

Psychology
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introduction
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[Business](#), [Strategy](#)



Psychology is a science which questions the mind and examines behaviours. There are many different areas of research and one of them is social psychology. Social psychology is the scientific study of how people think about, influence and relate to one another within a social context. Social psychology has two main approaches the mainstream and the critical. The mainstream approach is undifferentiated from the regular sciences since they apply indistinguishable strategies. It uses the quantitative analysis but such analysis does not reach underrepresented populations. There is also the critical approach which questions the social establishments and behaviours or actions that contribute to the types of oppression and inequality.

It offers the opportunity to gain more insight into the subject as it uses the qualitative method, in which the questions are open ended usually and the participant has the opportunity to explain the reason behind his or her actions. In this paper the researcher demonstrates that LGBTQ psychology can use extensively the critical approach and further research issues like the relationship with the parents or the relationship with classmates.

Introduction Psychology is defined as “the science of mind and behaviour”. But it is also a science that seeks to answer questions about life, behaviour and how the nature, the culture or other factors affect us.

In other terms, it is a scientific field that has a quest, which is to describe and explain behaviour and the mind underlying it. Therefore, there are many different areas of interest like clinical psychology, biological psychology and social psychology. Social psychology is the scientific study of how people think about, influence and relate to one another within a social context. It

utilizes logical strategies to comprehend and clarify how feelings and conduct of individuals are affected by the real, envisioned or inferred nearness of other individuals. Social psychology can help us understand concepts like self-understanding, social relationships, intergroup relationships and group performance. In other terms, it is a scientific field preoccupied with the investigation of social relationships. Social psychology has two main approaches: the mainstream and the critical. The mainstream approach is undifferentiated from the regular sciences since they apply indistinguishable strategies.

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

Quantitative research quantitative research is the systematic empirical investigation of observable phenomena via statistical, mathematical or computational techniques (Given, 2008). But nowadays it is believed that quantitative methods have limitations, since such studies do not provide insights on the reasoning behind participants' responses. Also they often do not reach underrepresented populations, and they may span long periods in order to collect the data. Whereas, according to Mercer & Clayton (2012, p. 182) "Critical social psychology has largely evolved from challenges to what is referred to as the mainstream.

" The difference in this approach is that it questions the social establishments and behaviours or actions that contribute to the types of oppression and inequality. Traditionally, in order to be scientifically meaningful a psychological phenomenon must be quantified and measured, but this approach takes into consideration social theories like feminism and Marxism and it follows how society works since it does not just take into consideration one group, but it allows diversity and inequality to form the theoretical framework. It uses the qualitative research, which it is more suitable when the researcher tries to identify common patterns and to examine more the views of the participants. Consequently, the analysis explores new ideas that emerge from the themes and then the theories are formed when there are meaningful patterns of behaviour and thoughts (Guest, 2012, p. 11). The main difference between the qualitative and the quantitative method is the way that the questions are posed.

In the quantitative method the questions are measurable and the analysis requires statistical tools, whereas in the qualitative method the researcher asks why and the analysis is based on the context of the answer. Still the mainstream approach is popular worldwide and this is because it gives the opportunity to address the study to many people and to have the validity that a vast number of participants provide. But, it does not include the different views and it fails to portray the insights and the ideas behind the behaviour. It does not explain the patterns it just confirms or not the researcher's assumptions. Therefore, it might not have validity in another

social context. What it is needed, it is a balanced view of the social perception, which it is influenced strongly by change.

Social environments change constantly from various reasons, such as a war, physical disaster or technological progress. Therefore, several researchers try to explain behaviours and to adapt it in an universal concept. For instance, Asch conducted a well-known experiment on conformity. Asch conformity research is examined and reproduced in many different cultures. There is an interesting meta-analysis which favours that every time they tested the hypothesis, the results were similar for all cultures.

As the researchers argue 'the study has been conducted in different regions around the world and the results have been confirming the theory on conformity' (Bond & Smith, 1996). Although the participants were from different cultures, not all the subgroups were included and moreover the participants did not have the chance to explain their behaviour. There is no information for the participants concerning their beliefs and ideas.

Why did they react in a particular way? Furthermore, until recently most of the participants were white, heterosexual men and usually students.

Critical social psychology takes into consideration more personal data than the mainstream approach and most importantly the participants explain why. They are given the opportunity to explain. The researcher identifies the similar trends and ideas.

There are numerous examples of understudied subgroups within the society, that now have the chance to state their difference and explore their ideas.

Considering mainstream psychology, we should be sceptical towards the information and the theories on homosexuality. For instance a few years ago the DSM-III included homosexuality as a mental illness. Through the years this notion has changed, but there are not many studies that embrace it or that underline the difference. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer or LGBTQ psychology is concerned with sexuality, it has a much broader focus, examining many different aspects of the lives of LGBTQ people including prejudice and discrimination, parenting and families, and coming out and identity development (Riggs & Ellis, 2017). It is the scientific field that concentrates on the lives and experiences of LGBTQ people. It is important to mention that the primary focus is not in sexuality in various aspects of life, from motherhood to identity development. Recently a psychotherapeutic study underlined that neither science nor psychotherapy can be separated from values (Russell, 2007).

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

Such separation between the personal and the social self fails to give an in depth meaning to the interventions needed and the plan or the strategy the person's well-being. Through research we can understand that such process

moves beyond the therapy hour (Russell, 2007). Looking further into the challenges that the families face and the support the person can receive, it is easily understood the lack of literature on family support. There are not many studies on this matter, which is a surprising fact if we consider the physical and emotional problems that the LGBT youngsters face. The health risks are well known but still understudied. The family is surely important but there is not enough evidence on the role it plays and most importantly how it can help the young man or woman.

Parental acceptance and rejection are different constructs, hence it refers to the behaviour of two parties: first of the young person, who feels ready to share his identity and second of the behaviour and thoughts of the parents and of the rest of the family. Still the research is limited although, it is already given the link between parental rejection and negative health outcomes (Ryan, Russell, Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2010). The same study assessed the relationship between family rejection in adolescence and the health of LGB young adults (Ryan, Huebner, Diaz, & Sanchez, 2009). The results showed clear associations between parental rejecting behaviours during adolescence and the use of illegal drugs, depression, attempted suicide, and sexual health risk by LGB young adults. On the other hand, affirmation or acceptance of LGBT adolescents is associated with positive adjustment and decreased mental health and behavioural health risks in young adulthood: higher self-esteem, increased social support, and better general health status, along with decreased depression, substance abuse, sexual risk behaviour, suicidal ideation, and behaviours. (Ryan, Russell,

Huebner, Diaz & Sanchez, 2010) Almeida and the colleagues in 2009, conducted a survey and they evaluated emotional distress among 9th–12th grade students, and examined whether the association between being lesbian, gay, bisexual, and/or transgendered and emotional distress was mediated by perceptions of having been treated badly or discriminated against because others thought they were gay or lesbian. The survey took place in Boston and the results showed that perceived discrimination accounted for increased depressive symptomatology among LGBT males and females, and accounted for an elevated risk of self-harm and suicidal ideation among LGBT males (Almeida, Johnson, Corliss, Molnar & Azrael, 2009).

There should be more research examining this issue and in a more cross-cultural context as the values may vary. Even with just one study it is shown that the mental health of the individuals is deeply affected. Additionally, it is important to discuss about the prejudice that LGBT members face. Again the research findings are limited. In 2006 a researcher tried to define the anti-homosexual prejudice. It was attempted to examine how queer theory might enrich the social psychological inquiry by challenging assumptions about the politics of doing scientific work and the utility of identity-based sexual politics. (Hegarty & Massey, 2006). In summary, there are many inquiries that need to be addressed and the mainstream psychology does not provide the means for a deep understanding in the subject. Recent developments emphasize the significance of sexual orientation in development and it was proposed the creation of psychology courses devoted to 'lesbian, gay, bisexual and

transgender' (LGBT) content that would focus on the need of an intersectional pedagogical approach, which will promote equality. (Case & Lewis, 2012) In conclusion, social psychology is concerned with the study of the people living in a society and how the society influence them. There are two main approaches that research is conducted. The first is the traditional mainstream one, where quantitative methods are used, in order to examine a hypothesis. The critical social psychology, on the other hand, tries to find insights in the thoughts and the behaviour.

The researchers are asking questions and the participants have the opportunities to explain the thought behind their actions. In this way previous non-existing fields can now be researched more. In addition, understudied groups can now be further studied and form new scientific fields such as LGBT psychology.