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PACIFIC ASIA PSYCHOLOGY: IDEAS FOR DEVELOPMENT?

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Focussing on health and management needs, an applied "psychology for development" is emerging in the African literature, and we aimed to explore its wider application to the development of countries in Pacific Asia. "Psychology for development" has made use of some distinctive pathways, from (a) realizing that development policy may contain mistaken assumptions about the psychology of the people involved, to (b) reconstituting, (c) restating, (d) refuting, or (e) rechannelling psychological concepts devised for western conditions. Applied psychological phenomena so far identified include (a) a "pay me!" reaction to aid (recipients demanding money for their participation); (b) "double demotivation" (salary differentials between local and expatriates demotivating both groups); (c) the "pull down" motive (the perception that others will sabotage high self-achievement); (d) "cognitive tolerance" (the ability to value at the same time both modern medical and traditional beliefs about health); and (e) the revitalised importance to health care of concepts such as "source credibility". Anecdotal evidence suggests that these pathways and applied concepts may have a future in Pacific Asia, and we recommend empirical research to develop awareness of their viability in this region.

Background, Rationale and Aims

In terms of extending its profile into "developing" countries, the discipline of psychology has arguably not been highly successful. For every writer finding the transition relatively smooth (e.g. Reeler, 1991; Tembo, 1991), there have been more adopting a critical attitude (e.g. Akin-Ogundeji, 1991; Antaki, 1989, Eze, 1991; Harris, 1990, Jahoda, 1983, Kamwendo, 1985, Omari, 1983, Smith, 1991/2, Wober, 1975). The general thrusts of the critics' arguments appear to be (a) that psychology was formed in response to the particular needs of the relatively industrialised world, and (b) that psychology departments elsewhere have been too much of a mere "relay station" for "western" and "academic" theory and research (Berry et al., 1992; Carr & MacLachlan, 1993). Some of this criticism has emanated from Pacific Asia (e.g. Callan et al., 1986, pp.185-6; Feather, 1985, p.388; Taft & Day, 1988, p.378).

As one response to the scepticism, Cross-cultural psychology has undoubtedly been of some practical value (see Segall et al., 1991). Yet it has evidently not - in its present form - proved sufficiently practical to alter the balance of criticism. Despite even the well-known and pioneering cross-cultural studies of values during the 1970s in which Asian Pacific cultures featured prominently (e.g. Hofstede, 1980; Ng et al., 1982), we are still witnessing calls for more and closer cross-cultural survey work (e.g. Misumi & Peterson, 1990). An alternative response has been to call for a pluralism of indigenous

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psychologies (e.g. Davidson, 1992), and today we are faced with a continuing debate in the literature between those who advocate this "cultural psychology", "emic" perspective (e.g. Misra & Gergen, 1993a, 1993b) and those psychologists for whom the "cross-cultural", "etic" route is the approach to adopt (e.g. Poortinga, 1993; Triandis, 1993).

Ironically, while everyone agrees that we must construct a psychology which is relevant (e.g. Kamwendo, 1985, p.135; see also Eze, 1991, Serpell, 1976; Wober, 1975), and despite some stimulating critiques (e.g. D.Sinha, 1989; J. Sinha, 1990), the precise practical roads on which to advance remain somewhat elusive. The production of a tangible psychology for and of development may seem at times to lack a methodological framework and a conceptual thrust (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993c). The overall objective of this paper is therefore to suggest some possibly useful "how to do it" guidelines towards the construction of a "Psychology for Development" in Pacific Asia.

As a potential model of how to proceed, attempts have recently been made to assert a new style of psychology in Malawi, an African "developing" country (Carr and MacLachlan, 1993). One consequence of this "new style" of psychology has been that student enrolment into psychology has increased five-fold over five academic years, and up to sixty-five per cent of employers nationally are now expressing interest in employing psychology graduates (Carr, 1994). These developments are possibly all the more impressive for having taken place against a background of acute "third world" poverty (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993), and mounting student criticism of the existing educational system (Carr, 1993b). Something is obviously being seen as relevant, and this unusual success perhaps warrants closer examination to extract any relevancies for countries in our own region.

What is the key to the success of psychology in the development of Malawi? We have argued that consumerism is important (Carr, 1994; MacLachlan & Carr, 1993a), specifically the focussing of psychology exclusively onto the acute health and managerial needs that characterise the country (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993). This policy of focus and by implication exclusion of less relevant psychology has been applied to researching, teaching, marketing and consulting in the discipline of psychology (Carr & MacLachlan, in press a): Research and consultancy activities have begun to produce a "psychology for development" centred wholly the country's own needs, a psychology which in turn has been ploughed back into the curriculum and the marketing strategy. Might the same sort of (consumer-driven, problem-driven) formula might be applicable here in Pacific Asia, and the (sometimes rapidly) "developing" societies within it?

The specific steps in the present paper build towards our overall objective. First, we seek to establish whether the context of development, the conditions of life, and above all the needs in our region, are comparable; secondly, by examining the psychological concepts that have been developed elsewhere, and the pathways taken to derive them, we consider whether the same methods/pathways might be adopted here in Pacific Asia. Aware of the wide cultural diversity in this region, we are not so naive as to propose one psychology for all Asia Pacific! Yet, this same cultural diversity is likely to mean that at least some of the constructs under development in Malawi will be relevant here, and we end by assessing the extent to which the region might share and thus develop certain psychological constructs of its own.

Comparable Needs?

The health needs of developing worlds are often daunting. The countries of Sub Saharan Africa for example, currently "lead" the world in HIV/AIDS prevalence (Weekly Epidemiological Record, 1993). In Malawi, the speed and intensity of the epidemic is expected to lower the already low life expectancy of forty-nine years, and to raise infant and child mortality rates which already stand at fifteen and twenty-five per cent respectively (House & Zimalirana, 1992). Poverty is one of the factors behind the low life expectancies in many developing countries, with the vast majority of people eking out a subsistence life in rural areas. Early death in Malawi for example is frequently attributed to two preventable and curable ills, malaria and malnutrition, with various water-borne diseases and tuberculosis

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also being serious threats to health (House & Zimalirana, 1992). At the same time, the means to care for health are often desperately lacking, in terms of essential drugs (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993a); hospital space (Carr, et al., in press); and medical personnel (Southern African Economist, 1993).

There are clear parallels in the developing societies of Asia Pacific. With regard to AIDS for example, it is now estimated that the epicentre of the epidemic will have moved to South East Asia by 1997 (Dwyer, 1993). In Papua New Guinea (where Life Expectancy has been estimated at 49.6 years), the disease has been described by the World Health Organisation as "potentially devastating" (p.364), on the grounds that the country already has a high rate of sexually transmitted diseases (Weekly Epidemiological Record, 1991). Similar concerns have already been voiced for the 2.5 million inhabitants of the other 20 Pacific Island nations (Weekly Epidemiological Record, 1991). In nearby Australia, there is general concern for the youth generally (Cribb, 1993) and particular concern for the Aboriginal community, in which sexually transmitted disease rates are already high and getting higher (Dwyer, 1993).

In more general health terms, Cambodia outdoes even its African counterparts in several respects. It has for example, the highest infant mortality rate in the world; a death rate among pregnant women which is the double of Africa; malaria as the primary cause of death in the country; and water-borne diseases and tubercolosis reportedly running rampant (Blanckaert, 1993). Within the "developed" countries of our region, there are often enclaves of acute poverty. In parts of Australia for example, the health statistics for the Aboriginal community resemble those in the third world (Gibson, 1994). This brief comparison indicates that the Asia Pacific region does contain patterns of health needs which match those being felt in Africa, and probably also many other non-western countries and societies.

Health and health systems need managing, and developing countries share some of the same problems. In Malawi, the requisite management skills are frequently not being developed fast enough to keep pace with national demand (Dubbey et al, 1990), and this need has been attributed to developing countries generally (e.g. Rajbhansee, 1972; Srinivas, in press). In fact, the whole issue of management training is now openly regarded as critical for national development in Malawi (e.g. Malawi News Agency, 1992). In Africa as a whole, motivation has long been regarded as an area for concern in management (e.g. Blunt, 1983; MacLachlan, 1993a; Munro, 1983). Undermining motivation, we often find such demotivators as corruption and nepotism (e.g. Carr et al, 1994; Srinivas, 1994); and gross salary differentials favouring expatriate over local managers doing a similar job (e.g. Carr & MacLachlan, in press b; Chadwick, 1994; Machika, 1992; MacLachlan & Carr, 1993b). In fact, the major aid organizations have been openly criticised for overspending on expatriate salaries (e.g. Aita, 1992).

The management of economies, like that of governments, has frequently been centralised and "top down" in orientation. This orientation, in both spheres, is gradually being abandoned in Sub Saharan Africa. On the political front, dictators have been loosening or losing their previously iron grip on the political marketplaces. Similar changes are taking place on the economic front, where the old commercial monopolies are experiencing competition, and growth is now being encouraged in the small business sector (Tellegen, 1992, Spore, 1992) - a reorientation deemed vital if economic stagnation in many developing countries is to be reversed (Van Dijk & Marcussen, 1990).

Pacific Asia undoubtedly already possesses some reputations for good management which are the envy of the world. Yet in China for example, increased emphasis is being placed on management training (Wang, 1993). In the Pacific Islands, Traynor and Watts (1992) have noted the nepotism of "one talk", while Oh (1991) has recorded similar observations in the East Asian countries of Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan and South Korea. In Japan, expatriates are hired to teach English and they are paid more than the local teachers, reportedly disaffecting the latter group (Archer, 1993). In Papua New Guinea, expatriate managers are still employed and are paid relatively high salaries (Forbes, 1993). Finally, there are those who argue that the economies of South East Asia owe their

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phenomenal growth in part to unleashed market forces (e.g. McCrann, 1993). Although there underlying psychological differences which distinguish the Asian from the African zeitgeist (see Hofstede & Bond, 1988), it is reasonable to hypothesise that managerial needs will covary at least some respects.

Viable Pathways and Concepts?

Several unifying themes are to be found running through psychology as applied to development. One is the central importance of the survey method - asking the people concerned directly for their beliefs, feelings, and behaviours. This contrasts with the experiences of developing psychology in the west, where the experimental method has undoubtedly been predominant. An additional unifying theme in Malawi has been the time-honoured practice of everyday observation - but with a difference. This difference has consisted of adopting a mental "set" to notice possible "psychological mistakes" being made in development policy.

Realizing

A prime example concerns the giving of aid, the intention behind which has been to "help people to help themselves" (Kellog Foundation, 1992). This phrase has indeed become something of a watchword for the philosophy of giving aid. Yet, in Africa, there have been indications that "psychological mistakes" are being made in trying to reach this target (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993). Unintentionally, aid may be cultivating a psychological "contract" or expectation in which the donor must pay the recipient community to help itself. For instance, during the 1992 drought (and famine) in southern Africa, a town community in Malawi refused to unload its donated maize unless paid to do so. Similarly, a rural community, presented with the equipment to build itself wells, laid down the same conditions. At conferences and workshops in Africa, the per diem (daily living allowance) is often far above the minimal level required - otherwise the professional community concerned may not attend! And at one of these conferences, it was alleged that children in the school community cannot be expected to cooperate fully with educational research (designed for their own benefit) unless paid to do so.

The cultivation of this "Pay me to help myself!" reaction (Carr & MacLachlan, in press a) has never been intended, and is not perhaps likely to bring recipient communities to a position where they can help themselves. The realization of the possible psychological implications of giving aid may, through further research now being conducted, allow the development of more effective methods of assistance between the wealthier and poorer countries of the world (Davies, 1993). The "pay me!" reaction may also be found in the Asia Pacific region. Schultz (1994) notes its presence in Fiji, while in Australia (Channells & Carr, 1994) it may partially account for conference junketing and for high long-term unemployment (through the refusal of voluntary work designed to enhance prospects for paid employment).

Exactly the same path of reasoning, from realizing a possibly mistaken psychology, surveying its extent, and taking corrective action, has been followed with regard to the salaries received by expatriates working in Malawi. These salaries are often paid by the western donor agencies, with the very best of intentions. However, serious mistakes may be in the making. Following the reasoning that expatriates must be enticed away from organizations "back home", salaries are in the main suitably augmented. This however can leave the local colleague in a grossly inequitable situation. In Malawi for example, it is usual for the expatriate manager to earn more than ten times the salary of the local manager doing essentially the same job. In an ironic twist, paying expatriates well to work in "development" may be partly responsible for so many professionals leaving their home country to work in foreign and less needy lands (Southern African Economist, 1993).

Reconstituting

Intuitively, the salary differential is going to have a demotivating effect on the local development workers, but scientific theory bearing on this issue is also available. In addition, the social psychological principle of "equity" for example (Adams, 1965) suggests that the local homologues of expatriates may tend to lower their inputs (by working less hard or less well for instance). Any "belief in

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a just world" (Lerner, 1970), cultivated say by Church influence Carr & MacLachlan, in press b), can lead to derogation of one's own abilities. For their part, expatriates sometimes acquire a reputation for caring neither for their own work nor for the abilities of their local counterparts - moreso perhaps in the commercial and industrial contexts.

These observations prompted a search for relevant social psychological principles. Counterintuitively, existing principles suggest that the highly paid expatriates are likely to join their local homologues in becoming demotivated. Equity theory suggests that the over-rewarded expatriates are at risk of developing an overinflated opinion of their input (Davies, 1993). Secondly, the just world hypothesis suggests that they may "blame the victims" (local colleagues and/or those they are paid to help) for their inequitable situation. Finally, the principle of "minimal sufficiency", derived from dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957) among others, suggests that the expatriates may transfer their locus of motivation from intrinsic to extrinsic (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993b).

Each of these effects would result in a demotivation of the expatriate workforce. Considering also the impact on local workers, the "double demotivation" hypothesis has been derived, an hypothesis which is now being empirically tested by surveying both types of manager. If substantiated, it will have significant ramifications for development policy. Recommendations might be made to the donor agencies (already being criticised as we have seen for overinflated salary budgets) that salaries should be cut, and possibly redistributed over teams of expatriate and local workers rather than expatriates alone. This change should not only save money, but also improve motivation and therefore productivity, in terms of development work!

One of the pathways to a "psychology for development" has thus involved the application of psychological principles established almost exclusively under western conditions. There is a difference however. The research process has involved a unique "reconstitution" of elements initially discovered in the laboratories and field laboratories of the west. In this sense, the particular pathway to a psychology for development could best be described perhaps as adopting a mind-set to perform "psychological alchemy". What of Pacific Asia?

We have already seen that expatriates are earning relatively high salaries in both Japan and Papua New Guinea. Schultz (1994) has observed double demotivation in Fiji, while salary differentials exist in Australia's industrial, banking and educational sectors (Chidgey & Carr, 1994). Chadwick (1994) views the problem of salary differentials as endemic to development generally, while women the world over have long earned less than men for doing the same job. Asian Indians differ from North Americans in preferring to allocate resources on the basis of comparative need rather than individual reward (Berman, Murphy-Berman, and Singh, 1985), a similar tendency mirrored in Africa (Carr and MacLachlan, in press b). To the extent that this aspect of "collectivism" is general to the region (see also Misumi and Peterson, 1990, Wang, 1993), one might reasonably expect any salary differential favouring the expatriate manager to be a general cause of motivational problems.

Restating

The notion of a common collectivism has featured in a further pathway towards a psychology for developing societies. This may involve the restatement, the qualification of a principle established in the western context. In the case of Africa, there have been moves towards a restatement of the "unidirectional drive upwards" (Festinger, 1954). This motivational concept is widely recognised as being one of the theoretical cornerstones of social psychology (e.g. Turner, 1991, p.55) - at least in the more industrialised half of the world. In Malawi, it was the students themselves who made the observation of how fundamentally mistaken it can be to simply import conventional western psychology "as is" into a non-western, third world context. One student wrote the following for instance in an essay (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993c):

In our culture, African culture, the idea that people appreciate the superiority of others as Festinger suggests is rare. People always develop hostility towards those who are better

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than them. For example, there is too much witchcraft going on to reduce the ability of the colleague. If there is no witchcraft, there is too much backbiting to discredit the other. We, Africans, we don't accept the superiority of the other without feeling jealousy.

Festinger's core concept may thus require restating in at least two aspects. Firstly, any unidirectional drive upwards may be countered in some contexts by a kind of "motivational culture" in which efforts are made, or perceived to be made, to ground the high flyer. Secondly, African students may not so easily as their western counterparts accept the superiority of others. In Festinger's (1954) terms, the range of comparability may be much wider. Unlike westerners, people in Malawi seem less content to compare themselves against those their "betters". In short, there may be a pervasive motivational culture to consider - one which entails efforts to "pull down" one's perceived rivals (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993b).

In scope, this motivational culture would appear to extend beyond students at university. In Malawi, it is widespread among nurses, who believe that spells are needed to enable promotion, by protecting them from the malice of rival colleagues (Carr and MacLachlan, 1993b); among subsistence farmers, who sabotage the crops of their more successful neighbours (MacLachlan and Carr, 1993c); within Malawi's industrial management and shop floors (Carr et al., 1994); and even in the attributions of psychiatric patients (MacLachlan et al., in press). On a wider scale, it has been noted also in a variety of African societies (Munro, 1986; Kiggundu, 1991; Srinivas, 1994; Wober, 1993).

There is an abundance of evidence that this kind of motivation is functioning in the Asia Pacific. Much has been written on its presence in Australia, both anecdotal (e.g. Carlton, 1993; Conway, 1972, p.28; Dixon, 1990; Grey, 1993; McGuinness, 1993) and empirical (Feather, 1992, 1994; Lazarevic, 1992). It has been recorded at a comparatively higher level among Japanese students (Feather & McKee, 1993), although its implications either for a national or for a regional organisational psychology have not been considered (see Feather, 1994). Wan Rafaei (1984) found that Chinese were high on achievement motivation but often attributed their success to luck; while Singaporese women showed more direct signs of fear of success (Kaur & Ward, 1992). The motive has even been named in a variety of cultural contexts, from "tall poppy" in Anglo-Australia (Feather, 1994) and "big noting" in the Aboriginal community (Lazarevic, 1992); "red-eye disease" in Chinese Hong Kong (Bond, 1994); "shoe-sock man" and "learn-em man" in Papua New Guinea (McLoughlin, 1994); and "gule wamkulu" in Malawi. In an effort to evoke an appropriate generic description, and impressed by Lewin's relatively neutral (1951) concept of "field", this social phenomenon has been termed "motivational gravity" (Carr et al., 1994). Improperly managed in terms of staff selection, development and welfare, motivational gravity is likely to prove very costly (Carr et al., 1994; McLoughlin & Carr, 1994).

Refuting

A second of Festinger's cornerstone concepts has featured in another pathway found to be of use. This route may lead to the refutation of a western psychological principle, and to a replacement which is truly "alternative". In Africa, this has entailed a possible refutation of the best known and most researched theory in social psychology (Wheeler et al, 1978, p.131), "cognitive dissonance" (after Festinger, 1957). We began with the observation that "medical" and "traditional" views on health sometimes sat side-by-side - without any apparent discomfort - in the mind of the consumer of health services. Remember our professionally trained medical nurses believing that they needed a protective spell to achieve promotion! This seeming ability to tolerate inconsistency raised the crucial empirical question of whether there is simply no inconsistency for the consumer (and so no "dissonance"), or whether the inconsistency is noticed but fails to produce any "dissonance".

Survey research then measured beliefs about cause, prevention, and treatment for the tropical ills of schistosomiasis (bilharzia) and malaria (Ager, et al., 1993); epilepsy (Shaba et al., 1993); and psychiatric symptomatology in the tropics (Pangani et al., 1993). Separate measures were taken of both modern medical, and traditional beliefs. In each and every

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case, there was evidence that the consumers of health services in Malawi had the ability to tolerate two different, and according to Festinger psychologically incompatible belief systems - a phenomenon named "tropical tolerance" (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993f). This evidence always took the same technical form, of no significant (negative) correlation between medical and traditional beliefs: Holding one type of belief in no way excluded holding the other type of belief.

The key question of whether these consumers notice an inconsistency, or notice but do not feel any discomfort, is now being researched (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993f). In the interim, the findings have been used to alert the managers of health systems to consider including the traditional healer (of whom there are many) into the chronically overstretched health services (MacLachlan, 1993; MacLachlan & Carr, 1993d). If traditional beliefs and scientific "knowledge" can coexist comfortably in the mind of the consumer of health services, then there is perhaps no reason why they could not do so in the system itself. A possible example of the incorporation of traditional healers would be to fulfil a much needed palliative role in the care of AIDS patients, and - in fact - this kind of role is already being performed in some African countries (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993f; Munro, 1993).

Finding peaceful coexistence between modern medical and the traditional in Africa is not new (e.g. see Barbichon, 1968; Dawson, 1969a, 1969b) and this bodes well for the sustainability of any such developments in managing health care. The interpretation of coexistence as a human resource is fresh. What has recently been called "tolerance" and regarded as an ability, a strength carrying positive applied consequences, was previously regarded by western expatriate researchers as something of a problem (for exceptions see Elliot et al, 1992; Porter et al., 1991). Jahoda (1970) for example studied the supernatural beliefs and changing attitudes of Ghanaian university students, investigating the (perhaps) implicit assumption that when Ghana (and Ghanaians) were fully "developed", then western ideas would finally prevail. More recently, Peltzer (1986) interpreted the coexistence of traditional and medical beliefs to be a reflection of people in transition. It is arguably on a much smaller scale that we hear of such "tolerance" in western cultures - for example in the belief that AIDS is a punishment from God for promiscuity (see Carney et al., 1991).

Anecdotes (e.g. Nason, 1993) apart, there is empirical evidence of "uncertainty avoidance" in a number of Pacific Asian cultures (Hofstede, 1980), particularly in East Asia (Hofstede & Bond, 1988). Tolerance of both modern medical and traditional beliefs may thus be a psychological phenomenon to measure and to incorporate into the management structures and services of health care systems. Furthermore, there is evidence from the Australian Aboriginal community that traditional healers are being marginalised and "driven underground" under the current health management system (Dudgeon, 1993). Taken together, these facts suggest at least some potential applied role for research into cognitive tolerance in our region.

Rechannelling

While there undoubtedly will be instances when western principles will not work in the non-western context, and when radically different principles must take their place, the experience in Africa has been that there are indeed fruitful points of contact. At times, principles and accompanying techniques established in western contexts, to meet western needs, can turn out to be very useful when creatively rechannelled into tackling radically different, non-western kinds of problems directly connected with "development". In Malawi, conveying the health message is one of the greatest and most distinctive of these problems, as in AIDS prevention for example.

The "head-on" approach to the AIDS crisis does not seem to be penetrating Malawian psyches (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993a). Given the prevalence of the disease in Malawi, a "health-beliefs" debate of the sort continuing in the west would be out of place. Instead, some of the fundamental, necessary knowledge to form "health-beliefs" may be lacking (MacLachlan & Carr, 1993e). Accordingly, the localised research is examining the more fundamental issues (Carr & MacLachlan, 1993a). How dangerous do people perceive AIDS to be, especially in the context of other

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major killers such as malaria? ("What's so special about AIDS?"). Are perceptions about risk accurate? Are defence mechanisms employed? Many students have undoubtedly been sexually active, so is dramatic role-playing an effective way to "break through" any AIDS-related denial? (MacLachlan et al., 1993). Is interactive learning (using an "AIDS game") an effective avenue? (MacLachlan and Chimombo, 1993). Who do students actually trust, find "credible" with regard to advice about AIDS prevention and management? (Carr, 1993c). Although it is the government-controlled media through which most effort is being channelled, they are no longer trusted since the Church mounted a revolutionary challenge to the government, in 1992 (Chiona et al., 1992; Tembo, 1991).

There are clearly practical applications in these questions and methods for the development of health in Africa, but what about Asia Pacific? We have already seen that South East Asia is expected to become the epicentre for the AIDS epidemic (Dwyer, 1993). Furthermore, there may be problems in communicating the basic information. For example, in addition to Papua New Guinea's 768 known languages, a majority of people do not reportedly have access to media such as newspapers and television (Weekly Epidemiological Record, 1991). These kinds of basic communication problems are to be found in poverty-stricken countries around the world, and to that extent the techniques already being rechannelled and applied in Africa may be of benefit in parts of this region too.

In terms of management, we have already seen that developing worlds elsewhere are undergoing radical change, which basically involves "democratisation" from the presidency downwards into the industrial and commercial markets. The same zeitgeist is to be found in the Asia Pacific, for example in Indonesia (The Australian Special Survey, 1993), and in China (Wang, 1993). Outside of Asia Pacific, western concepts have been fruitfully rechannelled into this zeitgeist in at least two major areas: economic management, encouraging entrepreneurial business activities among the "ordinary" citizens; and managing selection, as the jobs market has become increasingly responsive to individual - rather than say political or regional - differences, and what they have to offer. Have these reapplications anything to offer us?

In the first case, an innovated adaptation of a classic survey study was made, concerning motivation at work (Morse & Weiss, 1955). In Malawi, work means first and foremost "security", but many are frustrated in their current job and seek self-employment in small business (Carr et al., 1993). In addition, while "professionals" like teachers for example are seen as motivated only by money, subsistence farmers working for themselves are seen to be relatively more intrinsically-driven. These findings have been interpreted as supporting the moves towards an entrepreneurial economy. Indeed, peasant farmers in Malawi, on the very brink of starvation, will proudly sell some of their produce (Carr et al., 1993).

It is not difficult to imagine that this kind of research may assist Pacific Asian governments, seeking for example to encourage small business enterprise. It may furthermore enhance understanding between cultures in the region. To illustrate, in Australia (Jones et al., 1993) as in Malawi, it has been found that workers generally underestimate the intrinsic motivation to work in their culture. They judge those around them to be motivated by money, whereas actual measurement of personal motivation reveals a very clear tendency to be intrinsically motivated. Australians have literally been labouring under an illusion, both in their own eyes and those of others in the region - a stereotype which has been claimed to exist at home and abroad for the last 100 years (Taft and Day, 1988).

Psychometrics has also been proving useful, with the development of reliable, valid, and economic tests, as a result of which demand has been increasing. For instance, tests have been developed for selecting managers with initiative and integrity (Tesfaye, 1992), bank tellers with customer services skills (Douglas, 1993), and students with computer aptitudes (Ugeni, 1993). While it has been appropriate to import western techniques, the tests themselves have been locally developed. The western Approaches to Study Inventory (A.S.I.) (Gibbs et al., 1988) lost factor structure and predictive power entirely under the uniformly intense motivation in Malawi's only university (Carr et al., 1994), while black

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South African students are uniformly motivated to comply with the white system to the minimum level necessary to "pass" (Vijver & Poortinga, 1991). In Malawi, the variables which predict computer science grades are more basic than those that are useful in the west - for example having had some experience with video equipment, or not being in need of spectacles (Ugeni, 1993).

Although China has been using psychological tests in selection for many hundreds of years, psychologists there have nevertheless recently uncovered a distinctive "moral character" dimension to leadership in Chinese managers, and new tests have been locally developed to reflect this predictor variable (Wang, 1993). Wainer (1993) observes uniformly supra-high motivation among test-takers in Korea. Meanwhile, from Papua New Guinea, there has been a call for a reconstruction from basics of selection devices in the armed forces (Bau & Dyck, 1992). Phenomena such as cognitive tolerance would certainly necessitate the adaptation of western psychometric concepts such as "internal consistency" (Munro & Carr, in preparation). These facts suggest that test construction, from basics and in the local context, will be a useful feature of any Psychology for Pacific Asia.

Concluding Recommendation

There seems no doubt that some of the constructs being developed in developing Malawi will have currency in some of the societies in this region. At this stage however, much of the evidence remains anecdotal and speculative. We have already received notice in the case of motivation to work (Jones et al, 1994) that anecdotes are not always true. In the same way, the widely held belief that Australians suffer from "cultural cringe" (e.g. McGuinness, 1993) has not been corroborated by the empirical evidence (e.g. Feather, 1993). The next step in constructing a relevant "psychology for Asia Pacific countries" seems to be to answer the calls (e.g. Harris, 1993; Hutchings, 1993; Misumi & Peterson, 1990) for regional, empirical survey work. Only by this empirical pathway will the true value of these constructs be ascertained. We have tried to suggest some tangible directions for such research to take.

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