

**The 1950s and the 1960s: Two Decades in the History of Psychology in the Dominican
Republic**

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Thesis

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HISTORY OF PSYCHOLOGY IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Abstract

The history of Psychology in the Dominican Republic in the 1950s and the 1960s is part of the beginnings of Psychology in the country. As different events took place, Psychology showed up in different contexts throughout both decades, from university courses, such as introduction to Psychology, to events such as the First Interamerican Congress of Psychology. These moments were key in the advancement of Psychology as they paved the way to the first departments of Psychology in 1967. Therefore, my research aims at recovering a neglected chapter in the history of psychology. My question asks: how did the discipline of Psychology become institutionalized in the Dominican Republic? By reviewing different sources, such as books created around those decades and articles covering the events of the time, this research aims to show the process Psychology underwent throughout the 1950s and the 1960s.

Keywords: History of Psychology, Dominican Republic, Latin America, Caribbean

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Introduction

When one thinks of the history of Psychology, the first thought usually goes to the first experimental laboratory in Germany and to movements such as Behaviorism which arose in the United States. This, of course, is quite logical, given the number of textbooks taking that path. Nevertheless, this strategy is like taking a highway: you miss the hidden places like small towns and wonderful villages. One of those small towns in psychology is hidden in the Caribbean, more precisely in the Dominican Republic.

Currently, centering the historical narrative on one specific country has nationalistic and patriotic connotations. Although this seems an acceptable reason for avoiding such approaches, the alternative cannot be to restrict the account to only some elite national settings such as Germany and the U.S. Why maintain the focus on mainstream settings? There is still a lot of work to be done to dig out local traditions in other cultural settings that have not yet been explored.

It is possible to see how, systemically, certain countries outside of Europe and North America are excluded from Psychology history manuals by reviewing: “A History of Modern Psychology in Context: Incorporating Social, Political, and Economic Factors into the Story” (Pickren & Rutherford, 2010). This manual focuses on North America and Europe, dedicating one chapter to the internationalization and indigenization of Psychology, and one chapter to inclusivity in Psychology. Both of those chapters are meager in comparison to the chapters related to North America and Europe. Another manual that is even worse is “A history of psychology: main currents in psychological thought” (Hardy Leahey, 2004). This classic textbook does not even have a chapter regarding the internationalization of Psychology.

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Therefore, my research aims at recovering a neglected chapter in the history of psychology. My question asks: how did the discipline of Psychology become institutionalized in the Dominican Republic? The question led me to try to find out about the state of Psychology in the Dominican Republic in the 1950s and the 1960s. Given the lack of primary and secondary sources, the research was very much an exploratory excursion into the unknown and proved to be much more difficult than expected. Additionally, the problems with travels due to the Covid pandemic increased the challenge even more because as master student in the Netherlands, I could not travel back to my country and to consult libraries and archives.

After months of investigation, and with the help of some friends, I managed to get a couple of fragmented pieces of history, which offer some hints of how psychology became a discipline in my country. Thus, my historical research is rather modest: It is mainly the outcome of an effort to put these scattered pieces together in order to get an overall view that contextualized each step and decade within the process of institutionalization.

I will start with a brief summary of what happened before the 1950s in the Dominican Republic. Historians consider that the official appearance of psychology was in the 1940s, with the introduction of at least three different Psychology subjects being taught at the *Universidad Autónoma de Santo Domingo*. These subjects were: (a) General Psychology, (b) Abnormal Psychology, and (c) Applied Psychology (Brea De Cabral et al., 1998; Zaite, 2013). The historian Enerio Rodriguez attributes the introduction of these courses to the groundwork done by some pioneer's half a century ago. In particular, he cites Jose R. López's (1896) paper on "Nutrition and race" (Rodriguez, 2009). López used the term 'race' to refer to Dominican citizens arguing that the poor physical health of these people, their intellectual atrophy, and their incapacity to elevate to more advanced forms of civilization, stems from the poor nutrition of the

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local diet. According to López, this diet weakened the Dominicans, debilitating their brainpower, and making them lazy and indolent. He designated three main characteristics that are signs for a lack of nutrition: improvidence, violence, and duplicity. Interestingly in Spain Rafael Salillas defended a similar theory, connecting the lack of nutrition and bad eating habits to psychological characteristics of nomads (Mülberger, Techniques of mind-reading in Spanish juridical Psychology, 2020).

Nevertheless, despite such early interests in psychological topics, it was in the 1940s, when the first officially acknowledged paper in psychology was published by Fernando Sainz (1945), an exiled professor and writer from Spain. The paper was entitled “A study about psychology and Dominican education”. He published his study in a series of articles using what now a days seems rather anecdotic information about the personality of Dominican people. He described them as:

(...) conformists. They accept their luck without protest. Resist adversity by being stoic and celebrate luck as if they were a child. They love life as an epicurean.

The Spanish teacher offers a caricature of the Dominican population as being immature (childish), easy to treat and with no higher ambitions.

Moreover, he commented about them that:

They take care of themselves; they medicate and treat themselves with wisdom and popular techniques. To the service of their health, they put all the earth, flora and fauna, the experience, the doctors, the wizards, and the celestial court; but if death reaches them or their loved ones, they accept it with exemplary conformity. (Rodriguez, 2009, p. 47).

The paper goes on to expand on Sainz's thoughts and experiences with people of the Dominican Republic. The descriptions he gives regarding the "Psychology of Dominican

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people", has he called it, is very general because what he defines here as typical for Dominicans seems a description that can also be applied to people from several other countries, such as Haiti, Colombia, Puerto Rico, and others. Actually, these attitudes and traits could easily appear in any human population. Precisely because the description being so general, it can produce a false sense of validity due to the easiness to encounter people who fit into it.

The 1950s

Historical Overview

At the beginning of this decade and since 1930, the country was governed by the dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo – also known as *El Jefe* –. This dictatorship was a result of the military intervention by the United States. Therefore, it was marked by a heavy presence of military aspects¹.

In 1949 Dominican revolutionaries performed what today its known as the Luperon expedition², named in honor of one of the heroes of the Dominican restoration. It was made by air and sea by opposers of the regime. The expeditions failed, but the revolutionary movements of which it had been part, continued throughout the decade of the 1950s (Herasme Peña, 2011).

In 1959, there was another invasion against the regime: the expeditions of Constanza, Maimón, and Estero Hondo. Just like its predecessor – the Luperon expedition of 1949 – also this attempt to trigger a change in government failed (Herasme Peña, 2011). This expedition took

¹ Trujillo was a military man, having been trained by the U.S. Marines. He reached the rank of General and lead a military revolt against President Vasquez in 1930. During his regime he had the support of the army to ensure his power (Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, 2022).

² Although called 'expeditions', these were attacks to the regime made by Dominican revolutionary that were outside of the country. Therefore, they needed to invade or go in a 'expedition' to perform their attack.

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place on the 14 of June, and its legacy became the 1J4 (June 14) movement that continued the revolutionary activities and later even became a political party.

Psychology in the Dominican Republic

The First Interamerican Congress of Psychology

In 1953 The newly founded Interamerican Society of Psychology (1951) organized their First Congress in Santo Domingo, which at the time was called 'Trujillo City'. This congress was possible thanks to the cooperation of the Mexican Secretary of Public Education, UNESCO, the Secretary-General of the incipient Inter-American Society of Psychology, and the Dominican government, under the guidance of Oswaldo Robles and Andres Avelino. It is important to remark that, while the First Congress was held in the Dominican Republic, the country did not yet have any Psychology department or university training in psychology (Rodriguez, 2009).

During the event, Fabio Mota³ and Malaquias Gil Arantegui⁴ gave an update at the beginning of the congress on psychology in the Dominican Republic. They mentioned that even though there were no official psychology departments, certain areas of psychology had captivated the attention of scholars in the country and that the interest in Psychology was growing each day. Specifically, the areas of psycho-pedagogy, philosophy, and clinical psychology were expanding quickly. According to the records of the Congress, in the year before, 1952, the Secretary of State for Education and Fine Arts⁵, had applied the 'P.V. Simon

³ Mota was a teacher of Psychiatry and Abnormal Psychology at the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo*.

⁴ Gil Arantegui was a Spanish teacher of pedagogy; he was also a pedagogy teacher at the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo*.

⁵ Today divided in three different ministries: the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology; and the Ministry of Fine Arts.

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Intelligence test'⁶. In this trial, they tested students from public and private schools in city environments and the countryside environment (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, p. 75). The test was passed to approximately 5000 students, with ages between 7 and 14. It was done at the Institute for Psycho-pedagogical Research with the aim of creating a scale to measure the intelligence of the local students (Rodriguez, 2009).

During the Congress, several papers were presented by psychologists from all over the American continent. Nine of these papers were given by members of the Dominican delegation (Gallegos, 2012) and are, therefore a good way to see what kind of psychological topic and research was practiced in the country

The nine papers representing the Dominican Republic covered subjects from applied Psychology⁷ to theoretical Psychology, four on the first and four on the latter branch of psychology, with the update of Psychology in the Dominican Republic being the first paper. The comparison already informs us that there was a widespread interest in discussing psychological (meta-)theories and concepts. Even within the sample of papers dealing with applied psychology, most try to show ways in which psychology could be of service to society. The presentation of empirical research was nearly absent among these talks.

Armando Cordero's paper, for example, is entitled "The Psychological factor and the problem with professional guidance"⁸. He focused on the role of psychologists in schools when it comes to give orientation to students on a case-to-case basis. His goal was to show that such an individual assessment is desirable because it was supposed to help the students develop their

⁶ This was another way of referring to the Stanford–Binet Intelligence Scales.

⁷ Although its currently being abandoned, the term 'Applied Psychology' was predominantly used at the time (mid-20th century) to identify the areas of psychology that were of 'use' to society.

⁸ This and other translations regarding the congress might sound strange to English speakers, but this are the translations made at the time of the event (1953).

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‘...spiritual values’⁹, and to live to be proud of what they are, what they should be, and what they could be’ (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, págs. 208-212). We do not know exactly what he meant with ‘spiritual values’ but given that Catholicism was the primary religion in the Dominican Republic, it is possible that these ‘Spiritual values’ are based on the Roman-Christian ethics and beliefs (U.S. Department of State, 2019).

The second talk was about “Information and Essay on the Application of Psychology to Delinquency” by Adolfo Mejía Ricart. Mejía Ricard explains what criminal Psychology is and urges the attendees of the congress to insist on its importance in court cases across the American continent. Mejía argued that criminals should be judged based on evaluations made by expert criminologists and not only by a jury (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 484-491). Also, within the area of criminal Psychology, Daniel Osvaldo Avelino presented “Psychological and Categorical Fundamental Principles of Penal and Civil Responsibility”. This presentation suggested that the psychological state of a person needs to be taken into consideration when judging if a person is responsible for their actions. Before arriving to such a judgment, the expert needs to assess whether the offender had been able to properly understand and foresee the repercussions of his acts (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 602-606). These two contributions connect well with the attempt made also by psychologists in other countries such as Germany, U.S., Italy and Spain, to develop a new specialty in psychology called forensic (juridical) psychology. While the first textbooks already appeared at the beginning of the 20th century, it would still take until 2001 until the APA would include this professional area (Mülberger, 2009).

⁹ Due to Catholicism being the primary religion in the Dominican Republic, it is possible that these ‘Spiritual values’ are based in Catholic beliefs (U.S. Department of State, 2019).

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Performing a slight jump in subjects, but still, within the field, of applied psychology there was the presentation by Antonio Pannochia Alvarez on “Psychic traumatism of women suffering from the amputation of the breast”. Here the perspective was clinical. The author was a physician who explored the different levels in which a woman’s life can be affected by such an amputation, i.e., from a change in her self-image to problems in romantic relationships. Pannochia highlights the importance of mental health care for patients that need to undergo or have undergone the breast amputation procedure (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 676-679).

Moving into more theoretical subjects, Pannochia gave a second presentation on another topic related to women. This presentation was titled: “Feminine reactions and attitudes towards maternal instinct”. In it, he explored the intricacies of maternal feeling by comparing how Dominican women feel when being married women, single mothers, infertile women who adopted children, married women with infertile husbands and who wish to be mothers, and lastly, mothers who are sex workers (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, págs. 611-616).

Also, theorizing, George Lockward presented “The problem with the mathematization of the psychic”. In his work, he explores the use of mathematics in the study of the mind. He exposes arguments in favor, i.e. why measurements and formula can/should be used in Psychology, but he is also critical and insists in the need to see humans as being more than just a sum of quantities (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 533-535). Since the 19th century, psychologists had been trying to quantify sensations, discussing the use of psychophysical formula (Mülberger, 2022). After the 1930s until the mid-20th century, Neo-Behaviorism was highly influential and cognitivism was on the rise, both promoting the need for

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experimentation and measurement. Thus, when Lockward was giving his talk, the interest in measurement had only increased.

Another of the subjects covered at the conference was ‘consciousness’. The philosopher, Andres Avelino talked about “The antinomic problems of categorical conscience”. He exemplified different types of categories for how people see consciousness – from a psychological point and from a philosophical point – and what it covers when changing from one perspective to the other (e.g., memory as part of consciousness). The author also discussed the existence of conscience from the perspective of both Psychology and Philosophy (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 539-550).

The last presentation of the Dominican panel was by Juan Francisco Sanchez with his study on “Philosophy, Psychology and human reality”. He pondered on what psychology really is as a study of the soul and of the mind. Throughout the text, he cites a wide variety of authors, analyzing their perspectives on this subject (Interamerican Society of Psychology, 1955, pp. 622-647). Such a topic seems to reflect the interest of some existential philosophers of the time, connecting to early humanistic approaches that had appeared in the 1940s in the U.S. under the leadership of Charlotte Bühler, Abraham Maslow and Carl Rogers.

Institutionalization

In the 1940s, there were some psychology courses offered at a bachelor’s level at the Dominican universities. Students from careers such as Philosophy, Law, and Medicine joined them. These courses were originally held at the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. But, upon the decision in 1955/56 to host in that faculty also a teacher training program, the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters turned into the Faculty of Philosophy and Education. This change brought with it the introduction of new subjects such as (a) Psychology of teenagers, (b)

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Education Psychology, (c) Psychometry, and (d) Applied Psychology (Brea De Cabral, Rodriguez Arias, & Alonso de Tapia, 1998).

During this period when Psychology was institutionally only available in a couple of courses, there were some papers written by students from a psychological perspective. These papers were presented in 1957 during a scientific contest¹⁰. The winning paper was written by Tirso Mejía-Ricart – who at that time was a bachelor’s student in medicine and who had submitted a paper to the Faculty of Medicine entitled “*Psychopathological Process of Violent Acts*”. In the essay/manuscript, Mejia-Ricart discusses the different factors that influence violent acts, such as genetics, emotions, culture, and which kind of circumstances could cause them. The paper also covered different psychopathologies that could result in violence. At the end of his paper, Mejia-Ricart cites Kretschmer’s constitutional theory and Jung’s typology.

At the Faculty of Philosophy and Education, also a psychological paper was received from the same author, namely Tirso Mejia-Ricart. He submitted two papers because he was enrolled at that time in two academic careers (Medicine and Phil./Ed). His second text was an “*Essay about Love*”. In this paper, he performed a revision of the descriptions of love from a sociological and psychological perspective. He did this by following the approaches of MacDougall, Freud, Mead, and Stern. He did this analysis by viewing love as a sentiment that is completely dependent on the cultural interpretations of survival instincts and sexual impulses (Brea De Cabral, Rodriguez Arias, & Alonso de Tapia, 1998).

¹⁰ This seemed to be a contest that happened in all faculties between the students, meaning one of the papers participated in the contest by the Faculty of Medicine, and the other in the contest of the Faculty of Philosophy.

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A look beyond borders: Psychology Colombia and Spain

One of its first psychology programs in Latin America was established in Colombia in 1947. This was the Institute of Applied Psychology at the National University of Colombia (Aguilar, Ossa, Burbano, & Cudina, 2021). In Colombia, Psychology was born in the middle of a violent time in their history, a civil war that would last for 10 years. Although this war was affecting society, it did not seem to steer psychological interests. Colombian psychologists at that time seemed to concentrate more on their academic interests following the trends in North America and Europe (Aguilar, Ossa, Burbano, & Cudina, 2021).

In the 1940s in Spain, the Franco dictatorship was still dominating the country. At that time modern Psychology was not flourishing. The government wanted the field to return to a more conservative and catholic path based on St. Thomas Aquinas' works (Carpintero, 2012). In the decade of the 1950s, there was renewed interest in modern Psychology, starting with the creation of the *Sociedad Española de Psicología* (Spanish Psychological Society) in 1952. This Society was the driving force behind the foundation of a Psychology School at the *Universidad Complutense de Madrid* in 1953 (Carpintero, 2012).

The 1960s

Historical Overview

The 1960s started with a lot of commotion. The failed expedition of 1959 empowered the revolutionary movements to plan more attacks against the regime of Trujillo. This, combined with the clash between him and the Catholic Church and the murder of the Mirabal sisters led to Trujillo's execution on May 30th, 1961 (Herasme Peña, 2011). Finally, after 30 years, the death of the dictator opened the door for political changes. Several events followed immediately, such

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as percussions and protests. The first elections were held in December of 1962 with Juan Bosch as the winner and then took his place as president in 1963 (Hoy, 2018).

Despite being elected, the first democratic government did not reach the end of 1963. This was mainly due to the problems with the Catholic Church, the oligarchy and the military. They faced a coup that threw them out of the government and established a triumvirate as the new government (Solano & Pérez, 2022). This led to the ‘April war’ – name given to the revolution against the state – in 1965 that lasted only a few months but caused the second intervention of the United States into the Dominican Republic (Pereyra, 2021).

Afterwards, in 1966 Joaquin Balaguer took place as the new president and maintained his position for 12 years. This government kept an iron hold on the young and was responsible for the disappearing and murder of several students and young activists (Nina Gómez, 2019).

Psychology in the Dominican Republic

Institutionalization

At the beginning of the decade, more precisely in 1961, the law 5778 was approved, giving the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo* a guarantee that its autonomy would not be endangered or infringed upon by the government. This act of 1961 gave way to new programs being introduced in the University’s professional offers, such as a Sociology degree in 1963 which led to more courses in psychology such as ‘Introduction to Psychology’, and two courses in Social Psychology. The reform also opened the door for sending students to other countries for their specialization, exchanges that would bring new knowledge to this university (Rodriguez, 2009).

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During this year (1961) a portfolio of tests (bateria de pruebas) – both physical and psychological – was used to evaluate what therapeutical approach could be the best/or most adequate to ensure the success of a student (Secretaria de Estado de Educacion, Bellas Artes y Cultos, 1963). This portfolio was used to evaluate in students mental and physical conditions, it contained separate instruction for teachers, students, and those in charge of applying it (e.g., other teachers, representatives of the Secretary of State for Education, Fine Arts, and Culture). The portfolio evaluated students as individuals and as part of their community. One of the instructions even specified that it is important to evaluate the places frequented by students because they might influence their morality, such as parks and community centers (Secretaria de Estado de Educacion, Bellas Artes y Cultos, 1963).

Shortly after, an educational reform took place between 1965 and 1966 under the banner of the “Renovation Movement”; a movement aimed at democratizing higher education in the country by making academic careers more accessible to all citizens. This reform opened the door to new careers in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), the Social Sciences and Humanities (Rodriguez, 2009). This also allowed for the creation of a “orientation department” to offer different types of assistance and service to the students (Rodriguez, 2009).

The Introduction of Psychology courses and the following educational reform were necessary conditions for the first psychology departments to be created in 1967. The first department belonged to the Humanities Faculty of the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo*. Its founder and first principal were precisely Tirso Mejia-Ricart¹¹, who, after his

¹¹ In 1957 had written the two papers for the contest in the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo*, one of them being the winning paper at the Faculty of Medicine.

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studies in the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo* became a psychiatrist and assisted specialized studies in Psychology at the University of Bonn (in Germany).

The study plan designed for the first Psychology curriculum - similar to a bachelor's degree program today - consisted of four years of studies with the option of specializing in either (a) Educational Psychology, (b) Clinical Psychology, (c) Social Psychology, or (d) Industrial Psychology. Also, some other tracks are mentioned, but none of them are clearly defined in the literature (Brea De Cabral, Rodriguez Arias, & Alonso de Tapia, 1998). The first generation of students started with 25 participants, all of them had at that time already a degree in either Education, Law, or Medicine.

The second department, founded in the same year, belonged to the *Universidad Pedro Henriquez Ureña* (UNPHU). This university was new. It had opened its doors only the year before. Also, here the Psychology department was located within the Faculty of Education. Malaquias Gil promoted the creation of this department, and its first principal was Jose Cruz (B.A.). Cruz, who was a priest, and started the department with a technical course in psychometry, which by 1968 evolved into a bachelor's in Educational, Clinical, and Industrial Psychology (Brea De Cabral, Rodriguez Arias, & Alonso de Tapia, 1998).

These first programs were designed by using the programs of other Latin American and European universities as inspiration (Valeirón, 2014). Furthermore, both universities seem to have taken different approaches to Psychology, with the *Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo* taking a more behaviorist approach, while the *Universidad Nacional Pedro Henriquez Ureña* went with a psychodynamic approach (Valeirón, 2014).

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A look beyond borders: Psychology Colombia and Spain

The Colombian civil war known as “La Violencia” was still going on, and psychologists were still more interested in European and North American trends. However, this interest did not mean that they were not aware of the situation in Colombia, there were some papers regarding Colombian society and the violence that plagued the country (Aguilar, Ossa, Burbano, & Cudina, 2021).

Meanwhile, in Spain, Psychology was making its way into the universities through the Philosophy and Medicine faculties (Carpintero, 2012). During this decade two schools were established at the *Universidad de Barcelona*, one focused on clinical psychology, and one covering other specialties (Carpintero, 2012). Finally, in 1968 the degree for Psychology was created in Spain. This fomented the creation of various departments and faculties around the country (Carpintero, 2012).

Conclusions

This research on the history of psychology in the Dominican Republic has shown that during the decades of the 1950s and the 1960s, the country was not disconnected from psychological advancement. Beginning with the first Interamerican Congress of Psychology, the country demonstrated an increased interest in different areas of Psychology. The congress, even if it did not trigger a spectacular change such as launching the country into a Psychology ‘boom’, it had its hand in the development of Psychology in the country, given the timeline in which Psychology courses were introduced at universities.

The proceedings of the congress also gave us a glance into the psychological issues the Dominican scholars were interested in, such as Lockward’s interest into the issue of the

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mathematization of consciousness, or the application of psychology to the problem of delinquency.

Another interesting development of Psychology in the Dominican Republic is the interest in educational Psychology and the study of young people. This can be deduced from the titles of the courses that were offered in that period, such as 'Educational Psychology' and 'Psychology of teenagers'. It was also reflected in the update given by Mota and Gil at the beginning of the first congress when they informed about the application of the Intelligence Test to school students, and the creation of the portfolio of tests in 1961 by the Secretary of Education, Arts and Culture.

Looking back at how the Secretary of education applied an Intelligence test to students in 1951, it is interesting to note a decade before Spanish researcher had been doing something similar in one of its remaining colonies in Africa. In Equatorial Guinea two Spanish doctors, namely, Vicente Beato and Ramon Villarino, applied the Yerkes and Binet-Bobertag's tests to the native people of the country. In 1944 they published the results on the "Mental capacity of the black" (Bandrés & Llavona, 2010). The Spanish testing of Equatorial Guinea natives had racist connotations because the authors concluded that the natives were intellectually inferior to white Europeans. Given this role of testing in the hand of the colonizers, it is interesting to note, that scholars in the Dominican Republic had appropriated such techniques to test their school children and with the goal in mind of evaluating the educational system.

Finally, the simultaneous creation of two departments of Psychology in 1967 took place under difficult socio-political conditions, right at the beginning of Joaquin Balaguer's twelve years of presidency. If we compare this event with the time when these first departments were created in Colombia which were the first in Latin America, we can see that it took the Dominican

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Republic some decades longer. But if we compare it to the time when the first Psychology degree was created in Spain (1968), we see that the Dominican Republic was not lagging behind but was rather quick in setting up an institutional setting in which Psychology could expand.

A look at the two decades (1950s and 1960s) in the history of Psychology in the Dominican Republic shows that the country had a growing interest in Psychology and its application in society. But more research would be needed to arrive at a complete picture and to get to know the biographies of these forerunners and the details and influence their work had.

Future research could be made by using information that has not yet been digitalized, such as the university study plans and guides that might be in the university archives. Also, through oral accounts, by performing interviews to those that were students at the time or in the following decades.

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