

Rethinking contemporary psychological approaches through the mediation of creativity

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Abstract

Rethinking contemporary approaches to psychology in the world involves reexamining and critiquing the foundations and methods of this science in the face of new challenges and social changes. This means seeking innovative and more inclusive approaches to understanding and treating psychological problems.

Rethinking contemporary psychological approaches is a necessary process that helps us adapt this science to the changing needs of modern societies. By utilizing innovative and more inclusive approaches, we can achieve a deeper understanding and more effective treatment of psychological issues. Creativity, as a multidimensional and dynamic phenomenon, is no longer considered solely as an individual trait, but rather as a complex process influenced by individual, social, and cultural factors. Contemporary psychological approaches emphasize the importance of nurturing and enhancing creativity in all aspects of life and believe that creativity can help improve performance, enhance quality of life, and increase individual and social well-being. Therefore, the present study aims to rethink contemporary psychological approaches through the important role of creativity.

Keywords: Contemporary psychological approaches, creativity

1. Introduction

Psychological approaches refer to a set of different perspectives and methods used to understand and explain human behavior and mental processes. These approaches emphasize different aspects of psychological functioning and offer a variety of therapeutic tools and techniques.

Older approaches to psychology, including structuralism, functionalism, psychoanalysis, Gestalt, and behaviorism, were more philosophical and introspective. Each of these schools of thought focused on collecting information, emphasizing different aspects of the mind and behavior. While contemporary psychology collects information based on scientific and experimental methods such as experimentation and observation of behavior, it also pays attention to biological, social, and cultural factors. In addition to psychological factors, contemporary psychology also pays attention to the influence of biological (such as genetics and the brain), social (such as culture and relationships), and environmental factors on human behavior. Contemporary psychological approaches include biological, behavioral, cognitive, psychoanalytic, and humanistic approaches (Church, Baumann & Stapleton, 2022). In psychological approaches, creativity is generally defined as the ability to generate new and novel ideas, solutions, or products. This ability involves thinking innovatively and going beyond conventional thinking patterns. In old psychological approaches, creativity was sometimes considered an innate talent, sometimes associated with the concepts of madness and insanity, and sometimes considered a potential ability in all people that could be developed through nurturing and education (Kaufman, & Glăveanu, 2019).

Creativity plays an important role in contemporary psychological approaches. The concept is no longer considered solely as an individual trait, but rather as a complex process influenced by individual, social, and cultural factors. Contemporary psychology emphasizes the importance of nurturing and enhancing creativity in various areas of life, including education, management, and problem solving. In contemporary psychological approaches, several variables have been considered for creativity. These variables refer to different dimensions of creativity, including individual characteristics, environmental and social factors, and cognitive processes related to creativity. Understanding these variables and their influence on each other can help us to understand creativity more deeply and develop strategies to enhance it (Glăveanu, 2014).

Therefore, rethinking contemporary psychological approaches is a necessary process that helps us adapt this science to the changing needs of societies and, by utilizing more creative and inclusive approaches, achieve a deeper understanding and more effective treatment of psychological problems.

2. Research Methodology

The research method of the present article is qualitative and meta-synthesis in terms of integrating the findings of previous research:

1. Search and selection method for sources: First, a quick search in Google Scholar identified highly cited articles on contemporary psychological approaches and creativity.

Then, a comprehensive, systematic, and original search was conducted to identify key concepts and keywords in the review. The search continued until it was determined that new, less cited articles were no longer adding new information to the data. This saturation occurred approximately when 30 relevant sources had been reviewed.

2. Literature review: Review of books, articles, and dissertations and classifications of theoretical concepts in the field of contemporary psychological approaches and creativity to the extent of sufficiency and saturation of information.

3. Theoretical Framework

Main characteristics in contemporary psychology mediating creativity

3.1. Biological approach:

The biological approach to psychology examines the role of biological factors, particularly the structure and function of the brain and nervous system, in behavior and mental processes. This approach is closely related to creativity because many of the cognitive processes involved in creativity, such as divergent thinking, problem solving, and information processing, are related to the activities of the brain and nervous system. Among the theories in this approach is evolutionary theory.

According to evolutionary theory, creativity is an innate, evolutionary trait that helps humans adapt to their environment and solve problems. According to this theory, creativity is a force that is constantly being replenished and renewed (Gero & Milovanovic, 2024).

Studying brain activity during creative thinking can reveal which regions and neural networks are involved in the process (Barbot, Hass, & Reiter-Palmon, 2019).

Some research has shown that connections between different parts of the brain, particularly the frontal lobe and attentional distribution networks, play a role in creativity, and the role of neurotransmitters such as dopamine and serotonin in creativity has also been investigated. It appears that these brain chemicals can affect arousal, motivation, and mental flexibility, and thus also influence creativity. It appears that these brain chemicals can affect arousal, motivation, and mental flexibility, and thus also influence creativity (Limb & Braun, 2008).

3.2. Behavioral approach

In the behaviorist approach, creativity is considered a learned behavior that is shaped through the processes of conditioning and reinforcement. Behaviorists believe that creativity, like other behaviors, is developed through interaction with the environment and through the reinforcement of creative responses by external rewards and stimuli. In other words, creativity is considered as a response to stimuli that, if reinforced, increases the likelihood of its repetition in the future. In this approach, creativity is not studied directly, but rather as a result of the processes of conditioning and reinforcement.

For example, if a child receives encouragement or a reward for a creative response to a problem, they are more likely to repeat that creative response in the future. Thus, behaviorists believe that creativity can be taught and reinforced in children using the principles of classical and operant conditioning (Chen, Moradi, Vahid, Khalil, 2024).

3.3. Cognitive approach:

The role of creativity in the cognitive approach is to generate innovative and flexible solutions to different problems and situations. This approach focuses on mental processes, problem solving, and cognitive processes such as perception, memory, and thinking, and considers creativity as an important cognitive process. In the cognitive approach, creativity is considered as a cognitive skill and involves complex mental processes such as information processing, problem solving, and critical thinking. This approach emphasizes the importance of prior knowledge and experiences, the influence of the environment, and the processes of evaluating creative ideas (Giancola, Palmiero, Piccardi, & D'Amico, 2022).

3.4. Psychoanalytic approach:

Psychoanalytic theory suggests that creativity stems from unconscious processes and early childhood experiences, often linked to unresolved conflicts and the sublimation of primal urges.

This perspective emphasizes how individuals express internal states, especially those stemming from early relationships, through creative outlets. Recent psychoanalytic writings on aesthetics highlight the role of early relational experiences in shaping the sense of aesthetic form and the drive for refined expression (Hagman, 2009).

Creative Potential in Psychosis:

Some psychoanalytic approaches, particularly those within the Jungian tradition, explore the potential for creativity to emerge from the symptoms of psychosis, suggesting that these symptoms can be a source of insight and self-discovery (Hagman, 2009).

In essence, psychoanalysis offers a rich and complex perspective on creativity, linking it to unconscious processes, early childhood experiences, and the drive for self-expression. Recent developments in psychoanalysis continue to explore the multifaceted relationship between the psyche and the creative process, offering valuable insights for understanding both the artist and their work (Tarzian, Ndrio, Fakoya, 2023).

3.5. Humanistic approach:

Humanistic approaches highlight the vital role of creativity in psychology and emphasize its importance for individual growth, social progress, and the renewal of the field itself. Creativity is considered essential to addressing the challenges of the 21st century, especially in the face of rapid technological change and the need for innovative solutions. Humanistic psychology, with its focus on human potential and self-actualization, increasingly recognizes creativity as a core element (House, Kalisch & Maidman, 2017).

4. Case studies

4.1. Biological approaches – Introduction to Psychology

While there isn't one single "founder," Charles Darwin is widely recognized for laying the groundwork for the biological approach to psychology through his theory of evolution by natural selection. His work highlighted the influence of genetics and evolution on behavior, suggesting that some behaviors are adaptive and have been naturally selected for their survival and reproductive advantages. Other notable figures who contributed to the development of biological psychology include Wilhelm Wundt, who established the first psychology laboratory, and individuals who explored the relationship between brain function and behavior, like Phineas Gage and those who developed brain imaging techniques.

Here's a more detailed look:

Charles Darwin:

His theory of evolution by natural selection provided a framework for understanding how inherited traits, including behavioral tendencies, could be shaped by their impact on survival and reproduction.

Wilhelm Wundt:

While not solely focused on the biological approach, his establishment of the first psychology laboratory in Leipzig in 1879 marked a significant step in establishing psychology as a scientific discipline, paving the way for biological approaches to study the mind and behavior.

Early Pioneers:

Figures like René Descartes, Thomas Willis, and Luigi Galvani, though working before the formal establishment of biological psychology, explored the connection between the brain, nervous system, and behavior, laying some of the early conceptual groundwork.

Modern Biological Psychology:

Later, researchers like John Harlow (with his work on Phineas Gage) and those developing brain imaging techniques like fMRI and PET scans, further solidified the link between specific brain regions and behaviors (Rothbart, 2011).

4.2. Behaviorist approaches – Introduction to Psychology

The behaviorist approach to psychology, which focuses on observable behaviors and their relationship to environmental stimuli, was largely founded by John B. Watson. He established behaviorism as a school of thought in psychology by emphasizing the study of observable behaviors and their modification through environmental interactions. His work built upon the earlier research of Ivan Pavlov, particularly on classical conditioning.

Here's a more detailed look:

John B. Watson:

He is considered the "father of behaviorism". Watson argued that psychology should focus on observable behaviors rather than subjective mental states. His 1913 paper, "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It," is a foundational text for the movement.

Classical Conditioning:

Watson's work was significantly influenced by Ivan Pavlov's research on classical conditioning, which demonstrated how learned associations between stimuli could elicit specific responses.

Focus on Observable Behavior:

Behaviorism prioritizes the study of observable actions and responses to environmental stimuli. This approach contrasts with earlier schools of thought that focused on introspection and subjective mental experiences.

Environmental Influence:

Behaviorists emphasize the role of environmental factors in shaping behavior, arguing that behaviors are learned through interactions with the environment.

B.F. Skinner's Contribution:

B.F. Skinner further developed behaviorism, particularly through his work on operant conditioning, which focuses on how consequences (reinforcement and punishment) influence behavior (Leigland, 2009).

4.3. cognitive approaches – Introduction to Psychology

The cognitive approach in contemporary psychology is widely attributed to the work of Ulric Neisser, particularly his 1967 book, *Cognitive Psychology*. This book is credited with formally establishing cognitive psychology as a distinct field of study. While Neisser is considered a key figure, the cognitive revolution was a broader movement involving contributions from various fields

Ulric Neisser:

His book, *Cognitive Psychology*, is considered a foundational text for the field.

Noam Chomsky:

His work on linguistics, particularly his critique of behaviorism and theories of language acquisition, was influential.

George Miller:

He highlighted the interdisciplinary nature of cognitive science, emphasizing the roles of psychology, linguistics, and computer science.

Jean Piaget:

His developmental cognitive theory, focused on representational thought and the construction of mental models, contributed significantly (Chica, Bartolomeo, Lupiáñez, 2013).

4.4. Psychoanalytic approaches – Introduction to Psychology

Sigmund Freud:

The psychoanalytic approach, a foundational theory in contemporary psychology, was established by Sigmund Freud. It emphasizes the influence of the unconscious mind, early childhood experiences, and psychosexual development on personality and behavior. Freud's work, particularly his development of psychoanalysis as a method of treating mental disorders, has had a lasting impact on both psychology and Western culture.

4.5. Humanistic approaches – Introduction to Psychology

The humanistic approach in contemporary psychology is largely attributed to Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. While both are considered founders, Maslow is often referred to as the "father of humanistic psychology". They both emphasized the positive potential of individuals and their capacity for growth and self-actualization.

Carl Rogers is known for developing the person-centered approach, which includes client-centered therapy, emphasizing the importance of the therapeutic relationship and the client's capacity for self-directed change. He also highlighted concepts like unconditional positive regard and the actualizing tendency, the innate drive toward growth and fulfillment.

Abraham Maslow is famous for his hierarchy of needs, which outlines the stages of human motivation and suggests that basic needs must be met before individuals can strive for self-actualization. His work emphasizes the importance of understanding the whole person and their potential for growth.

While both Rogers and Maslow are central to the humanistic movement, other notable figures include **Rollo May, Erich Fromm, and Viktor Frankl**, each contributing unique perspectives to the field (Behrendt, Ralf-Peter, 2018).

5. Summary and conclusion

The humanistic and existential approach in psychology places a strong emphasis on creativity as a vital component of self-actualization and human flourishing, making it a core focus. This perspective views creativity not just as a skill, but as an essential part of human development and well-being, aligning it with concepts like personal growth and fulfillment.

The results showed that humanistic approach is most associated with creativity:

Focus on Self-Actualization:

Humanistic psychology, pioneered by figures like Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow, centers on the idea that humans have an innate drive to grow, change, and develop their full potential. Creativity is seen as a key pathway to achieving this potential and experiencing a meaningful life.

Emphasis on Motivation and Potential:

Humanistic psychologists are interested in what motivates individuals to be creative and how they can unlock their inherent potential for creative expression.

Connection to Well-being:

The humanistic perspective links creativity with subjective well-being, resilience, and happiness, suggesting that engaging in creative activities can enhance overall quality of life.

Beyond Problem Solving:

While other approaches may focus on creativity as a means to solve specific problems (like divergent thinking), humanistic psychology explores creativity as a broader force for personal growth and self-discovery.

Other psychological approaches, like the cognitive approach, also acknowledge the importance of creativity, particularly in areas like problem-solving and idea generation. However, the humanistic perspective uniquely elevates creativity to a central aspect of human existence and psychological health.

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