

Community and Multicultural Psychology in Japan —Macro Counseling Approach—

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The purpose of this paper is threefold. First, a brief explanation of the history of community psychology development in Japan was presented. Second, I proposed the integration of community psychology and multicultural counseling theories, which resulted in my theoretical framework, Macro Counseling. Finally, different areas of counseling in relation to Japanese culture from the viewpoint of Macro Counseling were explained. Those areas are (1) individual counseling, (2) psychotherapy, (3) facilitation, (4) liaison & networking, (5) group work, (6) mediation/intermediation, (7) case work, (8) advice, (9) consultation, (10) advocacy, (11) social action, (12) crisis intervention, (13) coordination, and (14) psychoeducation.

key words: Macro Counseling, Japan, culture, community psychology

Historical overview of community psychology

First, I will introduce a historical overview of community psychology in Japan.

The history of Japanese community psychology was strongly influenced by the American model during its initial stage. Only a few years after the Swampscott Conference on mental health in the United States, the concept of community psychology was introduced to Japan.

After the introduction of this concept by influential psychologists such as Kazuo Yamamoto, a series of Community Psychology Symposia was held from 1975 to 1998, and the Japanese Society of Community Psychology was established in 1998. Numerous active research projects have been conducted and translated books have been published in this field. The American model has been influential in many aspects of Japanese community psychology research and practice (Sasao & Yasuda, 2007). However, some of the research that has been conducted at the individual level or in a school setting seems to focus particularly on personal adjustment instead of community development.

Recent research topics

The recent research topics of Japanese community psychology include the following eleven areas.

[1.] As the Ministry of Education began implementing the national dispatch program of school counselors, the profession of school counseling has vastly grown over the last ten years.

[2.] Research pertaining to HIV counseling revealed that there are eight hundred thirty two HIV/AIDS patients reported. Preventive education is very important.

[3.] Earthquake psychological care was originated in 1995 when the Great Hanshin Earthquake occurred in the Kansai area.

[4.] Suicide prevention is now an imperative activity since the establishment of the Basic Suicide Prevention Law in 2006, ten years after the recommendation of the World Health Organization. The number of suicides increased to over thirty thousand (30,000) in a year. The suicide rate in Japan is 38-suicides per one hundred thousand people (38/100,000); this number exceeds that of Finland and unfortunately is the highest suicide rate in the world.

[5.] Telephone counseling is an effective and

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important aspect of prevention, intervention and post-follow up of suicide. The most famous organization is called "*Inochi no Denwa*," that is "Telephone lifeline" in direct English translation. The organization has 49 branches throughout Japan. Collectively, the organization received over seven hundred thousand phone calls in 2003.

[6.] Counseling for mothers and their children is also an important activity, because of the break down of the nuclear family and a lack of social support for mothers in terms of parenting.

[7.] Feminist therapy contributes to the intervention of domestic violence problems. Japan statistics indicated that there were over fifty thousand cases of domestic violence incidents nationwide in 2005 (by telephone contact and direct intakes at 124 institutions that provide counseling and support for victims of violence by their partners).

[8.] Cult withdrawal helping provides *Aum Shinrikyo* cult members with the assistance to abandon the organization and former members' to improve their mental health. Aum was responsible for Sarin gas attacks in Matsumoto and Tokyo subways in 1994 and 1995, killing 22 innocent people. The

other cults are *Moonies* (*Unification Church*), *Panawave*, and so on.

[9.] Senior citizen networking becomes an important activity because the average life expectancy in Japan is the highest in the world (male 79 years of age, female 86 years of age in 2007), which results in the increased number and ratio of senior citizens in total Japanese population.

[10.] Self-help group empowerment is provided primarily to patients with substance abuse issues such as alcoholics (estimated eight hundred twenty thousand (820,000) patients in Japan in 2004).

[11.] Mental health among immigrants has been studied with special focus on their help seeking behaviors.

Integration of community psychology and multicultural counseling

I have been working as a counselor and a mental health adviser for international students in a higher education institution in Tokyo since 1991. Based on my professional experience, I proposed the idea of integrating multicultural or cross-cultural counseling and the community psychological approach for helping and supporting those culturally different clients. Furthermore, I sug-

Table 1 Paradigm of intervention activity in developmental community psychology

Levels of intervention	Setting in ecological systems*	Purpose of activity	
		(a) Therapeutic activity	(b) Preventive activity
(1) Assistance for Individual	Micro-systems	(1a) Individual counseling	(1b) Education about intercultural differences
(2) Direct intervention to individual + Group + Community	Micro-systems Meso-systems	(2a) Counseling in the system group work	(2b) Social skill Training education for prevention
(3) Structural intervention to individual + Group + Community	Micro-systems Meso-systems Exo-systems Macro-systems	(3a) Conflict resolution Mediation of groups Coordination of institutions Community policy	(3b) Joint productive activities Community enlightenment Community planning

* See Bronfenbrenner (1979)

gest this approach be implemented on an individual, group, and community level.

In Table 1, I presented my theoretical attempt in the 1990s, which was to integrate multicultural approach and community psychology intervention into the development of international students as well as surrounding Japanese students and other community members. At that time I named my approach, "Developmental Community Psychology." The levels of intervention were based on Bronfenbrenner's theory of Ecology of Human Development, which proposed four types of settings including micro-systems, meso-systems, exo-systems, and macro-systems. According to the four system types and two purposes of activity (therapeutic and preventive), I classified eight types of intervention for developmental support. The example activities of each type are shown in Table 1.

Fourteen areas of counseling

Based on the aforementioned classifications, I later proposed that there are fourteen areas of counseling in the context of Japanese society, partly because of the Japanese mental health system and partly because of the social needs based on Japanese culture.

These Fourteen Areas of Counseling and Japanese Culture are:

- (1) Individual counseling
- (2) Psychotherapy
- (3) Facilitation
- (4) Liaison & Networking
- (5) Group work
- (6) Mediation/Intermediation
- (7) Case work
- (8) Advice
- (9) Consultation
- (10) Advocacy
- (11) Social action
- (12) Crisis intervention
- (13) Coordination
- (14) Psychoeducation

The following section will present these fourteen categories based on Macro Counseling theory, with special reference to Japanese culture and society as well as theories

that are originally developed in Japan.

(1) Individual counseling

The first area is "Individual counseling." This is the basic activity that is needed and is expected of a counseling professional. For a long time, collectivism and traditional Japanese values interfered with the dissemination of psychological counseling that is based on the individualism and other Western traditions. For example, *Ikkashinju*, which is referred to as a whole family's committing suicide, represent Japanese family-oriented value system. As a part of an extended family (*Shinseki*), a wedding is perceived as a unification of two families rather than two individuals. However, industrialization, urbanization, and post-war Americanization have transformed some Japanese traditional values and made individualized lifestyle more acceptable in the society.

(2) Psychotherapy

The second area is "Psychotherapy." There are two unique psychotherapy theories: *Naikan therapy* and *Morita Therapy*. *Naikan* is a Japanese word referring to "inside looking" or "introspection." *Naikan* is a structured method of self-reflection that helps people understand themselves, their relationships and the fundamental nature of human existence (Krech, 2001; Ozawa-de Silva, 2006; Reynolds, 1983). *Naikan* was developed by Yoshimoto Ishin, a Buddhist of the Jodo Shinshu sect in Japan. His strong religious spirit led him to practice *mishirabe*, an arduous method of meditation. Wishing to make a deeper level of self-reflection available to others, he developed *Naikan* as a method of introspection that could be more widely practiced than religious meditation. *Naikan* practice is based on three questions:

What have I received from (e.g. my mother)?
 What have I given to (e.g. my mother)?
 What troubles and difficulties have I caused to (e.g. my mother)?

Usually a *Naikan* retreat starts by focusing on these questions as an individual reflects on one's relationship with his/her mother.

Subsequently, these questions can be expanded outward to other relationships. During the retreat, a facilitator comes and listens to participants from time to time allowing them to put what they have discovered into words. Today, there are approximately 40 Naikan training centers in Japan.

The second Japanese original therapy is Morita therapy. Dr. Masatake Morita (1874–1938) was a psychiatrist and a department chair at Jikei University's School of Medicine in Tokyo. Morita's personal training in Zen Buddhism influenced his teaching. Morita formulated his psychotherapeutic principles in Japan as well as developing a program for the treatment of neurotic tendencies at the same time (Morita, Kondo, & Levine, 1998). Morita Therapy directs one's attention receptively to what reality brings to himself/herself in each moment. Simple acceptance of "what is" allows individuals to actively respond to what needs doing. Most therapies strive to reduce symptoms of mental illness. In contrast, Morita therapy aims at building a character to enable one to take action responsively in life regardless of symptoms, natural fears, and wishes. The character is determined by the behavior, by what one does. Dogmatic patterns of collapse are replaced with the flexibility to call upon courage and empowerment. Decisions become grounded in purpose rather than influenced by the fluid flow of feelings. Morita himself was suffered from *Taijinkyofusho*. *Taijinkyofusho* is a culture-related syndrome conceptualized in Japan. While previous studies suggest its psychopathological similarities to social phobia and obsessive-compulsive disorder, introspection regarding shame and low self-esteem is particularly linked to Japanese culture.

Amae (甘え) is a Japanese word used to describe behavior aimed at inducing another (such as a parent, spouse, teacher or boss) to take care of you. The person who is carrying out *Amae* may beg or plead, or alternatively act selfishly while predicting that the caregiver will forgive and indulge him/her. The behavior of children towards their par-

ents is perhaps the most common example of *Amae*. However, it has been suggested that child-rearing practices in the West tend to cure children of this kind of dependence, while it continues into adulthood in parent-child relationships in Japan. In his book "*the anatomy of dependence*" (1971/1973), Dr. Takeo Doi states that *Amae* is not just a Japanese phenomenon, but the Japanese are the only people who have an extensive vocabulary describing it.

(3) Facilitation

The next area of multicultural and community counseling is "Facilitation." Facilitation literally means "to make the process easy." Fostering the client's development is one of the roles of the counselor. (1) Facilitation in individual counseling includes a client's satisfaction of the help seeking process in the context of Japanese culture. (2) Facilitation in a group process has been developed differently from individual counseling. One important contribution is "Structured Encounter Group (SEG)" developed by Yasutaka Kokubu in 1992, which is mostly used in psychoeducation groups. Structured Encounter Group (SEG) is widely accepted, especially by Japanese teachers, to practice psychoeducation in the classroom and other educational settings. (3) Facilitation at the community level is not only a social issue but also a psychological intervention issue. We have to respect and seek a traditional conflict resolution system in the community. Tsuneichi Miyamoto has described those traditional community conflict resolution systems such as *Yoriai*, which is a traditional dialogue system that is democratic and respectful in nature.

(4) Liaison & Networking

Liaison, and networking are also important areas of the new type of counseling. As in liaison-consultation psychiatry in a hospital, networking of helping professionals is a very effective way of treating individuals. Mizuno (2003) proposed three types of helping professionals: professional helpers, role helpers, and volunteer helpers. Japanese collectivism and vertical networking is in the

process of transformation and integration of horizontal (democratic) networking. Nakane Chie (born 1926) is a Japanese social anthropologist. Her book published in 1967 "Personal Relations in a Vertical Society (*Tate-shakai no Ningen Kankei*)" characterizes Japanese society as vertical, relational and conforming.

(5) Group work

A counselor sometimes must take the role of a group worker. ASGW defines group work in four areas: (1) task group, (2) guidance/psychoeducation, (3) group counseling, and (4) group psychotherapy. Group work is primarily used for preventive and developmental purposes. Group work is also utilized in a remedial setting and self-help groups.

(6) Mediation/Intermediation

Intermediation means "mediation for human development." Transcend method by J. Galtung was originally developed for non-violent conflict transformation at the national and international levels (Galtung, 2004). However, it is also effective in arbitration of intra-personal conflicts and interpersonal relationships. Mediation between ethnic minority cultures and mainstream Japanese culture is still an important task which Japanese counselors have to tackle. It is also correlated with Alternative Dispute Resolution Education (ADRE) that is an area of group work and can be utilized in different domains of counseling. It is often informal education not only by lecture and instruction in medical, marital, family, workplace situations.

(7) Case work

Caseworkers are the professionals who coordinate multifaceted services to ensure a quality of service for the target client populations. Counselors also play the role of caseworkers by connecting the client to his/her social environment. Caseworkers and counselors must understand the mutual roles that they play in supporting the clients and work collaboratively as a professional team. Ishikawa explains importance of multicultural casework in Japan today (Ishi-

kawa, 2003).

(8) Advice/Advising

Advising or guidance is also an important aspect of counseling.

Advising and guidance as a part of counselor's roles have not been well received by Japanese professional counselors, partly because of the influence of Carl Rogers' client-centered approach. However, from a multicultural counseling perspective, advise giving is an important element of counseling interventions when working international students and residents from abroad.

(9) Consultation

Consultation refers to an activity that is engaged in by a third person (consultee) who is responsible for a client's treatment plan to help facilitate the client's well-being. For example, a school counselor often consults with the teacher of a student with psychological problems. Consultation with school administrators and teachers has received increased attention in the development of school counseling in Japan along with direct counseling and coordination (Seto, Inoue, & Forth, 2005).

(10) Advocacy

Advocacy is considered a new area of counselor roles that is introduced to Japanese counselors. This particular area has been overlooked in a traditional training of counselors and psychologists in spite of the need for supporting socially underrepresented people such as Korean-Japanese, *Ainus*, and *Burakumin*. The dimensions of advocacy include primary, secondary and tertiary preventions in personal, group and community levels. Counselors are expected to engage in advocacy on these levels.

(11) Social action

Social action for minorities is a part of counseling for vulnerable and underrepresented people. For example, *Buraku*, or *hisa-betsu buraku* (discriminated communities) are Japanese social minority groups. The *burakumin* are one of the main minority groups in Japan, along with the Ainu of Hokkaido and residents of Korean and Chinese descent. They are communities of de-

Table 2 14 Areas of counseling in view of ecological systems

Counseling activity	Systems			
	micro-	meso-	exso-	macro-
(1) Individual counseling	◎			
(2) Psychotherapy	◎			
(3) Facilitation		◎		
(4) Liaison & Networking			◎	
(5) Group work	○	○		
(6) Mediation/Intermediation	○	○		
(7) Case work			◎	○
(8) Advice	◎			
(9) Consultation			◎	◎
(10) Advocacy			◎	
(11) Social action			◎	◎
(12) Crisis intervention	◎			
(13) Coordination	○	◎	○	○
(14) Psychoeducation	◎	◎		

scendants of outcast communities from the feudal era. These groups may also mainly be comprised of those with occupations considered “tainted” with death (such as executioners, undertakers or leather workers). Furthermore, these people traditionally lived in their own secluded hamlets and ghettos. They were legally liberated in 1871 as the feudal caste system was abolished. Unfortunately, this did not stop discrimination against these groups nor improve their lower living standards. In certain areas of Japan, there is still a stigma toward members of these groups who sometimes still face lingering discrimination in matters such as marriage.

(12) Crisis intervention

Crisis intervention is a crucial activity that counselors intervene people who are under unexpected and overwhelming stress such as a natural disaster or personal crisis. A counselor often coordinates the services for the clients in order to stabilize the situation and help them cope with their crisis. Teamwork is necessary for crisis intervention. *Inochi no denwa* functions as crisis intervention for people who are suicidal.

(13) Coordination

Coordination is one of the three essential activities of the framework of the traditional school counseling in the U.S. Coordination

of resources, collaboration, and management of resources are three terms that are used interchangeably (Stone & Dahir, 2006). Special Needs Education Coordinator is an important role of school psychologists role in Japan (Geshi, 2005).

(14) Psychoeducation

Psychoeducation is a form of counseling that facilitates psychosocial adaptation of individuals thorough group work and educational sessions. Psychoeducation was first utilized with children (Borgen, Rudner, & Gurney, 1981), as a method of counseling and educating clients on psychosocial skills to solve their presenting problems, or to prevent forthcoming troubles from occurring. Psychoeducation is found effective in helping family members of patients with schizophrenia (Anderson, Reiss, & Hogarty, 1986). Inoue, Tanaka, & Suzuki (1997) developed WAKSAS model of psychoeducation that consists of Warm-up, Awareness construction, Knowledge building, and Skills training, and facilitate psychoeducation.

Table 2 shows the relationship between the fourteen areas of counseling and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems.

Conclusion

I have explained the characteristics of Japanese community psychology and multi-

cultural psychology from a counselor's perspective. First, community psychology in Japan started on the basis of the U.S. models; however, culturally appropriate research and practice have been developed within Japanese social context. Second, integration of community psychology and counseling occurred because of recent multicultural issues in Japan. Consequently, Macro Counseling, which is a new paradigm of counseling, was proposed. Third, different areas of helping activities or various professional roles are required to promote well-being of clients and preventions of the problems that are derived from Japanese culture and society.

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