Creativity as an integral part of professional pedagogical culture

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Abstract: *This article discusses the call for teachers in all educational institutions to move from traditional pedagogy to a more creative model of teaching, reminding them to use a creative, imaginative approach in teaching. The importance of four core skills such as creativity, communication, critical thinking and collaboration, applicable to students in the 21st century, is noted.*

Key words: *creativity in education, thinking, creative approach in pedagogy, emotional and mental burnout.*

Scientists and specialists from various fields increasingly recognize the importance of creativity (e.g., Davis, 2004; Robinson, 2013). Studies on the development of creative abilities highlight that in today's society, individuals who do not harness their creative potential may face challenges in various areas of life. Csikszentmihalyi (2007) points out that while creativity might have been a luxury for a select few during the Renaissance, it has become essential for survival in the modern world. Creativity enables people to better recognize opportunities and respond more effectively to challenges and obstacles in both their personal and professional lives. Furthermore, engaging in creative behavior

enhances life satisfaction, as it is often linked with feelings of fulfillment and joy, which are key components of emotional well-being and mental health.

Creativity plays a crucial role in education. Educational institutions worldwide encourage teachers to shift from traditional pedagogy to a more creative approach and to integrate creativity into their teaching practices. However, teachers are often perceived as resistant to change and slow to adapt. This study offers a systematic literature review following the PRISMA framework to examine research on teacher creativity in higher education. It defines the concept of creativity within the context of higher education, underscores its importance, and identifies the key factors that influence it. The findings suggest that teacher creativity plays a key role in the development of students' competencies and the professional growth of educators. A teacher's creativity results from the interaction between personal characteristics and the surrounding social environment. The outcomes of this review will help teachers understand the importance of creativity, identify its most influential factors and challenges, and ultimately achieve their goals more effectively.

As society places greater emphasis on creativity, higher education has started to demand more creative input from both faculty and students. This shift is driven by the ever-changing economic landscape and the rapid advancement of new technologies, which necessitate the production of highly creative university graduates. (Andersen, 2022; Deverell & Moore, 2013; Fan & Kai, 2022). As emphasized by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, four "super skills" have been identified as essential for 21st-century learners: creativity, communication, critical thinking, and collaboration (Kivunja, 2015; Tuazon & Sumadsad, 2022).

College students need not only professional skills but also social skills, which include the ability to creatively solve complex problems, collaborate with others, and address economic, social, and cultural challenges to effectively navigate an ever-changing world (Tell & Howeskog, 2022). In the effort to foster students' creative development, faculty members play an integral role in this educational practice (Vodovnik, 2019).

Creative teachers are essential for fostering students' creativity (Fischer, 2020; Fischer & Golden, 2018; Li, Chen & Kang, 2022; Wang & Jia, 2023) and for the more effective implementation of higher education curricula (Ayob, Hussain & Majid, 2013). Since the

onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the traditional higher education model has undergone significant changes, shifting from face-to-face campus lectures to a more student-centered approach that incorporates online and hybrid learning (Khamis, Nasim, Khamis & Petruka, 2021; Owais, Natur, Mukhaisen & Bader, 2022). In this context, it has become increasingly important for teachers to explore, innovate, and adopt a creative approach to effectively facilitate learning (Fischer & Tatomir, 2022). For instance, educators must integrate learning technologies such as web-based platforms, video conferencing systems, and virtual offices to enhance course design (Salas-Rueda, De-La-Cruz-Martinez, Eslava-Servantes, Castañeda-Martinez & Ramirez-Ortega, 2021). Furthermore, teachers must adapt their management strategies to support online learning and develop competencies that enable them to effectively motivate and engage their students, considering the complex teacher-student interactions inherent in virtual classrooms.

It is also worth noting that, in general, creativity has been shown to depend on the subject area. As an ever-expanding field, creativity in education continues to face significant challenges. Creativity in education, much like the broader concept of creativity itself, must be more context-dependent. Moreover, it is acknowledged that more dynamic perspectives on creativity are needed to understand its complexity, value, and significance in the educational environment. This highlights the necessity of a systematic literature review in this area.

On the other hand, teachers are often perceived as resistant to change and slow to adapt. Although creativity is crucial for human development and can be cultivated through appropriate human resource development methods that support learning and skill enhancement, little attention has been given to assisting teachers in fostering their creative abilities. Despite the growing need to cultivate creative educators, higher education institutions seem to lack adequate resources to support teachers in developing creativity (Borodina, Sibgatullina & Gizatullina). The widespread integration of digital tools and technologies into teaching and learning globally has further complicated efforts to enhance teachers' creative abilities, as there is no cohesive framework in place to provide consistent support in this area.

In summary, the aim of this review is to clarify the concept of teacher creativity in an educational context, identify and demonstrate its significance in education, and explore the factors influencing teacher creativity to uncover opportunities for future research in this field.

To achieve these objectives, this review addresses three research questions:

1. What does teacher creativity mean in higher education?

2. What is the significance of teacher creativity in higher education?

3. What factors influence teacher creativity in higher education?

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