

**Differencing—Making a Difference:
A Stratad Theory of Psychology Addressing
Global Socio-Psychological Challenges Now and Beyond**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to develop a theory from the 138 words of Dr. Janice K. Moodley on the webpage of the *7th Southern African Students' Psychology Conference*, deeming that statement to be crucial initial data on the subject of how Psychology addresses pressing issues now and beyond. Stratad Theory developed over the past few years from a more stringent implementation of Classic Grounded Theory. A Stratad Theory approach was used to analyse, synthesise, and elaborate the initial data, drawing from an additional 45 literature items. A theory of *differencing* arose from the data, indicating how *Psychology* makes a difference in the world now and beyond. Differencing has Psychology, transcending in its salienting of roles and narrowing of disparities, secure food (nutrition) and reduce violence, create a context for communicating to face the world, discern needs, invite people, engage deliberatively, dialogue progressively, counsel people, and educate for work. Differencing then drives researching through knowing yesterday, futuring, and environmentalising to harness technology and enhance science, while it uses ethicalling to grapple with uncertainties, ensure rights, help nations, and lobby government and groups for, among other things, a home for each family—the socio-psychological hub for all.

Keywords: differencing, deliberative engagement, reducing violence, educating for work

INTRODUCTION

Stratad Theory was used for this study. Stratad Theory is a methodology for accurate and structured data analysis and theory generation (Last, 2020). The initial data for this study were the 138 words of Dr. Janice K. Moodley on the webpage of the *7th Southern African Students' Psychology Conference* (Moodley, 2021). First, all the nouns, verbs, and adjectives were extracted from the data, leaving out the definite and indefinite articles and conjunctions. Next, the words were alphabetically ordered, and theoretical development incidencing (counting) was done. Then,

duplicate terms/lines were removed, and highest incidence ordering was carried out. Match contrasting was done, followed by theoretical (concatenated) arrangement. The following theory statement (summative principle) was produced: ‘Changing psychology NOW to address global socio-psychological challenges BEYOND.’ After this, the theory statement was verified, and the chief issue, *challenges*, and central solution, *changing psychology*, were identified. Then, the keywords with incidence were marked in the data and the realistic concepts of the central solution functioning (how *changing psychology* functions) were identified, named, and listed. They are:

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|--|---------------------------------|
| 1 facing the world | 12 educating for work |
| 2 helping nations | 13 transcending |
| 3 enhancing science - mind-behaviour | 14 grappling with uncertainties |
| 4 counselling people - physical + mind | 15 discerning needs |
| 5 narrowing disparities | 16 futuring |
| 6 lobbying govern. - better housing | 17 making a difference |
| 7 environmenting | 18 knowing yesterday |
| 8 reducing violence | 19 inviting people |
| 9 harnessing tech. | 20 dialoguing progressively |
| 10 securing food | 21 engaging deliberatively |
| 11 ensuring rights | 22 salienting roles |

These concepts were alphabetically ordered, stratified and re-ordered by mid-naming after duplicate removal. Highest incidence ordering of mid-concepts (*communicating*, *making a difference*, *researching*, and *ethicalling*) was done, and the central solution **main concept** was identified. Thus,

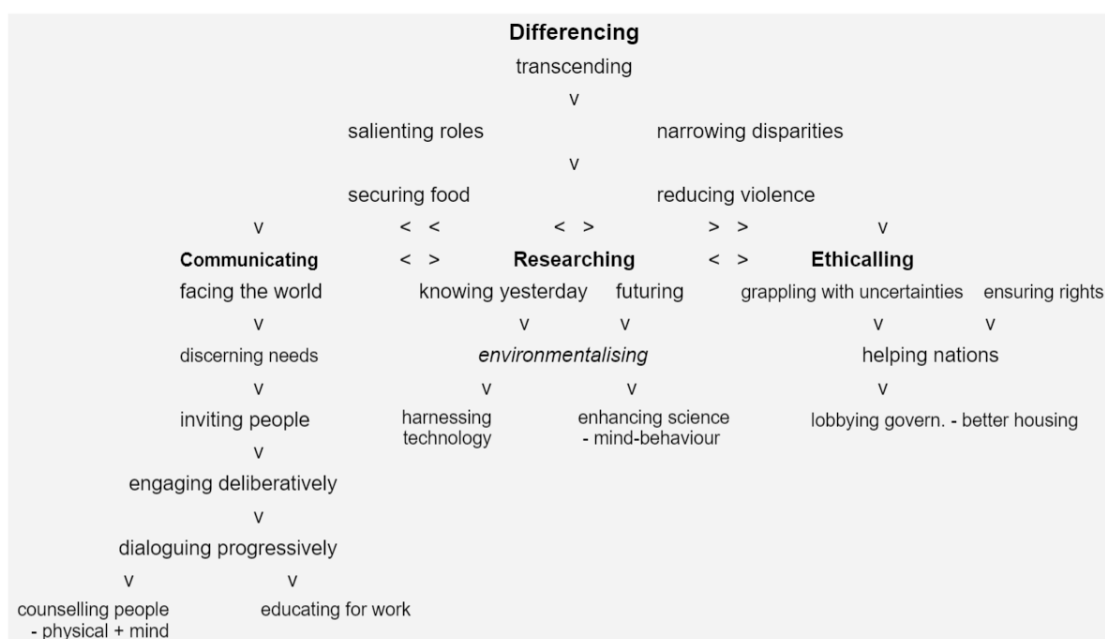


Figure 1—Differencing Theory Structure

changing psychology had become *making a difference* which was conceptualised as *differencing*. Following, structuralisation took place, arranging in strata—stratifying. Next, the theory title was articulated: *Differencing—making as difference: A Stratad Theory of Psychology Addressing Global Socio-Psychological Challenges Now and Beyond*. All concepts in the theory structure were then sequentially stratified by rotationalising through identifying, articulating, and re-arranging. Sequence arrows were added to the structure (sequencing) and bifurcating, renaming, broadening, sequentialising, and indicating interactions were applied. Finally, operational identification, interaction articulation, and process diagramming were completed. This produced the theory structure which can be seen in Figure 1 above.

Following this, the theory was written up with reference to this structure, similarity sourcing from over 45 literature items.

THE THEORY OF DIFFERENCING

It is clear that the literature, and even colloquiality, use *differencing* to mean establishing various difference types. Differencingly, the present theory has conceptualised and harnessed the word *differencing* to mean *making a difference*. Psychology *differences* by shifting and changing to address the exigencies of global socio-psychological challenges (Moodley, 2021). This is how Psychology *makes a difference* in the world. The primary focus and sub-process of *differencing* is *transcending*. Through *transcending*, all aspects of *differencing*'s functioning takes place. *Transcending* undergirds *salienting roles* and enables *narrowing disparities*. It also provides the insight and resourcefulness for *differencing* to be effectively *securing food* for the needy and *reducing violence* against the vulnerable, by means of various outreaches and programmes. Through *differencing*, *transcending* productively contextualises the operation and interactions of *communicating*, *researching*, and *ethicalling*, which are the main processes that make the difference.

Transcending. Transcending means mentally traversing distances, such as hypotheticality, spaciality, temporality, and sociality (Lieberman & Trope, 2008). *Transcending* breaks thought processes out of boundaries, disciplines, and contexts (Moodley, 2021). Psychology *differences* by utilising a *transcendent* process, abstractly aiding evaluating, predicting, and planning (Lieberman & Trope, 2008).

This opens the mind and immediately engages *communicating* in *facing the world* and *discerning needs*. These rotatively feed back into *differencing*'s *salienting roles* for *securing food*, and *narrowing disparities* for *reducing violence*. Thus, *transcendent differencing* impels *communicating* for effective *food provision* and *violence reduction*. *Communicating* draws the *environmentalising* of *researching* into the rotative process, and *ethicalling* joins through *grappling*

with uncertainties to lobby government, business, and other groups for improved structural food supply, housing, protection from violence, and counselling and education services.

Psychology *differences transcendently* by going beyond the immanent and exploring deeper meanings (Pytell, 2006). This relies on *knowing yesterday* well, *futureing, harnessing technology, inviting people, engaging deliberatively, and dialoguing progressively*, for impactful rotative influence of *researching and communicating*.

Salienting roles. *Salienting roles* has Psychology *differencingly* address global and local issues in the most *transcendent, discernable, and flexible* manner (Moodley, 2021). It also enhances self-identity and -definition, increases social interaction, other expectation, and *futureing*, leading to greater commitment to altruistic endeavours (Callero, 1985).

Stress induces greater commitment to *very salient roles* (Krause, 1994). Accordingly, the *differencing* action of Psychology should embrace stressful contexts converting them into positive energy for *narrowing disparities* and making socio-psychological contributions to actions for *securing food and reducing violence*. *Reducing violence* is an obvious focus for Psychology now and in the beyond as it can minimise trauma and bring emotional and physical healing, but what of *securing food*? Why is Psychology so relevant to *securing food* for undernourished millions? The question already provides part of the answer. Nourishment. *Nutrition*.

Nutrition and psychological wellbeing are intricately connected. Neuropsychiatric probiotic supplement stomach microbiota modulation treatment can help to alleviate psychological suffering; dietary hippocampal neurogenetic modulation can improve mood, learning, and memory; obesity-induced vascular impairment dementia, Alzheimer's disease, and depression can be prevented through proper diet; Western-diet-induced depression and anxiety (from high processed foods) can be replaced by wellbeing and peace through switching to a Mediterranean diet; nutraceuticals can aid angiogenesis, vascular cleanliness, cognitive clarity, deflammation, and metabolism and neural regulation (Owen & Corfe, 2017). Thus, besides people needing basic food for survival, they need better, more natural foods for healthy bodies and minds. This provides the reason why Psychology needs to address the global socio-psychological challenge of *securing food*. How securing food can be done by Psychology will be explored further under that section below. First, *narrowing disparities* must be dealt with as it relates to *salienting roles differencing transcendently to narrow the disparities* between many polarities, among which are *the hungry and the sated, the attacked and the protected, the well-educated and the ill-educated* (see *communicating* below), and the *housed and the houseless* (see *ethicalling* below).

Narrowing disparities. The *disparity* between *well- and ill-educated* is such that the better educated can live longer than the less educated (Miech et al., 2011). Other disparate socio-economic

factors (Moodley, 2021) include *rural poverty vs. urban wealth* for which rural and agricultural economic regeneration is indicated (Dachin, 2008). Psychology's role in such challenges may revolve around *communicating, researching, and ethicalling* through *engagement, dialogue, and lobbying* to bring about practical programmes and real change (cf. Moodley, 2021). This also applies to adequate medical, mental health (*counselling* and psychiatric), and physical *security* services.

Securing food. *Securing food* is all about the world and nations having enough quality food for all to live a healthy, happy life (IFPRI, 2021). Achieving this is a very complex issue for each nation. Although globalisation is desperately struggling to dominate and control food production and distribution for profit and power, allowing this to continue unchecked may be detrimental to *food* quality, choice, and even *supply*. Disruptive market mechanisms can leave whole populations 'stranded' without proper *food supply*, leading to malnutrition, starvation, and death. Psychology acknowledges the fundamental need and right of the individual to protect and care for themselves and their loved ones. Intuitively then, the individual cares for their family, friends, community, society, and nation, all of which have *protective* mechanisms such as lockable doors, gates, fences, walls, boundaries, and borders. Even the political elite who favour or ignore influx of foreigners into countries, do not practice what they preach, as their borderless countries provide for them mansions with high walls, armed security, and ultimate protection. This is the human condition, and it cannot be changed from the outside by tearing down all of these *protective* structures. Psychology must change the human condition from within. People need to be changed, to be more loving, amenable, and sharing, but not at the expense of their psychological, emotional, or physical *safety*. So too with *food security*. A country cannot abandon *securing food* to multinational companies who supply inferior products for quick profit and who patently do not have the people's interests at heart. Each country needs to maintain a transparent socio-economic balance between the encouragement and development of local production and the need for international trade in foodstuffs (Barclay & Epstein, 2013). Communities know what is best for themselves, and it is the community which should control and manage food supply, even by means of cooperatives with neighbouring communities, not through rich untrustworthy multinational food suppliers.

Reducing violence. Psychology needs to *difference* (make a difference) *transcendently, salienting roles* and *narrowing disparities*, bringing about a *reduction in violence* especially against the vulnerable (Moodley, 2021). Government 'attempts', NGO efforts, and even perpetrator rehabilitation (cf. Tolan & Guerra, 1994) for *violence reduction* have essentially been unsuccessful; in many places violence is on the rise and continues at very high levels; Psychology's *differencing* needs to *stop violence* by empowering targets and victims to know exactly how to *resist violence* and *safetify* themselves before, during, and after an attack; this will stop many predators and perpetrators

in their tracks and put many more behind bars where they can be offered an opportunity to rehabilitate (Last, 2020). Violence does not just stop because we speak out against it, or say it is unacceptable and must stop. It has to be made to stop. Nip it in the bud, where it is at. In the *set-up* or in the attack. *Stop the attacker* and have them arrested. Psychology must run training programmes to help people do this *socio-psychophysically* (Last, 2020) and to discover and apply linear and multi-layered coping techniques to manage violence trauma (Gumani, 2012). Anti-violence advocates (not lawyers, but trained community workers) can help reduce, even stop, the number of attacks from violent partners (Sullivan & Bybee, 1999). Structural factors like removing organised crime from the police and from society, alcohol restrictions, overhauling and streamlining the justice system, and increasing security at schools (Greene, 2005) and number of health/sport centres and schools (Cerdá et al., 2012), can reduce violence and must be lobbied for, promoted (Last, 2020), and where possible even undertaken by psychologically trained people like you and me. Those of us who can, must become more vocal and practically active in the fight against violence.

COMMUNICATING

Psychology, really, is *communicating*, whether *transcending*, *salienting*, *narrowing*, *securing*, *reducing*, *facing*, *discerning*, *inviting*, *engaging*, *dialoguing*, *counselling*, *educating*, *researching*, *grappling*, *helping*, or *lobbying*.

Facing the world. Many socio-psychological challenges are now facing the world (Moodley, 2021), and so too Psychology is expected to boldly *make a difference* through orienting its *communicative* role by *facing the world* head-on on Psychology's own *transcendent* but *salient* terms. No more cowering on the backseat of some enchanted lullaby, making pronouncements, researching irrelevantly, and ignoring uncertainties. *Facing the world* is adjusting your bearing to the challenges, and pressing forward in practical involved ways to actually deal with the problems and solve them. Does Psychology know who it is anymore? Has it been on a detour, or has it totally lost its way? Is Psychology sure of its identity? How does Psychology think about authority, power, and the translation of experience into practice (cf. Brown, 1993)? Does Psychology work catalytically from ivory towers or in transformative interactivity on the ground, in the street, with the people? Is Psychology's knowledge and authority sufficiently empowered so it can do its thing in the world now and beyond in an honourable, vital, and exceptionally effective way? In that resplendent stance of *facing the world*, Psychology is open, receptive, and expectant for *discerning needs*. It perceives a 'decerning need' (Moodley, 2021) to be *discerning needs* to prepare and make way for the *future*, the beyond, which unknown as it is, must be *grappled* with, through *transcendent* insight, ingenuity, and creativity.

Discerning needs. Precision, temporality, awareness, visual peripherality, sensitivity, inquiry, recognition, heartfulness, feeling, enablability, and effort are guiding beacons to the quality and magnitude of the process of *discerning unfulfilled needs* (cf. Rawlins, 2006). Cathexis, archetype, knowlegeability, developmentality, affectivity, possibility, fallibility, and specificity (Howard, 2000) present Psychology with *uncertainties for grappling in discerning needs*. Openly *facing the world* and *discerning needs* leads to *inviting people* to share their uncertainties and indecision. This can form friendship, fellowship, collaboration, *deliberative engagement*, and ‘*progressive dialogue*’ (Moodley, 2021), with such *communication* resulting in *counselling people* and *educating* them for life’s practicalities, such as appropriate *work*, effective parenting, and suitable psychological and physical *protection*.

Inviting people. People who have suffered and overcome are often more inclined to *invite people* into their lives for productive relationing. This stems from deepseated and often highly-prized and won empathy, compassion, and understanding. Altruism comes to the fore for *helping* other people and situations for the sake of making oneself happy at seeing others thrive, succeed, and be happy. *Inviting people* includes *victoring*—helping people to share in your victories through *welcoming, contributing, benefitting, increasing, and growing*; *contributing* includes *getting involved in training* others, and lobbying government, companies, organisations, and other groups for positive socio-psycho-physical progress (Last, 2020).

Inviting people operates efficaciously through non-judgementality, communication willingness, transparent positive luring, displaying interactively, self-expressive co-creation, and valuing contributions (Cardoso & Russo, 2018). These are simply more ways that Psychology (you and I) can be *differencing* in the world now and beyond (Moodley, 2021).

Sometimes *discerning needs* involves *inviting people* to pray or being invited to pray (Bishop, 2018) where this might be culturally appropriate (Jeppsen et al., 2015). Whether you are praying to Allah, Elohim, the Almighty, Jehovah, or Mary, prayer has been shown to prevent, intervene, and improve people's mental and physical health (Sayeed & Prakash, 2013), albeit mediated by optimism (Ai et al., 2007), colloquial disclosure (Black et al., 2015), or a sense of God-closeness and -control (Jeppsen et al., 2015). Assistance, peace, and focus request-prayers are positively associated with a reduction in PTSD and depressive symptoms (Tait et al., 2016). If invited to pray by the person with whom you are *engaging, dialoguing, helping, counselling, educating, or lobbying*, by all means do the appropriate thing, or, if you are too shy or not the praying type, simply reflect the request back to the individual and ask them to pray.

Engaging deliberately. The concept or process is *engaging deliberately*, not *engaging deliberately*, the latter meaning *on purpose* and the former *in a deliberative manner* (cf. Moodley),

indicative of discussion and interchange. *Deliberative engagement* is about *impartialing* passionately and can be encouraged, trained, rolled out, and undertaken by communities, districts, and whole countries (cf. Carcasson, 2016). Psychology can make it happen by *getting* and *staying involved* (Last, 2020).

Dialoguing progressively. *Engaging deliberatively* embraces *dialoguing progressively* which involves dispersed voice and expertise seeking, unheard citizen involvement, clean democracy (not crony, elitist, or collusive so-called ‘democracy’), public ownership sharing, interacting, innovating, working through, problem-solving, convergent thought avoidance, community capacity building and improvement, support facilitation, treating and acting broadly, changing adaptively, and private-nonprofit-public collaboration (Carcasson, 2016). *Dialoguing progressively* is about higher inquiry, conceptualising problems, working collectively, improving ideas, revising theories, advancing knowledge, reflecting and tracking progress, and creating value (Tong & Chan, 2020).

Counselling people—physical + mind. “(...)the relevance of psychology has shifted BEYOND the Freudian couch to address critical societal challenges associated with physical and mental well-being” (Moodley, 2021). This means Psychology has changed and must continue to change to *engage in counselling people deliberatively, progressively, and constructively*, giving due cognisance to *body-mind wellbeing, transcendently making a difference*. Helping people to get to know their self—‘know thyself’ is the famous Aristotelian saying from the 4th century BCE (Sofroniou, 2009)—to develop choice- and decision-making (Bear, 1998), and to employ culturally-relevant cosmologies, methods, and modalities (cf. Twaise, 2017), and multicultural, ecologically transactional, self-deterministic approaches (Levers, 2009) are intricate aspects of effective *counselling*. Psychology must not assume all culturally-affinitive people to be homogenous in thinking or behaviour (Young, 2014; cf. Gumani, 2014), as each individual is a ‘cosmos’ within themselves. Value-, tradition-, and story-recovery (Charema & Shizha, 2011) as well as traditional healership (cf. Ajobiewe, 2007) are meaningfully considerable practices in multicultural *counselling*.

Dialoguing progressively can be so intense and interactive that it forms a conducive context for *counselling people* in a responsible manner, so as to take into account both their *physical and mental needs*.

Educating for work. Social and work life have changed drastically since the year 2000; this has led to greater unemployment, poverty increase, and **capital-demand** education-work reconfiguration attempts (de Melo, 2019). Adequate preparations and implementation of *educating people for work* flow from *differencing’s salienting roles* and *narrowing disparities* interacting with *researching, ethicalling, and communicating’s facing the world, discerning needs, inviting people, engaging deliberatively, dialoguing progressively, and counselling people*. *Educating for work*

demands exploration of vocation training need, quantity specificity and generality, vocation content education level insertion, current framework effectivity, and new method and institution type requirements; then, applicable legislation, servable students, available peoplepower, innovating curricula, unemployed vocational training, and work education administration need to be examined (Draper, 1967). In the digital world of now and beyond (Moodley, 2021), *educating for work* requires knowledge acquisition, forming skills, on-the-job training, breadth of vision, holisticality, flexibility, researcher-policymaker interactivity, industry masterplan work skill development programming, and institution-capacity (not **capital-demand**) building (Allais & Marock, 2020).

RESEARCHING

For Psychology, *communicating* is built on *research*, and *research* on *ethics*. Therefore, without *research* there is no real foundation for action. But Psychology should not withhold action because it has not *fully researched*. *Knowing yesterday* and estimating *future* consequences, Psychology must move with what it has to *environmentalise*—address issues *in vivo*, contextually, and in their totality. This is the essence of *action research*.

Knowing yesterday. Now and beyond (Moodley, 2021) Psychology is *researching* ever more productively by understanding and *knowing yesterday* (past research and history) and *futureing*—ensuring a way in the future (Toffler, 1970). *Knowing yesterday/history* can make you feel like good citizens, cultured (educated and civil), linking the past with the future, providing a contextual arena for common interests, exemplary behaviour, and universal application (Stack, 2012). There is a well-known and hackneyed saying: ‘Those who don’t know the past are likely to repeat it’ (my version; cf. Virginia Tech, 2021). For Psychology, this means that really doing the openminded, unpreconceived, unbiased, thorough *research* is necessary to find out what is correctly and accurately known about the issues at stake, and working from there. This includes, for example, not blithely accepting or parroting platitudinous politically-correct ‘knowledge’, like conflating weather variation and climate change with global warming (cf. Pielke & Ritchie, 2020), unverified mRNA injections with fully-trialled vaccines (cf. Vojdani & Kharrazian, 2020), or stress and depressive reactions with emotional malady. Psychology needs to dig deeper and beyond the hegemonic politically-aligned search engines widely available today. Alternative sources, networking, websites, podcasts and groups should all be discovered and joined for access to narratively-uncontrolled sources of sound, peer-reviewed information. There is a lot of solid research out there that is hidden in plain view if you only make the effort to find it.

Futuring. *Futuring* involves *organising, goalsetting, selfsupporting, connecting (dialoguing, getting involved, training, lobbying), strengthening, achieving, and contenting* (Last, 2020; Toffler, 1970).

Environmentalising. *Environmentalising* presents Psychology with a fresh *transcendent* epistemology in that it does *differencing* to *engage* the entire human being in the context of their *nutritional/health, protection, counselling, education, work, and housing* needs. Psychology must now work with people's whole *environment* to provide meaningful wellbeing (cf. Li, 2020). *Harnessing technology* can be a powerful way of reaching many people, *engaging* them, and making lasting contributions to their lives, thereby also *enhancing science*, but Psychology must remember and prioritise those who will not, do not, or cannot take advantage of such opportunities. These people need to be accessed directly in person, or be *invited* to come for *engagement, dialogue, or counselling*. When *researching* works in harmony with *communicating, ethicalling, and transcending, differencing* takes *history and future prospects* and drives them through *environmentalising* to *narrow disparities, harness technology, and enhance science* for optimal planning and rollout of programmes for *helping nations*.

ETHICALLING

Rotationally, *ethicalling* moves within its own sphere, *grappling with uncertainties, ensuring rights, helping nations, and lobbying government and groups* for improvements for the people, especially *housing*. But *ethicalling* and its sub-processes also interact with the wider *differencing* processes of *transcending, researching, and communicating*, providing people-firstness, and *protecting* them from abuse, exploitation, and harm.

Grappling with uncertainties; Ensuring rights; Helping nations. *Ethicalling* is the hub of the wheel of *differencing*, with *transcending, communicating, and researching* radiating outward from its centre. *Grappling with uncertainties* provides impetus for creative and collaborative *dialoguing* and should not put Psychology off from attempting difficult and perhaps even important but risky *research* (Badillo-Urquiola, 2021; cf. Chappell & Singer, 2020). Everything, however, should be done to minimise and contain risk, always *ensuring the rights* of others, but visionary, original, inventive, and ingenious approaches to problem-solving should be encouraged. However else will Psychology start to win the battle against the huge socio-psychological challenges in the world? In this manner Psychology can be realistically *ethicalling* for *helping nations*.

Lobbying (groups and) government—better housing. Near and dear to everyone's heart is your home (cf. Robbertze & Muller, 2020). If you have an adequate house, flat, or apartment, then

you can make a home; if not, then you have no home and your whole life can be in disarray with *food, safety, education, work*, and other aspects of your life badly affected. Thus, *housing* is the pivot for Psychology's *differencing* in the world, because without it there is no holding together of body and mind, no true wellbeing, and no real addressing of global socio-psychological challenges now and beyond. Psychology must *deliberatively engage* and *lobby government, groups, and business—big, medium, and small* for *better housing*. Additionally, Psychology must find its role in expeditiously *differencing* to *secure nutrition, reduce violence, educate, and counsel the people*.

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