Indigenous and Cultural Psychology

Understanding People in Context

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It was once assumed that the bedrock concepts of psychology held true for all the world's peoples. More recently, post-modern approaches to research have expanded on these Western models, building a psychology that takes into account the sociopolitical, historical, religious, ecological, and other indigenous factors that make every *culture*, as well as every person as agents of their own actions.

Indigenous and Cultural Psychology surveys psychological and behavioral phenomena in native context in various developing and developed countries, with particular focus on Asia. An international team of 28 experts clarifies culture-specific concepts (such as paternalism and the Japanese concept of *amae*), models integrative methods of study, and dispels typical misconceptions about the field and its goals. The results reflect culturally sound frames of reference while remaining rigorous, systematic, and verifiable. These approaches provide a basis for the discovery of true psychological universals.

Among the topics featured:

- Scientific and philosophical bases of indigenous psychology
- Comparisons of indigenous, cultural, and cross-cultural psychologies
- Socialization, parent-child relationship, and family
- The private and public self: concepts from East Asia, Europe, and the Americas
- Interpersonal relationships: concepts from East Asia, Europe, and the U.S.
- Factors promoting educational achievement and organizational effectiveness in Asia
- The growth and indigenization of psychology in developing and developed countries
- Are any values, attitudes, beliefs and traits universal? Cross-national comparisons
- The potential for indigenous psychology to lead to a global psychology

With this book, the editors have captured a growing field at a crucial stage in its evolution. *Indigenous and Cultural Psychology* benefits students and researchers on two levels, offering groundbreaking findings on understudied concepts, and signaling future directions in universal knowledge.

II. FAMILY AND SOCIALIZATION

III. COGNITIVE PROCESSES

IV. SELF AND PERSONALITY

Chapter **9**

Cultures Are Like All Other Cultures, Like Some Other Cultures, Like No Other Culture

James Georgas and Kostas Mylonas

The theme of this chapter is the relationship between cross-cultural psychology and indigenous psychology[1] and a methodological approach that can potentially satisfy the goals of both. Indigenous psychology is an integral part of cross-cultural psychology. Whereas cultural psychology has taken the extreme stance that the essence of culture is unique in its symbols and significance so as to preclude meaningful comparisons between different cultures (Shweder, 1990), the accepted definition of cross-cultural psychology includes two basic dimensions: universal psychological phenomena across cultures and psychological phenomena specific to cultures.

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[1] The etymology of the Greek term *indigenous psychology* might be of interest. It was generated by Adair's (1999) differentiation between *indigenous* and *autochthonous*. Three words in the Greek language are employed for this concept. One is, as Adair has written, *autochthonous*. The root *auto* in Greece has a number of meanings. In this regard it means "he," "she," "it," "they," or "those." "Chthon" is derived from the root "chthonos," which means "land." Thus, autochthonous is defined as "a resident from the onset in the land of one's family." A second word is "gegenis," derived from "ge" another word for "earth" or "land," and "genis," derived from "genos," which means "descent," "lineage," "family" and is defined as "one who has been born in a specific place, who belongs there as a native inhabitant." A third term is "ithagenis," "one who resides in one's place of birth and descent." The terms "indigenous" in English or "indigene" in French are derived from "endogenis," meaning "endo" or "internal" and again "genos," but which is defined in Greek as "that which is caused by internal processes." However, the term "indigenous" was mistakenly translated into English by social scientists in the 19th century as meaning "native." At this point the use of the term "indigenous" has been established in scientific usage, and we of course will continue to employ it.

The theme "empirical, philosophical, and cultural issues in indigenous psychology," is highly relevant to cross-cultural psychology at this stage in its development. The relationship of cross-cultural psychology to indigenous psychology and to cultural psychology has been discussed by many researchers (Berry & Dasen, 1974; Shweder, 1990; Kim & Berry, 1993; Diaz-Guerrero, 1993; Sinha, 1997; Berry, 1999; Adair & Diaz-Loving, 1999; and in the special issue of Indigenous, Cultural, and Cross-cultural psychologies, 2000).

Kim (Kim & Berry, 1993; Kim, Park, & Park, 1999) has been a protagonist in this effort to emphasize the need for psychologists from non-Western countries not to merely copy western theories and methods but to take the initiative to be creative and think about psychological concepts based on the context of their own culture, and to experiment with methods.

Cross-cultural psychology was developed as a way of detecting cultural diversity in psychology theories and research. At another stage, the awareness of the domination of American and European psychology led to the questioning of the application of western derived theories, methods, and interpretation of research results to non-western cultures. A related question was the omission of psychological phenomena observed in non-western cultures (Kim & Berry, 1993). Indigenous psychology became a legitimate branch of cross-cultural psychology when it emphasized the in-depth study of the cultural context in which psychological phenomena are embedded. This was in contrast to the conventional practice in cross-cultural research of focusing only on the level of the psychological phenomena and giving lip-service to the concept of culture by interpreting research results in terms of similarities or differences in ethnic groups, e.g., "Greeks" or the name of the country "Greece," and without specifying relationships with potential cultural level context variables. Thus, an important goal of indigenous psychology is to answer questions regarding the second dimension of the definition of cross-cultural psychology "psychological phenomena specific to cultures" by specifying culture-psychology relationships. A proposal of one way of doing this will be presented later in this paper.

The relationship of indigenous psychology to cross-cultural psychology has been discussed by Kim and Berry (1993). They specified six key aspects of indigenous psychology: 1) contextual understanding, 2) study of peoples in all cultures and also ethnic groups in polyethnic nations, 3) distinction between nations and cultures, 4) employment of multiple methods and new methodology, 5) clarification of external observer vs. internal observer bias, and 6) discovery of universal facts, principles and laws that could explain human diversity.

Berry (2000) has recently proposed a framework integrating the cultural, indigenous and comparative traditions of research, described as a symbiotic approach that could lead to the study of a "universal

psychology," and not a psychology that reflects western psychological theories. Cross-cultural psychology is described as a symbiosis of the cultural or in-depth approach and the comparative approach.

Kim, Park, and Park (1999) argued that the predominant findings and methods of contemporary western psychology are not suited to other cultures. Kim delineated the key elements of the Korean approach with an emphasis on a bottom-up model-building approach. He also raised important epistemological issues of two types of knowledge—analytical, semantic, and declarative knowledge; and phenomenological, episodic, procedural knowledge—as parallel methods of investigating psychological data in different cultures and advocated more holistic and qualitative methods as an alternative paradigm for a Korean indigenous psychology approach.

Poortinga's (1999) viewpoint regarding the tendency of some psychologists to rely strictly on cultural interpretation of the uniqueness of their findings also touched on an important epistemological issue. That is, the scientific method is 1) public, meaning the researcher is obliged to describe thoroughly the method employed, and 2) replicable, meaning that other researchers must be able to apply the same method and reproduce the results. In other words, those who argue for a culturalist interpretation of the uniqueness of behavior must also show that this behavior does *not* occur in other cultures. Poortinga essentially agrees with Berry (2000) that indigenous psychology should have both a cultural and a cross-cultural dimension, and that the search for universals should be an integral part of its goals.

Adair (1999) acknowledged the growing limitations of Western models in psychology and suggested that the goal of indigenous psychology was to make psychological research more culturally sensitive and to make it more autochthonous, that is, more independent of its imported origins, and more focused on addressing local issues, customs, behaviors, and local training.

Diaz-Loving (1999) took as a starting point the lack of cultural sensitivity and the ethnocentric perspective of the "Euro-Meso-North-American" scientific psychological tradition, which has resulted in indiscriminate imposition of universal categories and findings across behavioural settings. He supported the indigenisation of psychology in general and employed the example of Mexican ethnopsychology as a potential solution. Diaz-Loving argued that autochthonous researchers are aware of the social, ecological, and cultural variables in their culture that provide a theoretical framework for interpretation of results. He also suggested that one benefit of indigenous psychology is the discovery of unique characteristics in a culture, and a second is the study of the relationships of culturally relevant variables to universal constructs.

GREECE AND INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY

Coming from Greece, and having written an indigenous analysis of Greek culture (Georgas, 1993) and its effects on values and family (Georgas, 1999; Georgas, Berry, van de Vijver, Kagitçibasi & Poortinga, in press; Georgas, Mylonas, et al., 2001) it is clear that we support the indigenous psychology approach. When the first author returned to Greece in 1964 after training in psychology in the United States, his interest in cross-cultural psychology and his emerging interest of looking at psychological phenomena from the perspective of the Greek culture were stimulated by certain experiences. Although the term *indigenous psychology* was not employed at that time, this perceptual set was already established in the first author's approaches to psychology.

Over 30 years ago, in teaching courses in developmental psychology, the descriptions of the crisis of adolescents of American developmental psychology textbooks did not seem to fit the Greek adolescent or the Greek family, e.g., the rebellion of adolescents towards parents, the goals of American parents to encourage independence of their children, that young adults should live in a separate household from their families, they should be independent economically from their families, that psychological problems of adolescents and young adults were interpreted as due to their being too emotionally close to and too dependent on their parents, and the prescription proposed by many psychotherapists for children to distance themselves geographically and emotionally from their parents. Since in Greek culture at that time, the opposite was observed or prescribed, e.g., goals of parents were to encourage cooperation and interdependence of children on the family, it appeared that either the Greek family was pathological because they did not promote individualist behaviors, a position actually taken by some American trained social and behavioral scientists at that time, or perhaps these American bred psychological theories did not pertain to the Greek context.

In writing a textbook on social psychology in Greek (Georgas, 1986), the issue of American emic versus Greek culture emerged repeatedly. For example, in reviewing the literature on attitudes and behavior, situations employed in experiments were taken from the American context—with over 90 percent of the literature American—almost all examples were irrelevant to the Greek culture. The final manuscript attempted to separate the concepts and the theories which appeared to have cross-cultural invariance.

Construction of a scale of family values (Georgas, 1999) employed in a number of studies was based on examination of the Greek literature on family and on the generation of potential Greek values by Greek students.

An indigenous psychology approach was employed in Georgas (1993), in which Greek culture was analyzed employing elements of Berry's (1976) ecocultural framework and also with a historical analysis similar to the approach of Diaz-Guerrero (1993).

METHODOLOGY AND INDIGENOUS PSYCHOLOGY

An old adage in psychology has always remained tucked in a corner of the first author's mind. It has played the role of an epistemological prompter, albeit an oversimplification, in how to look at psychological phenomena. The adage is (Kluckhohn & Murray, 1950),

> *Man is like all other men,*
> *like some other men,*
> *like no other man*

The three hierarchical levels of personality implied by the adage are universal traits, taxonomies of traits, and individual traits. The upper two levels also refer to nomothetic methods while the lowest level refers to idiographic methods.

The adage could also apply to cross-cultural psychology and to indigenous psychology, that is, "Cultures are like all other cultures, like some other cultures, like no other culture." Surely all cultures share universal features as well as universal psychological variables. Groups of cultures share features on psychological variables. And cultures have specific and possibly unique features and meanings, e.g., language, myths, meanings, symbols.

However, the term *culture* has a number of definitions. One refers to its constituent elements, e.g., patterns of behaviors, transmitted symbols, values, etc. Culture is also employed to designate a group of people with the same culture as defined above, or as a synonym for *ethnic group* or, as used in our discipline, as a synonym for *nation* or *country*. Anthropologists argue that if *culture* is defined strictly as referring to ethnic groups, their numbers are estimated to be in the thousands. If culture is equated with nation-state or country, the number is approximately two hundred. However, culture is also employed in taxonomies of nations or ethnic groups with similar characteristics, e.g., European culture, Arabian culture, or Francophone cultures.

Thus, in discussing the definition of a cultural group in indigenous psychology, the unit of study has usually been a nation-state, but it has also been ethnic groups within a country. The point here is that indigenous psychology may study a relatively small ethnic group or a country, but the focus can also be on clusters of countries with similar constituent cultural elements, or clusters of countries with similar psychological patterns of variables.

The predominant arguments underlying the indigenous psychology approach were presented earlier in this chapter. Among them are the search for specific psychological adaptations to cultural elements. Research generated by non-western psychologists related to indigenous concepts, and related to addressing their own cultural and social issues is highly desirable in cross-cultural psychology and in psychology in general. The Korean

Row labels (items):

- control over life
- satisfied with life
- marriage or long-term relationship is necessary for one to be happy
- prepared to do smthing to improve conditions of immediate family
- working mother&children can have warm rels
- job gives women independence
- income should come from both husband and wife
- fathers looking after children are well suited for doing so
- can people be trusted
- woman needs to have children to be fulfilled
- marriage is outdated
- faithfulness
- adequate income
- same social background
- mutual respect and appreciation
- good housing
- agreement on politics
- understanding & tolerance
- living apart from in-laws
- happy sexual relationship
- sharing household chores
- children are part of a successful marriage
- discussing problems
- spending time together
- talking about mutual interests
- are you a religious person

Note: Shaded or marked blocks denote an item loading on the respective factor for each of the 33 countries, according to the following keys:

Key: Factor 1

▨	Loadings between |.40| and |.50|
▨	Loadings between |.51| and |.60|
▨	Loadings higher than |.60|

Key: Factor 2

☒	Loadings between |.40| and |.50|
⊞	Loadings between |.51| and |.60|
☒	Loadings higher than |.60|

Our decision to proceed in determining clusters of countries was also based on further consideration of the advantages and disadvantages of the methods employed up to this point. These factor equivalence testing methods assume universality, at least to some extent. The first method compared the pooled correlation matrix of the 33 countries with each country's correlation matrix. The second method compared the factor structures among all pairs of countries and also assumes that if universality exists, it should be present for *all* countries in the analysis, an unlikely event in most cases, although there are exceptions (Georgas, Weiss, van de Vijver, & Saklofske, 2003). Universality or equivalence of factor structures is sometimes achieved by excluding discrepant items or even countries from the analysis (Muthén, 1994; van de Vijver & Poortinga, 2002). Thus, the above methods provide some information on construct equivalence across countries, but do not provide information on items that might be culture specific for clusters of countries.

A CLUSTERS OF COUNTRIES METHODOLOGY

The basic hypothesis of this paradigm is that there may be some universal family value constructs across cultures, but there also may be constructs made up of items which contain both common items across countries and also items which are characteristic to groups or clusters of countries.

Instead of deleting discrepant items or countries (van de Vijver & Poortinga, 2002) in order to determine universal factors, a procedure was followed with the purpose of identifying common or universal items in each factor across clusters of countries and also items specific to the factor structure of each country cluster. The advantage of such a procedure is that it employs the information contained in the same data used for factor analysis under a different perspective. Thus, instead of relying only on the intercorrelations of the 51 items in the analysis and comparing the 33 factor structures, we should attempt a higher – aggregated – level solution, by also relying on the information of the similarities and dissimilarities among the same 51 items at the country level as measures of homogeneity among countries in their patterns of response.

Following the above rationale, a country level cluster analysis was employed with aggregates of the participants' responses, the 51 mean values for each of the 33 countries, followed by a within clusters of countries factor analysis of the raw score family values at the individual level. For the first stage of this country level analysis, the standardized transformations of the 51 item means were inserted into a 51 items by 33 countries matrix and hierarchically cluster analyzed in the attempt to form homogeneous country sets, that is, to determine clusters of countries

with similar patterns of family values. Four clusters of countries were obtained:

1. Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, West Germany, East Germany, Luxembourg, Slovenia, Spain, and the United Kingdom. This cluster is composed primarily of Western European Countries, seven members of the European Union, with two exceptions, the Czech Republic and Slovenia ($n = 12{,}861$).
2. Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and Ukraine. This cluster is clearly composed of Eastern European and Socialist countries associated with the former Soviet Union ($n = 11{,}527$).
3. Croatia, Greece, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Poland, and Portugal. This cluster is also composed primarily of Western European countries, five members of the EU, with exceptions Croatia and Poland ($n = 8{,}358$).
4. Denmark, Finland, Iceland, the Netherlands, and Sweden. Except for the Netherlands, this cluster is composed of Scandinavian countries ($n = 5{,}560$).

Malta was not a part of any of the four clusters. For each cluster separately (all countries involved were collapsed for their family value scores within each cluster) correlation matrices were calculated for the raw score family values; Spearman Rho coefficients were computed for all matrices and all values and these matrices were then factor analyzed for each cluster of countries. For all items, their participation to some common factor across clusters, some partly common factor or specific factor, is presented in Table 3 along with the overall factor structure as a starting point.

A closer look to Table 3 reveals interesting differences for family values among the four clusters of countries. There are items that contribute to factor equivalence across all 33 countries (such as the "importance of religion for family life" or the answer to the question "is divorce justified"; there are also items that contribute less to the overall factor equivalence since they take part in the factor structures of two clusters of countries (such as "mutual respect and appreciation importance for a successful marriage" and the "adequate income importance for a successful marriage" value). Then, there are other items that take part in a single specific factor structure that holds for only one cluster of countries, but may very well form an overall factor in the overall factor solution. This is the case for the items forming the FU2-OVR factor present for the countries in the second cluster (Belarus . . . Ukraine) portraying the concerns about the immediate members of the family including the elderly. On the basis of such evidence, one might argue that some items form universal sets-factors for all 33 countries in their clusters, some other items form universal

Table 3. Items Participating in the Overall and Cluster Factor Structures

Items	Overall	Cluster 1	Cluster 2	Cluster 3	Cluster 4
importance of religion	A	A	A	A	A
spending time in church	A	A	A	A	A
attending religious services	A	A	A	A	A
church and family life	A	A	A	A	A
are you a religious person?	A	A	A		A
shared religious beliefs (important in marriage)	A	A	U2	E	
sharing household chores (important in marriage)	B	B	B	B	B
discussing problems (important in marriage)	B	B	B	B	B
spending time together (important in marriage)	B	B	B	B	B
talking about mutual interests (important in marriage)	B	B	B	B	B
happy sexual relationship (important in marriage)	B	E	B	B	B
mutual respect and appreciation (important in marriage)	B		B	B	
understanding & tolerance (important in marriage)	B		B	B	
children are part of a successful marriage			B	B	U4a
faithfulness (important in marriage)				B	U4b
is abortion justified?	C	C	C	C	C
is divorce justified?	C	C	C	C	C
approval of abortion if woman not married	C	C	C	C	C
approval of abortion if not wanting more children	C	C	C	C	C
is adultery justified?			C		U4b
marriage or long-term relationship is necessary for one to be happy	D	D	D	D	D
both parents needed in a family	D	D	D	D	D
woman needs to have children to be fulfilled	D	D	D	D	D
woman single parent without relationship			D		D
parental responsibilities			D		
adequate income (important in marriage)	E	E		E	U4a
good housing (important in marriage)	E	E		E	U4a
can people be trusted?	E				

same social background (important in marriage)		U2	E	
agreement on politics (important in marriage)		U2	E	
concerned with elderly	F	FU2-OVR		
prepared to do smthg to improve conditions of immediate family	F	FU2-OVR		
help elderly	F	FU2-OVR		
concerned with living conditions of immediate family	F			U4a
working mother & children can have warm relations	G		G	G
income should come from both husband and wife	G		G	G
fathers looking after children are well suited for doing so	G		G	G
job gives women independence	G		G	G
children suffer with working mother		H	HU2U3	
women want home and children		H	HU2U3	
housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay		H	HU2U3	
importance of family in life	U1			
in future, more emphasis on family life	U1			U4b
marriage is outdated	U1			U4b

Key: ("U" stands for factors unique in one cluster structure, OVR stands for Overall factor):

A	Religiosity and Family life
B	Companionship in marriage (similar factor: B)
C	Abortion, divorce & adultery
D	Children, family life, and marriage (similar factor: D)
E	Family security (similar factor: E)
G	Working wife and mother (similar factor: G)
FU2-OVR	Importance of living conditions of family and the elderly (cluster 2 & overall)
HU2U3	Woman's role as a housewife (clusters 2 & 3)
U1	Importance of marriage and family life (cluster 1 only)
U2	Same social, political and religious background (cluster 2 only)
U4a	Adequate income, good housing and children (cluster 4 only)
U4b	Importance or keeping the family together (cluster 4 only)

sets within some and not all clusters of countries, and finally, some items form factors for just one cluster of countries as an indication of specific properties on family values within this cluster only.

The next step was to compute the composite factor indices (as means of the standardized raw scores, expressed as T-scores) to explore for the actual support or rejection of these family value factors within each cluster of countries separately. The respective means (for the weighted data) were also calculated for the overall factors, and then analysis of variance results were computed for all possible comparisons (if the factor existed for at least two clusters of countries). Of course, the main objective of this analysis was not to explore for the possible differences among the four clusters of countries but to verify that these differences, although not extensive, due to their systematic nature and their consistent pattern are an indirect advocate of the general method employed. For example, it seems that cluster 3 countries (Greece, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Croatia and Poland) stand more in favour of the religiosity and family life values (mean T-score of 53.97) and strongly against abortion and divorce issues (mean T-score of 47.38). Cluster 2 countries (Belarus, Bulgaria, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and Ukraine–all associated with the former Soviet Union) support religiosity and family life values (mean T-score of 51.45) and they also support values associated with children in family life and marriage (mean T-score of 51.78). On the other hand, cluster 4 countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden, The Netherlands) are strongly in favour of divorce and abortion necessity (mean T-score of 54.15) and strongly against family values that reflect the conventional family life of "children, family life and marriage" (mean T-score of 45.17). Cluster 1 countries (Austria, Belgium, France, West Germany, East Germany, Luxembourg, Spain, United Kingdom, the Czech Republic and Slovenia) consistently hold the third place next to the cluster 4 Scandinavian countries for all four factors of family values.

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this paper was to present a methodology that would enhance the interaction and communication between the indigenous psychology approach and the cross-cultural comparative approach. The indigenous psychology approach is extremely important in cross cultural psychology for a number of reasons. It emphasizes the study of psychological variables within the context of the culture. Because psychology has been dominated for over 100 years by western nations, many psychological concepts and findings reflect psychological issues and concepts that may not be as relevant or valid in other cultures. Cross-cultural psychology has played a key role in emphasizing this issue. Thus, another reason for the importance of indigenous psychology is to encourage