

THE PROBLEM OF CULTIVATING CREATIVITY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Considered in the article is the concept of creativity in relation to the emerging need to incorporate its teaching and development in the school and university curriculum on a global scale. According to international research, modern education should center on enhancing creativity, as it is valuable for preparing new generations for rapidly changing global environment. Reviewed is a psychological perspective on the problem of defining and describing the construct of creativity and applying it in educational context. Specifically, researchers conceptualize it as a complex, multi-faceted phenomenon that contributes to a person's efficient performance in any activity. It allows one to see ordinary things from an unusual angle, critically assess situations, and generate novel ideas and unexpected solutions to existing problems.

A creative personality is characterized by openness to new, diverse experiences, flexible mind, effective motivation, and enhanced capacity for continual learning throughout entire life. It is hard to overstate the enumerated qualities and competencies in relation to successful functioning in the world of opening horizons and arising possibilities. To become an accomplished, efficient professional, an individual has to be ready to constantly improve and produce innovative outcomes in his/her field. Creativity-centered education can supply young people with necessary tools, which would enable them to implement change and make a difference. Hopefully, theorists in the sphere of creativity research have provided evidence to the important statement about the possibility of the development of creativity in students through purposeful instruction. In particular, systematic practicing should focus on the development of such components of creative ability as originality, flexibility, fluency, elaboration, all types of intelligence, and efficient problem solving. Discussed are the controversies and challenges associated with teaching creativity in practical settings.

Key words: *creativity, teaching creativity, fostering creativity, educational reforms.*

In modern dynamic times, there appears a need to form learner's personality, able to navigate new constantly arising tasks and problems. European integration and human mobility have placed creativity in the spotlight. Being able to look at the same thing from different perspectives is an important competence in the Information Age. Well-adapted personality must be self-efficient, open to new experience, active and creative. Moreover, it must be a personality, tolerant to differences, ready to interact with other personalities in a multicultural world. This introduces corresponding demands to preparation of the future generations for the adult life and successful functioning in a rapidly changing social environment. However, alongside with the unambiguous demand expressed in all educational documents to develop a creative personality, there are controversies in tackling this phenomenon in reality. The current paper will deal with the concept of creativity and major problems associated with its application in the context of modern education worldwide. The reasonable conclusion will claim that the goals of education must include developing the creative personality of a young individual, with a flexible original mind, effective motivation, enhanced capacity for further learning and greater openness to new cultural experiences.

On the one hand, creativity is defined as the unique ability of individuals and the undiscovered mystery of the brain [7]. On the other hand, it is defined as the ability of the individual to generate "novel unusual ideas, to avoid stereotypic schemes in thinking, and to rapidly resolve problem situations" [7, p. 3]. Thus, it is reasonable to think that manifestations of creativity are encountered quite frequently. Furthermore, creativity is interpreted as a specific attitude, personal quality that develops in the process of professional work. It manifests itself as the ability of transformation and creation of a qualitatively new product [7, p. 3]. It is reasonable to assume that with the creative approach to studying, young people have a better opportunity to reveal all the traits of their personalities, their own identity, desires, and aspirations. This fact enables individuals to become what they can become. The person learns to be authentic and becomes sincere; s/he expresses oneself more honestly and spontaneously. Importantly, self-expression or realization of one's own inner world in the outer world is a particular human need, which is inherently connected with creativity. One can say that creative nature is the ability for self-expression that helps a person not to efface oneself, not to lose one's own being while performing

social roles, but to creatively express oneself in the world by means of activity and its products. In other words, any kind of activity must be developed to the mastery level of producing masterpieces, which bear a touch of individuality and thus make one's life and personality eternal.

According to Professor Ken Robinson, the leading specialist in the field of educational reforms, creativity is "the process of having original ideas that have value" [3]. The great contributors to the field, Robert Sternberg and Todd Lubart, who underlined its complexity and multifaceted nature, suggested a more detailed definition of the concept. Thus, the theorists determined that creativity is "a way of thinking, reacting, and working in an imaginative and idiosyncratic way, which is characterized by a high degree of innovation and originality, divergent thinking and risk taking," [8, p. 128]. Based on this process-oriented approach, researchers draw a productive conclusion about the possibility of the systematic development of creativity and its components, such as creative thinking and original problem solving. For instance, the instruction in creative thinking must aim at creating the conditions in the classroom favorable for the development of its specific qualities, namely originality, flexibility, fluency, and elaboration. The related aspects that also have to become the target of educational efforts are cognition and the feelings of satisfaction and self-efficacy, which are enhanced through stimulating meta-cognition and creativity [8].

It is necessary to admit that the crucial contribution to understanding creativity was made by its pioneers, Jay Paul Guilford and E. Paul Torrance [6]. Both theorists approached the notion from the psychometrical viewpoint and elaborated a test battery for its measurement. Guilford distinguished divergent thinking as an important component in the structure of creativity although he did not confine its broad conceptual framework to this single aspect [6; 8]. The further development of the creativity research resulted in the involvement of mixed or combined approaches, which tend to recognize the multi-faceted nature of creativity and the necessity to consider all its components in interplay. For instance, Sternberg came up with the so-called confluence approaches, such as investment or propulsion theories, which focus on "wisdom, intelligence, and creativity synthesized" [6, p. 87]. Luckily, researchers have found out many ways how to combine creativity with education and take advantage of it for educating younger generations. At present, creativity researchers distinguish the so-called 4 Ps of the concept, particularly, person, process, product, and press, which are effectively applied in the classroom settings [5]. Smith and Smith explain the essence of every component in the educational context and state that this theoretical framework promotes efficient dealing with all the diversity of current thinking in the creativity field.

As Sir Ken Robinson justly claims, the task of education, on a large scale, is to prepare children for the future. It means that educators have to develop their capacity to function successfully in the society and reach high professional outcomes. At the same time, the time when children leave school and start adult life will be much different from what it is now. Moreover, it is the case in the present conditions of the fast pace of changes in the world's development, with new jobs emerging every year, and consequently, new skills necessary to act efficiently. According to Saebø, McCammon, and O'Farrel, the concept of creativity has become the focus of interest in education due to a considerable technological progress that requires "a new generation of workers who are creative and innovative" [4, p. 1]. Such situation presents a real challenge for the education system and needs fresh ideas and solutions to the problem of preparing young generation for independent living and shaping their happy future.

In such a way, as many scholars suggest, it is necessary to develop creativity in children since literacy is no more important than creativity. In many developed countries of the world, governments have started campaigns of educational reforms concerning the task to inspire students' creativity. For instance, the Ministry of Education in Taiwan released the White Paper on Creative Education that integrated creativity into the curriculum thus indicating that the country has started a new era of education [2]. On a related note, in 1997, the White Paper *Excellence in Schools* in the UK proclaimed the major task of education was raising standards in literacy and numeracy [1]. However, the National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education under the chairmanship of Professor Ken Robinson stated that it was not enough to meet the challenges facing education. Except for developing literacy and numeracy skills, the need arose to work out "a broad, flexible and motivating education that recognizes the different talents of all children and delivers excellence for everyone" [1]. It means that the pursuit for creative and cultural education must become a national strategy that would allow every individual to discover inner potential and abilities, as well as "develop young people's capacities for original ideas and action" [1].

However, Robinson points out that in the first list of obligatory subjects in American schools are math and languages, while arts and music, for instance, are at the end of the list. Academic ability has become the center of attention and the focus of efforts both at schools and universities. As a result, many naturally talented and gifted people gradually come to believe that they are not at all talented just because they do not do well at studying [3]. An important notion for creativity is intelligence and the proper understanding of its nature and functioning. Robinson highlights that intelligence is diverse because a person thinks about the world in different ways: visually, in sound, and kinesthetically, in abstract terms and in movement. Besides, intelligence is dynamic and interactive, which statement implies that the brain is not divided into compartments; it develops all its capacities simultaneously. Finally, imagination, as a crucial ability in the structure of creativity needs to

achieve a particular attention of educators [3]. In this regard, Saebo et al. point to the existing relationship between creativity and student development and their overall learning abilities [4]. Moreover, the scholars insist on the necessity to investigate this issue as it is crucial for shaping effective system of education capable of meeting new arising challenges of the modern world.

As a matter of fact, Ken Robinson emphasizes that children possess this capacity for innovation since birth, all of them without exception [3]. During their socialization and education, though, it turns out that this initial ability is frequently killed or undermined. An interesting opinion belonging to this educational reform-maker is that creativity is associated with not fearing of being wrong. Gradually, children lose this open and brave attitude to being wrong, and they learn how to avoid mistakes and try to be right, to present only right solutions. Indeed, if a problem is not clearly defined and there is not one correct solution to it just because it is a problem that has never existed, it is impossible to come up with exactly and solely right answer.

In the reality of school or university educational process, one can notice a contradictory tendency concerning the perceptions and attitudes to creativity from all the participants. Many educators are very cautious in the classroom as far as expressions of creativity are concerned. Smith and Smith highlight the ambiguous attitude to the concept under discussion demonstrated by teachers, which they find both as a promise and a pitfall. An attractive side of it is the use of creativity merely as a means to reach other goals, such as improving problem-solving skills, imagination, and curiosity, or enhancing motivation. In contrast, as an end in itself, creativity seems rather dangerous to many teachers due to its risks for orderly structure of the curriculum and the whole educational process. Therefore, with all its advantages and attractive effects on the personality development of children, educators are cautious to approach it too close "so as not to end up as a moth to a flame" [5, p. 251].

On the level of research and scholarly investigation of creativity and its contribution and place in the system of education, there are also many questions. In particular, Smith and Smith indicate that researchers distinguish big "C" and little "c" types of the notion and then, a logical question will be about the type, relevant for educational setting [5]. A lot of theoretical and conceptual issues as well as practically oriented problems must be faced before it is possible to realize all the incredible potential of creativity for the purpose of fostering education. In addition, the authors point out to the fact that modern orientation of the U. S. schools on standardized testing procedure is not a favorable factor for initiating original thinking, deviance from standard perception, and breaking norms and stereotypes. The teachers, parents, and students are, in the first turn, concerned with preparation for the annual mandatory test-based assessments, which have little to do with creativity and originality of thought. As Smith and Smith put it, "the ubiquitous No Child Left Behind has sucked all of the air out of the ruminations of educators who might embrace creativity in the United States" [5, p. 251].

To summarize, one must admit that the problem of creativity fostering in the educational settings is controversial in both theoretical conceptualization and practical application. While almost everyone in the community appreciates such implications of creativity as original ideas or innovative products, there are different approaches to interpreting both the definition of the term and its structure. Furthermore, the overall acceptance of the directive to foster creativity in young generations is combined with a conflicting attitude to it in practice. Moreover, the modern realities of schools and universities internationally seem to be not very favorable for enhancing original thinking, creative capacity, or a fresh, not standard view on things. Hopefully, considerable findings and achievements as well as substantial development of the current creative research can suggest valuable ideas for implementing the goal of creative education.

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ПРОБЛЕМА ФОРМУВАННЯ КРЕАТИВНОСТІ В КОНТЕКСТІ МІЖНАРОДНОЇ ОСВІТИ

У статті аналізується концепція креативності та обґрунтовується актуальність включення відповідного предмету в навчальні плани шкіл та університетів. В умовах швидких змін і високих вимог глобалізованого світу освіта має стимулювати креативність, щоб підготувати молодь до сучасних викликів. Розглядається психологічний підхід до проблеми визначення й опису поняття креативності та її використання в освіті. Визначено протиріччя, пов'язані з формуванням креативності в конкретних умовах освітніх закладів.

Ключові слова: креативність, формування та розвиток креативності, освітні реформи.

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ПРОБЛЕМА ФОРМИРОВАНИЯ КРЕАТИВНОСТИ В КОНТЕКСТЕ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОГО ОБРАЗОВАНИЯ

В статье анализируется концепция креативности и обосновывается актуальность включения соответствующего предмета в учебные планы школ и университетов. В условиях быстрых изменений и высоких требований глобализирующегося мира образование должно учить креативности, чтобы подготовить молодежь к современному вызову. Рассматривается психологический подход к определению и описанию понятия креативности и ее применению в образовании. Определены противоречия, связанные с формированием креативности в конкретных условиях учебных заведений.

Ключевые слова: креативность, формирование и развитие креативности, реформы образования.

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