

PREFACE TO THE 4TH EDITION EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY: AN AFRICAN UPDATE PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

With your permission, allow me to cite what an independent reviewer of Educational Psychology had to express: An African Perspective 3rd Edition expressed about it: Educational Psychology: An African Perspective is a completely revised and updated edition of this popular title, incorporating recent developments in educational psychology. This book offers students an understanding of fundamental principles of psychology, educational psychology and its application to teaching, learning, human development and growth including cognitive development; theories of learning, memory, theories of Westerners and Africans personality development Such apt description has stood the test of time and serves as a true reflection of its successor, namely, Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective 4th Edition! In fact, what I have expressed is by far an underestimate of the 4th Edition! This Edition supercedes the 3rd Edition in more ways than one. As author I leave it for you as reader to discover for yourself and many others.

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Introduction & Discourse

It has been a long safari since the first Edition was published in 1989; second Edition in 1995 and third edition 2004. I need not tell you, when the fourth edition was published! Discover it for yourself. This book has been in existence for three decades. This in itself speaks volumes; what kind of a book it is; to have survived for so long; in such competitive industry of bookmaking, not only in South Africa, but also in many other parts of the World. I have no reason, not to be proud of such an extraordinary record!

The first time I used my own textbook for teaching was not in South Africa or any other African country! It was thousands of kilometres from South Africa! It was in Canada. This reminds me, as I recall that the manuscript of the book was prepared in Canada in 1987, when I was a Visiting Professor at the University of Alberta my alumna meta hailing from the University of Transkei in South Africa. Come 1989, it was published by the Butterworths Publishers in Durban.

As it was published in December 1989, I was back in Canada for a short period of time teaching Psychology. The class I taught had already bought their textbook and workbook, namely, Psychology and Life by Scott Fraser and Philip Zimbardo. But on telling them that my own book had been published in South Africa, on demand they all said they wanted my book. I resisted their demand, on account that they had already had their book and workbook and that, mine was intended for my African students studying Educational Psychology.

My resistance fell on deaf ears! In the end I conceded. I told them what was happening was fascinating to me! The general practice and trend in Africa is placing orders for books from Europe and America. There we were placing an order for books from Africa! So I placed the order from Butterworths in Durban. Within ten days we received the books. Each one of the students purchased a copy.

What a difference with our African university students, who are very reluctant to spend their money on books. They would rather photocopy the entire book! Or some of those who purchase books resell them on completion of the course! It is a behaviour, that we as Africans take no pride in. In fact, it can be worse! Not long time ago, I was at the University of Dar es Salaam in Tanzania as External Examiner, when the Librarian rushed to me, to see how I look like, since we had never met before. But beyond this, she had a message for me. She said she wanted Educational Psychology: An African Perspective, given that all the copies they had in the Library had been “removed”. I am a Tanzanian myself. I felt ashamed!

I now pause to reflect on the history of Educational Psychology: An African Perspective. What was the rationale for authoring such book in the first instance? This is not a rhetoric question, and therefore I will account for it. On completion of my doctorate at the University of Alberta in Edmonton, Canada, I was appointed Lecturer in Educational Psychology at the University of Botswana in Gaborone. Two years later, I was recruited Associate Professor in Educational Psychology at the University of Transkei in Mthatha.

At the time of my appointment, the Rand was at par with the American dollar. The books I used were mainly imported from America. Within a year or two of my arrival, the value of the Rand compared to the American dollar was devalued by about 50%. This had a tremendous impact on the purchase of books from America, or the United Kingdom. I went to the University Bookshop, to place order for the following year. I was told how much it would cost. It was double what it was then. That was more than I could handle. I refused to place orders for new books.

My reasoning went like this: My course is not the only course the students will be expected to buy. Where will they get the money to purchase books at such a high cost? So how was I going to teach my courses. The answer was I would give them handouts and write notes on the board, or use transparencies. Fine, proceed! But this was not the end; as I was daunted by this predicament.

I debated the matter further within my mind. Tuntufye, you went to Canada and America to pursue advanced studies, and while doing so; you studied with Americans and Canadians, who happen to be authors of the books you wish to import for your students. As a matter of fact, you were a better student than some of these American and Canadian authors! Now you are sending messages that, the education you got from their countries was good, but not sufficient! Now they must write and send me books for my students and me to teach them.

I resolved; that I was going to go on sabbatical leave and write a textbook for my students at the University of Transkei. Furthermore, the book would have to be published in South Africa, as a means of controlling the price. Since making this decision over 30 years ago; I have had no regret. Within the first two years of its publication. It became the best seller so I was informed by the Butterworths Publishers. For this reason, they invited me to visit their place of work, where I saw my book displayed all over the walls as the best seller! The staff, all white, were exceedingly delighted to meet me and my wife Bernadette. Every utterance made was punctuated by my title as Professor. Heaven on earth at Butterworths Publishers Headquarters! We were booked room at the 23rd floor, which was the top floor of Holiday Inn in Durban.

Allow me to take you back in time. On being invited to visit them at their expense, I immediately responded positively. But added that, I would be coming with my wife, and would glad to bear the cost of the flight and accommodation. The response came back swiftly that, they would be happy to fund her accompanying me! That was beautiful! And so, one afternoon we boarded a flight from Mthatha straight to Durban, and no business of going via Johannesburg.

On arrival, we were guided to the international arrival, where we were to find one of the top managers assigned to meet us. There was no such person! We then decided to exit, only to see a white man of Italian origin, going by his name, running in our direction. The first thing he did was to grab our luggage from our hands!

That surprised me by leaps and bounds, despite my having lived in Canada and America for more than ten years! We learned from him that, he had been waiting for us at the domestic arrival; only to be told that he was waiting for us at the wrong place; since flights from Transkei are international! On my return to Transkei, I went to the lecture theatre of more than 200 students and told them our escapade. Let me quote myself: FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MY LIFE, A WHITE MAN CAARRIED MY LUGGAGE. WE HAVE ALWAYS CARRIED THER LUGGAGE! You cant believe it; my over 200 hundred students in the lecture theatre gave me a standing ovation!!! “Long Live Professor Mwamwenda”! The last sentence is my own words!

One year after publication, I was informed that, the price of the book was raised from R 48.00 to R59.00 This did not bring me joy, given that it was contrary to publishing the book in South Africa, particulary in view of the fact, during the first year, because of the high demand for the book, they had reprinted it close to ten times. Every time they did so, the books would be bought almost immediately. I wrote to the Manager concerned, who happened to be a lady to reconsider the price raised. I made it known that given the huge sales the Company had made, it was more than enough to pay whatever it cost them to publish it!

She swiftly responded that the new price would remain in force, as no reconsideration would be granted. That disturbed me and was not prepared to give up that easily! Immediately, I wrote to the Managing Director, who always identified himself as British by nationality. His response came at a supersonic speed, clearly stating that the price of the book would at R48.00 with immediate effect. A British National Indeed!

I was born and grew up in rural village of Mbeya, Tanzania, which now has qualified for the status of a city. My father had grade 2 education and therefore could read and write. My mother did not go to school and therefore could neither read or write. However, my mother was more intelligent than my father. There are a number of times when I argued with her, she would do better than I did.

For example, when she visited us in Mthatha, South Africa, she wanted to take my last born son Eddie to Tanzania and bring him up. I refused on the ground that, I did not think she would be able

to bring up Eddie, in the manner am rearing him! She paused for a moment and then proceeded to present her version of her understanding.

She told me that in Transkei, I was holding a very important job, for which I was paid very well. She asked me, “Who brought you up?” I answered her that she did! “Then why do you think I cannot bring up your son?” She won the argument and I lost! But she did not take Eddie with her to Tanzania. To her, this was mean of me! She was right again. I lost the aargument for the second time! One need not be intelligent on the basis of Western education, of which she had none!

The point I wish to make is that, as humble as they were; they made their contribution genetically and socioculturally, which shaoped me to achieve what I have achieved in life, including the publication of Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective 4th Edition. From the Third Edition, I wish to cite as follows:

The preparation of this book and its contents have been influenced and shaped by my upbringing in Mbeya, Tanzania, which includes being a shepherd and growing up in one of the most ordinary rural African families; my life as a student; my life as husband and father of of four children, one and only daughter Escort, a Medical Doctor in London Ontario, Canada and three sons; Anthony a Teacher in Vancouver, Canada; Asimwe a Computer Science Teacher in Durban, South Africa and Eddie an Accountant in Toronto, Canada; my life as a student in Tanzania, Uganda, India, the USA and Canada; my tteaching experience at Primary and Secondary School levels in Kenya and Uganda.

As well as my university management and teaching Educational Psychology in Botwana, South Africa, Canada and USA; many years of receiving Christian Education and leadership role as Head of Department, Dean of Education, Executive Assistant to the Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor. Director for Long Island University in New York, Africa Project Manager for AISA, Research Consultant and Professor at Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and University of Mpumalanga., The long list ends here. Where appropriate, I have drawn freely from all these sources of challenging vast experience.

Wherever Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective has gone, it has been welcomed with open arms, as it happened when I was a Visiting Professor more than once in Canada and the USA. When I was in New York, Professor Grace Jinx Rooselvet arranged for my visits to universities in New York. One of them was New York University with an enrolment of 50,000 studentds then. I addressed academics and students in the Department of Applied

Psychology. My presentation later on constituted one of the Chapters in the Third Edition African cultures: An encounter with Western civilisation.

At the end of my presentation, the Head of Department, who was a lady of Japanese origin complimented me that, I had spoken from the heart. That was the first time, I heard such expression! In the same audience, there was an American lady, who came to me and said; some years back, she headed the Department of Applied Psychology. During that period, she was invited to Liberia, West Africa, to spend a while teaching Educational Psychology. The first thing she did, was to go to the Library and search for a suitable book; she would be using in Liberia, West Africa. Mwamwenda's book was her choice among all others. She went on to say, at the time, she never thought, she would one day, meet the author in person. And so she was delighted to meet me in person, and so was I! But I recall that, I forgot to give her a hug!

One time I was flying from Cape Town to East London via Port Elizabeth. After being cleared to head for the waiting lounge, I heard someone calling me to go back to where I had been cleared. I wondered what might be amiss. Only to find one of the attendants at the reception. So I identified myself; In response she told me there was nothing amiss; she wanted to have a look at me. So I told her, "this is me!" She proceeded to tell that, when she was a student at the University of Cape Town, They used my book as their textbook.

In Zimbabwe, am told my book is referred to as the Bible. In Tanzania at the University of Dar es Salaam, am told that if academics or students have any thing they do not understand in Psychology, they raise the question "What does Mwamwenda?". In the same University, students call me "their Professor!" They have told me in person, that although I have never taught them, they used my book, which by their interpretation is as good as having my having taught them. That is Professor Tuntufye Mwamwenda the Aauthor of Educaational Psychology: An African Update Pespective 4th Edition.

Professor Elias Mpofu a Zimbabwean, who has taught in America for a good number of years, was offered a package he could not resist, to go to Sydeney University in Australia. I have met him several imes at conferences and has published a number of my Papers; as he is the Editor of Africa Journal of Psychology. In reference to Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective, he declared it as Mwamwenda's Gift to Africa. It is my pleasure and honour to offer such a gift to our Continent. It is amazing and fulfilling, to know that for over three decades, there are

thousands of teachers teaching thousands of children based on the principles of human behaviour, as presented in *Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective* 4th Edition.

Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere former President of Tanzania was honoured with the invitation to come and grace the Dawn of Democracy in Multiracial South Africa under the Founding President Nelson Mandela! On landing at Oliver Tambo International Airport, he was flooded by the media, National and International! South Africa and the World at large extremely know well; the role Mwalimu Julius Nyerere played in the Democratisation of South Africa.

Therefore, the media national and International desired to know what Mwalimu Nyerere thought of his presence and the important date of 27th April, 1994! With a wide smile of relief and genuine honesty replied, “I did not know that this Day would come to pass in my lifetime”.

Similarly Barack Obama on being elected President of the United States of America, stated as follows: “ I thought this day would come, but I didn’t think I’d live to see it”

Representative Jesse Jackson stated that the victory of Obama overwhelm him.” I cried all night. I am going to be crying for the next four years. What Barack Obama has accomplished is the single most extraordinary event that has occurred in 232 years of the nation’s political history”.

! Along a similar train of thought of Julius Nyerere of Tanzania; Barack Obama of America together with Jesse Jackson of America “I am deeply delighted that, *Educational Psychology: An African Update Perspective* 4th Edition has been published in a New Democratic Multiracial South Africa, in my zLifetime”

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