

## Research Essay

# Possible Role of Quantum Physics in Transpersonal & Metaphysical Psychology

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## Abstract

The three main schools that explain the origin of consciousness are neuroscientist, skeptic and quantum. The quantum school explains consciousness by applying quantum theories and explains that consciousness has a quantum origin, is non local and creates our perceived reality from vibrating entities that can have multiple versions based on the observer's perception. Although the neuroscientist model has been used by most traditional psychology schools, the quantum consciousness model has recently gotten a lot of attention as it can be used to support more metaphysical paradigms of psychology such as metapsychology and transpersonal psychology that recognize the dualistic nature of the human (spiritual and physical). Although the quantum consciousness model is still not well understood and accepted by traditional psychologists, it provides a multidimensional view of the human being that might explain the complex human consciousness that is still a mystery for most of us that are fascinated by the creativity and wonderful power of the human mind.

**Keywords:** Transpersonal psychology, quantum physics, metaphysics, metapsychology, consciousness.

## 1. Introduction

Most western scientists assume that consciousness is produced in some form by the brain. There is of course evidence for that position. There is evidence of common sense in our daily lives, when a person drinks too much alcohol or gets a hard hit to the head, we do not think clearly. We also have more sophisticated tests of the relationship between the brain and consciousness; in fact all the theories of consciousness during the last century have been supported by psychologists who have been moving towards materialism that characterized the nineteenth-century physics based on Newton's classical mechanics. These have been trying to show that consciousness is only the functioning of the physical brain. This materialistic psychology was supported by John Watson (1916), who wrote that psychology is a purely objective experimental branch of science that needs no consciousness in the same way that science does not need chemistry and physics.

There are different and varied ways of describing consciousness and all are based on interests of different research groups: psychologists, neurophysiologists, computer scientists, metaphysicians, philosophers and physicists. Consciousness can be defined as the set of subjective, immediate or remote knowledge that each being has about the world and himself but the question is, what originates consciousness?. There are three main schools that explain the origin of consciousness: neuroscientist, skeptic and quantum.

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The neuroscientist school advocates that consciousness arises from an activity neuronal merely more or less complex, and thus resides in the brain. Most of traditional psychology theories are based on the neuroscientist school and it is the predominant school of thought in modern psychology. We call the skeptical school as the one whose followers hold that science can never interpret and understand consciousness. In general, this would be so because the secret of "being aware" is not based on a simple phenomenological problem, but on the contrary, the great challenge is to explain that part of "the consciousness that is aware of own consciousness". In other words, the great mystery is that we are aware that we have consciousness, and that is irreducible to science.

The quantum school explains consciousness by applying quantum theories. The quantum consciousness model explains that the universe is a set vibrating beings and that consciousness has a quantum origin. The model proposes that consciousness is non local and can work independently of the physical brain and that consciousness is endless and immortal. The model also proposes that our perceived reality is created by our consciousness by interpreting vibrating energy and that reality can have multiple versions depending on the observer. The quantum school also explains that we live in a collective consciousness that connects all the consciousnesses of the universe to the supreme consciousness by using the quantum entanglement concept that explains that the quantum states of two or more objects have to be described with reference to each other, even though the individual objects may be spatially separated.

This last school supports some of the psychological paradigms that couldn't be explained before. Freud is the proponent of metaphysical psychology that is a paradigm that proposes that inner information of an individual cannot be known by looking at the outside of a person (Reitinger 2013), Freud could not find the biological connection during his time of work which caused him to focus on other topics and almost abandon his research for metaphysical psychology (Tresan 1996). The metaphysical psychology paradigm recognizes the inner side of the individual but it cannot connect it to the biology of physical brain, as the quantum consciousness model recognizes that consciousness is independent of the brain, the psychologist can use this model in order to analyze a psychological problem from a dualistic point of view (spiritual and physical). The model also supports the transpersonal psychology paradigm that recognizes the spiritual and immortal nature of consciousness (Grof 1994). Without the quantum consciousness model, these paradigms couldn't be explained as the neurological model does not recognize the dualistic nature of the human being.

## 2. Quantum Consciousness Model

The trend to explain consciousness by applying quantum theories has gained popularity in recent years and, although clearly disdained by neuroscientists, more and more researchers direct their steps this way up. Brian D. Josephson (1962) of the University of Cambridge, winner of the 1973 Nobel Prize in Physics for his studies on the quantum effects in superconductors (Josephson effect), proposes a unified field theory of quantum nature that would explain not only consciousness and its attributes, but also all the phenomenology observed to date in terms of parapsychological, metaphysical and mystical experiences.

Another character that has stood in defence of a quantum theory of consciousness was the physicist Roger Penrose (1994). Penrose (1994) attacks and almost ridicules those who argue that the artificial intelligence of computers can reproduce human attributes, including consciousness. Penrose, based on the mathematical theorem of Gödel and based on subsequent his elaborations, concludes that no system that is deterministic, that is, which is based on rules and deductions, can explain the creative powers of the mind and its judgment. This nullifies the

claim of classic physics, computer, neurobiology, etc., that structure themselves into a complex phenomenon of consciousness. Penrose says that only the peculiar characteristics of non-deterministic quantum physics could issue an approximate judgment on consciousness, within a theory that involves quantum phenomena, macro physical and conditions of non locality. At this point perhaps it would be interesting to clarify that local conditions are not known in quantum physics, those capabilities that either have a quantum system, experience instant communication between two parts without there being time duration between communication of an event from one point to another system.

There is still another favourable group to this explanatory theory of consciousness, which is headed by Dr. Ian N. Marshall (Marshall & Zohar 1997) who through empirical testing system claims to have the key to the issue. Marshall and Zohar (1997) showed that conscious thought emerges from quantum effects.

Quantum physics helped to have a quantum understanding of consciousness. What we are able to perceive with our five senses is not reality. Quantum physics has shown that space and time are illusions of perception. Our body cannot really be a reality if it does not occupy most of the space it seems to occupy; an experiment made at the University of Manchester revealed the shape of the interior of an atom is almost entirely empty space. The question then became how we could possibly make the world around us see us if this is the case (Russell et al., 1993).

The quantum consciousness model proposes that our true consciousness does not exist in our brains or in our bodies, but this illusion of our individual bodies along with the misinformation of our true origins has manifested the idea that we all think independently from one another. With this understanding, it seems possible to scientifically explain telepathy, clairvoyance, spiritual mediums related to the transfer of information between sources without physical means of communication phenomena. When we understand that there is a common spiritual bond between all things in the universe and that we are all part of a divine intelligence, this simple understanding will fill all the holes in modern religions and predictions about the future and literally every occurrence of events (Russell et al., 1993).

According to quantum physics, the physical world and its reality, it's just a recreation of the observed. We created the body and reality, as we create the experience of our world in its different manifestations dimensional. In its essential state (atomic or cosmic subquantum micro), the body is made of energy and information, not solid matter, this is only a meager level of perception, this is energy and information arising from the endless fields of energy and information spanning the entire universal creation (Valverde 2015a).

### 3. Transpersonal Psychology

Transpersonal Psychology considers that the psyche is multidimensional. There are several "levels of consciousness" and each has different characteristics and is governed by different laws. Transpersonal psychology does not deny other schools of thought as psychoanalysis does not arise as opposed; right thing would be to say that attempts to go further. For transpersonal vision, Freud developments have been of fundamental value in the development of psychological science to include the idea of the unconscious in a discipline that was tied to the positivist rationalism. Certainly, psychoanalysis opened the possibilities of understanding of the human psyche. Transpersonal psychology promotes another opening including the spiritual dimension of the human being. Transpersonal psychology is the study of human nature and development proceeds on the assumption that human beings possess potentials that exceed the limits of ego developed normally. A main goal of transpersonal theory is to integrate the spiritual experience within a broader understanding of the human psyche (Valverde 2015b).

It is with the study of states of consciousness and the full potential of man, that transpersonal

psychology assumes that humans can achieve harmony and transcend through spiritual development. Transpersonal is something that exceeds the range of human's own experience or personal history. Transpersonal refers to that which is beyond of the person who is the essential being.

Much of its discoveries and contributions come from the study of Eastern religions, Metaphysics, and Christian mysticism. Transpersonal psychology is interested in the different forms of Buddhism, for meditation, for yoga, for mystical experiences, psychophysiological effects and the limits of consciousness. The ultimate goal of all this is to try to achieve an awakening that is the greater awareness that would raise the level of "being" that integrates psychology and spirituality.

In the book of Stanislav Grof (1994), "Transpersonal Psychology" is described as the perception of the spiritual dimension in a psychological language. Many things that happen in this world seem to make no sense, and they really do not make sense if we consider only the material dimension. Suffering and death seems meaningless, even life often seems meaningless as well. But if our view includes the spiritual dimension, from this new angle of view everything is different and what before was meaningless, it acquires now a new meaning. This is what happens with many concepts of orthodox psychology that seems to be dominated by randomness and chaos.

Only in the light of metaphysics and religious knowledge the exquisite order is appreciated. This is what transpersonal psychology brings: the order and direction where there seemed to be randomness and chaos. The therapist, for example, often go short of arguments to the thinking of who is tempted to commit suicide; only if the therapist has a clear idea about the perennial values, he or she would have the ability to persuade the potential suicidal person with determination and effectiveness (Grof 1994).

Transpersonal psychology is used to understand the spiritual human being, which is beyond the three-dimensional reality and includes the ability to understand what cannot be defined. The transpersonal world connotes eternal spiritual values that go beyond the individual and that we see as inherent to the person and go even beyond space and time. With transpersonal psychology, we see that the great puzzle of the meaning of life is only resolved if we have this eternal context; unless we have the spiritual dimension nothing makes sense and, of course, does not make sense from the transpersonal psychological point of view (Grof 2010).

## 4. Metaphysical Psychology

When we go beyond empirical or objective psychology, we enter the realm of metaphysical psychology or *metapsychology*. Metapsychology is a term coined by Sigmund Freud and means "beyond" psychology. It is defined by Freud as (1957):

"A systematic attempt to discern and describe what lies beyond the facts and laws of psychology, such as the relations between body and mind or concerning the place of the mind in the universe".

Metapsychology can be used for psychology that leads behind consciousness (Freud 1957). Metapsychology is the study of psychology within a metaphysical context. Not only is metapsychology a dualistic (physical and spiritual) approach to understanding human nature, but also it emphasizes a person-centered therapy approach which is closely related to psychoanalysis. Metapsychology is a theoretically explicit psychology, which has the main purpose to connect the mind and body while maintaining a client-centered setting (Meltzer 2009). This psychology is meant to emphasize the experiences as viewed by the client and not by the views of a psychologist trying to find out what the experience means to that person (Gerbode 2013).

Metapsychology allows people to recognize that they are in control of their own experiences. Once they can recognize these experiences, then they become aware of ways in which they can improve themselves and the environment around them (Gerbode 2013). Gerbode stresses therapy as a way of developing the spirit for personal growth, rather than as an answer to mental disorders (Gerbode 2013). Gerbode (2006) had a main focus in traumatic incident reduction (TIR) which is a very structured and self-centered process that is used to lessen the negative effects of past traumas and encourage the person to become more aware of their inner strengths and embrace them (Gerbode 2006). Metapsychology promotes a person-centered process, based on direct experiences, to eliminate psychological symptoms experienced by people who experience traumatic incidents (Gerbode 2006).

## 5. Quantum Consciousness in Transpersonal & Metaphysical Psychology

The quantum consciousness model propose that the biochemistry of the body is a product of quantum consciousness that includes feelings, emotions, thoughts and ideas, this creates reactions that sustain life in every cell. The perception of something is a learned phenomenon, if we change our perception, we change our experience and therefore our world, as this only has reality in our acting ability, be it on a conscious, subconscious or supra conscious level. This important concept of the quantum consciousness model supports the metapsychological view that allows people to recognize that they are in control of their own experiences. People are in control of their reality and can change this reality by raising their level of consciousness in order to improve themselves and their conditions. It also supports the transpersonal psychology paradigm that promotes spiritual development as part of the human experience, according to the quantum consciousness model, consciousness can learn from its experience and use this to transform its perception of reality and therefore grow spiritually.

The quantum consciousness paradigm through the principle of entanglement also proposes that although each person appears as a separate and independent, in reality we are all connected to the patterns of universal intelligence also called the absolute. Our body is part of a universal body, our minds are part of the universal mind and in turn all of these are part of the universe. This has an important implication for both metaphysical and transpersonal psychology, a person consciousness is connected to all the consciousnesses around him or her; if a person wants to improve his or her condition, he or she needs to improve his or her relationship with the other people around them. If we need love, we need to give love, if we need recognition, we need to give recognition to others. This simple concept that has been part of metaphysics, religion and other spiritual areas can be explained with the quantum principle of entanglement.

The quantum consciousness model also promotes the non locality of consciousness, this means that consciousness is immortal and timeless and functions independently from the brain. Some of the best evidence that consciousness can function independently of the brain come from near death experiences, profound experiences that some people report when they have been on the threshold of death. The near-death experiences are very short stories of people who have been clinically dead and then are resurrected or revived spontaneously after a brief interval with the memory of what they experienced during that period. According to Greysen (2010), many people with near death experiences reported vivid mental clarity exceptional sensory imagery and a clear memory of the experience and an experience that is more real, then in their daily lives.

Another evidence of the non locality of quantum consciousness is proposed by John Lorber (1980) that specialized in children with hydrocephalus, or water on the brain. Children with this condition have an abnormal amount of cerebral spinal fluid accumulation in the cavities inside their brain compressing brain tissue that usually leads to mental retardation seizures, paralysis and blindness and if not treated to death. However, Lorber describes dozens of children and some

adults with severe hydrocephalus but live normal lives. Indeed, in a sample of children with their cerebral space filled with ninety-five percent of spinal fluid in their skull leaving virtually no room for any brain tissue, half of them had a higher IQ than one hundred and thirty.

Both metaphysical and transpersonal psychology paradigms recognize the spiritual dimension of the human being that can be explained by the quantum consciousness model that proposes the non locality of human consciousnesses. Transpersonal psychology recognizes spiritual dimensions of existence and the profound human need for transcendental experiences. Each person inhabits a reality that is beyond all change, as more deep within us without the knowledge of our three-dimensional or physical outer senses. There is a core of being, an energy field that creates immortality and manifests as the physical body. This core is the being that is, the I am, the essential being or soul, primordial seed, which is contained in an atom called seed. We are seeds of eternity essential at this stage of quantum eternity.

## 4. Conclusions

Although the explanation of consciousness by using quantum theories is still in its infancy, it provides a platform for the development of multidimensional psychological paradigms that recognize that humans have an immortal consciousness that transcends time and it is integrated with a physical body that allows consciousness to have an three dimensional experience for the purpose of human growth and evolution. A better of understanding of the quantum nature of our consciousness can lead to a better understanding of the power of the mind and its relation with the universe and every living being around us.

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