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CHAPTER 1



Development of Psychology in Singapore

Some Perspectives

TAN Ai-Girl

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents some perspectives on the development of psychology in Singapore. The subtitle “some perspectives” alerts us of the scope of this chapter. As cited in Sinha and Kao’s (1997) introduction to an edited book on psychology in Asian countries:

... production of knowledge – be it physics or psychology – is socially conditioned and its categories and tools for the perception and analysis of reality are mediated by social forces, culture, history, and tradition. It is, therefore, not surprising that each country has its own distinctive variety of psychology. We cannot, therefore, talk of *the* ... perspective that ignores the differences. It would be more appropriate to talk of several ‘ ... perspectives’, thereby emphasizing their special characteristics. (Sinha & Kao, 1997, p. 21)

The citation informs us of the unique features that a discipline may gain in the course of its reception and development in a society. It also alerts us of the limitations of a chapter or a book in presenting a comprehensive overview of the development of a discipline. The readers are advised to refer to subsequent chapters for insight into the development

of various subdisciplines (e.g. counselling psychology, vocational psychology and health psychology) and areas of interest (e.g. psychotherapy in Chinese medicine and brain imaging) of psychology in Singapore.

This chapter is organized into four parts. Part one "Beginning of psychology in Singapore" summarizes the development of psychology before the establishment of the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS, 1979). The main source of information for this part is Long's (1983, 1987) article *Psychology in Singapore: Its roots, contexts and growth*. Part two "Growth of psychology in Singapore" highlights the establishment of the SPS and the formalization of undergraduate (1986) and graduate (1997) programmes at the local higher educational institutions. These establishments are regarded as significant indicators for the growth of psychology as an academic discipline and a profession in Singapore. Part three "Development of psychology in Singapore" lists out some specific characteristics of the development of psychology in Singapore as compared to that in other countries. Part four "Progress of psychology in Singapore" presents factors that may contribute to the progress of psychology in Singapore. It also discusses possible directions of development of various subdisciplines of psychology in Singapore.

Beginning of Psychology in Singapore

Psychology in its early development played a particular role in the clinical and medical services (Long, 1983, 1987). Instead of being taught at the humanistic or philosophy department, the teaching of psychology in Singapore began in the medical college. In 1905, the first centre of higher education, the Straits Settlement and Federated Malay States Government Medical School was set up and later in 1921 renamed the King Edward VII College of Medicine. It was in this college, in 1914, that the first clinical course in Psychological Medicine with some content of psychology was offered to the medical students. Nearly one and a half decades later, in 1928, the Raffles College was established as a college of education offering diplomas in Arts and Science. There, some activities in psychology were observed, such as public courses in practical psychology (November 1929, by Dr P. Fennelly from England). The courses were well received by the colonial officers and members from the business and medical fields and other professions. Nearly two months later, the participants of these courses formed the Singapore Psychological Association (SPA) (January

12, 1930). Two main aims of the association were outlined: (1) Supporting and creating opportunities for residents in Singapore to pursue the study of practical psychology, and (2) establishing and maintaining contacts with psychologists visiting Singapore and with related societies and associations in the world. In addition, the group set up a library that kept books of psychology for the use of its members. Unfortunately, in 1939, with the outbreak of the Second World War, the association terminated its function. The association, nonetheless, paved the initial path to the development of psychology as a profession in Singapore.

Similar to the teaching of psychology, psychological services in Singapore began in the medical domain in 1956, when an Australian psychologist, V. W. Wilson, was appointed to the Colonial Medical Service. Wilson was on contract (1956–1959) from the United Kingdom to build up and to incorporate a full psychological service within the mental health programme based at the Woodbridge (Mental) Hospital. A framework was proposed by Wilson for the development of psychological services. Four major functions of psychological services were suggested: (1) providing psychological and clinical services in medical, social welfare and educational fields, (2) planning a programme of basic psychological research on social and cultural influences, (3) organizing formal courses in psychology for psychiatric nurses and other professional staff working with psychological problems, and (4) making available professional advice to government bodies.

In 1949, the medical school merged with the Raffles College to become the University of Malaya. This university served the needs of both Singapore and the then Federation of Malaya until 1959 when Singapore became a self-governing state. Singapore joined the new Federation of Malaysia in 1963 and left the Federation in 1965. Separated from the University of Malaya, the University of Singapore came into its own in January 1962. The teaching of psychology in the educational department was observed in the fifties. Educational psychology was taught in the School of Education, University of Singapore, and the Teachers' Training College (TTC). At the TTC, in the early sixties, educational psychology was only part of the Principles of Education Course, which included History of Education (Chin & Balakrishnan, 1983). The second university, the Nanyang University was established in 1956 as a privately funded Chinese-medium university. Its degrees were accorded official recognition by the government in 1968. In the late sixties, the Department of Education,

Faculty of Arts, Nanyang University introduced general psychology, social psychology and social statistics to first and second year students. Due to the well reception of these courses in 1976 the Nanyang University set up a degree unit, the Sociology/Psychology programme within the Faculty of Arts. The courses discontinued after the merger of the Nanyang University and the University of Singapore into the National University of Singapore in 1980.

The growth of psychology in the sixties and seventies was slow. Singapore gained its independence on August 9, 1965. Long (1983, 1987) attributed the slow development of psychology during the post-independent period to two factors: (1) resistance to foreign interference to Singapore's sociopolitical policies after independence and (2) the inception of psychological service in psychiatric services. Nonetheless, during this period, applied psychological services began to flourish in Singapore with the employment of psychologists in the ministries and public services: the Ministry of Health (Department of Psychology), the Armed Forces' Education Department (introduced psychological services in 1966), the Ministry of Defense, the Ministry of Education (Guidance Unit), the Institute of Education (Guidance Unit), and the Ministry of Home Affairs (providing services to the Juvenile Court Probation and Aftercare Service and the Prisons Department).

Before the end of the seventies, in the academic year 1978/79, Psychological Medicine was included in the final year examination programme of the medical students (University of Singapore, 1978/79). At the same time, the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) was listed as a registered society on January 11, 1979 (Supplement of the Republic of Singapore Government Gazette, July 20, 1979). The establishment of a psychological society marked the growth of psychology in Singapore. On January 20, 1979, the SPS was inaugurated with 40 founding members. Some of the important remarks of the founding president are cited as follows:

The aim of the Society is to advance psychology as a science and a profession in Singapore. It sets to promote knowledge in psychology and its application for the benefit of the community ... The formation of the SPS marked a significant milestone in the growth and development of psychology in Singapore in that it has become widely accepted by other

professionals as a distinct professional group. (Long, 1983, p. 13, old abbreviation of SPS was SPsS, note from the author)

The SPS delineates the three roles of a psychologist (Code of professional ethics, SPS): (1) as a scientist who believes that society will be best served when investigations are initiated upon perceived needs; (2) as a teacher who recognizes primary obligation to help others acquire knowledge and skill, and to maintain high standards of scholarships; (3) as a practitioner who knows his or her social responsibilities may touch intimately the lives of others. Over two decades, the membership of the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) increased from 40 to 197. The SPS continues to serve as a central body of institution to promote ethical psychological practices to the public (see Lim, 2000).

Growth of Psychology in Singapore

The advancement of psychology as an academic discipline and a profession is indebted to psychology education at the higher education institutions. As stated, the teaching of psychology as a subject or part of a subject began under the medical and teacher education programmes. Only in year 1986, a more comprehensive programme of psychology was offered to undergraduates. The Degree programme of psychology was made available at the Department of Social Work and Psychology, National University of Singapore (NUS):

The degree of Bachelor of Social Sciences with Honours may be taken in any one of the following branches of learning: psychology, economics, political sciences, social work, sociology, and statistics. (Statute A1, Part III, 13, 2, p. 76, University of Singapore, 1987/8).

The establishment of a Degree programme marked the beginning of a systematic study of psychology. In general, undergraduates who major in psychology attend introductory courses for psychology, psychological research and statistical methods, biological psychology, cognitive psychology, personality and abnormal psychology, social psychology, developmental psychology, learning and memory, group dynamics, industrial and organizational psychology, cross-cultural psychology, and health psychology. Honours programme is offered to outstanding students. Students at this level are exposed to more theoretical knowledge and attend

specialized modules in the areas of industrial and organizational psychology, applied psycholinguistics, counselling and health psychology, applied developmental psychology, or other areas such as intercultural aspects. In 1987/88, the Department of Social Work was renamed the Department of Social Work and Psychology to reflect the incorporation of psychology in the department since 1986. In 1989, the first batch of 52 psychology students graduated from NUS.

The Nanyang Technological University (NTU) was established in 1991. At the same university, the then Division of Psychological Studies (renamed Psychological Studies Academic Group in July 2000) of the National Institute of Education (NIE) formed another important institution for teaching psychology. Since then, modules on psychology have been offered to student teachers of the Diploma, Degree, and Postgraduate in Diploma programmes. For each programme, student teachers are recommended to read two to three core or elective modules (20–30 hours each). The major contents of the core modules of psychology include child development, psychology of learning and assessment. Elective modules also include guidance and counselling, special needs education, motivation and creativity. The modules are structured according to the contemporary educational policies and initiatives released by the Ministry of Education (MOE). Special emphasis is given to how theoretical knowledge can be applied to classroom practice. As such, most of the titles of the modules are termed according to the practical aspects of psychological knowledge (e.g. “Becoming a more effective student” and “The applications of developmental psychology to teaching and learning”). Student assignments are geared towards examining the practicality of psychological knowledge in the local educational and classroom context. In addition, psychology is also integrated into modules of the Diploma and Advanced postgraduate Diploma in Guidance and Counselling programmes for the in-service teachers.

At the Singapore Management University psychology is offered as one of the subjects (general education) for students of the Bachelor Degree in Arts and Science. The integration of psychology into some modules of special professional education for nursing are observed at the School of Health Sciences, Nanyang Polytechnic. Child development is the core module for Early Childhood Education Programme at the Ngee Ann Polytechnic.

Towards the end of the nineties several graduate programmes in psychology at the Master level were established. The then Division of Psychological Studies (renamed Psychological Studies Academic Group since July 2000), NIE, offered its first part-time postgraduate programme (January 1997): Master of Arts in Applied Psychology. This programme entails two lines of professional training, counselling psychology and educational psychology (National Institute of Education, 1997–98). On average, Master students spend two years completing four core subjects and four optional subjects in either the educational psychology specialization or the counselling psychology specialization. In addition, they have to complete 200 hours practicum and a dissertation of 15,000 words. Since its commencement, 18 candidates of the educational psychology specialization and 30 candidates of the counselling psychology specialization have been conferred. The candidates conducted either qualitative or quantitative research. Most of their studies were related to practical sociopsychological problems and educational issues.

Subsequently, less than two years later, two part-time graduate programmes in psychology were offered by the Department of Social Work and Psychology in NUS: Master of Social Science (Psychology) by research and Master of Social Science (Applied Psychology) by coursework. Candidates of the latter programme are given choices in their selection of specialized modules from five areas: industrial and organizational psychology, applied psycholinguistics, counselling and health psychology, forensic psychology, and applied developmental psychology. The candidates are required to complete two essential modules, four specialized modules and a dissertation of 20,000 words.

Since the establishment of the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) (1979) and the Degree programme at the Department of Social Work and Psychology (1986/87 academic year), psychology has gradually developed its academic (scientific) and professional roles. Our preliminary review shows that applied psychological research in the areas of mental and health care outweighs basic psychological research and other applied psychological areas (e.g. education, social) (Tan & Lim, 2001). In the past decade, there was an increase in the number of entries in the list of publications in PsycLIT ($n = 287$, 1991–99), from a key word search “Singapore or Singaporean”. The number of researchers ($n = 176$) attached to the local affiliation has increased by tenfold compared to that before

1980. Frequent research themes were health or mental health (e.g. stress, HIV and suicide), sociocultural (e.g. family and parenting), educational (e.g. learning and intelligence), organizational, language, personality, preschool education and counselling (see Tan & Lim, 2001). A search on the National University of Singapore (NUS) library collection showed that faculty members of the Department of Social Work and Psychology have been actively involved in some of the above-mentioned areas of research: health psychology, language, personality and sociocultural issues. We also referred to the list of publications of the National Institute of Education (NIE) and website information of local hospitals and polytechnics. These institutions demonstrate academic interests, research directions and practical education in applied or professional psychology (e.g. counselling, clinical and educational). For a comprehensive list of research and studies on Psychology in Singapore, the readers are recommended to read the work of Elliot, Ward, Chang and Loh (1996) and Elliot (1999).

Social perceptions of the working places and roles of psychologists confirm the significant contribution of psychologists in social and medical services (Tan, Lim, & Goh, 1999). Psychologists provide counselling, mental health care, educational and other social services at hospitals, government ministries (e.g. education, military, civil defense and community service), and voluntary or non-governmental organizations. Examples of establishments where psychologists work include the following:

1. Psychological Services Unit of the Rehabilitation and Protection Division, Ministry and Community Development and Sports (MCDS);
2. Singapore Boy's Home, Residential Institutions for Children and Young Persons, MCDS;
3. Psychological and Guidance Services Branch, Ministry of Education (MOE);
4. Psychological Assessment and Research Branch, MOE;
5. Woodbridge Hospital/Institute of Mental Health;
6. Manpower Department, Ministry of Home Affairs (MOHA);
7. Specialist Units: Rehabilitation and Counselling Branch, MOHA;
8. Institute of Mental Health;
9. Singapore General Hospital;

10. Kandang Kerbau Hospital;
11. Tan Tock Seng Hospital;
12. Police Psychological Unit; and
13. Applied Behavioural Science Department, Ministry of Defense.

Development of Psychology in Singapore: An International Comparison

Psychology has a young history of development in the Singaporean society compared to the development of psychology in other countries. If we employ the year of establishment of a department as an indicator for the beginning of a comprehensive teaching of psychology at the higher education institution, the teaching of psychology in Singapore is one of most recent happenings, nearly 110 years after the birth of modern psychology (1879). We present some features of psychology in Singapore from an international perspective. Table 1.1 summarizes some essential information for our discussion.

Some findings from the table are as follows.

1. The Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) was established before the university department of psychology. In most countries listed in Table 1.1, the inauguration of a professional society came in place together or several years after the establishment of a department at the university. This feature has given psychology in Singapore a “grounding foot” in health and mental health services. Furthermore, the teaching of psychology first took place in the medical college. The term “psychology” may sometime be seen as an identical term with “psychiatry” (see Long, 1983 & 1987), or psychological services are subsumed under social services and counselling. To avoid misconception and diffusion of identities and roles, psychologists in Singapore have to establish clear and distinct conceptual frameworks and directions through their professional services and research projects.
2. With less than thirty years of scientific and professional development, psychology in Singapore, unlike that in many other countries, was not under the direct influences of the founding scientists of modern psychology. Japanese, Chinese, Indian and American psychologists were once students of the founders or early prominent psychologists who set the pioneer work of modern, scientific psychology. In Japan,

Table 1.1 Years of establishment of professional societies and departments of psychology and the membership of psychologists: An international comparison

| | Society/ Association | Department | Membership | Remark |
|------------|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Bangladesh | 1972 ^a | 1921 ^a | 800 ^a | |
| China | 1921 ^a | 1920 ^a | 4,200 ^a | Cultural revolution – interruption |
| Germany | 1904 ^f | 1879 ^{f-i} | 1,500 ^f | Second World War – interruption |
| Hong Kong | 1968 ^b | 1967/68 ^b | – | Cross-cultural studies |
| India | 1924 ^a | 1916 ^{a, c} | 423 ^a | Recognition-science |
| Japan | 1925 ^d | 1918 ^d | 4,700 ^d | |
| Malaysia | 1988 ^a | 1969 ^a | 100 ^a | |
| Singapore | 1979 ^a | 1986 ^a | 197 ^g | |
| Taiwan | 1949 ^a | 1962 ^a | 770 ^a | |
| USA | 1925 ^e | 1830s ^{e-i} | >70,000 ^e | |

Notes

^a Nair & Sim (1997).^b Kvan (1997).^c Sinha (1994): 1905 Psychology was included as an independent subject at Calcutta University.
1915–16 Psychology was included into graduate studies at the same university.^d Azuma & Imada (1994).^e Rosenzweig (1994).^{e-i} Textbooks began to use “psychology” as the title.^f Pawlik (1994).^{f-i} Wundt established the first laboratory of psychology in Leipzig.^g Tan & Lim (see Chapter 2 of this book).

Yujiro Motora studied in Germany and set up the first laboratory of experimental psychology in 1900 at the University of Tokyo. This laboratory grew into the first university department of psychology. *Matatoro Matsumoto*, the first Chair of the department (1918), trained under Wundt (Azuma & Imada, 1994). In China, *Cai Yuanpei*, a scholar who later became the president of the Beijing University, studied at the Wundt laboratory. He established the first laboratory at Beijing University in 1917 (Jing, 1994). Indian history of

development of scientific psychology began in 1905, when the Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University, *Asutosh Mukherjee*, included psychology as an independent subject in the postgraduate course. Ten years later the first psychological laboratory was established at the same university. The following year, *N. N. Sengupta*, who studied under Hugo Munsterberg, a student of Wundt, started the postgraduate classes (Sinha, 1994). The USA has the largest community of psychologists in the world. The emergence and development of psychological science was indebted to the evolution of psychology from a philosophical to a scientific enterprise under the influence of the teaching of *Gustav T. Fechner* and *Wilhelm Wundt* (Rosenzweig, 1994).

3. The membership of the Singapore Psychological Society is far smaller than that of the other countries. This could be due to the small population in Singapore. The lecturer and student ratio of the National University of Singapore (1:27) (Nair & Sim, 1997) was one of the highest among the 36 departments of psychology in major East Asian universities. Similarly, the lecturer-student ratio of the National Institute of Education, Psychological Studies Academic Group, is high (December 2000, 29 faculty members to over 1,000 students taking core and elective modules of educational psychology per year). The lecturer-student ratio of the university departments of psychology researched by Nair and Sim (1997) was between 1:4 (e.g. University of Padjadjaran, Indonesia) and 1:40 (e.g. Universiti Pertanian Malaysia, renamed Universiti Putra Malaysia and Srinakharinwirot University Thailand). Most of the departments of psychology investigated had a small teacher-student ratio: Beijing University (1:8), Beijing Normal University (1:7), National Taiwan University (1:14), National Chung-Cheng University (1:14), University Malaya (1:5), Dhaka University (1: 19) and University of Mysore (1:9) (Nair & Sim, 1997).
4. Accompanying the establishment of academic departments and professional associations/societies are the establishment of regular scientific journals, conferences and meetings, as well as divisions of psychology. As discussed in the Introduction (pp. xix-xxxiii), psychologists in Singapore have yet to launch conferences on a regular basis and gain adequate support for the growth of regular publications of books and journals. We cite some examples on how psychology

has gained their scientific and professional status in other countries. The progress of psychology in the USA has been supported by a strong publication culture, regular conferences and symposiums, and a large number of divisions of psychology. The American Psychological Association (APA) set up the APA Central Office with full-time staff in 1945. The APA staff has grown to over 300 staff members, with more than half of them involved in publishing and other information dissemination activities (Rosenzweig, 1994). Psychology has a distinguished status in India. In 1923 psychology was recognized as a science and a separate section "Psychology and Educational Sciences" was created under the foremost organization of the country, the Indian Science Congress Association (Sinha, 1994). Psychologists in India are among the leading Asian psychologists in promoting indigenous approaches to the study of psychology. They are active in publishing in local and international journals. Every year there are approximately 1,000 entries in the *Indian Psychological Abstracts* (Sinha, 1994). Psychology in Japan, like that of the USA, has suffered less interruption from political instability than psychology in countries such as China (cultural revolution) and Germany (Second World War). Psychologists in Japan have been involved actively in cognitive psychology and cross-cultural studies, especially in the areas of social psychology. The Japanese Psychological Association (JPA) publishes two periodicals, *Journal of Psychology* (bi-monthly in Japanese with English abstracts) and *Japanese Psychological Research* (quarterly in English). The JPA holds an annual convention attended by over 2,000 participants. The Japanese Association of Educational Psychology (1927) and the Japanese Certification Board for Clinical Psychologists Inc. (March 1994) have helped to advance the scientific and professional status of psychology in Japan (Azuma & Imada, 1994). Established at a much later date, the Hong Kong psychological communities have demonstrated an accelerated momentum in establishing an indispensable role model for the psychologists of other Asian countries. The department of psychology at the Hong Kong University (1968) was set up by John Binnie-Dawson, a co-founder of the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (1972). Between 1950 and 2000, there is an increase in the total number of publications about Hong Kong individuals, culture or society (Spinks & Lou, 1997).

Progress of Psychology in Singapore: Some Suggestions

The development of psychology is unique in every society. In summary, we identify some factors that influence the growth and progress of a discipline: (1) strong professional leadership; (2) active publishing and research culture; (3) large membership; (4) regular opportunities for exchange and sharing of research findings; (5) systematic and comprehensive professional training and continuous education; (6) relevance of knowledge and services to meet the needs of the society; (7) sufficient mentoring opportunities; and (8) adequate funds. The development of psychology, an emerging discipline in Singapore, would be promising in the presence of favourable conditions to allow the above-mentioned factors to take place. To achieve this, relevant organizations have to share a truthful and coherent vision for the growth of psychology in Singapore.

Of the many subdisciplines, counselling psychology has the potential to establish its scientific and practical status in Singapore. Its growth is supported by the growing number of local graduates at the Master level. Between 1997 and 2000, a total of 62 Master students enrolled for the Master of Arts in Applied Psychology (NIE, NTU) specializing in counselling psychology.

Educational psychology is another subdiscipline with the potential to grow in Singapore. Between 1997 and 2000, 39 candidates of the Master of Arts in Applied Psychology specialized in it. Together with the number of student teachers and in-service teachers reading educational modules with a heavy content in learning and teaching, educational psychology has a great potential to flourish in Singapore.

Neuropsychology also has the potential to grow in Singapore. Together with psycholinguistics, neuropsychology can help uncover the mystery of bilingual brain processes. Since 1997, "thinking" and "creativity" are two essential themes introduced to the Singapore education system. Recently, biological and brain sciences have attracted the attention of the societal leaders, educators and researchers. The advancement of neuroscience research in Singapore with the establishment of neuroscience laboratories in the hospitals may provide a possible avenue for interdisciplinary research between neuroscientists, psycholinguistics specialists and cognitive psychologists.

From our preliminary analysis (Tan & Lim, 2001), health-related research is a dominating area in psychology in Singapore. Health psychology is thus another potential area of growth. The national interest in health care issues has injected a strong impetus into the development of this subdiscipline. Considering this factor, it is perhaps appropriate to claim that psychology in Singapore has the potential to establish graduate education and professional training in the area of clinical psychology. A basis for the professional training and academic education can be formed with support from the existing bodies as follows: (1) faculty members teaching health psychology at the higher education institution to offer academic knowledge and research methods; (2) the Woodbridge Hospital/Institute of Mental Health and other hospitals to offer mentorship in practical training; (3) the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) to support and help establish collaboration for clinical training and practicum in clinics, hospitals, health centres and private practices.

Industrial and organizational psychology has the potential to grow in Singapore given the fact that the progress of the Singaporean society is featured by its active financial and economic activities. Globalization and internationalization in the Singapore economy demands expertise in cross-cultural organization and communication.

Research methodology developed in cross-cultural psychology can be integrated into all of the above-mentioned subdisciplines including organizational and industrial psychology. Cultural sensitivity and diversity are key components of psychology in Singapore. As such, psychological research and services have to be sensitive towards social categories such as gender, age group, socioeconomic status, home language, belief system and educational background. After its independence, in the last several decades, the Singaporean society has undergone rapid socioeconomic modernization, cultural and linguistic adaptation, as well as physical and technological advancement. These changes have brought forth different linguistic and cultural values across generations. It is thus indispensable that we try to understand psychology in Singapore within the context of these changes. It is also important to understand how the individuals of various generations and socioeconomic backgrounds adapt and innovate ways to cope with the changes. Social psychology is related to the study of how a person's mental life and behaviour is shaped by interactions with other people and has the potential to grow in parallel with cultural psychology.

The growth of psychology is related to the possibility of gaining social and governmental support and recognition for the work done by psychologists. Funds and scholarships should be made available to support psychological research, continuous education opportunities for graduates of the Degree and Master programmes to further their doctorate studies, and regular scientific meetings (e.g. conference and symposium) and an intensive publishing culture. Rewards for good research work on and services to peculiar sociopsychological problems should be presented to scientists, researchers and practitioners. The professional viewpoints of psychologists should be highly regarded when societal leaders formulate policies in socioeconomic, educational, cultural and technological domains.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Psychology in Singapore has to progress within the scientific and professional frameworks of psychology and the sociocultural contexts of Singapore. As a small nation with a stable sociopolitical and economic system and a comparatively large pool of international and local talents, Singapore offers a platform for the indigenization and internationalization of psychological research and services. Indigenization of psychology in Singapore should begin with efforts to improve the existing organizational structures and available resources related to psychological research and practices. Specific divisions should be established within the leadership of the Singapore Psychological Society (SPS) to promote scientific studies and professional training in specific areas such as counselling psychology, educational psychology, neuropsychology, health psychology, clinical psychology, organizational psychology, social psychology, and cross-cultural or cultural psychology. The process of indigenization cannot be completed in the absence of internalization of psychology in Singapore. Internationalization of psychology can compensate the limited resources of psychology in Singapore in the following ways: (1) organizing interregional mentoring systems; (2) creating opportunities to nurture young professionals in the Southeast Asia region (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand) in the acquisition of skills and competence in publishing and conducting research; and (3) cultivating the culture of sharing research findings through interregional and international conferences. Ultimately, psychology in Singapore is part of the world psychology. Indigenization and internationalization should be

conceptualized within the framework of the development of psychology in Singapore.

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