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Psychologyis a science which questions the mind and examines behaviours. Thereare many different areas of research and one of them is socialpsychology. Social psychology is the scientific study of how peoplethink about, influence and relate to one another within a socialcontext. Social psychology has two main approaches the mainstream andthe critical. The mainstream approach is undifferentiated from theregular sciences since they apply indistinguishable strategies. Ituses the quantitative analysis but such analysis does do not reachunderrepresented populations. There is also the critical approachwhich questions the social establishments and behaviours or actionsthat contribute to the types of oppression and inequality.

It offersthe opportunity to gain more insight the subject as it uses thequalitative method, in which the questions are open ended usually andthe participant has the opportunity to explain the reason behind hisor her actions. In this paper the researcher demonstrates that LGBTQpsychology can use extensively the critical approach and furtherresearch issues like the relationship with the parents or therelationship with classmates. IntroductionPsychologyis defined as “ the science of mind and behaviour”. But it is alsoa science that seeks to answer questions about life, behaviour andhow the nature, the culture or other factors affect us.

In otherterms, it is a scientific field that has a quest, which is todescribe and explainbehaviour and the mind underlying it. Therefore, there are many different areas of interest like clinical psychology, biological psychology and social psychology. Social psychology is thescientific study of how people think about, influence and relate toone another within a social context. It utilizes logical strategiesto comprehend and clarify how feelings and conduct of individuals areaffected by the real, envisioned or inferred nearness of otherindividuals. Social psychology can help us understand concepts likeself-understanding, social relationships, intergroup relationshipsand group performance. In other terms, it is a scientific fieldpreoccupied with the investigation of social relationships. Socialpsychology has two main approaches the mainstream and the critical. The mainstream approach is undifferentiated from the regular sciencessince they apply indistinguishable strategies.

In many cases inscience, in the analysis of different ideas, the researcher has topick or to transform one variable, which will lead to a theory test. This approach is likewise like the characteristic science. Themainstream is integrative in nature, drawing from many psychologicaltheories and many areas of research’ (Graziano, 2007, p. 24). It uses more quantitative data, to measure the population on agiven positive or negative scale.

Quantitative research quantitativeresearch is the systematic empirical investigation of observablephenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques(Given, 2008). But nowadays it is believed that quantitative methodshave limitations, since such studies do not provide insights on thereasoning behind participants’ responses. Also they often do notreach underrepresented populations, and they may span long periods inorder to collect the data. Whereas, according to Mercer & Clayton (2012, p. 182) “ Critical socialpsychology has largely evolved from challenges to what is referred toas the mainstream.

” The difference in this approach is that itquestions the social establishments and behaviours or actions thatcontribute to the types of oppression and inequality. Traditionally, in order to be scientifically meaningful a psychological phenomenonmust be quantified and measured, but this approach takes intoconsideration social theories like feminism and Marxism and itfollows how society works since it does not just take intoconsideration one group, but it allows diversity and inequality toform the theoretical framework. It uses the qualitative research, which it is more suitable when the researcher tries to identifycommon patterns and to examine more the views of the participants. Consequently, the analysis explores new ideas that emerge from thethemes and then the theories are formed when there are meaningfulpatterns of behaviour and thoughts (Guest, 2012, p. 11). The main difference between the qualitative and the quantitativemethod is the way that the questions are posed.

In the quantitativemethod the questions are measurable and the analysis requiresstatistical tools, whereas in the qualitative method the researcherasks why and the analysis is based on the context of the answer. Still themainstream approach is popular worldwide and this is because it givesthe opportunity to address the study to many people and to have thevalidity that a vast number of participants provide. But, it does notinclude the different views and it fails to portrait the insights andthe ideas behind the behaviour. It does not explain the patterns itjust confirms or not the researcher’s assumptions. Therefore, itmight not have validity in another social context. What it is needed, it is a balanced view of the social perception, which it isinfluenced strongly by change.

Social environments change constantlyfrom various reasons, such as a war, physical disaster ortechnological progress. Therefore, several researchers try to explainbehaviours and to adapt it in an universal concept. Forinstance, Asch conducted a well-known experiment on conformity. Aschconformity research is examined and reproduced in many differentcultures. There is an interesting meta-analysis which favours thatevery time they tested the hypothesis, the results were similar forall cultures.

As the researchers argue’the study has been conductedin different regions around the world and the results has beenconfirming the theory on conformity’ (Bond & Smith, 1996). Although the participants were from different cultures, not all thesubgroups were included and moreover the participants did not havethe chance to explain their behaviour. There is no information for theparticipants concerning their beliefs and ideas.

Why did they reactedin a particular way? Furthermore, until recently most of theparticipants were white, heterosexual men and usually students. Criticalsocial psychology takes into consideration more personal data thanthe mainstream approach and most importantly the participants explainwhy. They are given the opportunity to explain. The researcheridentifies the similar trends and ideas.

There are numerous examplesof understudied subgroups within the society, that now have thechance to state their difference and explore their ideas. Consideringmainstream psychology, we should be sceptical towards the informationand the theories on homosexuality. Forinstancea few years ago the DSM-III included homosexuality as a mentalillness. Through the years this notion has changed, but there are notmany studies that embrace it or that underline the difference. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer or LGBTQ psychology isconcerned with sexuality, it has a much broader focus, examining manydifferent aspects of the lives of LGBTQ people including prejudiceand discrimination, parenting and families, and coming out andidentity development (Riggs & Ellis, 2017). It is the scientificfield that concentrates on the lives and experiences of LGBTQ people. It is important to mention that the primary focus is not in sexualityin various aspects of life, from motherhood to identity development. Recently apsychotherapeutic study underlined that neither science norpsychotherapy can be separated from values (Russell , 2007).

Values are important for a person’s development and apartfrom the political there are the personal, the cultural and thesocial. They are also shaped from the personal experiences, thethoughts and the role that a person has within its family and society(Russell &Bohan, 2007). If we do not take into consideration thesexual orientation it is difficult if not impossible to help theperson. Since the challenges that the person faces are not identifiedand understood.

Such separation between the personal and the socialself fails to give an in depth meaning to the interventions neededand the plan or the strategy the person’s well-being. Throughresearch we can understand that such process moves beyond the therapyhour(Russell , 2007). Lookingfurther into the challenges that the families face and the supportthe person can receive, it is easily understood the lack of literatureon family support. There are not many studies on this matter, whichis a surprisingfactif we consider the physical and emotional problemsthat the LGBT youngsters face. The health risks are well known butstill understudied. The family is surely important but there is notenough evidence on the role it plays and most importantly how it canhelp the young man or woman.

Parental acceptance and rejection aredifferent constructs, hence it refers to the behaviour of two partiesfirst of the young person, who feels ready to share his identity andsecond of the behaviour and thoughts of the parents and of the restof the family. Still the research is limited although, it is alreadygiven the link between parental rejection and negative healthoutcomes (Ryan, Russell, Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2010). The samestudy assessed the relationship between family rejection inadolescence and the health of LGB young adults (Ryan, Huebner, Diaz,& Sanchez, 2009). The results showed clear associations betweenparental rejecting behaviours during adolescence and the use ofillegal drugs, depression, attempted suicide, and sexual health riskby LGB young adults. On theother handaffirmation or acceptance of LGBT adolescents is associatedwith positive adjustment and decreased mental health and behaviouralhealth risks in young adulthood: higher self-esteem, increased socialsupport, and better general health status, along with decreaseddepression, substance abuse, sexual risk behaviour, suicidalideation, and behaviours.(Ryan, Russell, Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2010)Almeida andhe colleagues in 2009, conducted a survey and they evaluatedemotional distress among 9th–12th grade students, and examinedwhether the association between being lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/ortransgendered and emotional distress was mediated by perceptions ofhaving been treated badly or discriminated against because othersthought they were gay or lesbian. The survey took place in Boston andthe results showed that perceived discrimination accounted forincreased depressive symptomatology among LGBT males and females, andaccounted for an elevated risk of self-harm and suicidal ideationamong LGBT males (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar & Azrael, 2009).

There should be more research examining this issue and in amore cross-cultural context as the values may value. Even with justone study it is shown that the mental health of the individuals isdeeply affected. Additionally, it is important to discuss about the prejudice that LGBT membersface. Again the research findings are limited. In 2006 a researchtried to define the anti-homosexual prejudice. It was attempted toexamine how queer theory might enrich the social psychologicalinquiry by challenging assumptions about the politics of doingscientific work and the utility of identity-based sexualpolitics.

(Hegarty& Massey, 2006). In summary, there are manyinquiries that need to be addressed and the mainstream psychologydoes not provide the means for a deep understanding in the subject. Recent developments emphasize the significance of sexual orientationin development and it was proposed the creation of psychology coursesdevoted to ‘ lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender’ (LGBT)content that would focus on the need of an intersectional pedagogicalapproach, which will promote equality. (Case & Lewis, 2012)Inconclusion, social psychology is concerned with the study of thepeople living in a society and how the society influence them. Thereare two main approaches that research is conducted. The first is thetraditional mainstream one, where quantitative methods are used, inorder to examine a hypothesis. The critical social psychology, on theother hand, tries to find insights in the thoughts and the behaviour.

The researchers are asking questions and the participants have theopportunities to explain the thought behind their actions. In thisway previous non-existing fields can now be researched more. Inaddition, understudied groups can now be further studied and form newscientific fields such as LGBT psychology.