ASSESSMENT OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CREATIVITY AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS IN THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

HABIB REZA GHAFARIAN SHIRAZI1a, MASSOOD IMANIAN ARDABILIb AND HOMA GHAFARIAN SHIRAZIc

1aGraduated M.A. student in Educational Management, Department of Educational Management, Bojnourd Branch, Islamic Azad University, Bojnourd, Iran
bMaster of Social Science Research, Assistant professor, Department of Social Communication Sciences, Quchan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Quchan, Iran
cM. A. student of Social Communication Sciences, Department of Social Communication Sciences, Quchan Branch, Islamic Azad University, Quchan, Iran

ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this paper is to identify the relationship between creativity and organizational effectiveness in the ministry of education. Organizational creativity, especially in educational organizations, can benefit an organization, and those who are concerned with it, while the resulting effectiveness and productivity can be a help to managers. Organizational effectiveness, as the most important goal for any organization, is the destination toward which all organizational efforts are made. Leadership and management scholars believe that several factors (institutional, environmental, personal, etc.) are related to organizational effectiveness. Therefore, behavioral characteristics of managers can make an important contribution to the increase or decrease of organizational effectiveness. This is while creativity among employees can also be effective in organizational effectiveness. Using a descriptive method, that is, documentation and review of the results obtained from other research and publications, this article investigates and identifies the relationship between creativity and organizational effectiveness in the ministry of education.

KEYWORDS: Creativity, Organizational Effectiveness

According to intellectuals, creativity is the most powerful ability in the human nature from childhood to adulthood. For Rogers, man is born inherently creative. However, creativity is not well-developed and complete in the early stages of life and it needs attention and guidance. Definitely so, childhood is the first cradle of creativity. Without a doubt, creativity is not needed only in the early childhood; but rather, humans are in need of creativity in all periods of life. Guilford recognizes creativity as an action or behavior that provides a solution to a problem. He states that creativity is the demonstration of a creative act, conduct or ability - or in general, a creative act, that is, providing appropriate solutions to problems (PirKhaefi; 2005). Creativity can be defined as the production of authentic, innovative and adaptive ideas, approaches and concepts that feature a flexible behavior (Shahraray and Madanipoor; 1996). In the “Amid” Dictionary [Persian], creativity or innovation is defined as “doing or bringing something new”. A more accurate definition can be the creation of something that has never existed. The Oxford Dictionary defines creativity as the ability to produce something new, with power being subject to imagination and intelligence (PirKhaefi; 2005).

The Importance of Creativity

1 - Creativity is something expandable.
2 - Creativity is an individual matter, and evaluating creativity is associated with an assessment of individual abilities.
3 - Creativity is expandable by being sensitive in understanding problems.
4 - Creativity grows through experiment, experience and exploration.
5 - Imaginative and innovative thinking will lead to the stimulation of creativity.
6 - Creativity is associated with independence of thought and self-confidence; hence, having a strong self-confidence is necessary for the development of creativity.
7 - Creativity becomes richer through personal feelings and impressions.
8 – Creativity is the curiosity and desire to learn and experience things; and therefore, curiosity must be given attention.
9 - Creativity is the development of knowledge and the ability to absorb and enjoy all the blessings of life. Innovative ideas and comments by individuals should be encouraged and be provided with the context for realization (Seyf; 2001).
Factors Affecting the Creativity of Individuals

Individual factors

Individual factors originate from the individual’s self and include factors such as personality characteristics (a strong self-image of being creative, perseverance, flexibility to uncertainty, independence, the need to succeed and self-confidence) and cognitive styles - learning and thinking styles.

Personality characteristics include

A strong self-image of being creative; perseverance; flexibility to ambiguity; independence; the need to succeed, and self-confidence. A strong self-image of being creative is equal to accepting the fact that one is a creative individual and will increase one’s creativity.

Perseverance: refers to hard work and an intensive and energetic usage of time.

Flexibility to ambiguity

Refers to the capacity to tolerate ambiguity, that is, high adaptability in dealing with unknown or undefined situations.

Independence

Refers to choosing one’s thoughts and acts freely and avoiding the imitation of others without knowledge.

The need to succeed

Refers to the maximum willingness to change and a preference for ambiguous situations.

Self-confidence

Designates confidence in one’s abilities and skills and not copycatting others. People with high confidence think and act independently and continue to adhere to their beliefs despite criticism and rejection by others.

Cognitive style

Designates one’s preferred method for collecting, processing and evaluating information. To put it more clearly, cognitive style refers to individual differences in the mode of understanding, thinking, problem solving, learning and connecting with other people.

Mode of thinking

Thinking is the process by which information is put together so as to reach a new result. Mode of thinking is the method used for combining various pieces of information.

Knowledge

Including fundamental knowledge, gained from the lesson books and guide books, and empirical knowledge, the type of knowledge that one has to familiarize oneself by practicing it over time (Moghimi; 2002).

Motivational factors

Extrinsic motivation: refers to all of the incentives that are induced by society into a person. These are rooted in:

Social crises

The source of creativity is necessity.

If there was no necessity in human life, creativity would not be required. Human needs usually occur in terms of routines except in exceptional circumstances such as various crises, including natural disasters - including floods, earthquakes, volcanoes and hurricanes - and disasters caused by humans. The type or cause of a crisis is not intended here: What matters is the massive influx of needs after such crises that can lead to mental revolution in the minds of people and appear in the form of innovation and creativity.

Levels of social expectation

A society in which upward progress is dominant is witness to individual creativity and innovation day by day. In such society, invention is not limited to a class of thinkers only; rather, it includes everyone so that even the criminals in such community try to think of new ways in doing what they do.

Intrinsic motivation

An impulse that originates from one’s self is called intrinsic motivation. Various forms of intrinsic motivation are listed as follows (Mohaqeqi; 2008).

Natural talent of an individual

This can occur consciously or unconsciously even in the absence of any external stimuli. Having an average IQ and learning ways to increase creative thinking makes it fully accessible for all the needs of life.

Internal needs

Sometimes people feel a force inside them that always gets them to help others and improve life status in the community by being creative. They can be of any gender, age or occupation.
Personal Crises

Personal crises, like social crises, can be a powerful stimulus to individual creativity.

Environmental factors

Amabile et al. (2003), by conducting a research on the relationship between work and creativity among dozens of organizations and hundreds of individuals and groups, concluded that creativity is greatly affected by the business environment. These findings suggest that environment has a more prominent role in creativity than other factors such as individual talents and features (Sadeghi Mal Amiri; 2007).

The concept of effectiveness

Effectiveness is the degree to which a system has done what it actually had meant to do, or the degree to which correct work has been done According to Peter Drucker, effectiveness, unlike efficiency, is considered in strategic planning. The proper process of planning depends on the effectiveness of that plan since decision-making as to what will be done, when it will be done, and what quality will be chosen occurs during the process (Alwani; 1994).

Effectiveness criteria form Campbell’s perspective

1 - Overall effectiveness: this measure is evaluated by assessing past performance or through overall assessment, or else, through the judgment of informed and important persons in relation to organizational performance.

2 - Efficiency: refers to the relationship between incoming utility (input) and used resources (data) within a specified period of time, as the standard period, and can be measured at three levels - individual, group and organizational – by going through existing documents and evaluations or a combination of the two.

3- Performance: The degree to which a system has applied proper factors to achieve a goal, that is, how much it takes to realize an objective.

4 - Quality: the degree to which systems converge in prerequisites, specifications and expectations. A qualitative characteristic is the measure based on which a product or service is designed, made and tested. These features can be objective or subjective.

5 - Income: refers to the amount of obtained benefit from sales minus total expenditure and commitments, for example, profit to sales ratio, return on assets ratio, etc.

6 - Incidents: refers to the events that may occur on the job and can be time consuming.

7 - Growth: an increase in different organizational variables such as plant capacity, labor, sales, new markets, market share and innovation. This variable represents the current or past state of an organization.

8 - The percentage of absenteeism at work: This criterion refers to unjustified absences but has several definitions (such as the length of absence compared to the frequency of accidents).

9 – Desertion: usually refers to quitting a job on a voluntary basis and is detectable by reference to the archives administration.

10 - Job satisfaction: defined as an individual’s satisfaction with what one gains from one’s career.

11 - Motivation: The state or condition that encourages an individual to do a job or accept a particular belief. Motivation usually refers to the desire or tendency to work for the realization of business objectives.

12 - Spirit: a group phenomenon that ensures intense effort, guarantees unity of organizational and individual objectives, and fosters commitment and dedication. Spirit is a group concept unlike satisfaction, which is a personal issue.

13 – Control: is the criterion for measuring and directing the degree to which organizational behavior of individuals is influenced.

14 - cohesion/conflict: cohesion refers to the sincere cooperation of individuals while conflict designates verbal or physical aggression, weak coordination, and ineffective communication.

15 - Flexibility/adaptability: designates the ability of an organization to change its standard and operational procedures in response to environmental changes in the organizations.

16 - Planning and Goal Setting: refers to the identification of next steps for the future of an organization deliberately and regularly.

17 - Consensus on Objectives: besides personal and specific objectives, all individuals should consider a single goal for the organization.

18 – Institutionalization of objectives: designates the adoption of organizational goals and the belief that organizational goals are correct and authentic.

19 - Adaptation of role and norms: This criterion refers to the limits on which the staff members of an organization agree regarding issues such as favorable
attitude toward supervision, role expectation, spirit and requirements of their roles.

20 - Communication skills of the management: designates the skills used by managers in relation to supervisors, subordinates and colleagues by supporting or facilitating constructive and helpful interaction as well as building enthusiasm for realizing the goals and keeping up the financial performance.

21 - Task skills: refers to the levels of overall skill required for managers and leaders to fulfill their duties.

22 - Information and communication management: efficiency, accuracy and precision in analyzing the awareness of organizational effectiveness.

23 - Readiness: the possibility that some management functions may be added to the body of the organization and the organizations can successfully carry them out.

24 - Exploitation of the Environment: The level of successful organizational interaction with the environment.

25 - Evaluation by external phenomena: This criterion refers to the assessment of an organization by external individuals and organizations present in the environment, for example, customers, suppliers, etc.

26 - Stability: maintenance of organizational structure, functional departments of the organization and their required resources over time.

27 - The value of human resources: a combinational criterion that refers to the total value of staff members expressed in terms of the balance sheet or accounting.

28 - Participation and joint influence: designates the degree of each organization member’s involvement in decisions that directly affect their job and destiny.

29 - Emphasis on training and development: the degree of an organization’s efforts to develop and expand its human resources.

30 - Emphasis on success: a comparison between the individual need to achieve success and the realization of new organizational goals (Robbins; 2002).

Factors that contribute to organizational effectiveness

Organizational Culture: basic assumptions and beliefs that are shared among organization members, or common meanings and concepts among staff members, which include the following:

An atmosphere filled with trust

This is necessary for maintaining the organization because staff members need to communicate openly and honestly with one another. Organizational departments require cooperation between the units.

Employees should trust one another to be able to cooperate and solve problems.

Increasing production through workers means that all must participate. The employees must be a source of quality and productivity. Individuals should be encouraged and given the necessary powers in an organization.

The next issue is the importance of a long-time view of the organization. Successful companies invest in training their employees to empower them. Career paths should be designed in such a way that the employees adhere to the organization for long periods of time and gain an extensive career background.

Organizational design

Successful and effective organizations have three characteristics in terms of organizational design.

A simple form with a few staff members: the shape or system of the organization is simple and elegant, while the number of staff members in administrative posts is few.

Large corporations are made into smaller units to be simple and flexible. Organizational structure is decentralized so as to strengthen innovation and change. In small organizational units, individuals feel a sense of belonging and help each other for problem solving.

Entrepreneurship

Organizations have found that success is something other than pure profit. Success depends on a set of values and competencies. Maintaining a balance between financial and non-financial resources provides a better picture of the company and its performance, while helping the managers to lead staff members and the organization toward strategic goals.

Simultaneous Stricture and Negligence

Researches show that successful organizations in the long term are those which use appropriate competency on the one hand and appropriate measures of financial performance and operational efficiency on the other.

Top management

Another dimension of the effective organization lies in management processes and
methods. Three factors are important among these criteria:

**Vision of leadership:** for guidance and leadership, the organization requires a special vision of leadership. The leader has to provide a vision or perspective for the employees and inspire a sense of leadership, common purpose and destination into them.

**Action fanaticism:** managers and employees pay special attention to work and practice for a successful organization. Successful companies have a slogan, “Try it, do it, do it right”.

**Focusing on core values:** Ethics is important in organizations. The company’s management should focus on the main objectives and strategies and appreciate the decisions that stimulate, strengthen, and sustain the company.

**Strategic Orientation**

Three Features of Strategic Orientation Are

- **Customer Contact:** paying attention to the customer should be the focus of the company. The customer is considered the most important and beneficial factor in an organization. In such organizations, success depends on meeting more needs of the organization.

- **Rapid response:** successful organizations try to quickly react to problems, issues and opportunities that come forward. Such organizations have a progressive perspective and take advantage of every opportunity.

- **The focus and purposes of commercial methods:** Effective organizations have a very clear and definite focus. Such companies are well aware whether they are prospective or defensive. They also know well how to act and succeed: They know what the best practice is (Nokar; 2008).

The relationship between creativity and organizational effectiveness in the ministry of education:

Major decisions of the ministry of education are usually made in administrative establishments of the ministry. Administrative decision-makers have acknowledged that, in the process of pursuing objectives and policies, regional offices of the ministry can demonstrate their effectiveness so as to transform structures, facilities and policies. This becomes possible by making operational and reasonable decisions that are effective in the achievement of educational goals. If these processes are associated with creativity by the employee of the ministry of education, the schools will be an appropriate scene for training providence to the next generation and preparing them in the face of future.

Thus, if we want to consider future developments and the many problems associated with it, we need to innovate and create using our knowledge. We also need to consider that training an active, dynamic, innovative and creative generation demands the establishment of schools with particular characteristics and appropriate management methods. But there is still the question whether the creativity of employees in these organizations will lead to their effectiveness. Research has shown that, in other organizations - for example, educational organizations, creativity provides a good platform for organizational effectiveness. The researcher chose the Talcott Parsons model of organizational effectiveness as the model that can be prescribed for organizational effectiveness of these agencies. This model divides effectiveness into four dimensions each of which has four indices, hence sixteen all in all:

A) **Compatibility:** including indices of adaptability, growth, innovation and development.
B) **Goal achievement:** including indices of success, quality, resource acquisition and efficiency.
C) **Integrity and cohesion:** including indices of satisfaction, atmosphere, communication, and conflict.
D) **Continuity:** including indices of loyalty, main interests in life, motivation and identity (Harris; 2006).

Pandey (2009) conducted a research on organizational factors that influence employee creativity and concluded that creativity is highly affected by organizational structure, leadership style and reward system in an organization. Decentralized structure, transformational leadership style, participation of staff members in activities and granting rewards that could satisfy internal needs are among factors that affect the creativity of subordinates. (Pandey and Sharadindu and Sharma; 2009).

Thompson (2000), in his research, believes that open and free communication crushes hierarchical structures that, in its own turn, leads to more risk-taking capacity in the organization, and ultimately results in increased organizational creativity, effectiveness and efficiency. (Thomson; 2000).

Vaezi et al. (2009) examined the relationship between behavioral components of educational leaders and organizational effectiveness. Their findings indicate a correlation between supportive, participatory and success-oriented behavioral components on the one hand and organizational effectiveness on the other,
while designating no significant relationship between prescriptive and situation-oriented behavioral components on the one hand and organizational effectiveness on the other. There was a significant relationship between participatory behaviors of the manager and components of compliance, consistency, unity and organizational integrity. In addition, there was no significant relationship between the gender of educational leaders and organizational effectiveness. (Vaezi et al; 2009).

Sadeghi MalAmiri (2007) investigated factors affecting the creativity of employees of Iranian research institutes and concluded that individual factors including capability, personality traits, cognitive styles, intelligence, flexibility and challenges contribute directly to creativity, whereas organizational factors including leadership styles, organizational structure, organizational reward systems, atmosphere, and resources contribute indirectly to creativity. (Sadeghi Mal Amiri; 2007).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Using a descriptive method, that is, documentation and review of the results obtained from other research and publications, this article investigates and identifies the relationship between creativity and organizational effectiveness in the ministry of education.

CONCLUSION

Effectiveness, as one of the most common organizational structures, is linked to all participants in organizational life, yet it is discussed very little. Understanding organizational goals is of the first steps that should be taken toward organizational effectiveness. Organizational goals should indicate the reason for the existence of an organization and what it is trying to achieve. Objectives are defined as “the ideal situation of the organization in the future”.

Organizational effectiveness is the degree to which an organization achieves its desired goals. Etzioni believes that an effective organization is one which its visible results are equal to or more than its goals. As proposed by Alaghehband, educational organizations are developed in order to realize their targets as expected by society as the most effective and efficient social units. Therefore, all organizational efforts are directed toward promoting and encouraging behaviors that are effective and productive in organizational terms, as well as satisfactory and rewarding for organizational staff members.

For sustaining effectiveness and success, managers need specific features, potential capabilities and competencies, knowledge, long-time experience, and social communication skills. To create an effective management, we should start with goals. Understanding organizational goals, believing in and commitment to them, as well as alignment and mobility toward the achievement of organizational objectives comprise the first step toward effective administrators.

For conducting programs, managers should primarily rely on resources, especially manpower. Effectiveness requires acceptance of organizational objectives while achieving such goals depends on the use of all resources available to administrators. In an organizational environment, instructions concerning individuals or groups must be determined mutually and in advance. This process has two benefits. First, it allows the employees to participate in making decisions about principles that will judge their efforts.

Secondly, involvement of the employees in the planning process will increase their commitment to defined goals and objectives. Thus, organizational effectiveness, as the most important goal for any organization, is the destination toward which all organizational efforts are made. Leadership and management scholars believe that several factors (institutional, environmental, personal, etc.) are related to organizational effectiveness. Therefore, behavioral characteristics of managers can make an important contribution to the increase or decrease of organizational effectiveness. This is while creativity among employees can also be effective in organizational effectiveness.

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