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Psychology

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## Psychology

### Introduction

Psychology is a science aimed at understanding the structure and function of mental activity and behaviour associated with it. The diversity of research areas, ranging from the recording of the activity of nerve cells in the study of the effects of psychotherapy, makes difficult a simple definition of "the" psychology. As to measure its progress, its definition has evolved over time.

### Literature

It went from the "science of mental life", the "science of observable behaviour" in the 1920s to the 1960s, to become the science of behaviour and mental processes they relate to individuals or groups in a situation, taking into account the different determinants (biological, contextual, social, and cultural etc). This definition reflects the work of the various branches of psychology concerned with the study of observable behaviour, thoughts and emotions. To achieve its objectives, psychology uses various scientific methods: observation, case studies and experiments.

- Developmental psychology of mental and behavioural processes from beginning to end of life;
- General psychology study of high-level cognitive functions: memory, reasoning, learning, emotion and action,
- Psychopathology and clinical psychology, the study of mental disorders and their treatment;
- The psychology of health is interesting psychological consequences of somatic diseases;

- Clinical psychology and social psychology, the study of interactions between individuals and institutions, and study of social representations;
- The psychology of educational and vocational guidance;
- Gerontology, psychosocial study of psychosocial processes related to aging;
- Psychophysiology, confrontation functional units of general psychology with specific physiological modules (nervous and somatic).

According to the APA (American Psychological Association), the educational psychology is the discipline that focuses on the development, evaluation and implementation:

- Theories of learning and teaching;
- Educational materials, programs, strategies and techniques from the theory contributing to educational activities and processes involved throughout life;
- Intervention and rehabilitation patches from various government programs.

The educational psychologist tries to provide tools and knowledge in clinical areas of special education, school psychology, and evaluation. The psychology of education can enrol in either contemporary theories of education. Bertrand (1990, 16-24) presents various theories of education that class according to the importance given to the following four factors: content, society and about the interactions between these three factors.

The spiritualist theory focuses on the relationship between the self and the universe as a religious or metaphysical perspective. The purpose of education is to get the person to rise to a higher spiritual level.

Personalistic theory holds that notions of self, freedom and personal autonomy are essential in a learning situation. This theory puts the student at the centre of learning. It must be active in this process to generate results. This approach focuses on the subject and considers the

self-actualisation of the "learning" that is to say, achieving its full potential, is the primary mission of education.

Proponents of social theory concerned with social and environmental determinants associated with the world of education. They address the following subjects among others: social class, social and cultural inheritance, and elitism. Power relations between different classes are examined according to this conception of education. This theory focuses particularly on the review of student achievement based on their social status. Proponents of this approach believe that the education system does not, as he claims, social climbing. Rather the system reproduces the social and cultural inequalities students. This theory explores the factor company first.

Academic theory emphasizes content learning in an educational context. It gives more weight to those terms that are more specific knowledge. According to the academic perspective, it is the master (teacher) must bring the knowledge to his students. Transmitted knowledge is the same for all students, regardless of their social or other status. This trend supports the idea of a solid basic training common to all. The excellence and mastery of predetermined materials are the main objectives of this theory that focuses first and foremost on the content.

The motivation of students to their learning is recognised as a major factor of success in school. The motivation is expressed in particular by the involvement and perseverance of students towards school work. Some factors contribute to student motivation, among others provide academic tasks whose difficulty is adapted to everyone and promote their accountability for learning. Among the many definitions that exist in the literature, the most commonly used and the one given by Vallerand and Thill (1993): "Motivation is the hypothetical building used to describe all the internal and external forces producing the initiation, management and the persistence of behaviour."

Intrinsic motivation appears inherent in behaviour that engages the individual. It finds the fact to have fun only to execute the task or to engage in any activity. Extrinsic motivation is more related to the existence of external rewards or avoiding punishment by engaging in an activity. It is not inherent in the behaviour in question. The student may be motivated if he finds an interest in what the teacher is doing. For this, the task falls to the teacher to help students to be attentive for example using instructional materials to achieve the lesson. This phase is only possible if the teacher has prepared her class (written and mental preparation) this allows the teacher to save time and the student to assimilate knowledge.

The motivation of the teacher and the student maintain relations of mutual determinism (Bandura, 1986). While motivation is a highly personal builds, it feeds also greatly on the context in which it is expressed. In the school context, the teacher and students play a major role. Many studies (e.g., Pelletier et al., 2002, 193) to have shown that passive behaviour, disobedience or failure on the part of the students were perceived by teachers as evidence of incompetence and were therefore likely to lead to the use of extrinsic levers to push students to work. However, unlike the desired action, this system of rewards, punishments cause harmful effects on student motivation. According to self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000), the use of such strategies "controlling companies" by the teacher reinforces forms of extrinsic motivation of students to the origin of dysfunctional behaviour students.

### Conclusion

The foundations of psychology in education come mainly from the philosophy of education. This branch of philosophy is particularly interested in the quality of education and teacher preparation programs. It is mainly by way of comparison that forms our knowledge.

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