

Development of Psychology in Sri Lanka in comparison to Germany: Origin, Development, and Limitations

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ABSTRACT

Development process of any other field is not a quick one. It may come across steps throughout the history. When we compare the European region with the Asian region the situational processes they came across have similarities and differences. Germany is the birthplace of many psychological schools in which Sri Lanka still have some shadow of those schools and keep continuing some parts of psychology adapted from this society. Nevertheless, there are some trends of having own psychological practices affirming the cross-cultural framework. Sri Lankan universities are now trying to give a proper place for Psychology but still the tendency is not adequate compared to the placement given into other disciplines.

Keywords: *Psychology, Germany, Sri Lanka, Philosophical Idealism, Development Process*

Sri Lanka is an island which located in Indian Ocean and south of India. It officially indicated as a Democratic Socialistic republic of Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was under colonized by Portuguese, Dutch and in the end by English. It was independent by English in 1948 and kept remaining a name called Ceylon till the year 1972. Germany compared to the Sri Lanka is a developed country and some of the Psychological school merely originated based upon the Germany. The purpose of this article is to figure out the inter country differences in between Sri Lanka and Germany in terms of Psychology origin, development, limitations and current trends.

Historical Turning points in Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka got freedom from the British in 1948. And exposed to the open Economy system in 1977. The Society of Sri Lanka has Dramatically changed due to socio- economic changes. According to the World Bank discussion with Prof Indralal de Silva (2016) Sri Lanka is experiencing demographic transition and it will peak by 2041. Development of health care

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system and reduction of child mortality rates and all these conditions to be lead Sri Lanka into the oldest population in south Asia by the year 2041.

The situation of Traumatic experiences in Germany and Sri Lanka is differed in terms of Geographical location, economical situational and the cultural factors. For example, Sri Lanka was exposed to Tsunami in 2004 which was the second affected population of the world in terms of impact level of it. Moreover, Sri Lanka frequently exposes to landslides, Lightning strikes, coastal erosion, epidemics and environmental pollution, flooding and storms (Ministry of Disaster Management, 2016). Therefore, the trauma afterwards the disasters are to appear as the natural trauma in Sri Lanka in comparing with Germany. Moreover, there are certain tends of Personal disasters and trauma followed by these events emerges in Sri Lanka. According to Jong et al. in 2002 Sri Lanka has many personal traumas based upon war in between Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam(LTTE) and Sri Lankan government for 30 years. Still, some people are displaced based on this Civil war and War veterans and civilians have ended up with many Psycho-Social issues and traumas. In addition to the fact of Natural and civil war there are some interpersonal Traumas among Sri Lankan young populations. A Study done by Haj-Yahia, Tishby, & Zoysa, with 476 Sri Lankan students in 2009 point out that students more exposed to interpersonal violence and parental violence, the more they exhibit PTSD symptoms.

Recent research conducted in high-income countries suggests psychotic experiences are common in the general population, but evidence from low- and middle-income countries (LMIC) remains limited. Sri Lanka is a LMIC affected by three decades of civil conflict and, in 2004, a devastating tsunami. This study aimed to investigate the prevalence of psychotic experiences in a general population sample in Sri Lanka and associations with conflict- and tsunami-related trauma. This is a first National Mental Health Survey conducted in Sri Lanka. A cross-sectional, multi-stage, cluster sampling design was used to estimate the prevalence of psychotic symptoms. Data on socio-demographic characteristics, conflict- and tsunami-related trauma, and psychotic experiences were collected using culturally validated measures in a sample of 5927 participants (Keraite, Sumathipala, Siriwardhana, Morgan, & Reininghaus, 2016, p. 79).

Historical Turning points in Germany

History of Psychology in Germany has a relatively long history compared to Sri Lanka. In 1878 Wilhelm Wundt started the first experimental Psychological Laboratory at the University of Leipzig. Germany is the Birthplace of certain schools of Psychology such as Gestalt psychology. Philosophical development happened right through Rene Descartes cannot be ignored.

‘In Germany, the situation is somewhat differ than the Sri Lanka Germany has a history that stretches back to antiquity, it is important to remember that it was first unified as a nation state only in 1871, making it in a sense even younger than the United States. Located in the heart of

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Europe, without natural boundaries, Germany has experienced centuries of immigration, confrontation, and negotiation.’ (Coy, 2011, p. XIII)

‘The stages are indicated by headings treating the development of psychology during the period of Restoration after 1814/15, in the German Empire (1871–1918), in the Weimar Republic (1919–1933), during the time of National Socialism (1933–45), in the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG, 1949–1990), in the German Democratic Republic (GDR, 1949–1990), and in united Germany after 1990.’ (Sprung, 2001, p. 364)

Philosophical idealism and German Psychology

Psychology in Germany was born based with the Philosophical ideology introduced by the Kant Hegal, Fechner, Schelling, Carl Gustav Carus, Physiological Psychology, Johann Christian August Heirath, F.C:TH fischer and Heinrich Steffens, Carl Ludwig Michelet, Hegal Moritz Lazarus, Hayim Steinhil, Post Kantian idealistic Psychology. , Influence of idealistic psychology.

There was major historical phenomenon in Germany in which influenced on such Falling of Berlin Wall join back the German capitalism and German Socialism, Narcissism during the World War II. Recently the acceptance of huge number of Refugees to the German society. The Nazi platform appealed not only to violent thugs and Freikorps veterans but also to anxious middle-class Germans traumatized by the Great Depression, who were attracted to Hitler’s ardent nationalism and charismatic personality in a time of unsettling crisis and instability. Students and intellectuals were enchanted by the Nazis’ aura of confident modernity, embracing the party’s fascination with mass media, technological efficiency, and racial pseudoscience. For Germans disenchanted with the Weimar Republic, the carefully staged mass rallies put on by the Nazis presented an idealized image of German unity and national pride that provided a striking contrast with the divisive parliamentary politics of the Weimar era. (Coy, 2011, pp. 181–182)

There is a tendency of come up with traumas such as Health issues and interpersonal complex issues are very common in German context. Attempting suicide and suicide ideation trauma are common among German student sample. (Plener, Singer, & Goldbeck, 2011). Moreover, there is a tendency of accept refugees in Germany. Therefore, we can’t forget the trauma underneath the refugees who come to Germany. Their traumas not only impact on their community but also to German communities as they are going to socialize in the German society. Study done with refugee young population points out that feeling of guilt, and shame as well as trauma symptoms were all associated with the traumatic events they faced (Stotz, Elbert, Müller, & Schauer, 2015). Moreover, accident related trauma is more frequent in Germany. According to a study done by Mahmoodi et al., in 2015 with Dental trauma population points out that Eight percent of all patients seeking help at the dental emergency service presented with trauma, meaning that dental traumatology are one of the major topics in emergencies. To improve the quality of care,

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Further public education, expert knowledge among dental professionals and a well-structured emergency service are necessary. However, the death rate of injuries represents relatively low value in Germany. (Standardized injury rate <30 and Death rate followed injury 5%)

Development of Psychology in Sri Lanka

Psychology was established in Sri Lanka in early 1980. And it was basically established in the University context in Sri Lanka based with the subject philosophy. Situation is dramatically changing as University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka is increasing the capacity and quality of Psychology special programme for the undergraduate students and for some programmes to the post graduate students. For example Bullock (2016) points out that capacity is very low for the people who are willing to do Psychology in Sri Lanka. In addition, to the fact that there is a tendency to developing some private institutes and some institutes attached to Universities which offer diploma and certificate courses people who are willing to explore the psychology related disciplines. In Sri Lanka, Psychology is attached to the concept and practical methodology so called Counselling. In addition, Education Psychology is also a significant popular and University of Colombo has established a department of Education Psychology attached to faculty of Education.

In Sri Lanka, there is opportunity to gain a four year degree in Psychology (Bachelor of Arts) inside the national university system, either as a standalone degree in Psychology (University of Peradeniya, University of Jaffna, University of Kelaniya).

Table 1 Sri Lankan universities and Psychology degree programmes

University	Name of the course	Degree offers
University of Peradeniya	Department of Philosophy and Psychology.	Honors Degree in Psychology Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology Certificate course in Counselling and basic counselling skills Progress into Masters and PhD programs
University of Kelaniya	Department of Philosophy	General Degree course in Psychology; Special degree course in Psychology, Diploma in Counselling
The Open University, Sri Lanka	Department of Psychology and counselling	On the process of developing a Bachelor of Science Honors Degree in Psychology course.
University of Jaffna	Department of Philosophy	Degree offers separately as Psychology honors
University of Sri Jayewardenepura	Department of Philosophy	Degree offers combinedly with Philosophy

Note: Private academic institutes in Sri Lanka are not being considered.

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Although psychology in Sri Lanka is a popular topic both in the university and in the media, it is yet not recognized as an independent discipline in the national university system. Thus, there are no psychology departments in the national university system and postgraduate education in psychology is limited to a Masters' of Philosophy program in clinical psychology. This program, which enrolled its first cohort of six students less than six months ago, is taught by foreign staff, who fly in for brief lecture stints. Psychology is offered as a subject or program at a number of universities. For example, it is taught as a program within the Department of Philosophy at some universities, and as a subject within departments of Philosophy, Sociology or Education at other universities. Pragmatically, this means that, by and large, students cannot receive a specialized degree in psychology (undergraduate or graduate) unless they study outside the country, and psychology faculty members do not have a substantive academic home. This, added to a general lack of academic resources (books, textbooks, internet resources, laboratories, IT facilities) means that there is much room for psychology to develop' (Bullock, 2016)

PSYCHO-SOCIAL ISSUES IN SRI LANKA

War

As mentioned from the first part of this article Sri Lanka has many burning issues such as Development of older population (The World Bank, 2016). In addition to the fact that Sri Lanka had a civil war in between Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) and Sri Lankan government for thirty decades. It caused to results deaths more than 64,000, struggles, conflicts in human life and shattered the economy (Jong et al., 2002).

There are many displacements and increase of number of refugees, exposed experiences in war caused the countrymen traumatized from this war matter. A substantial number of participants had been directly exposed to war.' Many had witnessed attacks on their village, aerial bombing, mortar fire, cross fire, and instances of torture, and had seen wounded people, and people being burnt in their houses. 20 (12%) had been attacked, 28 (18%) arrested or kidnapped, 27 (17%) taken hostage or detained, 28 (17%) maltreated by police or army personnel, and 17 (11%) tortured. Instances of rape were low (five of 162) but there were concerns about underreporting since 60% of respondents (97) claimed to have heard of rape cases. Almost all had lost their homes or property (157, 97%) and faced starvation (152, 94%). 88% (142) described a constant feeling of being unsafe' (Jong et al., 2002, p. 1517).

Suicide

Sri Lanka is a one among the countries which reports world highest suicide rate (Jong et al., 2002). 4000 people killing themselves per year, or about 11 persons a day. According to Suicide prevention day Programme organized by Dr. Neil Fernando the head of National Institute of Mental Health Promotion, the people who tend to Suicide are in the age range of 15-44 old in Sri Lanka. As Dr. Fernando points out, risk factors of Suicides in Sri Lanka include mental and

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physical illness, alcohol and other substance abuse, chronic illness, acute emotional distress, violence and sudden and major changes in peoples' lives, such as job losses or separation of a partner (Amaranath, 2012).

Child abuse

One of the current trend of Social issues which lead many psycho social changes in Sri Lanka is the child abuse. Child abuse and child labor is also a very common in Sri Lanka. There is some media attracted child abuse case in every year. But Child abuse is a phenomenon which happened in daily basis in Sri Lanka.

Natural disasters

Sri Lanka is a path to two Monsoons seasons rain and lead more natural disasters due to those Monsoons and other weather related hazards (landslides, lightning strikes, coastal erosion, epidemics and effects of environmental pollution.) (Ministry of Disaster Management, 2016).

Traumatic experience shown by the people are very common in Sri Lanka. For instance, Sri Lanka exposed to Tsunami resulting more than 48,000 deaths and many other psycho, social, economic catastrophes in Sri Lanka. Sri Lanka was the world second affected country from that Tsunami.

CONCLUSION

Development process of a subject in a country depend on many factors. Psychology has a long history in Germany compared to Sri Lanka. Germany has some historical schools which is to really a matter to modern psychology. Philosophical involvement and political and social factors have influenced to German culture to develop the current situation of Psychology there. But Sri Lanka has short history of its development of Psychology. But there are different field which varying from Germany in Sri Lanka for the application of Psychology. Compared to the bridging the gap possibilities the lack of governmental universities course for students to learn is a gigantic issue in Sri Lanka nowadays. Most of the time student can obtain a government university degree when they enrolled into the Universities. Apart from that the Open university of Sri Lanka trying to launch a new Bachelor of Science honors degree in Psychology. Affirming the cultural diversity and development of cultural specific Psychology is immensely needed factor for the current situation in Sri Lanka.

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