

GENDER DIFFERENCES IN CREATIVITY AMONG SECONDARY GRADE TEACHER TRAINEES

Research
Paper

ABSTRACT

Education is the fulcrum upon which hangs the peaceful evolutionary transition of society plays a vital role in building a society. The term creativity is widely used with reference to the creative people, the creative process, even a creative environment. Creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel and appropriate. However, environmental factors will interact with individual differences and influence the creative process. Amabile (1996) describes four phases in the creative process, namely 1. Problem identification, 2. Preparation, 3. Response generation, and 4. Validation and communication. Creativity is best conceptualized not as a personality trait or as a general ability, but as a behavior resulting from particular constellations of personal characteristics, cognitive abilities, and social environments. There is an assumption that there is a relationship between natural / social environment and creative thinking. Age, School, Gender, Fluency, Flexibility and Originality are found to be affecting creativity in children. In this study, the author had selected a sample of 225 student teachers studying in various colleges in and around Chennai and found out the significant differences in their creativity according to their age, type of school, gender, fluency, flexibility and originality levels. The data was analysed and the results obtained with the help of ANOVA and other statistical methods. are obtained. The study showed that there are significant differences in creativity with respect to the category variables.

INTRODUCTION

The term creativity is widely used with reference to the creative people, the creative process, even a creative environment (Brown 1989). Our interest is in the process, culminating in a novel and effective solution to an open-ended problem. The importance of both novelty and effectiveness is reflected in the following definition. Creativity is the ability to produce work that is both novel and appropriate (Sternberg 1988). This definition is widely accepted in creativity literature. Guilford (1950) made an important contribution to our understanding of creativity when he distinguished between convergent and divergent thinking processes. Convergent thinking is similar to conventional notions of intelligence in which existing knowledge / information is synthesized to arrive at the single most appropriate answer. Guilford argued that creativity is expressed in terms of divergent thinking. However this led to measuring creativity in terms of the number of fundamentally different solutions that were generated. Creativity was initially studied as an intellectual or personality trait. The emphasis was on the creative individual and the nature of creativity was considered to be a black box (Barron and Harrington 1981). More

recently, however, there have been various attempts to describe and model the creative process so that it can then be effectively managed.

FACTORS INFLUENCING THE CREATIVE PROCESS

Amabile (1983) argues that creativity is best conceptualized not as a personality trait or as a general ability, but as a behavior resulting from particular constellations of personal characteristics, cognitive abilities and social environments. This view was shared by most contemporary theorists (Mumford et al 1993) who emphasize changing the environment in order to promote and facilitate creativity. It is particularly relevant for educators wishing to establish an environment that supports creativity by managing the factors that promote or inhibit

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It Annable's componential model of creativity specifically recognizes the importance of domain-relevant skills, motivation and creativity relevant skills.

METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken to find out the significant differences in creativity among the student teachers. The Baquer Mehdi's creativity tool was used for the study. It consists of various dimensions such as thinking creatively with words, problems, novel use of things, making things more interesting and useful, etc. Originality, flexibility and fluency are considered various dimensions of creativity. Age, gender and type of school are taken as the category variables. A sample of 225 student teachers studying in and around Chennai were taken as the sample. Stratified Random Sampling process was used. The following hypotheses were framed:

HYPOTHESES

1. There are no significant differences in fluency with respect to age, gender and type of school.
2. There are no significant differences in flexibility with respect to age, gender and type of school.
3. There are no significant differences in originality with respect to age, gender and type of school.

ANALYSIS

Hypothesis - 1 : There are no differences in fluency with respect to age, gender and type of school.

Table 1
THE RESULTS OF THE 'T' TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCES IN FLUENCY WITH RESPECT TO AGE, GENDER AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

	Variable	Class	N	Mean	S.D	S.E.M	't'	Sig.
Fluency	Gender	Male	125	16.66	8.86	0.79	2.45	0.05
		Female	100	17.94	8.08	0.81		
	Age	Below-20	112	18.62	7.43	0.7	1.18	N.S
		Above-20	113	15.86	9.39	0.87		
	Type of School	Government	125	17.15	8.72	0.783	0.17	N.S
		Govt.Aided	100	17.34	8.33	0.828		

From Table 1, it is understood that there are no significant differences among the students in fluency as far as age and type of school are concerned. But in gender, there are some differences; the creativity of the boys is 8.360, slightly higher than that of the girls, i.e., 8.079.

Hypothesis - 2 : There are no significant differences in flexibility with respect to age, gender and type of school.



Table 2
THE RESULTS OF THE 'T' TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCES IN FLEXIBILITY WITH RESPECT TO AGE, GENDER AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

	Variable	Class	N	Mean	S.D	S.E.M	't'	Sig.
Flexibility	Gender	Male	125	15.93	8.82	0.75	2.34	0.05
		Female	100	18.35	6.75	0.68		
	Age	Below-20	112	16.82	7.81	0.73	0.35	N.S
		Above-20	113	17.19	7.81	0.73		
	Type of School	Government	125	17.98	7.95	0.714	2.09	0.05
		Govt.Aided	100	15.81	7.48	0.744		

From Table 2, it is understood that there are no significant differences among the students in flexibility as far as age is concerned. But in gender, there are some differences; the creativity of the boys is 8.824, slightly higher than that of the girls, i.e., 6.746 and in type of school there are some differences: the creativity of the student teachers in govt institutions (7.953) is slightly higher than that of those in govt aided institutions i.e., 7.478.

Hypothesis - 3 : There are no significant differences in originality with respect to age, gender and type of school.

Table 3
THE RESULTS OF THE 'T' TEST FOR THE DIFFERENCES IN ORIGINALITY WITH RESPECT TO AGE, GENDER AND TYPE OF SCHOOL

	Variable	Class	N	Mean	S.D	S.E.M	't'	Sig.
Originality	Gender	Male	125	18.86	7.33	0.66	2.94	0.01
		Female	100	15.85	7.92	0.8		
	Age	Below-20	112	17.38	7.71	0.72	0.29	N.S
		Above-20	113	17.68	7.77	0.73		
	Type of School	Government	125	16.68	7.71	0.695	1.81	N.S
		Govt.Aided	100	18.55	7.65	0.761		

From Table 3, it is understood that there are no significant differences among the students in originality as far as age and type of school are concerned. But in gender, there are some differences: the creativity of the girls is 7.921, slightly higher than that of the boys, i.e., 7.326.

FINDINGS

1. In fluency level there are significant differences among men and women. Male members' scores are higher than the Scores of female teacher trainees.
2. In flexibility, there are significant differences among male and female trainees. Male members' scores are higher than the scores of female teacher trainees.
3. It was found that a significant difference occurred in the originality of men and women teacher trainees.
4. It was found that there was no significant difference in the fluency and originality levels of teacher trainees studying in Government and Government Aided Institutes. In the case of flexibility level significant difference was found among the teacher trainees.
5. It was found that there was no significant difference in the flexibility and originality levels of teacher trainees in low age-group and high age group. In the case of fluency level significant difference was found among the teacher trainees.

CONCLUSIONS

One of the objectives of carrying out this research is to arrive at specific conclusions. The aim was to study the creativity of secondary grade teacher trainees as something that is necessary for the discovery of creative solutions to problems. Solving problems is not just a scientific or engineering activity. Even educationists are commissioned to express a concept or an idea in a certain way. What makes one solution creative and another simply ordinary?. It seems that it is often the context within which a solution is offered that establishes creativity. This means that creativity is not simply a mental process. There may be little to distinguish creativity from expertise. Creative solutions are very much needed for the problems in society. It is very essential for the teacher trainees to get trained to provide creative solutions in the classrooms. The trainees should become good creative teachers. A creative teacher is sensitive to the problems arising either in the classrooms or in the school and has got the capacity to suggest more than one solution to solve the problems.

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I, S. Sebastian, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

S. Sebastian