

“When the indigenous psychologies are incorporated into a universal framework, we will have a universal psychology” Triandis (1996)

Universalizing Psychology: The voyage of an African Psychologist

A PROLOGUE

Sometime in April, 1983, I travelled to my home town in Ekpoma. Ekpoma is the headquarters of Esan-West Local Government in Edo State (aka the heartbeat of Nigeria). The reason for my travel was to inform my parents of a choice of discipline to study in the university. This period was when my academic and psychology voyage started. My obvious choice then was law. I had passed my Higher School Certificate Examinations (HSC) (A Levels) in flying colours with 11 points (A, B & D in Economics, Biology and History respectively). I did not have the right combinations for medicine because I had dropped physics and chemistry at a certain stage. Then I informed my parents that I wanted to read law which was the only profession I could think of.

Previously, between my secondary school and higher school, I vacillated between the pure sciences and Humanities such as Physics, Chemistry, Geography, Biology, Literature in English and History. Don't blame me because many of us were like that. There were no career counsellors nor did I have any sibling for a model, or to look up to for assistance. The only cousin I had was uninformed as I was about careers and did not do much to help. This was the situation in my time when I wanted to enter the university. I say this because of the students and learners who may also find themselves groping in the dark for a discipline to study like I did in my days.

Back to my parents and my loving mother's behaviour: Then suddenly, she started shouting, wailing at the same time (in psychology language, she was hysterical) with terrible

mannerisms. She was hysterical to the point that the behaviour struck fear in my heart. Unfortunately, I did not have a psychology word for such behaviour because I did not know what psychology was all about. You can imagine the shock I was in. I didn't know why her sudden change of behaviour. When she calmed down, not before she attracted family relatives, told everyone that "her first son (pointing at me) is wishing me (her) death" and shouted in an hysterical manner that I did not want her to live long and that I wanted to kill her before her time. At that point I was shocked and couldn't see the relationship between my zeal to study law and her dying early plus her sudden bizarre behaviour. I was just watching the scene that was getting bigger and bigger by the minute. Then suddenly, she told all those present that lawyers die early because they lie a lot while defending criminals in courts and that they are cursed professionals. She insisted that I kill her first before proceeding with my law plan. Is it not the Bible that says in Exodus 20:12 that "Honour your father and your mother that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you". What happened afterwards? Your guess is as good as mine. My zeal to read law vanished in to the air. As a way forward, I was asked to see an uncle of mine (the late Professor Abumere) who at the time was a senior lecturer in Geography at the University of Ibadan for advice. With everything provided for, I was at the University of Ibadan the following week unannounced to see this uncle that I was meeting for the first time. Thank God for African family cultural support system (Ubuntu). In many individualistic communities, the police would probably have arrested me when I was at his doorstep waiting for hours until they all came home in the evening very happy knowing I was a family member. Mr Campus Rector Sir, I say this because of its relevance to the theme of today's topic and the practice of psychology in Africa.

After looking at my results, without thinking, he told me to study Psychology. He even smiled when he saw the shock on my face because that day was the first day and time that I

heard the word “Psychology”. In that visit, two things happened that irrevocably impacted my life: Psychology and the University of Ibadan. Eventually, I filled in the Joint Admissions and Matriculation Board (JAMB) admission application forms and because of the beauty and size of the University of Ibadan, I filled in Psychology and the University of Ibadan as my 1st, 2nd and 3rd choices of discipline and university choice options. Around August 1983, I received my letter of admission from JAMB to study Psychology in the Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, Nigeria the owner of the PhD robe that I wear today. On the 4th of September, 1983 (8am), I sat in the popularly known LLT (Large Lecture Theatre) with many other first year students in the Faculty of the Social Sciences, and took my first psychology course, ‘Psyc 105: Learning processes’-a course I later taught for many years in the same Department and University. Before long, I embarked on a career in Psychology, a decision I have never regretted.

Why has psychology continued to fascinate me? I have several reasons: (1) Psychology is practical. It is about you and I, us, every day, issues. Issues that bothers on relationships, abnormal people, stress matters and coping behaviours, how to bring about self-control etc. (2) another point why psychology is interesting is that the discipline is a way of thinking. We look at life from a psychological perspective. We ask questions from critical perspectives to mundane issues. We have psychologists who will be interested in knowing why we smile, get angry, prefer our space, kill someone, rape someone to abuse of alcohol etc. Why is the Rector always making people laugh with his jokes during Campus ceremonial activities? Is it his personality, genetic, or something he acquired socially? Psychology students can look into that and provide answers and even develop an instrument to measure such traits for managerial positions. As a science, psychology demands that we ask testable questions through observation and by so doing helps a healthy critical way of thinking because at the

end, we build dependable and accurate knowledge. A third reason why I love psychology is that the discipline is diverse in nature from the study of physiology of hunger to treatment of mental illness which happens to be in the area of clinical psychology - my area of specialization. The present lecture is titled “Universalizing Psychology: The voyage of an African Psychologist.”

INTRODUCTION:

In the science of psychology, it is very important to define concepts related to the variables and issues under consideration to enable readers and listeners to follow the trend of discussion or talk and in addition moderate the tone of psychological jargons. The present discussion cannot be different given the audience I see in the hall today.

The definitions of concepts will be provided whenever and where ever they are necessary in the course of this lecture. The lecture is divided into four sections: For the benefit of students, the first section will highlight broad but brief definitions of different areas of psychology. The second section will focus on why the topic. The third section will highlight some of my research contributions in psychology. These are discussed under seven contributory areas and publications arising from them in my voyage and finally the fourth section will be based on conclusions from the voyage experience for future research and with recommendations for Africa and her psychologists.

Major Psychological sub disciplines:

Psychology has been defined as the science of human (and animal) behaviour and their mental processes (Bernstein, Crammer, Fenwick, & Fraser, 2008). The goal of psychology is to understand humanity both by discovering general principles and exploring specific cases (Fernald 2008). While psychological knowledge is typically applied to the assessment and

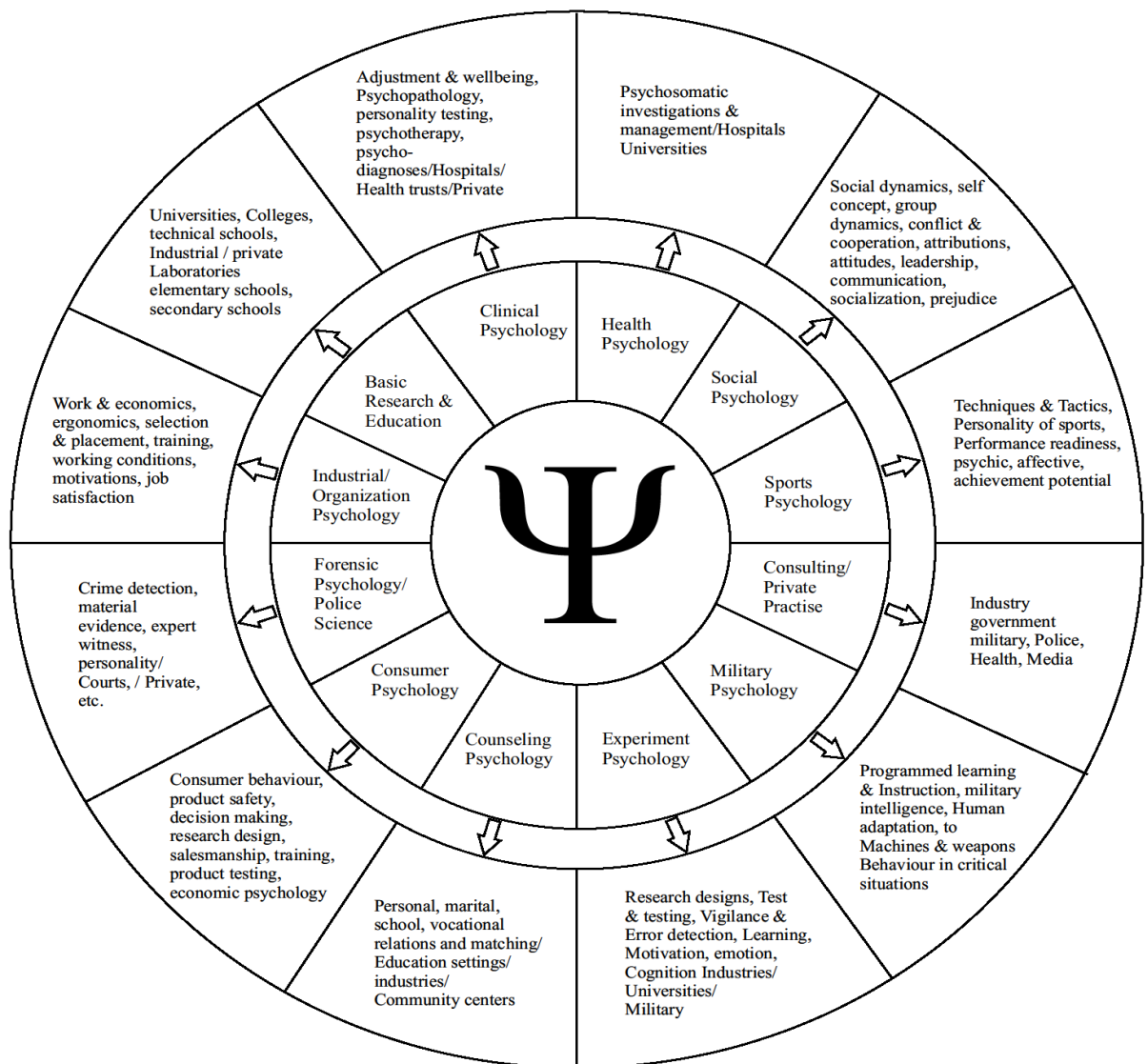
treatment of mental health problems, it is also applied to understanding and solving problems in many different spheres of human activity. Psychologists attempt to understand the role of mental functions in individuals and to understand social behaviour, while exploring the physiological and neurobiological processes that underlie certain functions and behaviours. **Biological psychologists** are those who analyse the biological factors influencing behaviour and mental processes. **Neuroscientists** are psychologists who examine the role of the brain and neural networks in behaviour and mental processes. **Developmental psychologists** seek to understand, describe and explore how behaviour and mental processes change over the course of life time from birth to old age. **Cognitive psychologists** study the mental processes underlying judgment, decision making, problem solving, imaging, and other aspects of human thought or cognition. **Engineering psychologists** study human factors in the use of equipment and help design and create better versions of such equipment. Sometimes the discipline is known as Ergonomics. **Personality psychologists** study the characteristics that make individuals similar to, or different from one another. **Social psychologists** study how people influence one another's behaviour and mental processes, individually and in groups. **Industrial psychologists** study ways to improve efficiency, productivity, and satisfaction among workers in organizations. **Sport psychologists** explore the relationship between athletic performance and psychological variables as motivations and emotions. **Forensic psychologists** assist in jury selection, evaluate defendants' mental competence to stand trial and deal with issues involving psychology and the law. **Environmental psychologists** study the effects of physical environment on behaviour and mental processes. **Community psychologists** work to obtain psychological services for people in need of help and to help prevent psychological disorders by working for changes in social systems. **Educational and school psychologists** study methods by which instructors teach and students learn and also tests for IQs, diagnose learners and students' academic problems and set up programmes to

improve students' achievements. **Clinical psychologists** are mainly engaged in assessment, diagnoses and treatment using various psychophysiological tests and psychotherapeutic methods for mental disorders. The following poster (Idemudia, 2007a) is designed to help prospective psychology students know the different areas in psychology and where they work.

CAREERS IN PSYCHOLOGY

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Psychology offers challenging, exciting and productive careers and many specialized fields as shown above. Psychology offers a wide variety of jobs-mental health practitioners, teachers, technician, military officers, police, managers, directors etc. Psychology opens doors to employment opportunities throughout the world in government, industry, schools and private organizations.

Poster presented at the 'Teaching of Psychology in South Africa' Conference held at the University of Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa. March 21-22 2007.

The Researcher as a Voyager:

According to Dictionary.com (2013), to voyage is to travel, a course of travel passage, especially a long journey by water to a distant place or a passage through air or space, as a flight in an airplane or space vehicle or a journey by land.

According to Fillppakou (2006), research is a never-ending journey during which the researcher will visit many different sites of his or her subjects, explore numerous paths leading to their destination, and overcome countless obstacles along the way. The conceptual mountains climbed, and the intangible horizons reached for, contribute to the discovery of new intellectual landscapes, and the experience gained by the researcher. At times this journey is like a solitary pilgrimage, on which the researcher travel to seek his or her own truth. During this meaningful search, encounters and dialogues with fellow pilgrims can lead to crossroads of uncertainty and ambiguity, instigating the inclination for re-visiting milestones and traces already passed and created on the journey made so far.

In my journey as a researcher and an African psychologist, I have journeyed by road, water and air principally as a lecturer moving from the University of Ibadan (Nigeria), the University of Namibia, Windhoek (Namibia), the University of Limpopo (South Africa) and now North-West University (South Africa). Other academic voyages of teaching and research include the University of London (UK), International University (Now Jacobs University, Bremen, (Germany)), the University of California in Los Angeles, UCLA (USA), University of Windsor (Canada) and other many academic institutions scattered all over the world and in addition, during the over 80 local and international conferences that I have attended. Mr Rector Sir, I cannot showcase my academic achievements, without anchoring the lecture in a vision that developed in the course of my academic voyage-the need to universalize psychology -is a call for a marriage between psychology in the West and psychology in

Africa, hence today's lecture: Universalizing Psychology: The Voyage of an African Psychologist' which will be my focus in the next section.

Why the Topic?

I would like to preface my discussion in this section with a quote from Triandis as follows:

“When the indigenous psychologies are incorporated into a universal framework, we will have a universal psychology” Triandis (1996) (page 2)

According to Weiten (1998), although psychology was born in Germany, it blossomed into adolescence in America. Like many adolescents, however, the young science did enter a period of turbulence and turmoil (and even in its adulthood, psychology is still very controversial across cultures).

Throughout psychology's history, most researchers have worked under the assumption that they were seeking to identify general principles of behaviour that would be applicable to all of humanity. In reality, however, psychology has largely been a Western (North American and European) enterprise with a remarkably provincial slant (Gergen, Gulerce, Lock & Misra, 1996). The vast preponderance of psychology's research has been conducted in the United States by middle and upper-class white psychologists who have used mostly middle and upper-class white males as subjects (Segall, Dasen, Berry, & Poortinga, 1990). Traditionally, Western psychologists have paid scant attention to how well their theories and research might apply to non-western cultures, to ethnic minorities in western societies, or even to women as opposed to men.

Why has the focus of Western psychology been so narrow? According to Albert (1988), a host of factors can explain: (1) Cross-cultural research is expensive, difficult and time-consuming. (2) Psychology has traditionally been interested in the individual as its basic unit

of analysis. (3) Some psychologists' worry that cultural comparisons may inadvertently foster stereotypes of various cultural groups, many of which already have a long history of being victimized by prejudice. (4) Ethnocentrism- the tendency to view one's own group as superior to others and as the standard for judging the worth of foreign ways-may have contributed to Western psychologist's lack of interest in other cultures.

Every society embraces particular cultural theories or ideologies that set the parameters within which normal, abnormal and deviant behaviour is defined. However, the psychologies of North America and Europe dominated African academics which led to a common argument about understanding African epistemologies as a necessity for the development of psychological knowledge that is appropriate to the continent (Nsamenang & Dawes, 1998). African psychology is a discipline that challenges the philosophical assumptions on which all theory relating to persons of African ancestry is based and the challenge is self-conscious and focuses on theoretical principles, premises, and postulates (Rowe, 2013). African psychology aims to establish the requisite knowledge and skills for implementing African-centred psychology to structure and deliver an instructional curriculum and to certify psychologists to address the particular psychological needs of African ancestry (Rowe, 2013). African psychology is also a body of knowledge that is concerned with understanding African life and culture (Kazdin, 2000).

According to Idemudia, (2005b), cognition includes our thoughts, ideas, beliefs, understanding and knowledge. Western psychologists believe in cognitive paradigm based on complex unit of analysis called cognitive schemas. But this approach unfortunately, has always down played or neglected the role of culture in psychological studies and the application of this to illness behaviour. According to Nsamenang and Dawes (1998), psychology came to Africa as a complete intellectual package instead of originating from a natural growth initiated on an African soil and according to Owusu-Bempah and Howitt,

(1995) contemporary psychology in Africa remains largely ethnocentric in its methods, theory and practice.

Psychology understands that neither health nor ill health occurs randomly within populations. Both are rooted in social processes such as the pattern of social interactions between individuals or groups defined as cultural bond based on values and norms, which help perpetuate patterns of health (Idemudia, 2008a). Culture is a way of life of a given people. Studies have shown that health and or illnesses are culturally defined and treated, since cultural meaning systems inform aspects of illness and some diseases are culturally specific. Unfortunately, the percentage of variance explained by culture on health issues in an African community is neglected and as such deserves special attention. Cultural cognition of illness and wellbeing is about how Africans know, perceive, and think about illness, wellbeing and the consequences it has for behavioural outcomes in prevention and management with theoretical implications. Not only do cultural definitions influence the interpretation of an event as stressful, but also our understanding of the role of life events depends on the cognitions of such people.

Mr Campus Rector Sir, my submission is that the time has come to universalize psychology. The contributions of scholarly papers discussed in this lecture are anchored on the premises and postulates of African psychology which have appeared in over 120 published refereed articles in high impact and reputable local and international journals, chapters in books, monographs and books.

D Areas of Contribution:

➤ Contributions in Applied Clinical Psychology (Mental health and Wellbeing)

(1) Applied Clinical Psychology

The field of Clinical Psychology integrates science, theory, and practice to understand, predict, and alleviate maladjustment, disability, and discomfort as well as to promote human adaptation, adjustment, and personal development (American Psychological Association, Division 12, Society of Clinical Psychology). Essentially, the principal goals of clinical psychology are to generate knowledge based on scientifically valid evidence and to apply this knowledge to the optimal improvement of mental and behavioral health (Baker, McFall & Shoham, 2009). In this area, Idemudia (2001a), Idemudia, Madu, Jegede, and Arowolo (2000), Ojedokun, Idemudia, and Omotoso (2013), Ojedokun and Idemudia (2013a), Jegede, Idemudia, and Madu (2001) have identified various psychosocial factors that are associated with occupational stress and burnout among bank, paramilitary, and hotel employees in Nigeria respectively. The findings indicated how manipulation of variables such as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, optimism, organization-based self-esteem, and perceived organizational support can promote workers' adaptation to stressful work environment.

Also, Idemudia (1994a, 1999a), Jegede, Idemudia and Madu (2004) have applied the knowledge of clinical psychology to identify various psychological factors that are related to barrier in purchasing insurance policies, poor living conditions of urban dwellers, and access to health information among Nigerian nursing mothers.

Idemudia and Madu (2000) have also applied their clinical expertise to assess the relationship between self-esteem and attitude towards death and dying among the aged.

In the areas of child sexual, physical and emotional abuse among high school students in South Africa, Madu, Idemudia and Jegede (2001a & b, 2003) identified perceived parental

disorders, perceived parental love and care, perceived parental undesirable behaviors as risk factors for child sexual, physical and emotional abuse.

Idemudia (2005b), Olapegba, Oladipo, and Idemudia (2012), Olapegba and Idemudia (2012) and Olapegba, Balogun and Idemudia (2013) have applied psychological knowledge to identify dispositional and contextual variables that are associated with life satisfaction among undergraduates, smuggling behavior among smugglers in border areas in Nigeria, responsible sexual behavior among adolescents in rural and urban communities and the influence of personality on factors on knowledge sharing intention among employees of banks in Nigeria. Idemudia (2011b) and Ojedokun and Idemudia (2013b) have also looked into the problem of mentoring and problem of knowledge cloning in academia. Mr. Rector Sir, there is need for us academics to leave good irremovable foot prints on the sands we have walked on for posterity by ensuring that when we leave, we would have cloned ourselves.

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(2) Experimental Psychology:

Mr. Rector, Sir, interestingly, I was attracted to this voyage but briefly because I didn't want to loose focus on my core discipline plus the extra time you have to spend in the laboratory. It started when I was appointed to coordinate the animal and human laboratories at the University of Ibadan. Every morning, I would visit the animal laboratory and observe albino (white) rats in cages and then decided along with some colleagues to venture in the area. Experimental psychology is an area of psychology that utilizes experimental methods to investigate the mind and behavior, and the processes that underlie them. Experimental psychologists employ human participants and animal subjects to study a great many topics, including, among others sensation and perception, memory, cognition, learning motivation, emotion, developmental processes, social psychology, and the neural substrates of all of these (Pashler, 2002). Since we could not inject drugs into humans for ethical reasons, we had to use albino rats. In this case, Balogun, Osinowo, and Idemudia (1999, 2002) investigated the consequences of combined chronic ingestion of alcohol and nicotine on discriminatory task and body weight among Albino rats. We found that alcohol intake singularly reduces appetite, whereas nicotine enhances food intake. But when the two are combined as is often done by many alcohol and nicotine users, the result is a profound reduction in food intake and that taking alcohol alone increases the level of water intake because of its dehydrating effects. Students with habits of using both drugs to facilitate 'learning and memory' should beware because learning rate decreases with continuous intake of alcohol alone and worse with nicotine and when compared with a no-drug group, there was a marked retardation in learning. In general, the findings indicated that combined chronic ingestion of alcohol and nicotine are associated with an increased risk of problem behavior and overweight. The implications of the findings is that combined chronic ingestion of alcohol and nicotine have direct impacts on the brain, which then in turn affect behavior and quality of life in a number

of ways. The findings are relevant to everyone who smoke and drink and for this I say ‘students beware’.

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(3) Mental Health, PTSD and Psychological Wellbeing:

The World Health Organization defines mental health as a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community (World Health Organization, 2013). Mental health describes a level of psychological well-being or an absence of a mental disorder (About.com, 2006, Princeton University, n.d). From the perspective of 'positive psychology' or 'holism', mental health may include an individual's ability to enjoy life, and create a balance between life activities and efforts to achieve psychological resilience (About.com, 2006). In view of the importance of well-being to the individual, group and society at large, Idemudia (2000a, 2002 a, b, 2004a, 2006a, 2007c, Idemudia, Osinowo, Balogun & William, 2001; Maselesele, & Idemudia, 2012; Mabunda, & Idemudia, 2012; Idemudia & Matamela, 2011, 2012; Idemudia, Kgokong, & Kolobe, 2012; Maepa & Idemudia, 2012; Maselesele & Idemudia, 2013; Olapegba & Idemudia, 2013; Idemudia, Kgokong, & Kolobe, 2013) examined how various psychosocial issues including somatisation impacting well-being among the youth, elderly, adolescents suffering from sickle cell anaemia, homeless street youth in prison, residents of Ibadan city in

Nigeria, HIV/AIDS and cancer patients in Gauteng Province of South Africa, orthopaedic patients, workers and street children in Mafikeng, North West Province of South Africa. The conclusion from the findings is that well-being can be improved when certain psychological issues are taking into consideration.

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(4) Contributions in Prisons

Mr Rector, Sir, this voyage was done by road within Nigerian prisons and by plane to the UK and German prisons. It would also interest you to know that the first time I heard and met with an AIDS patient was in a London psychiatric prison hospital, and that was my first patient in the hospital. The voyage started as a direct invitation from the Inspector-General of Nigerian Prisons to his office after a clinical rotation in one of the medium prisons where he discussed the relevance of clinical psychologists in prison with me which necessitated my PhD thesis, titled "Psychosocial factors determining psychological disorders among prison

inmates in Nigeria: Implication for treatment intervention”. Since 1995, I have trained many clinical psychologists in Nigeria ensuring there was a clinical psychologist working in a prison. Working in prisons includes the understanding of the nature of psychopathology and doing therapeutic interventions due to the nature of their vulnerabilities. As a result, I have published articles in prison studies including deviance and criminalization of children/adolescents into adulthood and developing psychological instruments for prisoners and have worked with prisoners extensively in Nigeria, United Kingdom and Germany. Generally, prison is considered a facility in which people are physically confined and deprived of a range of personal freedoms as a form of punishment imposed upon them by the state. But the modern conception of prison is a place of rehabilitation for offenders. In the view that most offenders would come back to the community to live among non-offenders, there is a need to prepare them psychologically on how to live a crime free live while still in prison. In this endeavour, Idemudia (1997, 1998, 2000b, 2007b), Idemudia, Jegede, Madu and Ibe (2001), and Idemudia and Reddy (2001-2002) have studied how various personality such as psychoticism, extroversion-introversion and neuroticism and other psychosocial characteristics of inmates in Nigerian, UK and German prisons affect health and wellbeing. In addition, how specially tailored psychological interventions such as lowering anger tantrums, impulse control and enhancing self-control in group settings would help rehabilitate inmates These specially tailored protocols are currently being used for street children, adolescent Para suicides, adolescent drug abusers, incarcerated youths and stigmatized AIDS patients in South Africa by five of my PhD students here at North-West University (Mafikeng Campus). Mr Rector, Sir, if you like, you can call us ‘designer psychologists and researchers’.

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(5) Contributions in Gender related studies

In the course of my research, I needed to journey into gender studies and gender related issues. The reason for this is that gender has been conceptualised generally from a Western perspective without cultural implications. On the theoretical side, gender awareness has modified existing psychological theory and led to the creation of a new feminist paradigm which in my view conflicts with African view of man and woman anchored on cultural norms and values. The question as to whether gender difference really manifests in attitude towards the mentally relapsed depressed patients, coping styles of cancer patients, stress reaction patterns and level of academic performance, perception of job tension, perceived racism and mental health, feelings of wellbeing among migrants, spouse-abuse, willingness to forgive, mental health of employees in workplace settings, responsible sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents, and bullying have remained very popular among researchers. The aim of undertaking these studies are to ensure a balance in the solution to human problems beyond

cultural stereotype. With respect to gender related issues, Idemudia (1994b, 2008 a, 2009 a, b, c, 2010c, 2013) in addition to other psychosocial factors examined gender differences in relapse among depressed patients, perceived job tension, mental health of African male and female migrants in Germany, feelings of wellbeing among African migrants in Germany, Spouse-abuse and bullying behaviour. Further, Oyefeso Osinowo and Idemudia (1989), Idemudia and Balogun (1995), Idemudia and Shenge (1996), Idemudia, Adebayo and Ilora, (2000) studied gender differences in attitude towards the mentally ill among Nigerians, coping styles among cancer patients, stress reaction patterns and level of academic performance among Nigerian secondary school students. Idemudia and Makhubela (2011), Idemudia and Mahri (2011), Idemudia and Mabunda (2012), Olapegba and Idemudia (2013) also investigated perceived job tension, willingness to forgive, adolescents' identity development, mental health of employees in workplace settings in Gauteng Province, South Africa and responsible sexual behaviour of in-school adolescents. In addition, Idemudia (2013) and Ojedokun and Idemudia (2013c) found that bullies like prisoners have high PEN (psychoticism, extraversion and neuroticism) scores plus low self-esteem indicating that bullies have the tendencies to end up in prisons and this is worse for female bullies.

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(6) Contributions in migration (African Migrants/Refugee studies)

Mr Rector, Sir, I am an African Psychologist and every voyage I make is anchored on Africa-focused issues. Africa as we know it has many issues ranging from political problems, bad management in government to civil strife and wars not to mention the economic hardships that comes with these. As a result, these turmoil, civil unrests, wars political instability and economic uncertainty impact humans and have made migration one of the important issues in contemporary society. Hence, research on migration and health has become a major focus among social and behavioural scientists from a diverse array of disciplines. Literatures (Idemudia & Boehnke, 2010; Littlewood & Lipsedge 1989) have shown that migrants experience emotional difficulties when they move from one society to another due to different cultural values encountered and that different migrating populations have diverse resources and different abilities coping with the stresses they experience. In Africa, the increasing levels of poverty, unemployment, war, political instability, homelessness, economic downturn and rapid urbanization have led to an unprecedented number of Africans migrating and seeking asylum and employment in other African nations and other countries of the world. A host of migration related conditions, including inferior socioeconomic status, social discrimination and lack of access to medical care, will all have particular impact on the physical and psychological well-being of migrants. African migrants in Germany and the United Kingdom, Zimbabweans in South Africa, and various migrants (West and East Africans) are being studied. The studies listed below were funded by the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), USA, Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (AvH), Germany, SOAS, UK etc. Therefore, pre- and post-migration stressors all need to be considered as potential contributors to the psychological health outcomes of any immigrant. In this respect, Idemudia (1995 a, b, 2006b, 2011a) studied incidence and prevalence of psychopathology among refugees in Southern Nigeria, global movement and health potential of black migrants

in Germany: A study of mental health indices using MMPI, Value orientations, Acculturative stress and mental health among African German Immigrants, in addition to finding a therapeutic approach to treating refugees with progressive psychopathology. Similarly, Idemudia and Boehnke (2005, 2006, 2010) have assessed African Migrants attitude in Germany. In addition to a quantitative mental health case study of African Immigrants in Germany, Idemudia, William and Wyatt (2013) have also studied migration challenges among Zimbabwean refugees before, during and after arrival in South Africa. Mr Rector, Sir, it would interest you to know that many Zimbabweans who were studied were homeless, suffered mental health problems and posttraumatic stress symptoms. That some of the pre-migration stress include sexual abuse by the police, immigration officers at the borders and post migration stresses such as further abuse in South Africa. Many of them trekked from Zimbabwe to Polokwane. Some of them would even sell their body for a plate of food. Talk about Ubuntu principles in Africa! Results have also shown that many West Africans particularly Nigerians and Ghanaians in Europe are stressed, want to go home but are afraid to do so due to economic turbulence in their countries. In addition, the findings from these studies have implications for migration policies including health policies for sending and hosting countries and their citizens. Findings also have implications for the well-being and mental health of the migrants.

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(7) Contributions in cultural related issues and health

Mr Rector Sir, this voyage was as a result of my post PhD internship with a Traditional healer of apoplexy-paralytic stroke (Hemiplegia), (Madu & Idemudia, 1997). It is one of the best journeys I have had to start and will continue to be part of my future research in psychology. My contention here is that psychology must not be seen from the eyes of the West but a universalized eye. In the eyes of African psychology, health and/or illness is culturally defined and treated, since cultural meaning systems inform aspects of illness and some diseases are culturally specific and that cultural bonds help perpetuate patterns of health. I have propounded theories in this regard that have been published and cited in academic

circles. This poster (award winning poster in Hungary) summarized the sermons being preached in this voyage.

POSTER ABOUT HERE

Despite "psychology" being studied by Africans, majority of the theories of psychology, and psychology as practiced in Africa, still has Eurocentric colouration. This situation creates a dilemma because African psychologists have to adopt and use non-universalized, foreign and imposed theories to explain and deal with African cultural experiences. For example, is anorexia a problem in Africa? In order to indigenize psychology and incorporate African perspective into a universal framework of psychology, African psychologists are now articulating for "African-brewed" conceptions, definitions and practices of "psychology" and "psychotherapy" To demonstrate this, indigenous ways of knowing and doing psychology in the African experience, Idemudia (1999b, 2002c, 2003 a, b, 2004 a, b, c, 2005 a, b, 2006 b, c, d, 2007-2008, 2008b, 2009d, 2010 a, b) studied therapies, psychotherapy practices in Nigeria, tradotherapy (a concept I coined) and psychotherapy in Africa, culture, psychosocial disorders and mental health, mental health and psychotherapy through the eyes of culture: lessons for African psychotherapy, culture, psychosocial disorders and mental health, cultural approach to mental health and psychotherapy in Africa, innovation and reproduction in Black cultures and societies. Collaborating with other reputable scholars in this quest for incorporating 'Africa indigenous psychology' into the universal framework, Madu and **Idemudia (1997)**, Stompe, Bauer, Ortwein-Swoboda, Schanda, Karakula, Rudaleviciene,

Chaudhry, **Idemudia** and Gschaider (2006 a, b,), Ritter, Chaudhry, **Idemudia**, Karakula, Okribelashvili, Rudaleviciene and Stompe (2008), Bauer, Schanda, Karakula, Olajossy-Hilkesberger, Rudaleviciene, Okribelashvili, Chaudhry, **Idemudia, E.S**, Gscheider, S., Ritter, & Stompe. (2011). have implicated various cultural related issues in suicide motives, the prevalence of hallucinations in Schizophrenia, the treatment of apoplexy (Hemiplegia) – Paralytic stroke delusions of guilt, psychotic symptoms in schizophrenia, and paranoid-hallucinatory syndromes in Schizophrenia across different cultures.

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CONCLUSIONS:

Mr Rector, Sir, it is important I mention that what redirected my voyage to North-West University started somewhere in 2008 when I was head-hunted and encouraged by the then Acting Dean of HSS, Prof Qualinge and other colleagues seated in this hall today. As at that time, I was preparing my voyage (not too sure exactly where) to UFH, East London, CU, Nigeria and a distant university in North America but her persistency and drive made me (to) redirect my journey and, finally, I arrived on the shores of Mafikeng on the 26th of January 2010 from a distant North America.

On my arrival, what I met on the ground concerning the Department of psychology was not pleasing at all. The Department was in a state of comatose and immediately I rolled off my sleeves and started work. By the end of 2010, about 80% of psychology students who were so frustrated to the point of contemplating suicide were graduated from the system. By the end of that same year, publications soared and the department did not only wake from her coma but was fully healed. I supervised and graduated 6 MA Clinical and Research students during the autumn graduations and another 4 in the coming spring graduation ceremonies totalling 10 in 2013 alone. Needless saying this because I am sure you have all the details. The Department is now waxing so strong that it can no longer be ignored in the affairs of this Campus.

From the list of my publications so far, you may have noticed that I have published with my students and colleagues and the trend is on and all I will say for now is, 'watch the space'. The best is yet to come. Currently, we have two MoUs with Covenant University, Nigeria and the University of Windsor, Canada. There are about three on-going research competitions with these universities. Mr Rector, Sir, it is worthy to note that recently, I have just been nominated as the Chairperson, Scientific Committee of the 2014 World Congress for

Psychotherapy that will be taking place in Durban (www.wcp2014.com). Locally, our impact is waxing stronger with stakeholders across the nation.

But I must say that as a Department, we are thinned out. We have families and loved ones and do not wish to be part of burnout, psychopathology statistics or be residents of mental hospitals. We have 5 programmes (BA, Honours, MA Clinical, MA Research and PhD) and yet there is only one professor, and six lecturers. As a matter of urgency, we need more hands at the senior level. Our sister campuses have as much as 16 staff members. Mr Rector Sir, it is often said that “what is good for the goose is good for the gander”.

On-going and Future Research Voyage.

My on-going and future research voyage in the next ten years is anchored on the advice and direction of NRF rating feedback. Mr Rector, Sir, you may recall that my NRF rating though was announced in 2012 but commenced in January 2013. According to their feedback, it is stated that:

Narrative justification of outcome (Why this rating?):

“The reviewers commended your research in mental health, especially in relation to developing African-oriented psychotherapeutic methods and more generally in cross-cultural psychology.”

“Most reviewers also commented on the **important contributions your work has made in contributing to theory regarding the psychological consequences of migrations and acculturation. This area of work is highly valued and needs greater exposure, particularly in contributing toward non-Western models of explanation**”

“Reviewers were encouraged by the collaborative relationships established with international scholars and which serves to underpin the quality of the work being undertaken”

“Your use of both qualitative and sophisticated quantitative approaches is noteworthy”

Comments from reviewers to provide developmental guidance ("What can I do to improve my rating in future?"):

“Reviewers were of the view that *you should continue to build on research related to culture and mental health, including the area of migration, especially within an international context*”.

“Furthermore, it may be worth exploring studies with larger, more representative samples and by supervision of post-graduate students”

By implication, Mr Rector, my research voyages in the next ten years will again take me to many other strange lands and as a result will focus on:

- Psychology of migrations and acculturation
- Build on research related to culture and mental health, including the area of migration, especially within an international context.
- Develop more indigenous African oriented theories in explaining certain behaviours in Africa. Already, I have made several contributions in theory development on “self”, “illness appraisal”, “criminal behaviour” and “culture and health” Already, I have a PhD student working on “happiness and wellbeing” and in the process develop a happiness scale for Africans. Mr Rector, let me quickly put this on a lighter perspective. The idea started in Germany when I went to deliver an invited lecture on ‘culture and wellbeing’ in 2011. While I was engaged with the audience, I asked a German Professor if he was a happy man. He told me he was a fulfilled man. Several

questions followed. He told me he has a wife and two dogs. No children. No close relatives. I asked him again if he was truly a happy man. He said ‘yes.’ Then I told him that if he was an African, he would have long committed suicide because of unhappiness. That immediately created a new research frontier to find out what happiness is all about for Africans. This is because my theory of the self in Africa shows that a person (man or woman) cannot be extricated from the immediate and extended family and so are his or her values.

- I am already engaged in a trustworthiness study with the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada from a cross-cultural perspectives.

Mr Rector, Sir, as you can see, my future voyages will no doubt take me to the shores of Canada, USA, Europe, Africa and Asia and while the journey is still on, God Almighty preserving my life, it is my hope that a new team of travellers will join me and continue the voyage that I began, opening up possibilities for new intellectual journeys, resulting in academic celebrations of this kind within the Department, School and the Campus.

Recommendations

Mr Rector, Sir, I stand here before you, tall and happy as an academic and delivered an inaugural lecture. Previously, I briefly indicated that I have voyaged across countries starting from Nigeria to Europe, North America, Namibia and South Africa. Based on the experiences I have acquired, I want to make some recommendations:

The beginning of a race begins with a whistle. In the words of Chinua Achebe, ‘the chicken that will grow into a cock can be spotted the very day the eggs are hatched’. I was given a thorough training in which I did 42 modules plus a dissertation at the University of Ibadan during my 3-years BSc programme. Mr Rector, Sir, our undergraduate programme needs overhauling. It will have implications for staff recruitment, a laboratory and equipment’s.

Without the necessary equipment for the practical and experiential component of psychology students are exposed only to theories. The foundation of the science of psychology must be solid otherwise, the builders labours in vain.

I have also mentioned the need for more senior staff to be recruited in the Department. Many of us are overworked and do not wish to be any mental health disorder statistics.

Money for research activities should be increased. I am happy with many of the vision statements of the University but more needs to be done.

Mr Rector, academic/non-academic colleagues, students and distinguished ladies and gentlemen, I have summarised the voyage of my academic life. According to Nelson Mandela, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” and in my own little way I hope I have done exactly that and continues to bring about more changes.

As I end my academic sermon, I will leave you with the words of our own father and hero, Nelson Mandela as food for thought: “what counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead”.

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