



THE CREATIVE PERSONALITY: DISCOVERING AND DEVELOPING CREATIVITY AMONG TEENAGERS

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Abstract

Over the years, the Nigerian state has placed so much emphasis on educational certification more than harnessing the available opportunities in creativity and how it can be used in job creation, socioeconomic development and growth of the nation. This study focuses on creativity as it relates to an individual's as well as society's sustainable growth. It deals exclusively on how an individual can identify his talent, development and improve on it. Some vital points were spotted out on how creative talents can be identified and be developed in the society. The study also looks at the characteristics of the creative persons and its effects on societal development and growth.

Keywords: Creativity, Teenagers, Talents, Creative persons, Intelligence

INTRODUCTION

There is no doubt that the subject creativity is an important one. We live in a world of creativity and as such we must strive to know the relevance that the development of creative thinking and talent search can have for us, both as individuals and as a society. Creativity offers a change from what has been known to what might be or what is yet to be discovered. As an emotive area of research creativity over the years, has been and has often been referred to as an elusive area of human function or endeavour.

From inception man has been involved in creating activities by decorating his body and also doing pictorial art which was excellent in execution and style. Most of these works executed by the early men can be found in caves of Altamira in Spain, Lascaux in France and certain parts of Africa.

What is Creativity?

The term creativity has no definite definition that has been generally accepted by everyone. The concept has always been generating a lot of controversies over the years. Questions asked have always been: What is creativity? What is the relationship between creativity and intelligence? How can creative talent be identified in an individual? What are the characteristics of a creative person?

Psychologists, Educationists, Philosophers have attempted to suggest or proffer a definition on the subject in question. Creativity can be seen simply as the ability to take existing objects and combine them in different ways for new purposes. Example of such creativity was when Gutenberg took the wine press and die/punch and produced a printing press. Going by this, creativity can be referred to as the action of combining previously uncombined elements. Creativity is the ability to generate novel and useful ideas and solutions to everyday problems and challenges.

Herrmann (2002) holds that creativity is an exclusive domain of those ordained to be creators, artists, scientists and inventors. He says that creativity is a kind of giftedness, which is not available with ordinary people. According to Franken (1994) creativity is “the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities that may be useful in solving problems, communicating with others, and entertaining ourselves and others”. He stated further that: in order to be creative, you need to be able to view things in new ways or from a different perspective. Among other things, one also needs to be able to generate new possibilities or new alternatives. For Harshini (2020), ‘creativity deals in subjectivity and emotion. It puts us in touch with a variety in human existence’.

Herrmann (2002) provided three keys which make the difference for people who have moved into creative functioning. They are;

- i. An understanding of the creative process and its component stages, and how the four modes of knowing come into play at each stage

- ii. An understanding of what hinders each mode at each stage.
- iii. A commitment to heightening one's own creative awareness and functioning.

Herrmann stated further that, in terms of creative expression, the world consists of;

- i. The already creatives: People who actively exercise their creative gifts for pleasure and profit;
- ii. The sometimes creatives: People who experience moments of creative brilliance, but only occasionally; and
- iii. Those who can be creative, but who have yet to tap into that potential.

He however stated that most people if not all are creative in various extent. Some act on ideas others do not. He made us to understand that creativity can be developed.

Relationship between Intelligence & Creativity

Intelligence has always been viewed from different angles by different scholars. It is usually seen as something that relates to an individual's reasoning, problem- solving skills, mental capability, and ability to make sound decisions. The most common definition of intelligence is an individual's ability to possess and utilize knowledge to meet the demands of a situation (Silvia, 2015).

Goldstein et al (2015) stated that creativity on the other hand is an individual's ability to process new ideas or techniques through critical thinking and imagination. They went further to state that creative works possess originality from existing ideas which need intellectual proves to develop and carryout a project.

Different schools of thoughts also influence the link between intelligence and creativity. Frith *et al.* (2021) are of the view that an individual's creativity depends on their ability to extensive explorations and openness to experiences. They pointed out that intelligent people tend to have convergent thinking, which helps them in finding solutions quickly in accomplishing a given task. Divergent people explore and learn through

experiences that lead to creativity in finding solutions to problems. Going by this, creativity does not depend on intelligence but rather an individual's openness to learning and new experiences. Other studies have also shown a correlation between creativity, passion and intelligence.

According to Nikolaeva et al. (2018), intellectual requirements vary across different tasks, challenging individuals to make use of different forms of creativity. Everyone individual is creative, depending on their field of study or passion, giving people different creative abilities at different IQ levels (Yu-Fong, 2019 & Silvia, 2015)

How to Identify Creative Talents

There is no doubt that there are a number of ways in which creative talents can be identified and encouraged. Some of the early attempts on the identification of creative talent resulted from a concern with the loss of human potential in socio-instrumental terms.

Lowenfeld & Brittain (1971) stressed that in as much as creativity is becoming vital in our society, we need to understand the processes involved in developing the creative thinking abilities of children. They stated further that the term creativity has become like a house hold name that is applied like sparkling paint to book titles, do it- yourself projects, or performance groups.

Torrence in Adeyanju (1996) carried out a study on how creative persons can be identified. They are;

- a. Ideational Fluency (Large number of ideas on problems)
- b. Originality and Elaboration

Adeyanju went further to state that there basically two types of methods that can be used in identifying creative talents. These are:

1. Test method of identification of creative talents and the non-test method of identification. In the test method of identification of creative talents, Adeyanju stated that there are a variety of them. The most commonly used among them are:
 - a. Uses of Things Test (UTT): This test requires the respondent to think and indicate as many uses as he could think of common objects presented to him. Examples are brick, a needle, a blanket, a sheet of

paper a chalk, etcetera. This test is derived from Guilford factor analytical work on cognitive ability. This test does not require sentence but single words or phrase. Three sources of creativity can be spotted from this test- fluency score (the number of uses), flexibility score (the varieties of uses expressed), and originality score (the number of uses that are unusual or new or surprising).

- b. Work Association (WA): The subject is presented with many ambiguous words such as bolt, knot, pipe, rod, among others. Thereafter he is expected to make many meanings as he could to each of the words. In this type of test fluency score is important.
- c. Fables: Here the subject is asked to make up three different endings for a folk story which has been narrated. The story is not narrated completely. The type of ending required could be restricted to moralistic, humorous or sad. There is fluency and originality score in this type of test.
- d. Hidden Shapes: It is made up of simple geometric shapes each which is followed by four complex figures. It is therefore required of the subject to find which of the complex figures contain the simple geometric shapes. It also includes the ability of the individual to think flexibly and to come up with usual ideas. In this test flexibility, fluency and originality scores are obtained
- e. Circle Test: Several circles ranging between (10-15) are presented to the subject. He is then required to draw anything using as many circles that are given. In this type of test, flexibility, fluency and originality scores are also possible.
- f. Good Enough to Draw a man test: There, the subject is asked to draw a man without further instruction from the teacher. The scoring is centered on the details included in the drawing. Fluency and originality scores are obtained.
- g. Projective Test: This test is based on an unusual, absurd or indefinite drawing or painting, the subject is required to write a short story on the drawing or painting he is presented with. The subject is induced into thinking and drawing of inferences since the pictures or drawings in actual represent nothing. Fluency and originality scores are very important.

Adeyanju went further to suggest hints on administration of test of creativity. These are;

- i. There is no time limits for each of the test
 - ii. Administration should be by a familiar teacher
 - iii. No threat of pass or failure in the test
 - iv. Instruction should be very clear
 - v. Examples should precede each test
 - vi. Paper and pencil should be provided
 - vii. Provide tension free atmosphere
2. The non- test method of identification: On the other hand the non-test method of identification has been advanced because of the limitations that are associated with the test methods. The non- test method includes observations and checklist of creative activities of individuals life experiences, inventories and questionnaires.

We must know that we live in a world of creativity and as such know the relevance that the development of creative thinking can have for us, both as individuals and as a people. Creativity offers a change from what has been to what might be or what is yet to be discovered.

Development of Creativity

Certain stages for the development of creativity were suggested at one time. They are initial stage otherwise known as preparation, followed by a thinking period which is also known as incubation, which was background for the next stage of illumination, which was followed by the last stage called verification, these four stages are sequential and the schools role seemed limited to the initial stage of preparation only. These four stages of developing creating have been termed outmoded by Lowenfeld and Britain (1971). They are of the view that creativity is too wide to be looked upon in such a narrow format. Creativity they say is closely related to the thinking abilities and to the attitude development.

Adeyanju (1996) stated that there are factors responsible for any creative process and they are:

- a. Environmental Factor over which the teacher has direct control.

- b. Social Values. This is illustrated by the amount of dependence of children on the peer group than the teacher
- c. Personality of the Child. This refers to the attitude that the child has developed toward himself and the worth that he feels about himself and his contributions.

He stated further that creativity in modern time should not be considered in so called a format as the stereotype stage pattern would want to insist. And that creativity is been more closely related to the thinking abilities and to attitude development. Be that as it may, he offered ways to plan lessons which emphasises eight traits that should lead to creative production. They are:

- i. Fluency in Thinking
- ii. Flexibility
- iii. Originality
- iv. Elaborate Thinking
- v. Risk Taking
- vi. Complexity
- vii. Curiosity
- viii. Imagination

Characteristics of the Creative Person

Creative people are associated with certain characteristics because of their ways of life. It is on this note that Adeyanju (1996) stated that investigators have argued that creative behavior depends much on personality as on cognitive power and they have offered evidence to show that the high creative person among other things is known to be:

- a. More Impulsive
- b. More Tolerance of ambiguity
- c. Makes Greater use of fantasy
- d. Limits his effort to a single mode of expression

Personality characteristics or any other features of creative production

- i. Creative persons are intelligent. It should be noted however that there is no 100% correlation between creativity and intelligence:

- This is so because the most intelligent persons are not always the most creative.
- ii. Creative persons are original: This is to say that they come up with novel or statistically infrequent responses.
 - iii. Creative persons are independent in judgment and in thought and action.
 - iv. The creative person has strong theoretical and aesthetic interest: The aesthetic view point permeates all of the work of a creative person.
 - v. Preference for the unfinished, the disordered, the complex and the rich: This invokes in them the curiosity to invent unifying principles which order multiplicity and carry to harmonious conclusions that which is unbalanced and incomplete.

The Creative Personality

Conforth (1977) is of the view that many studies between a highly creative group and relatively non-creative group, reveal that they were not differentiated on the basis of their intelligence but personality measures. Generally, it is highlighted that creative people tend to be introverted, reclusive and seen to have little time for what they regard as trivia of everyday life and social activity. They tend to be strongly initiative and more interested in the abstract meaning of the outside world than in its appearance to the senses.

According to Adeyanju (1996) compared highly creative and average people in terms of their personalities. He is of the opinion that creative people are:

- a. More aware of existence of problem
- b. Have a somewhat greater tendency toward emotional disturbance but also have more self-control to deal with this tendency.
- c. Have a greater flexibility when presented with problems.
- d. Able to be both analytic and intuitive in their thinking
- e. Are able to think both convergently and divergently and demonstrate a greater determination and perseverance.
- f. Seen to have a need for disorder, which allows them to get greater satisfaction, by bringing order to a chaotic situation.

- g. Are more open to experience and less defensive about accepting new information
- h. See themselves as responsible for most of what happens to them
- i. Enjoy being playful and childlike
- j. Engage more frequently in solitary activities, especially as children.

Conclusion

Different people have different levels and abilities of creativity much like anything else that is a skill. However, everyone can be creative if they want to. Creativity can be developed like every other skill. Majority of people feel they are not creative because their level of creativity is based on skills they do not have.

Some people have extraordinary talents in fields that have been recognized as creative, when they combine these extraordinary talents with the determination and persistence that is taken to achieve skill mastery; they are recognized as creative artists.

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