THE STATE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN VANUATU The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in Vanuation

Sect 1 Feb.

Gent 1 Feb.

Metal & Robinson Editor

Psychology in

Oceania and
the Caribbean

Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean pp 33-44 | Site as
The State of Psychology and
Mental Health Services in
Vanuatu

Authors Authors and affiliations
Civistopher R. Brown, Jimmy Obed
Chapter
First Online: 16 December 2021

PRESENTER AND OTHER AUTHORS: DR CHRISTOPHER BROWN & DR JIMMY OBED

VANUATU 3RD HEALTH RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

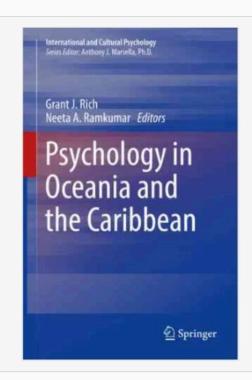
VNPF Conference Center, Luganville, Santo 26-28 October 2022



INTRODUCTION



- In 2021 Dr Obed and I were approached to provide a chapter for an academic book
- Published in "Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean"
 - International and Cultural Psychology
 - Grant Rich (Editor), Walden University, USA



The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in Vanuatu

Christopher R. Brown and Jimmy Obed

The role of psychology has historically had little relevance in Vanuatu. The reason for this has its roots in Vanuatu's isolation and geography, in its language and culture, in its colonial past and in its place as a newly developing nation. This has led to there being effectively no mental health services in the country until relatively recently. However, in the last decade, there has been a growing recognition of the benefits that good mental health care can provide the community. Over that time Vanuatu has produced significant mental health policies and begun the process of providing mental health care across the country. This chapter will discuss the state of psychology and mental health care in Vanuatu, consider the changes that have occurred in recent times and will look at some of the ways that this new focus on mental health care is benefiting the community

Demographic Overview

Geography

Vanuatu is an archipelago in the South Pacific. It is around 1770 km (1100 mi) east of Australia and 800 km (500 mi) west of Fiji. The archipelago stretches approximately 1300 km (810 mi) from north to south and comprises 83 separate islands. Of these, 65 are inhabited. There are only 14 islands that measure more than 100 km² The three largest are Espiritu Santo, Malekula and Efate - the most populated island and home to the capital Port Vila.

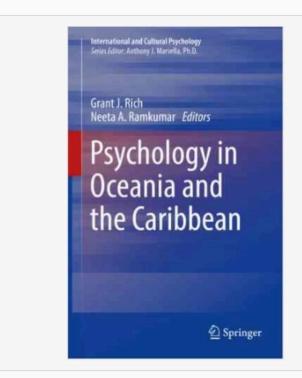
C. R. Brown () J. Obed Vanuatu Ministry of Health, Port Vila, Republic of Vanuatu

© The Author(s), under exclusive license to Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2022 G. J. Rich, N. A. Ramkumar (eds.), Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean, International and Cultural Psychology, https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-87763-7_3

BACKGROUND



- Psychology has traditionally had little relevance in Vanuatu
 - Isolation and geography
 - Language and culture
 - Colonial past
 - It being a newly developing nation
- There have effectively been no mental health services in the country until relatively recently







BACKGROUND

Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean pp 31-44 | Cite a The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in Vanuatu

Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean

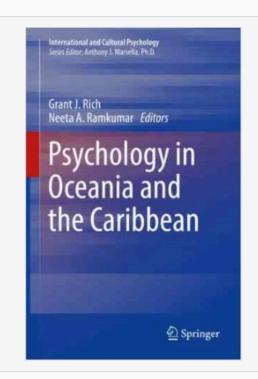
Authors Authors and affiliations

Christopher R. Brown, Jimmy Obed

Chapter

First Online: 16 December 2021

- In the last decade there has been a growing recognition of the benefits that good mental health care can provide
- This talk will outline the content of the book chapter as published
 - Key issues related to mental health
 - Progress and programs

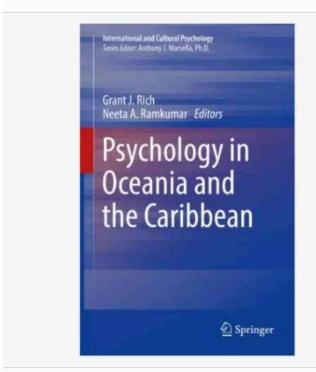




PSYCHOLOGY IN VANUATU



- Forster (2005) noted at that time
 - No perceived need for psychological services
 - No psychological associations
 - No mental health facilities
 - No understanding about the role of psychology

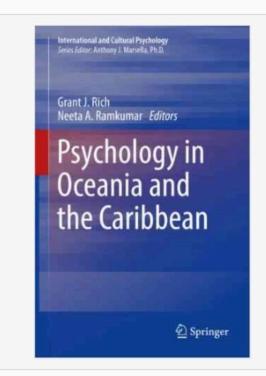




PSYCHOLOGY IN VANUATU



- Since that review
 - No systematic attempt to understand Ni-Vanuatu psychology
 - No indigenous trained psychologists
 - No psychological or social work services
 - No in country tertiary education in psychology



The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in Vanuatu

Authors Authors and affiliations

Christopher R. Brown, Jimmy Obed

Chapter
First Online: 16 December 2021

3

Downloads

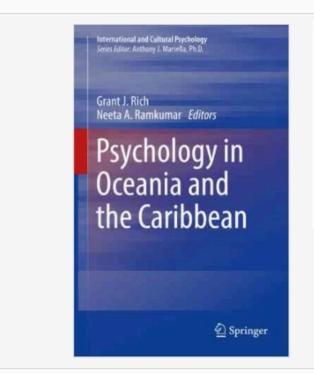
Part of the International and Cultural Psychology book

Psychology in Oceania and the Caribbean pp 33-44 | Cite as





- Situational analysis (2005) of mental health needs across the pacific
 - Mental health services effectively non existent
- Ministry of Health analysis of mental health services
 - Basic mental health services unavailable on most islands
 - No trained mental health nurses or doctors
 - No inpatient facilities in outlying islands
 - No community care facilities for people with mental disorders
 - No NGO's in the community dedicated to mental health
 - Heavy reliance on traditional or religious approaches to mental health care

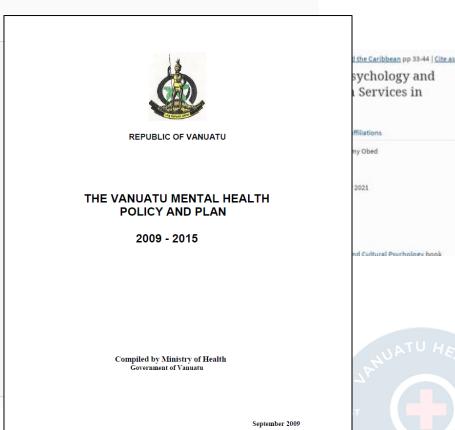








- This review lead to the first mental health policy for Vanuatu
- The Mental health Policy (2009 2015) represented the first recognition of the need for mental health services
 - Aimed to modernise the approach to mental health care service delivery across the country





- Strategic plan (2009-2015)
 - Limited infrastructure
 - Lack of mental health professionals
 - Limited financial resources
 - Lack of services in primary health care



REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

THE VANUATU MENTAL HEALTH POLICY AND PLAN

2009 - 2015

Compiled by Ministry of Health Government of Vanuatu

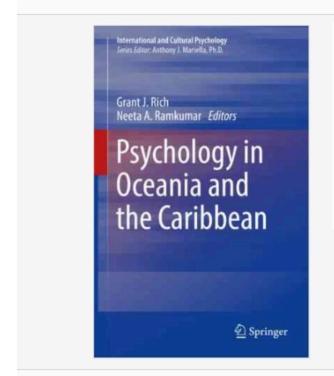
eptember 2009

1

2019
RAPORTO HEALTH



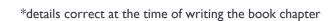
- In the decade that followed there have been significant improvements
 - Updated mental health legislation
 - Increases in human resources
 - Mental health services ant the primary health level
 - Recognition for the role of mental health care in the wake of natural disasters
- A commitment to creating a mentally healthy and literate community through access to equitable mental health care

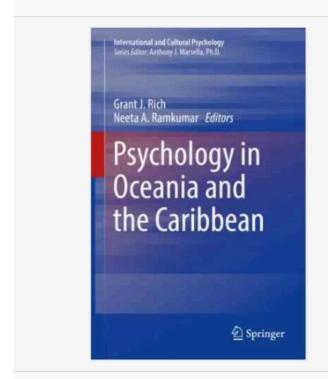






- The Mind Care Clinic*
 - Based at Vila Central Hospital
 - Deals with mentally ill patients from around the country
 - One fully qualified psychiatrist
 - Three qualified mental health nurses
 - Four dedicated beds
 - Visitation service
 - 520 consultations in 2020

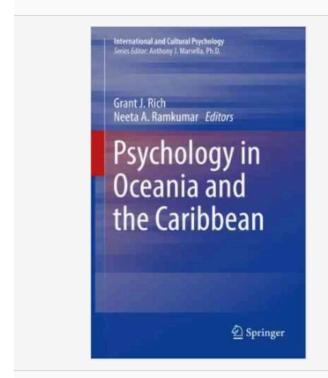








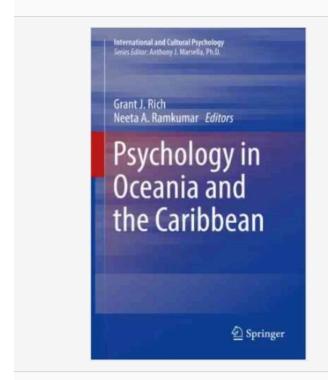
- The Mind Care Clinic
 - Pre-eminent organisation in the country
 - Addressing the systemic challenges to the provision of mental health care a key priority
 - Provides feedback to government regarding resources
 - Developing human resources through training and internship programs
 - Educating the community about mental health
 - Increase psychological literacy







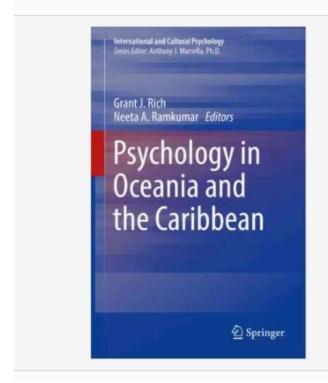
- The Mind Care Clinic Culturally relevant practices
 - Patients are unlikely to self-refer to psychiatric services
 - It often relies on family members
 - This is a significant undertaking
 - Often, only the most intransigent problems present for treatment







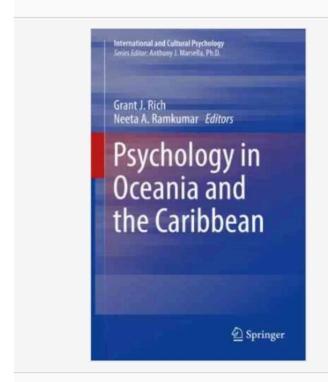
- Patients being accompanied by family members provides an opportunity for practitioners at the Mind Care Clinic
 - Allowing patients to be attended to by family members
 - Makes patients more amenable to treatment
 - Allows family members to be educated
 - Improves care when patients return to their community
 - Allows family members to be cognisant of warning signs of relapse







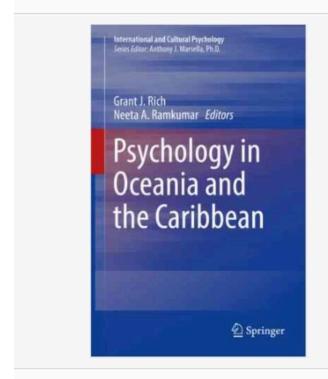
- Post-disaster mental health care and mental health psychosocial support (MHPSS)
 - Vanuatu is one of the most at risk countries for natural disasters
- Following TC Pam
 - MOH, MCC and IsraAID provided MHPSS training across affected communities
 - Trained community leaders about the psychological impacts of natural disasters
 - Develop the capacity of communities to deal with disasters







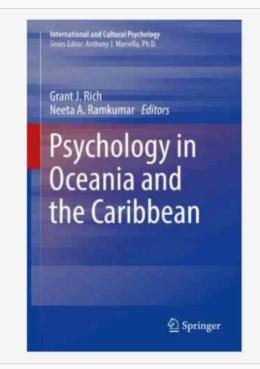
- Similar MHPSS programs were implemented in response to the
 - Eruption of the Manaro Voui Volcano in Ambae (2017)
 - TC Harold (2020)
- MHPSS training has become a commonly used tool to assist communities following natural disasters
 - Puts control over mental health needs into the hands of local communities
 - Educated communities about the services that are available







- The last decade has seen significant advances in understanding the need for mental health care in Vanuatu
- This has produced significant improvements in the provision of mental health services across the country
- It is hoped that, by continuing to focus on the need for mental health care and the continued development of mental health care services, Vanuatu will become a psychologically literate and mentally healthy country, which will allow it to deal with the many future challenges it will face







TITLE: THE STATE OF PSYCHOLOGY AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN VANUATU The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in Vanuation Wental Health Services in Vanuation The State of Psychology and Mental Health Services in



Prychology in Oceania and the Caribbean po 38-44 | Cite as
The State of Psychology and
Mental Health Services in
Vanuatu

Authors
Authors and affiliations
Christopher R. Brown, Jimmy Obed
Chapter
First Online: 16 December 2021

3
Describade.

Part of the International and Cultural Psychology book

PRESENTER AND OTHER AUTHORS: DR CHRISTOPHER BROWN & DR JIMMY OBED

VANUATU 3RD HEALTH RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

VNPF Conference Center, Luganville, Santo 26-28 October 2022

