

Chapter 2

Key Terms

2.1 Culture

Everyone has a culture. Culture and language provide people with ways to organize their thoughts, communicate with others, and manage the world. It is through culture that we think, feel, behave, and manage our reality (Shweder 1991). Culture allows us to know who we are, define what is meaningful, communicate with others, and manage our environment. Just as we use our eyes to see the world, we use our culture to understand our world.

In cross-cultural psychology, culture has been described as a fuzzy set, i.e., a term on which there is lack of agreement regarding its definition, conceptualization, and operationalization. The word “culture” originates from the Latin word *cultura*, which means “to till or cultivate.” Talor (1871) defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired as a member of society” (cited in Kim et al. 2006).

When referring to culture, we mean the totality of ideas, values, knowledge, and way of life of a group of people who share a certain historical, religious, racial, linguistic, ethnic, or social background (Henry et al. 1995).

A number of authors have attempted to define culture succinctly. Slaughter et al. (1990) wrote that culture “is the sum total of mores, traditions, and beliefs of how we function, and encompasses other products of human works and thoughts specific to members of an intergenerational group, community, or population” (p. 363). Rehm (1999) takes a slightly different view, defining culture as “a dynamic and negotiated social construction arising from interaction and resulting in shared understandings among people in contact with one another” (p. 66).

Culture is not a variable, quasi-independent variable, or a mere sum of individual characteristics. Culture is an emergent property of individuals interacting with, managing, and changing their environment. Culture represents the collective utilization of natural and human resources to achieve desired outcomes (Kim et al. 2006), and it is usually associated with the study of the past (e.g., history, philosophy, art, literature, language, and crafts).

It is always easier to detect the influence of culture in people other than ourselves. Culture is something to which we have grown so accustomed that we have ceased to notice its effects; nonetheless, it is not surprising that culture has such a profound influence on our behavior. It is a part of our life from inception: our mother's practices during pregnancy, the way we are cared for as infants, the language and sounds that surround us, and the rules that we are taught as we grow up. Culture is a set of value systems that relate strongly to religious beliefs, kinship patterns, social arrangements, communication networks, and regulatory norms of person familial and social conduct (Anderson and Kirkham 1999).

Individuals interpret situations based on their past experience, and these interpretations can never be culture-free. Thus, for example, the rules for touching differ from culture to culture; as a result, the manner in which one interprets an act of touching is necessarily culturally bound. However, cultural beliefs and behaviors are always being influenced by new information and new experiences. Therefore, culture is not static, but rather fluid and dynamic. It encompasses a complex network of meanings, enmeshed within historical, social, economic, and political processes. Given this understanding of culture as a process, and its far-reaching effects, it is clearly impossible to reach an understanding of culture based on a single experience. Rather, learning about one's own and others' cultures is a lifelong process—a journey with multiple destinations.

Cultural characteristics—There are many characteristics that describe a culture, among them communication, space, time, social organization, environmental controls, and biological variations (St Clair and McKenry 1999).

Although communities are not static or planned, societies do have cultural mores, practices, and characteristics which guide human behavior and provide a socialization framework that shapes interactions. Culture is this framework that guides and bounds life practices. Cultural practices, as well as the individual characteristics of the person or family, are likely to influence the interactions between service providers or interventionists and the parents of the children who are the recipients of the services. The task of the service provider, much like that of a gardener, is to individualize interventions, to address families' concerns and priorities, and tailor the services to families' needs and resources. Being sensitive, knowledgeable, and understanding the parents' cultural practices enhances this process and sets the relationship on a constructive course. Lynch and Hanson (1998) stressed that learning about one's own culture, as well as about another's culture, is a process that continues throughout one's lifetime. Bohannon (1989) stated that "the capacity to learn culture is genetic, but the subject matter is not genetic and must be learned by each person in his or her family and social community" and "only part of culture is conscious" (p. 12).

Culture is often confused with race and ethnicity. Originally, the term "race" was intended to denote biological variation, but it currently represents a set of individuals with similar identity factors that include political and social status. Similarly, the term "ethnicity" represents a group of individuals with shared characteristics, such as language, religion, and/or geographical origin (Rehm 1999), which is set apart by boundaries of affiliation (Mink 1997). Rehm (1999) reminds us that most people belong to more than one defined culture, but usually identify themselves with a sole culture.

People usually identify themselves as belonging to a specific culture, yet they do not necessarily reflect or represent all of the characteristics of that culture.

In learning about one's own or another's culture, one must understand how members of that culture communicate. Thus, it is important to know what is considered adequate personal space in that culture, how time is measured, and what are acceptable frameworks in which people may interact. Do members of that culture tend to stay segregated within their own nuclear families or do they interact within the larger extended family and/or community? Answers to these questions can help service providers identify the proper authority figures and facilitate their communication with them. Culturally bound environmental controls also include traditions and beliefs regarding health and illness, and people's place in relation to the environment, namely, whether people believe they control—or are controlled by—the environment (Giger and Davidhizar 2004).

Culture is an anchor that ties an individual to a social community. We do know certain things about culture. Culture influences behavior (Lynch and Hanson 2004). What we choose to do and how we do, it is usually dictated by cultural appropriateness. The way we greet people, how we express our pleasure or displeasure in various situations, what we eat, and what we wear is often a matter of culturally determined norms. The character and appropriateness of interpersonal relationships is usually influenced by the cultural dictates of the community. Culture shapes one's values (Lynch and Hanson 2004). The values that are most important to us are determined (or at least influenced) by our culture(s). We see this clearly, as we look at various cultural groups around the world. The fact that in the United States Anglo European Americans tend to place a high value on individual freedom whereas people from more traditional cultures may have a collective orientation is an example of culturally shaped values (Davis-McFarland and Dowell 2000). Culture acts as a screen for interpreting other cultures (Lynch and Hanson 2004). We view and evaluate unfamiliar cultures through our own cultural lens. Our ability to value other cultures may be related to our ability to expand our cultural horizons to understand and appreciate other cultures. Cultures have some characteristics in common.

Hundreds of definitions of culture can be found in the anthropology literature. In this chapter, culture is broadly defined as a system of learned and shared standards for perceiving, interpreting, and behaving in interactions with others and with the environment. Two inherent assumptions of this definition are that culture is learned and that it is shared. Human beings learn culture from those with whom they interact, beginning at the moment of birth (and some would say before birth). Parents, as well as any others who cared for us as young children, are the formidable teachers of cultural values, beliefs, and behaviors. Values are ideas about what is normal and abnormal, proper and improper, desirable and undesirable, and right and wrong. Values form the basis for our beliefs and behaviors. Culture should be viewed as a system; that is, culture is made up of discrete but interconnected components. A culture system consists of the following elements:

- Normative codes (ways of behaving) such as food practices, religious practices, and child-rearing practices.
- Communication codes (both verbal and nonverbal).

Table 2.1 Collectivist and individualistic value systems

Cultural orientation	Personal characteristics	Behavioral indicator
Individualism	• Self-expression • Assertiveness • Self-advocacy • Self-realization	• Communicating dissatisfaction with services • Viewing services in a manner different from that of the family unit or community • Focusing on the individual’s unique set of talents and potential
Collectivism	Is inseparable from the family and community • Self-interest is sacrificed in favor of family—or larger group—interests Group activities are dominant	An individual may not accept either transportation assistance or employment from outside his or her community • Suggestions for achieving self-sufficiency are not welcomed

Adopted from Sotnik and Jezewski (2005, p. 24)

- Knowledge (information necessary to function as a member of a culture group).
- Problem-solving strategies (how everyday problems are resolved).
- Relationships (family and social).
- Methods of transmitting culture to the young or to new members of the culture group.

Underlying and shaping these elements are the basic values and beliefs of the group. These elements function as a whole. A change in one component, or the introduction of a new or unfamiliar element, can affect other components, as well as the system as a whole (Sotnik and Jezewski 2005, p. 21). A child with disability in the family constitutes a change that affects several of the components presented herein.

Adherence to a collectivist or an individualistic value system also characterizes the manner in which people perceive their world and behave in it. The framework shown in Table 2.1 indicates several examples of diverse cultural values and potential implications for understanding disability and accepting disability-related supports.

It is important to state that most of the indigenous communities in the world live in a bicultural world. For example, many Native Americans and Alaska Natives live in both the traditional (tribal) and the modern world. Within this bicultural world, a person’s values, ideas, and beliefs are constantly influenced by the degree of interaction between the two worlds. How these worlds are negotiated at the individual level is not always obvious. Some Native American families may be very traditional in their spiritual values, but very modern in other respects. Thus, they actively participate in all tribal religious activities, but may also have a successful career on Wall Street. The cultural continuum for Native American families ranges from highly traditional to highly acculturated, with significant number of individuals and families found midrange, that is, with a strong footing in both the Native American culture and the white world culture. The degree of acculturation that results from living in a bicultural world greatly influences Native American families’ perceptions of—as well as their responses to—disability.

Most people have multiple cultures. There is racial culture as well as ethnic culture, and other cultures related to gender, religion, age, physical size, socioeconomic status, physical ability, and so on. Children with disabilities belong to a subculture as a result of their diagnoses—the “culture of disability” (Eddey and Robey 2005, p. 70). Their parents, as shown, often belong to a racial, ethnic, or cultural minority. Thus, due to genetics, the environment, or both, these children belong to two minority cultures: ethnicity and disability. Some may also belong to a third culture—that of poverty. If we generally agree that human behavior is shaped by the cultural context in which the individual developed, then the experiences or needs of children with disabilities and of their parents cannot be understood apart from the culture in which these families live. Culture fosters values, norms, attitudes, and perceptions about disabilities, as well as the goals parents set for their children, including the framework or agenda for development. Nsamenang (2000) refers to these as the “*cultural curriculum*.” In other words, culture also mediates children’s and parents’ views of the intervention process, the extent to which they are willing to seek education or therapy, and which types of education and therapy they consider valid and desirable. It also defines the nature of disability, provides the diagnostic labels, and formulates social policy and priorities regarding services and support for those with disabilities. Hence, the concept of culture and familiarity with the indigenous community’s culture are crucial to the success of the professional intervention. This is particularly true in the context of schools where the strained relationships between professionals and parents of children with disabilities could be mollified or at least diffused by understanding the parents’ culture.

It should be understood that culture is only one of many elements that parents use to define themselves and their children; another important key concept is *indigenous knowledge*.

2.2 Indigenous Knowledge

That which is learned through the mouth is forgotten
It is through the soul that we learn.
The soul repeats it in the heart, not in the mind,
And only then do we know what to do.
(Manual Arias Sojob: Interview with Guiteras Holmes, 1961)

Most of us in the Western world are accustomed to learning about the world primarily through our senses of sight and hearing. Despite a few interesting experiments in the education of the “lower” senses, the senses of smell, taste, and touch have not been accorded a place in mainstream Western education. These senses tend to be associated with either “savagery” or sensualism. When we look across cultures, however, a different sensory picture emerges, in which each of the senses plays a vital role in the acquisition of knowledge of the world. The following are only a few some of the many examples that exist around the world. For the Desana

people of the Colombian rainforest, the sound of every bird call, the color and scent of every flower, the taste of every fruit is imbued with a message about the social and cosmic order. The Desana remind us that knowledge comes from the full-bodied experience and interpretation of our environment (Classen 1999, p. 269). Another example is the significance of water for some of the indigenous communities in the world, such as the Nimiipuu. The Nimiipuu live in the basins of the Snake and Columbia Rivers. The Nimiipuu have maintained an indigenous knowledge system of water (kúus), which has an ideological and material importance in Nimiipuu cosmology and for everyday survival. From an ideological perspective, water is home to powerful spirits, while from a material perspective, water is used for medicine and healing purposes. According to Nimiipuu cosmology, eddies and confluences of free-flowing rivers and waterfalls are thought of as the homes of spirits; thus, the Nimiipuu see dams as killing streams. Similar to their regard for fish, they do not consider all water sources to be the equal in either importance or preference. Springs possess the purest, strongest, and most spiritually powerful water and are used in the ritual sweathouse, where the water is poured on hot rocks. Cold flowing water from high mountain streams is less preferred than spring water, but is considered “better” than water that runs at lower elevations, with less velocity, and at higher temperatures. Nimiipuu water priorities reflect their adaptive capacity, since spring water most often has fewer pollutants than does water at lower velocities and higher temperatures, which makes the latter a better habitat for pathogens. Water (kúus) and salmon (léwliks) are therefore essential to the life of Nimiipuu (Colombi 2012).

There is no curriculum for the knowledge presented in these examples, because for most of these communities it has been communicated via an oral tradition, passed down from generation to generation, from grandparents to grandchildren and from parents to children, in the family, and as part of community life. This knowledge cannot really be separated from life; it is ingrained in all aspects of life.

This is also true regarding all other areas of life in most indigenous communities. For example, the Pygmies of Central Africa have traditionally been closely attached to the rainforest. They were the “Forest People,” and the forest was the source of their religion, livelihood, and protection. They used to lead a nomadic life in camps of 30–40 families, which maintained regular links and exchanges with each other. Their mostly egalitarian and horizontal society acknowledged the wisdom of elders who preserved the community’s knowledge of the sites, plants, animals, ghosts and spirits, as well as their entire cultural heritage (rituals, music, dances, holy sites) and practices (pharmacopeia, hunting, and fishing).

Another example of a form of indigenous knowledge pertains to traditional healing, which is based on a holistic approach towards both the intervention and the person to be treated (Ong et al. 2005). Traditional healing considers the whole person and acts simultaneously on the physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional levels. Knowledge of traditional medicine methods is the domain of specialists who assume traditional roles. This knowledge has been passed on from father to son for thousands of years throughout history. One manifestation of such traditional knowledge is the role of the *medicine man*, as described in various indigenous societies (Kiev 1964). The medicine man diagnoses illnesses and treats them. He prophesies,

Table 2.2 Unique attributes of indigenous knowledge

Indigenous knowledge
• Natural resource • Local knowledge—unique to a given culture or society • Basis for local-level decision making in agriculture, healthcare, food preparation, education, natural resource management, and a host of other activities in rural communities • Passed down from one generation to the next • Lacks a canonical foundation in written form • Unofficial, un-institutionalized system • Applicable knowledge—relies almost exclusively on intuition combined with sensory evidence • Closed and isolated system, characterized by a lack of awareness of other possible ways to view the world • Encompasses cultural traditions, values, beliefs, and worldviews of local peoples • Holistic and inclusive form of knowledge • Indigenous knowledge and peoples are disappearing all over the world as a direct result of the pressures of modernization

locates lost belongings, and escorts the spirits of the dead to their destiny in the world beyond. He exposes criminals and punishes them, sways the weather, and, in hunter societies, guarantees bountiful prey. The medicine man embodies the community's mythology, theology, and cosmology and protects them from the forces of evil. From these sources it appears that in premodern societies the medicine man was important in religious and political terms, and was perceived as the preserver of the community's cultural heritage. Given its status of unofficial, un-institutionalized, pluralistic, and heterogeneous system, the trove of traditional knowledge tends to dissipate due to the absence of a written canon by which to convey this knowledge. The unique attributes of indigenous knowledge that were introduced through the examples provided here are summarized in Table 2.2.

In many countries in the world, there is growing recognition of the importance of indigenous knowledge, some of which is in danger, as expressed in the term *Bio-piracy*. *Bio-piracy* is the act of appropriating indigenous peoples' knowledge of nature and exploiting it for commercial gain without obtaining permission from or providing compensation to the indigenous people themselves. Critics of this use of indigenous knowledge, such as Greenpeace, claim these practices contribute to inequality between developing countries rich in biodiversity and the developed countries that act as hosts to biopirating companies. Earth-based resources used by indigenous and traditional peoples include medicinal uses of plants, fish, animals, and other resources located on lands, rivers, and seas. This knowledge stems from indigenous peoples' long-lasting attachment to their environment and a history of maintaining that environment over millennia in various places around the world. There are a number of key examples of bio-piracy in the literature. The case against W.R. Grace's patent on the neem tree is one of the most cited examples. Yet, this case is unique in that there exist written Sanskrit sources supporting the indigenous community's claim to earlier knowledge of the neem's medicinal attributes. However, most indigenous communities rely on oral—rather than—written

histories. This is the case for example in Australia. As one of the megadiverse regions of the world, Australia is home to numerous flora and fauna, which are being explored by corporate scientists. Thus, the Western Australia smokebush, which has long been used by Aboriginal people for medicinal purposes, is now being examined for its active ingredient, concurvine, which could prove effective in combating HIV (Christie 2001).

The disappearance of indigenous knowledge is also closely tied to the lack of protection of indigenous peoples' rights. Coupled with an ever-increasing external demand for natural resources found on indigenous territories and projects that have a detrimental effect on the environments and natural resources of indigenous communities, the absence of protective rights leads to increased poverty and social exclusion. Climate change is also a crucial issue that may well affect indigenous peoples' chances of survival. Indigenous communities have lived in harmony with nature for centuries. Unfortunately, in many countries, traditional indigenous knowledge of the environment and of medicine is in danger of being lost, just when such knowledge is desperately needed in order to restore balance to the environment after centuries of abuse at human hands. However, at the same time that indigenous knowledge is disappearing in some countries, there is a growing trend around the world of recognizing indigenous knowledge and its importance.

Evidence of the allure which indigenous knowledge holds for theorists and practitioners alike lies in multiple arenas. New international and national institutions sponsor inquiries into indigenous knowledge. Funding agencies attempt to incorporate issues related to indigenous knowledge in their financial activities (CIDA, IDRC, UNESCO, and the World Bank, as examples). Newsletters, journals, and other modes of communication that act as a mouthpiece for such organizations emphasize the significance of indigenous knowledge. In numerous conferences, scholars and development professionals discuss the merits of indigenous knowledge and deploy a new populist rhetoric to assert the relevance of indigenous knowledge in development planning. The words of Warren et al. (1993, p. 2) highlight the recent shift:

Ten years ago, most of the academics working in the area of indigenous knowledge represented anthropology, development sociology, and geography. Today... important contributions are also being made in the fields of ecology, soil science, veterinary medicine, forestry, human health, aquatic science, management, botany, zoology, agronomy, agricultural economics, rural sociology, mathematics,... fisheries, range management, information science, wildlife management, and water resource management.

Therefore, many researchers, professionals, and specialists working in indigenous communities agree that development planning strategies must incorporate indigenous knowledge. The integration of this knowledge in this context would enable a more culturally sensitive and a relationship-oriented model in the area of care, for example, thus facilitating the establishment of institutional level support services for indigenous communities. Such a framework would be more appropriate than existing ones and would be able to integrate preventative interventions and health promotion.

One of the many examples presented by Kleinman (1980), a pioneer of research of traditional medicine in multicultural societies, is especially interesting, as it

sheds light on the complexity of indigenous knowledge. Following a field study he conducted in Taiwan, he pointed out that there were three treatment systems operating concurrently. The three systems he identified—professional, folk, and traditional—were based on differing principles of diagnosis, classification, and treatment. “The professional system” relied on the principles of science. Authorized doctors would primarily utilize biochemical means to treat patients, with the aid of supporting specialists. This was the most dominant and institutionalized system, which received financial support and professional recognition from the government. The “folk system,” on the other hand, was an amateur, unofficial system. Individuals either provided themselves with initial treatment or were cared for by their families or acquaintances. This was the most common system: it served for defining the individual’s problem, it provided the lion’s share of the treatment, and it constituted the focal point of the individual’s decision making and engagement. The folk system dealt not only with the healing of sickness but also with its prevention. It was tied in with the other two systems—the professional and the traditional—which were themselves sometimes disengaged from each other. Despite its importance, it received little research attention, especially compared to the traditional system, which was considered dramatic and exotic. According to Kleinman, the traditional system was a specialist system even though it lacked bureaucratic specialists and a written canonical basis. It functioned as an unofficial, un-institutionalized, naturalistic, and heterogeneous system. Its agents and their actions were often associated with a sacred sector that operated in relation to supernatural spirits, and a secular sector that operated at the physical level and concentrated on areas such as herbal medicine and massage. In most cases the sacred sector received more research attention than did the secular one. The traditional healer was portrayed as relying on supernatural elements—spirits, ghosts, ancestors, and other supernatural entities, and as being part of an existing religious tradition.

It is important to note that at this point in time we are at a crucial crossroads regarding the preservation of indigenous knowledge, since most indigenous communities have already been affected by deep processes of transformation, such as urbanization, culturalization, and modernization, processes which inevitably affect indigenous knowledge. These communities are at a junction, between tradition and modernity, between change and preservation; consequently, any measures taken in order to get to know, preserve, and publish indigenous knowledge are of great value. For instance, *Indigenous Knowledge and Development Monitor* is a publication of and for the international community of people who are interested in indigenous knowledge. It is produced by three major international centers on indigenous knowledge: CIRAN—the Centre for International Research and Advisory Networks in the Netherlands; CIKARD—the Center for Indigenous Knowledge for Agricultural and Rural Development in Iowa, United States; and LEAD—the Leiden Ethnosystems and Development Program in the Netherlands. These international centers assist and follow the activities of regional and national centers in Nigeria (ARCIK), Philippines (REPIKA), Brazil, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya, Indonesia, Mexico, South Africa, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

Indigenous knowledge is not the only aspect of indigenous communities that is in danger of disappearing. Keep in mind that globally, there is a great deal of

diversity among indigenous communities and, correspondingly, their knowledge troves are also diverse. Each indigenous community and each individual within a community must be approached as unique. At the same time, themes emerge from shared experiences of genocide, bondage, colonization, and alienation, difficulties which have affected and continue to affect indigenous peoples worldwide. I chose to focus on one central subject out of many, namely, lands and territories.

2.3 Lands and Territories

The issue of lands and territories is a primary axis from which a long line of issues derives, some of which create longstanding conflicts between indigenous communities and the countries in which they live. This type of conflict extends to nearly all parts of the world.

Indigenous peoples have a special twofold attachment to their ancestral lands and territories. Spiritually, land plays a fundamental role in indigenous and tribal cultural identities, cosmologies, and beliefs, while on a practical and material level, it is their most essential resource, on which they depend for their livelihood.

For most indigenous peoples the attitude towards land is not limited to its value as property. It is the land that binds the community to all areas of life; therefore, the meanings attributed to it are deeper. Theirs is a holistic and communal conception of land, one which nourishes and sustains the group's identity. The contours of the tribal panorama define the identity and affiliation of the indigenous peoples and bind them to the land. This is a sustainable, honorable, mutual, balancing relationship: land is home, culture, spirituality, tradition, ancestral burial grounds, and environment.

At the same time, indigenous peoples are deeply dependent on land resources, through highly adaptive livelihood systems and practices. Their connection to the land was ratified at ILO Convention 1969, which recognized the right of ownership and possession of indigenous and tribal peoples over the lands they have traditionally occupied. Although some progress was made since then, the issue of land rights remains a highly contested topic. Even in countries with progressive legislation, indigenous communities face considerable challenges in terms of protecting their traditional territories. Recognition of indigenous and tribal land rights remains a complicated field in terms of its technical, economic, and political dimensions. Control of place creates a right to material and cultural resources, and to its instrumental, moral, and aesthetic knowledge (Castree 2004).

Dispossession of land and natural resources is a major human rights problem for indigenous peoples. They have in so many cases been pushed out of their traditional areas to give way to the economic interests of other more dominant groups and large-scale development initiatives, acts which tend to destroy their lives and cultures rather than improve their situation. Large-scale extraction of natural resources such as logging, mining, dam construction, oil drilling, and pipeline construction have had very negative impacts on the livelihoods of indigenous pastoralist and hunter-gatherer communities in Africa. South Africa provides an encouraging example of an attempt to safeguard the land rights of indigenous communities.

The struggle for land is part of a larger effort of indigenous peoples all over the world to secure human rights.

A proper examination of the issue of land struggles and recognition of rights requires a comparative approach, studying countries individually first and then comparing the findings, to create a common language that can serve as an instrument for diagnosing common issues. In other words, such a comparison would set the stage for significant research to be conducted within each country, in order to allow the findings to highlight the main issues and thus provide an overall perspective. From this vantage point, larger structures could be identified and outlined, forming a basis from which to draw more general lessons (Hague and Harrop 2001).

Here I present one example of such study, which compares the types and levels of recognition granted to indigenous communities around the world, ranging from total lack of recognition in a colonial regime to transformative recognition. The various levels of recognition are catalogued according to types of governments and the types of policies and the quality of state-indigenous relations that correspond to these levels are also indicated in Table 2.3. Based on these measures, it is possible to rate each country's attitude towards its indigenous peoples. However, it is important to emphasize that there is a constant dynamic of change, which in many cases creates a disparity between the definitions and the actual state of affairs.

The following comparative summary is based on the levels of recognition presented in the previous table, while emphasizing the insights gleaned from it (Table 2.4).

The comparison between the three countries, Brazil, Australia, and Canada, gives rise to several general insights, some or all of which are important for other indigenous peoples, including:

- There is an apparent difficulty in getting out of the colonial paradigm, after its lengthy and continued existence and as the generator of the state in its current form.
- In all three countries, one cannot point to a policy that coalesces into one type of recognition, but one can identify a main type of recognition. Policies reflect a wide range of types of recognition, and in most cases land policy reflects essential contradictions as it is at times colonial and at times democratic.
- Government support is needed for the various programs to improve the situation of indigenous peoples.
- It is apparent that as time progresses, the programs are getting closer to the indigenous peoples and less assimilative and patronizing.
- Generally, the condition of the indigenous peoples in all countries is worse compared to the other groups in the population. There is still a long way to go—conceptually and consciously, ideationally, governmentally, and financially—until appropriate gains are made, and the past losses, destruction, and oppression are amended.

The example presented demonstrates the engagement with indigenous peoples and their relations with the state they live in. These studies have resulted in a rich and varied body of research (Iverson et al. 2000; Nietzen 2003; Scheinin 2004; Tsosie 2001).

Nevertheless, the actual implementation of even the most far-reaching measures regarding land rights has not significantly improved the socioeconomic conditions

Table 2.3 Diagnostics of the types of recognition, types of policy, and state-indigenous relations

Regime	Types of recognition	Types of policy	State-indigenous relations
Colonialism	No recognition	– Expansion	– Killing
		– Takeover	– Deportation
		– Exploitation	– Dispossession of place and livelihood
Ethnocracy		– Oppression	– Destruction of family
		– Racism	– Assimilation
		– Segregation	– Citizenship and limited rights
	“Protective” recognition	– Oversight, patronage, and limitation of rights	
		– Spatial inequality in allocation of resources creates ethnic-class stratification	– Overt conflict due to antagonism and polarization, may be accompanied by violence
		– Partial civil rights	
		– Spatial encroachment	
		– Economic, social, cultural discrimination	
		– Declaration of recognition without implementation	
		– Utilization of informal recognition practices	
		– De jure or de facto mechanism of discrimination and inequality, “transience,” no right to local vote	– Gray areas and informal development
Liberal-democracy	Indifferent recognition	– Creeping recognition	– Moderate conflict due to the lack of clear categories
		– Rhetorical recognition	
	Affirmative recognition	– Passive recognition—does not recognize the unique needs of the diagnosed group	– Control, discrimination, marginality
		– Integration of traditional law in the legal system	– Protests and struggles using institutional channels
		– Distributive justice	– Achievements accomplished through grassroots struggles
		– Planning and development + financing and support	
		– Establishment of indigenous elected body	

Multicultural democracy	- Political representation on a liberal basis - Constitutional reform/amendment - Apology and reconciliation - Supreme court decisions that promote recognition and rights - Development of a legal construct that addresses needs - Recognition of the group and its needs: danger of marginality - Integration of traditional law in the legal system - Distributive justice - Planning and development + financing and support - Establishment of indigenous tribunal - Transitional justice	- קיר תיודת וירצ
	Transformative recognition - Political representation on a communal basis - Right to land according to traditional ownership - Right to equal/affirmative and collaborative development - Recognition of difference: accounts for unique economic, social, cultural rights - Prevention of dependence and development of autonomy - Sustainable framework for negotiations over land rights • Development of abilities that accounts for different needs and diversity of each group according to local agendas • Satisfying partnership—move to relations column? • Redistribution of resources, restitution, restoration • Liberty, security, and stability - Formulation of agreement/contract - Provision of the right to self-determination • Mutual fertilization: social-cultural-legal-economic-environmental—move to relations column?	- Moderation of the conflict - End of conflict

Adopted from Tzfadia and Roded (2010, p. 10)

Table 2.4 Comparison of Australia, Canada, and Brazil

Country/criterion	Brazil	Australia	Canada
Colonial background	Spanish occupation in the fifteenth century; 500 years of domination and annihilation	British occupation and settlement from the end of the eighteenth century. Ninety percent of aboriginals wiped out	Conquests and settlement beginning from the seventeenth century. Independence from the British in 1867
Civil status	Protégés until 1988	Civil status only from 1948. Referendum in 1967 on constitutional amendment granting civil rights 1975—law forbidding discrimination and subordination to federal government	Murder, Dispossession of livelihood and land. 1876 Native American Act annulled in 1985. Right to vote granted in 1960
Political representation	One representative elected in 1983	One representative in parliament, representation in states	Most representation is in the indigenous organization. Underrepresentation in parliament
Social and economic situation of indigenous peoples	Indigenous rights are violated, forests cleared, hostile army, invasion, plagues, murder, illegalities. Life expectancy dropped from 48 to 42 in a decade, rash of suicides, 60–80 % have chronic disease, child mortality 13 %	Represent the weak in society by a wide margin: poverty, unemployment, crime, alcoholism, disease, family violence	Indigenous population is younger, less educated, less employed and earn about \$8,000 less than nonindigenous. Many do not participate in the work force, crime is rampant
Legal system	Civil law is German	Customary + verbal testimony and indigenous rights to the land	Customary + indigenous Constitution
	1988 constitution C 231–2, 67 No proper backing in law. Indigenous matters are directly subordinate to the federation	Constitution promoting indigenous status Indigenous matters are directly subordinate to the federation	Backing in law is lacking Indigenous matters are directly subordinate to the federation

Land policy	1988 constitution—12 % of land recognized as indigenous land, since then process of delineation	Crown lands—terra nullius	1. Legal protection since 1982 and recognition of first rights of indigenous. Ratified in the Constitution Act 35 (1)
	Order 1755—encroaches upon indigenous lands	Mabo ruling in 1992	2. Agreements between tribal leaders and the government
	Only 87 % of indigenous land ratified in 1993	Indigenous land rights law in 1993	3. In 1998, agreement signed for retreat from 750 mile ²
	Invasion processes, forest clearing, dispossession, and neoliberals with the support of the state	Indigenous land tribunal established WICK—1996	
Data about withheld land	10/93 87 % of land sealed. 11.13 % of land given to half the population	1998, 2001—amendments to NTA ILUA	
Self-government	None	Since 1993, only some claims of ownership have been accepted	Indigenous make up 5.24 % of the population and 13 % of the land is registered in their name
Conflict level	High	Almost no autonomy. From a representative political body in government to regional decentralization	Autonomous existence. 1999 Inuit 1997 Delgamuukw vs. British Columbia and more
Primary recognition	Hostile-confirming	Moderate-low Affirmative	Low Transformative

Adopted from Tzfadia and Roded (2010, p. 65)

of indigenous communities relative to the societies they live in and there is still a long way to go to reach full recognition of them and their rights in terms of achieving justice, addressing grievances, and reconciliation.

Despite all the above and alongside the picture presented, it is important to mention that in the past decade there is a trend towards dealing with and discussing restoration of indigenous rights, primarily regarding land and territories, asking forgiveness, compensation, and distributive and transitional justice to the extent of self-government, all under the international aegis of human rights treaties and laws. The change processes are different in each country, but one can see progress towards recognition of injustices caused by settlers and states around the world to indigenous peoples and communities, measures taken towards restorative and transitional justice out of a desire to achieve reconciliation and peace. For example, the federal government announced on Tuesday that it intends to pay \$3.4 billion to settle claims that it has mismanaged the revenue in American Native American trust funds, potentially ending one of the largest and most complicated class-action lawsuits ever brought against the United States (New York Times, 8.12.2009).

In September 2007, the Canadian government began to make compensation payments to former students of Native American Residential Schools. By July 2008, the government had received 94,085 applications for the common Experience Payment and issued payments to 66,232 survivors (IntLawGrrls, 11.6.2009).

The New Zealand government has agreed it will pay millions of dollars to a group of indigenous Maori tribes who say they were victims of illegal land seizures and breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi (February 11, 2009 <http://Sydney.indymedia.org.au>).

2.4 Indigenous Psychology

Two kinds of coexisting contemporary scientific psychologies, namely, indigenous psychology (IP) and Westernized psychology (WP), can be meaningfully distinguished and defined (Yang 2000). These psychologies represent not only two disciplines but also two methodologies which, in turn, produce two distinctive kinds of psychological knowledge. Here I will briefly discuss them and their backgrounds.

The call for the indigenization and development of a psychology that will be socially and culturally valid is a worldwide phenomenon: Africa (Durojaiye 1993; Cameroon, Nsamenang 1995), Americas (Canada, Berry 1974; Latin America, Ardila 1982; Mexico, Diaz-Guerrero 1977), Asia (Hong Kong, Ho 1982; India, Sinha 1984; Japan, Azuma 1984; the Philippines, Enriquez 1993; Taiwan, Yang 2000), Europe (France, Moscovici 1972; Germany, Graumann 1972; Scandinavia, Smedslund 1984), the Middle East (Iran, Moghaddam 1987; Turkey, Kagitcibasi 1984). Many scholars have pointed out that existing psychological theories reflect the values, goals, and issues of the Western world but that they are not generalizable to other societies (Kim and Berry 1993). Azuma (1984) noted that “the development of a truly universal discipline is limited due through Western glasses, he may fail to

notice important aspects of the non-Western culture since the schemata for recognizing them are not provided by his science” (p. 49). These scholars point out that each culture should be understood from its own frame of reference, including, its own ecological, historical, philosophical, and religious context.

In human history, there have been three different kinds of psychology: folk psychology (including common-sense psychology), philosophical psychology, and scientific psychology. Folk psychology refers to the ordinary psychological views, assumptions, beliefs, concepts, conjectures, theories, preferences, norms, and practices that have been naturally and gradually acquired through socialization and that are commonly held by the general population of a society (Sinha 2003). In terms of its content and structure, folk psychology does not constitute scientific knowledge, but it can be used as original data for scientific analysis by anthropologists (Dickason 1984) or psychologists (Heider 1958). The folk psychology of a society may be regarded as part of that society’s *little tradition*, in Redfield’s (1956) sense.

In contrast, philosophical psychology refers to the formal systems of psychological thought, as proposed by a society’s philosophers. For example, philosophical psychological theories and concepts are plentiful in Indian philosophy (Sinha 2003), Chinese philosophy (Moore 1967), and Western philosophy (Burnet 1980). Philosophical psychology may be regarded as part of an ethnic or cultural group’s *great tradition*, in Redfield’s (1956) sense.

Different from both folk and philosophical psychologies, scientific psychology denotes a psychological knowledge system constructed by academic or expert psychologists using a scientific methodology. Nearly all societies have their own naturally developed folk and philosophical psychologies, but only some Western societies have an endogenous scientific psychology. The emergence of these scientific psychologies is a rather late historical phenomenon. They originated in European countries in the late nineteenth century and have flourished since World War II, especially in the United States. European and American scientific psychologies have been continuously imported by non-Western countries (Church and Katigbak 2002).

The first academic movement to advocate the establishment of an indigenous psychology was in the Philippines, in the 1970s, under the leadership of the late Virgilio Enriquez and his followers (Enriquez 1993; Pe-Pua 2006). Since then, other centers of indigenization have appeared, notably in Taiwan, Japan, Korea, India, Cameroon, Hong Kong, Iran, Latin America, Mexico, and New Guinea (Ho et al. 2001, p. 927).

In considering Westernized and indigenous psychology, the latter is the most pertinent approach for the purpose of studying the issue of collaboration between professionals and parents of school children in indigenous communities. Indigenous psychology is an impressive new approach to the study of psychology. By calling attention to the boundaries of mainstream psychology, it reveals other ways of studying human beings. This new approach contradicts the notion of cultural globalization and the dominance of Western culture, and instead offers a system for acquiring psychological knowledge, not in the sense of describing all psychological phenomena in all cultures, but rather in the sense of *strangification*. Thus, by intentionally using the indigenous cultural context as a starting point for its own development,

indigenous psychology has created a breakthrough, introducing a new way to increase our understanding of mankind. The premise to which indigenous psychology subscribes, namely, that it, as well as all other approaches to psychology, is rooted in and relative to its particular cultural background, poses a significant challenge to the Western world's traditional self-image of being neutral and objective. With the advent of indigenous psychology, Western psychology has been forced to recognize that it too is a culturally dependent, locally originated indigenous psychology.

In everyday life, people have phenomenological, episodic, and procedural knowledge that enables them to manage their environment, but they may not have the analytical skills to describe how it is achieved. Indigenous psychology advocates examining the knowledge, skills, and beliefs people have about themselves, and studying these aspects in their natural contexts. *It represents a descriptive approach, in which the goal of psychology is to first understand how people function in their natural contexts.* It advocates a transactional model of human functioning that recognizes the importance of agency, meaning, intention, and goals. It recognizes that human psychology is complex, dynamic, and generative. The goal is to create a science that is firmly grounded in the descriptive understanding of human beings.

2.4.1 Indigenous Psychology—Definitions

As pointed out by Kim and Berry (1993), indigenous psychology is “the scientific study of human behavior that is native, that is not transported from other regions, and that is designed for its people” (p. 2). After reviewing Kim and Berry’s (1993) and several other indigenously oriented psychologists’ definitions (Ho 1998), Yang (2000) defined indigenous psychology as “an evolving system of psychological knowledge based on scientific research that is sufficiently compatible with the studied phenomena and their ecological, economic, social, cultural, and historical contexts” (p. 245). He pointed out that all of these definitions “express the same basic goal of developing a scientific knowledge system that effectively reflects, describes, explains, or understands the psychological and behavioral activities in their native contexts in terms of culturally relevant frames of reference and culturally derived categories and theories” (pp. 245–246). Nine characteristics of indigenous psychology can be identified.

First, indigenous psychology emphasizes examining psychological phenomena in a variety of contexts: familial, social, political, philosophical, historical, religious, cultural, and ecological contexts (see additional details in Kim et al. 2006, p. 6).

Second, contrary to popular misconception, indigenous psychology is not simply the study of native peoples, ethnic groups, or people living in Third World countries. Rather, indigenous psychology is an approach that is appropriate for studying any cultural, native, or ethnic group, whether in an economically developing country, a newly industrialized country, or economically developed countries.

Third, indigenous psychology advocates the use of multiple and varied methodologies: philosophical analysis as well as qualitative, quantitative, experimental, and comparative methods.

Fourth, it has been assumed that only natives or insiders of a culture could understand its indigenous and cultural phenomena whereas an outsider could gain only a limited understanding of these. Although a person born and raised in a particular community may have insights into its indigenous phenomena, this is not always the case. Also, an outsider, with an external point of view, can call attention to a phenomenon, which—although treated as natural by a given community—is actually of a cultural nature. An outsider can point out peculiarities, inconsistencies, and blind spots which insiders may have overlooked (Kleinman 1980). According to the framework of indigenous psychology, both internal and external points of view are necessary in order to provide a comprehensive and integrated understanding of psychological phenomena (Kim et al. 2006).

Fifth, people have a complex and sophisticated understanding of themselves and their social world. However, this understanding is often practically- and episodically based, and therefore it might not be sufficiently comprehensive to include an analytical description of the underlying structure or process of understanding the self. Thus, based on episodic and analytic knowledge, general psychology presents psychologists' analytic conceptions, interpretations, and explanations, rather than an accurate representation of human psychology.

Sixth, indigenous psychology is part of a scientific tradition that advocates multiple *perspectives*, but not multiple *psychologies*. Indigenous psychology is part of a scientific tradition which searches for psychological knowledge rooted in a cultural context. This knowledge can then become the basis of the discovery of psychological universals and can contribute to the advancement of psychology and science.

Seventh, indigenous psychology is identified as a part of the tradition of cultural sciences. In contrast to the assumption underlying physical and biological sciences, according to indigenous psychology, people do not merely react or adapt to the environment, but they are also able to understand and change their environment, other people, and themselves (Bandura 1997).

Eighth, indigenous psychology advocates a linkage between the humanities (philosophy, history, religion, and literature, which focus on human experience) and the social sciences (which focus on analytical knowledge, empirical analysis, and verification).

Ninth, Enriquez (1993) identified two points of departure for conducting research in indigenous psychology: *indigenization from without* and *indigenization from within*. Indigenization from without involves taking existing psychological theories, concepts, and methods and modifying them to fit the local cultural context. In this approach, rather than assuming that a particular theory is universal a priori, researchers modify and adapt psychological theories to integrate them with the local cultural knowledge. Aspects that can be verified across cultures are retained as possible cultural universals. Existing theories in cognitive, developmental, social, and organizational psychology have been modified and extended by indigenous research.

Table 2.5 General psychology and indigenous psychology

General psychology	Indigenous psychology
Seeks to discover decontextualized, mechanical, and universal principles and it assumes that current psychological theories are universal	Questions the universality of existing psychological theories and attempts to discover psychological universals in social, cultural, and ecological contexts Represents an approach in which the content (meaning, values, and beliefs) and context (family, society, culture, and ecology) are explicitly incorporated into the research design
Has attempted to develop objective, decontextualized, and universal theories of human behavior, by excluding the subjective aspects of human functioning (consciousness, agency, meaning, and goals)	Advocates examining knowledge, skills, and beliefs people have about themselves and assessing how they function in their familial, social, cultural, and ecological contexts. It emphasizes obtaining a descriptive understanding of human functioning in a cultural context

Indigenization from within means that theories, concepts, and methods are developed internally, and indigenous information is considered to be a primary source of knowledge (Enriquez 1993).

Although both indigenous and general psychology seek to discover universal facts, principles, and laws of human behavior, the starting point of research is different. The following (Table 2.5) summarizes the essential differences between the two types of psychology.

As indicated in Table 2.5, the main goal of developing indigenous psychology is to construct various systems of knowledge based on folk wisdom, in order to help people solve their daily problems more efficiently (Hwang 2010). Hence, this kind of psychology is extremely important to the understanding and collaboration between parents and professionals in the indigenous community. Indigenous psychologists in the world are seeking an alternative to the existing psychological theories and concepts. It has been found that the assumptions that are supposed to be objective, value-free, and universal are in fact enmeshed in Western values—not true universals. Thus, for example, the psychodynamic interpretation of dreams and unconscious drives based on an individual-ego model as well as left-over Freudian interpretations of symbols tied to sex and aggression do little to help in tribal communities with group-oriented egos and a symbology all their own. Jungian archetypes, in contrast, have been helpful in tapping into possible universal constructs that may include spiritual development of indigenous people. Another example is the concept of *guilt*, which has a very different connotation and function in East Asia from its meaning in Western societies (Azuma 1988). In Western psychoanalytic and psychological theories, guilt is presumed to be based on irrational belief, unrealistic fear, or forbidden wishes. Extensive use of guilt is believed to cause later developmental problems in adolescence. In contrast, in East Asia, it is considered appropriate that children feel guilty or indebted towards their parents, for all the devotion, indulgence, sacrifice, and love that they receive from them (Ho 1982). Children feel indebted since they cannot return the love and care that they received from parents. Guilt in East Asia is viewed as an important interpersonal emotion that promotes filial piety, achievement, motivation, and interpersonal closeness.

The extent to which indigenous psychology is different and unique can be seen from the existence of unique phenomena in indigenous communities. Examples of notably unique phenomena are Philipino pakikisama (getting along with or making concessions to others) (Lynch 1973), Japanese amae (presuming and depending upon another's benevolence) (Dai 1956), Chinese face (Ho 1976) and yuan (predetermined relational affinity) (Yang and Ho 1988), and Korean woori (an inclusive group: we or us) and cheong (human affection) (Choi and Kim 2003). Given that these and other culturally unique psychological phenomena have never been studied in Western psychology, there are no relevant Western theories, concepts, methods, and tools available for non-Western psychologists to adopt in investigating them. This means that these local populations have to rely upon themselves to conceptualize and theorize about these local phenomena and design proper methods and tools for assessing them. This is a perfect way to wean local psychologists from their overdependence on Western psychology. They themselves have to develop innovative indigenized theories, concepts, and methods for the systematic study of each of the unique phenomena in their respective societies.

Every indigenous population has different primary psychological manifestations that need to be understood by those who come in contact with them. Thus, for example, while there are many specific clinical health issues that have to be understood in working with the indigenous populations of North America, the two most prominent problems are the high rates of alcoholism and suicide. To demonstrate the importance of recognizing unique contextual phenomena, I will elaborate upon the example of suicide among Native Americans.

It is generally accepted concept that the population of Native Americans as a group shows suicide rates higher than those of the general population, although the estimated rates vary from double the rate to a slightly higher rate compared to the national US average (McIntosh and Santos 1981; Webb and Williard 1975). The literature on Native American suicide indicates that the trend on this population is similar to that of the general population, in that the number of suicide attempts is higher among women, while the number of successful attempts is higher among the men. In the years 2002–2006, the highest US suicide rates were among Native Americans with 16.25 suicides per 100,000 (Hader et al. 2012).

Over the last 45 years, many tribal-specific patterns of suicide have been documented, e.g., the Navajo demonstrate a very low rate of suicide (Miller and Schoenfeld 1971; Miller 1979), whereas the Shoshone-Bannock demonstrate a very high rate (Dizmag 1968). Factors associated with Southwestern Native Americans adolescent suicidal ideation have been researched by Novins et al. (1999), and important findings in this study revealed that suicidal ideation was linked to a friend's suicidal behavior, feeling unsupported by family and friends, and a depressive symptomatology. In the study of the Pueblo people, the tribe was characterized as maintaining strong family and community ties, and suicidal ideation was associated with not having both biological parents in the home and with an increase in stressful life events over the last 6 months.

Unique psychological manifestations also require a unique response for the population. Such responses are described and recorded, for example, in their article *Suicide Prevention: A Culture-Specific Model* (LaFromboise and Lewis 2008).

One particular study that should be brought to the attention of researchers of indigenous psychology describes the Zuni youth suicide prevention program, which was developed as an excellent culture-specific model and focused on the development of Zuni life skills (LaFromboise and Lewis 2008). Through collaboration of tribal elders and an external (native) psychological researcher, a model was set in place. It involved the development of specific skill building exercises practiced in a classroom setting by school age children. A 3-year follow-up of tribal suicide statistics demonstrated its effectiveness, as the number of suicides dropped to zero. The model's structure is outlined here.

1. Develop a needs assessment tool within the cultural group, devised by tribal elders and the community, with the assistance of the research team.
2. Present the findings back to the tribal elders, and further discuss their significance.
3. Select the most appropriate culture-specific protocol for implementing the plan.
4. Create an educational component/curricula.
5. Train the tribal staff and teachers to use the curricula, and identify high-risk individuals.
6. Implement the educational model, with follow-up referrals to other mental health staff, while providing feedback to the planning committee.
7. Conduct follow-ups at different time intervals (longitudinal) to interpret the ongoing data and final data, and implement any changes needed. In the particular case of the Zuni youth program, yearly check-ins were held with appropriate advocacy to ensure continuity with staff, faculty, school administration, and tribal leader turn-over.

This model represents an initial step, in terms of pertinent solution-oriented research, since the issue of mental health among Native Americans has not been sufficiently studied. Their Worldviews regarding mental illness and healing have been frequently ignored in the psychological and psychiatric literature. It was only in the early 1990s, for instance, that the American Psychiatric Association began placing a greater emphasis on investigating this ethnic group's understanding of mental illness, and systematically incorporating relevant information in its publications (Mezzich et al. 1996).

Although current psychological practices strive to advocate and promote the wellbeing of indigenous people, the methods utilized by psychologists have historically failed to take into account the beliefs about health and healing held by this population. Native Americans and Alaska Natives, as many other indigenous peoples throughout the world, understand "wellness" holistically, that is, as a combination of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual elements (Patel 1995; Rice 2003). Illness is perceived as a sign of imbalance among these basic elements, brought about by ancestral spirits, bad spirits, and witchcraft. Healing practices, on the other hand, attempt to restore the natural balance of soul, mind, and body, through spiritual ceremonies and herbal remedies prescribed by community elders and cultural healers (Poonwassi and Charter 2005). Treatment for mental illness also revolves around storytelling, teaching and sharing circles, sweat lodges, and vision quests (Poonwassi and Charter 2005).

Finally, the question occupying many researchers in the field of psychology today is: “Is indigenous psychology a discipline?”

In Webster’s II New Riverside University Dictionary, discipline is defined as “a branch of knowledge” (p. 383). According to this definition, indigenous psychology may be considered a distinct discipline from psychological science, because it generates different kinds of psychological knowledge. Shams (2002) portrayed indigenous psychology as an independent discipline. (Yang 2012, p. 12–16) presents the following six characteristics of IP as proof that it is an independent discipline.

1. IP uses Cultural Basis of Knowledge: It is in this sense that IP knowledge has its own native cultural roots or sources. It is a kind of culturally embedded knowledge.
2. This mono cultural knowledge tends to be emic in the sense that it is culture-specific, rather than culture-general (or universal).
3. The IP knowledge system has the Euro-American native culture as its indigenous root and is produced through Western theories, concepts, methods, and tools as if it were universally or cross-culturally applicable.
4. The IP knowledge system is highly indigenously contextualized in the sense that its theories, concepts, methods, and tools have been endogenously developed in the ecological, economic, sociocultural, and familial contexts existing in Euro-American societies. These local contextual factors also determine or facilitate the formation and manifestation of Western people’s mind and behavior for which the IP knowledge system has been established.
5. The indigenous psychological research must be conducted in such a way that the researcher’s theory, concepts, methods, tools, and findings sufficiently reflect, represent, and reveal the natural structure and process of the studied local psychological or behavioral phenomenon as embedded in the socio cultural context.
6. The primary purpose for psychologists to establish a knowledge system is to interpret, understand, predict, and change people’s minds and behavior such that personal adjustment can be improved and social problems prevented or solved.

As we can see, IP provides a new and different perspective from which to gain understanding of the human being. IP has multiplied the possibilities by which to the possibilities for understanding of mankind. In addition, the premise underlying IP, i.e., that it, as well as all other approaches to psychology, is rooted in and relative to its cultural background, poses a significant challenge to WP’s traditional self-image of being neutral and objective. By perceiving itself as a culturally dependent, locally originated indigenous psychology, WP may achieve a more realistic self-image.

The concepts presented in this chapter make it evident that professionals who work in collaboration with parents of children with disabilities must be equipped with a broad understanding of the indigenous population and of the necessity to adjust their work methods according to this information. In this context, it is hard to imagine effective collaboration without awareness of the indigenous culture, familiarity with the dual significance of lands and territories as well as with other aspects of indigenous knowledge, and comprehension of indigenous psychology.

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