

# Filipino psychology essay

[Education](#), [Teaching](#)



The History of Philippine Psychology The psychology of, about, and for the Filipinos was born out of the need to establish a discipline which is responsive to the needs of the Filipino people. [pic] Generally, to some extent, it had been considered a given until a few years ago that when one talked about psychology, one meant the psychology of Americans. Asian psychology had been unrecognized, or at least, unacknowledged worldwide.

The Zeitgeist in Asian Psychology Through the years, however, there was an awakening, a realization, by Asian psychologists that western concepts and theories were irrelevant and inapplicable when applied in the Asian context. They began to question the appropriateness of letting western social scientists describe and predict Asian behavior, without consideration for the differences between the Asian and Western cultures. Thus was born the need for an Asian psychology, a psychology arising from one's own experiences.

With it, there was a movement as well by Filipino psychologists of the need to have their own identity. History of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, or the "Psychology of, about, and for the Filipinos" Psychology as an academic discipline in the Philippines started in the early 1900s when the U. S. colonized the country. Scientifically, it was generally viewed as a continuation of the development of psychology in the West. In the early 1970s, however, there came a turning point in the lives of Filipinos. It was a period marked by a high degree of nationalism, brought about by the declaration of the Martial Law.

It was ironic that the father of Philippine Psychology was, at that time, a recent Ph. D. raduate of Northwestern University in the U. S. It was precisely

his Western education that made Sikolohiyang Pilipino founder Virgilio Enriquez realize the need to have a psychology based on the experience, ideas, and orientation of the Filipinos. Together with three other colleagues—Prospero Covar (anthropologist), and Zeus Salazar (historian), and Alfredo Lagmay (psychologist)—they helped establish the foundation for a psychology of and for the Filipinos. Enriquez had been a professor of Psychology in the University of the Philippines in Diliman in 1963, but left in 1966 for the U.

S. to pursue a Ph. D. in Social Psychology. From there, he watched the disenchantment of young student activists in the Philippines over the deteriorating political and social conditions of the country. When Enriquez returned to the Philippines in 1971, he embarked on a research study with Lagmay into the historical and cultural roots of Philippine Psychology, which included identifying indigenous concepts and approaches. Four years later, he chaired the first national conference on Filipino Psychology. In this conference, the ideas, concepts, and formulations of Sikolohiyang Pilipino were formally articulated.

Sikolohiyang Pilipino in the University of the Philippines When Enriquez returned from the States, he and a few other colleagues translated foreign articles to Filipino. The students were also strongly encouraged to write their papers in this language instead of in English, which had been (and still is) the medium of instruction in the University. Gradually, more and more members of the faculty were convinced to use the Filipino language in teaching Introductory Psychology. The main problems they encountered in the use of

Filipino in teaching psychology, especially in its initial years, included the lack of materials written in Filipino and the lack of a technical vocabulary. These challenges were solved by translations, compilations of local materials, and choosing the appropriate words from the local dialect. There were times when the technical term was retained when there was no equivalent in Filipino. This did not work out because Enriquez realized that the translation failed to express a truly Filipino psychology. Other factors were the difficulty of expressing or explaining some Western concepts and theories in Filipino, the negative reactions of students who sometimes felt that their skill in speaking and writing in Filipino was inadequate, and the students' lack of fluency in the language.

However, there were observable benefits as well brought about by the use of Filipino in teaching psychology. Among other things:

- It created better rapport between teacher and students
- There was a more relaxed atmosphere in the classroom
- The students' confidence grew in expressing their opinions, thoughts, and actual experiences
- A different perspective, which was more Filipino, was introduced into the course
- Indigenous concepts were discovered; and

The scope of topics discussed became broader with the addition of information from local materials and experiences. Class discussions also became more concrete in relation to Philippine reality. Psychology became related intimately and significantly to the everyday life of the people. Most importantly, with the birth of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, a psychology with a Filipino orientation was developed. The Status of Sikolohiyang Pilipino Now Sikolohiyang Pilipino continues to thrive, despite the death of Enriquez in the early 90s. Its proponents

continue to advocate for a psychology that is truly responsive and reflective to the needs and the unique situation of the Filipino people.

For more information about Sikolohiyang Pilipino, read an SP proponent's paper on Indigenous Filipino Values. Reference: Enriquez, V. (Ed. ). (1990). Indigenous psychology: A book of readings.

Quezon City: Akademya ng Sikolohiyang Pilipino. Copyright Ma. Aleah Taboclaon