

The Need for Indigenous Research Culture in Pakistan

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The rate of globalization is increasing by the day, however, the need for local and culture-specific research is ever-needed. With the practice of Western theoretical models and practices in the field of Psychology in Pakistan, there always remains a certain level of inhibition and reservation towards the effectiveness of these models on the local, indigenous population. Recent efforts by the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) have been in place in order to promote a research culture in the universities across Pakistan (Haque, 2013; Hoodbhoy, 2009) but due to inadequate professors and staff, lack of research policies, seminars, conferences, and policy development outlook; research remains to be something on the backburner. The global world has recognized the importance of cultural specificity and how it manifests itself in the form of how one behaves, thinks, emotes, and develops one's social interactions (Algahtani et al., 2017). Through understanding the cultural context of a specific human behaviour could allow us to identify and comprehend the measures of normalcy and, likewise, maladaptation with cultural and social context. This insight can only be developed through the process of research within the spheres of any specific cultural context to understand the psychopathology of the natives to that

culture. Pakistan is suffering from a scarcity of having domestic, indigenous researches which could help identify psychosocial epidemiological patterns and viz a viz, the development of culturally appropriate policies and interventions (Khalily, 2010).

General notions regarding psychosocial behaviors and thoughts exist in Pakistan with limited research on them, with the existence of authentic data, matters of public policy would also benefit from it and the general field of social sciences shall observe a more indigenous policymaking. Studying the diversity within the indigenous groups could assist develop more population-specific interventions and remedies, and policies to cater to the specific crowd.

The need for research is essential to any growing nation and field, and decolonization of certain perspectives, concepts, and procedures may also be required in order to establish new cultural norms to understand and define the indigenous experiences, behaviors, knowledge, perspectives, and worldviews. Nevertheless, integration with the global norms is necessary as well and can only be achieved once a substantial amount of domestic research database has been generated.

To recognize, acknowledge, and address the dysfunctionalities within the society, the tool of research could help determine that how the culture's biological, sociological, and psychological aspects are defining its social structure and how it is affecting its inhabitants. The brutal murder of a 27 year-old woman, Noor Mukadam, in the July of 2021, raised many questions regarding how did the perpetrator reach to that state and how the Pakistani culture and society often enables certain behaviors and thought

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patterns which could later turn into gruesome crimes or severely maladaptive behavior patterns. Criminology has been taken on as a relatively new academic field in Pakistan, however, a lot of research, in alliance with other fields of social sciences, is needed in order to understand the cultural mindset of the masses and this concept is equally applicable for each area of social sciences.

Funding processes for researches is also an area that needs to be further looked into. Either the research programmes are underfunded or long-term funding is deficient. There is a need to bridge the relationships between the government funding bodies and the social science researchers in order to establish proper funding and to invite external funding by creating a more fertile research environment (Haque, 2013).

A well-developed research culture also includes a thorough research of the global perspectives and works that exist (WHO, 2005). Only then shall we be able to parallel our efforts in comparison to the Western world or the developed Eastern world. The process of indigenizing research may also include integration of Eastern philosophies into the Western framework. By doing so, we would be able to establish the differences, similarities, contradictions and ambiguities between the two cultural frameworks and their implications.

Indigenous research will help model the modes through which we approach mental health in Pakistan and how awareness could be brought about in a more culturally-oriented fashion. Culture is often termed as 'society's personality', stating that as differences in personalities exist amongst humans, similarly, each culture has individual differences (Dana, 2000). Therefore, the influence of the culture would majorly determine the understandings, expression, conceptualization of those people

and what methods work for them and which do not (Easterly, 2006).

Pakistan is lagging behind in research and development in the region. Indigenous research does not only identify the flaws and imbalances within the subject matter but also determines the potentials and the course of action for the times to come. This process of discovery allows to form short-term and long-term goals and open up new areas of investment and further research.

Research is an integral part of development for all areas of the state, be it for personal development, social development, structural development, or national development. The race to prove one's ideas right can hold us back from obtaining data from the disproven hypothesis as well. Efforts from journals such as *Journal of Professional & Applied Psychology (JPAP)* allows innovation, originality, and advancement by accepting negative results and allowing a learning to evolve from such outcomes. Additionally, developing a culture for indigenous psychological research is amongst the most important areas of research that should be explored within Pakistani academia, in order to establish a more cohesive understating of Pakistan as a people.

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