



## **Making Connections between Professional Success and the Factors of Teachers' Creativity**

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### **Abstract**

*The ability to innovate and transform has become more important to people today than the ability to reason. The greatest gift of man is the ability to learn. All interactions with the environment in which we live represent learning sources. The reality of work illustrates the need for this transformation. We are in the age of a new logic, of a dynamic culture, of mind changes. Within it, intuition, behavioral flexibility, intellectual agility, and the ability to initiate, adapt, imagine and renew learning, as well as everything that includes the concept of creativity, must predominate. This evolution of modern human society forces us to invest and mobilization of one's effort. People express themselves through work and creativity plays a decisive role on the road to achieving professional success. For professional success, it is necessary for the management of the organization to focus its evolution on creativity and to be characterized by flexibility and diversity. The present study aims to verify the role that creativity factors play in determining professional success, within a group of adults (teachers) participating in a training program. The article also analyzes statistically what are the dimensions of professional success that are related to aspects of creativity.*

**Key words:** Creativity; factors; professional success; teacher training

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## **1. Introduction**

In the literature, creativity is defined as "the ability to find solutions and to achieve something new and valuable "(Roco, 2004). It can be said that it is an incomplete definition because it limits creativity to the aptitude aspect. However, creativity also involves motivation, temperament traits, character factors, and others. Therefore, it can also be defined as "the unitary set of objective and subjective factors that lead to the realization, by individuals or groups, of an original and valuable product for society"(Sternberg, 2003).

Creativity also means the possibility of communication, the individual being in continuous contact with his inner and outer worlds. The receptivity of the individual allows one to understand the existing problems. Starting from the correlations it makes inside, with known and lived phenomena, it can solve the problems that have arisen. The thirst for knowledge and curiosity draws our attention to the new world. Our knowledge is enriched by our own experience and related to the environment and awareness of being part of this world favors the proper transposition of this knowledge. Creativity corresponds to the mental relationship that we approach to discover new relationships between things, events that can generate useful and general ideas about a given situation.

Due to the confrontation of our internal experiences with the problems of the external world, conflicts or contradictory situations may arise, and attempts to solve them may not always succeed from the first. That is why we can say that being creative also implies the possibility of making mistakes. Even if we perceive the mistake as a failure or if we look at problems with an exaggerated curiosity, it does not mean that our creative process is over. If we get rid of the attitude of resignation to failure and start without giving too much importance to any situation, failure. According to other authors (Jauk, Benedek, Dunst, Neubauer,2013) creativity means "a way of being, a way of thinking. It is first and foremost a common individual aptitude, which we generally have in equal measure, present in each of us and different in intelligence, evaluated by IQ." According to The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (2019), among the top 10 Skills in 2030 that companies want from their employees it is the creative skill.

### ***1.1. Creativity process***

Of the main dimensions of creativity, the creative process is essential for defining it. As the representatives of humanistic psychology argue, creativity can be defined as a process of the interrelation of the individual with a favorable and supportive environment (Paulus, Nijstad, 2003) or a process of modeling the ideas or hypotheses, testing them, and communicating the results obtained (Torrance, 2002). As a problem-solving process, creativity involves several approaches of a psychic, intellectual nature, in the sense that the production of the new entails, according to Urban (1994) "sensitive, profound, expanded perceptions of the recorded information, their ingenious association and combination, synthesis. , the analysis and structuring of information, their materialization into symbolic representations, their communication and reception by others as inherently creative solutions to the problems raised ". Equally, creativity is the premise of the process of generating the new but also the purpose of the original process.

The creative process involves all the psychological mechanisms of the creative individual and all his resources acquired through learning and experience. In addition to the activity of thought, the process stimulates the affectivity and enhances the personality traits. Creativity regarded as associative-combinative and accumulative form takes place on an amplified energy background and requires a great deal of psychic work, it calls for the mobilization of all energetic powers to direct the act and the creative process. The combinative side takes place against the backdrop of energizing phenomena, such as passion, success, interest, curiosity, will, courtesy, need, desire, ambition, feelings.

From a physiological point of view, it takes place on a high cerebral tone that generates and maintains the state of continuous concentration guided by the will. A strong will is self-

generating creative and creative powers, "almost every one of us can manage his mind more efficiently than he usually does. To a greater or lesser extent, we are all endowed with the power of the will and this is the key to the creative effort" (Silvia, Beaty, 2012). Essentially, the creation implies the concretization of the qualities specific to the creative spirit, irrespective of its field of manifestation, namely: the flexibility of thinking and conduct, a trait that facilitates the adaptation to unpredictable situations:

- divergent thinking: it allows to give up stereotypes and formulate various variants of response to environmental challenges;
- the ability to select and evaluate information that helps to formulate hypotheses and to think of solutions to solve the problem;
- cognitive fluidity understood as the ability to work with symbols, ideas, notions, etc., but also to make comparisons, analyzes, syntheses;
- the redefinition, as a performance in the restructuring of the universe of meanings and the creative re-elaboration of the component elements;
- the interrogative attitude, as an expression of the behavior;
- the attitude of rejecting the usual tendencies in the environment, the rigidity of social institutions;
- receptivity to messages and environmental demands, ability to act concerning internal value standards.

Stages of the creative process. Taking as a model the classification made by Taylor and Getzels (2017) we can say that there are: the preparation period, in which information is gathered, observations are made and the purpose or problem is delimited, a general hypothesis or project is outlined; it can be said that it is a latent period wherefrom the disparate knowledge existing in the mind of the creator are selected those which constitute the substance of the original idea; the incubation period represents the stage in which the subject of study (creation) passes into the area of the unconscious where it continues to be analyzed and processed; is the time when the solution is not found and the work is unsatisfactory and may take years; the lighting period coincides with the happy moment when the solution appears; is the stage in which the creative activity reaches the maximum point and the psychologists of creativity equate this step with the phase of inspiration, intuition in the field of artistic creation; the verification consists of the realization of the original idea, after verifying its correctness, in the writing and finishing the writing up to a final form acceptable from the point of view of the creator. But more important than finding solutions is the ability to invent, find, recognize and formulate a new problem.

Moraru (1972) recommends a "transdisciplinary approach" of creativity, modeling of thought processes, and elaboration of various models of information processing. Intelligence is an aptitude that generally corresponds to thinking and indicates its qualitative level. In terms of creativity, intelligence is found to be a necessary but not sufficient condition, and cannot fully explain creativity. Runco and Selcuk (2012) identify creativity as one of the forms of divergent thinking and distinguishes several intellectual factors of creativity and the most important are:

- sensitivity to problems - consists in the open attitude, receptive to the needs, attitudes, and feelings of others, permanent curiosity, and the desire to know, develop, experiment, and check new hypotheses;
- sensitivity to implications - consists in the ability to recognize addictions, problems, where others do not see them;
- fluency - represents a factor consisting of the richness, ease, and speed with which the associations between images, ideas, their flowing character are realized and succeeded;
- originality - lies in the subject's ability to see reality differently, to produce new ideas and images, to find answers, new, unusual solutions;
- ingenuity - consists in being able to find the most direct and easiest way that leads to an optimal effect;

- redefinition - the ability to restructure, interpret, transform, change the function of an object to make it useful in a new form;
- elaboration - consists in the coherent organization of information, ideas, the ability to plan an action (taking into account as much detail as possible), anticipating the final result, developing and finalizing an idea.

Creativity cannot be fully identified with divergent thinking because it is not a unidirectional and variable phenomenon, it involves, as well as other capacities: cognition, mechanical processes, figurative anticipation, convergence production, evolutionary abilities. Other researchers considered that a component with an important weight is the imagination. Piaget (1951) states that imagination is not only useful but, in many cases, necessary for the operation of the operations that rely on it. Osborne (2003) believes that creating constructive imagination is even more important than thought. Relatively few people use the creative capacity as a deliberate and a previously established goal, and those who use this faculty on their initiative, understanding its functions, are geniuses. All the so-called revelations that take place in the realm of religion, as well as the discovery of all fundamental or new principles in the field of inventions, occurs thanks to the faculty of creative imagination. If not used this creative imagination can weaken and become latent through unsolicited. By stimulating the creative imagination, man gets the basic or new ideas, the imagination, and the flair he needs. A source of the creative imagination is the subconscious, the place where every sensory impression and every impulse of thought that has ever reached the brain through one of the five senses is stored. Newer research has revealed that within the various stages and sub-stages of the creative process, in addition to operational mechanisms, attitudes, interventions, and a series of personality traits. By definition, creativity is a very complex trait of the whole personality, which involves, besides the intellectual, the voluntary, the characteristic components.

Popescu-Neveanu (1994) specifies that of the noncognitive factors of the personality the aptitudes are not creative by themselves but they thus become insofar as they are activated and valorized by motives and attitudes (e.g.: musical aptitude develops in the process of musical activity and not through a maturing process). Among the personality traits of creative individuals are, first and foremost, non-conformist intellectual attitudes. Conformism restricts the freedom and independence of thought, curbs the creative potential by channeling it in conventional, stereotypical directions while the creative attitude implies spontaneity, intellectual autonomy, the independent orientation of thought. The characteristic importance of the creative personality is the receptive attitude of openness to experience. The creative type is sensitive to everything that happens around him, has high empathy. Unlike other factors of creativity, attitudes depend entirely on education. The study of biological factors revealed significant differential aspects generated, above all, by the age factor.

Research done by psychologists shows that the performance of creative individuals is largely determined by individual, internal factors, a significant weight having the aptitude, motivational, temperamental, complementary factors, and other personality traits generated by intellectual and social experiences.

### ***1.2. Success and creativity***

Success is, first and foremost, a phenomenon of consciousness, existing only at the level of consciousness and social psychology. At least at first appearance, appears to us as a "psychological phenomenon" that cannot appear without the reaction of appreciation, enthusiasm, admiration, and praise. The success only appears in the society, this representing its functioning mechanism not letting it be reduced to an individual psychic phenomenon. Success is not only of mass character but also of value, of selection, of social promotion. The psychological source of success is the capacity of man to be enthusiastic, to admire, to praise, the capacity acquired during his social history.

Success has a complex causality, with different rhythms that are related to the psychology of the human species. (note - species created by history and creators of history, by definition) This psychological capacity of man to be enthusiastic, to reward is the most distant psychological source of success and indispensable. The individual psychological character stops here, he does not explain how success occurs, which is the object of success nor its forms. Its initiation and unfolding are not in the hands of individuals, but of society. The social class, driven by its necessities of life, decides on the actions that must be encouraged, supported, and promoted. Success occurs, without exception, only within a company and responds, more or less, directly or indirectly, to the development needs of the company. Success is always selective, it removes from anonymity a relatively small number of people (even if it fails in its appreciation) by the structure and level of the company, not by the actual merits of the successful candidates. It has two psychic aspects: one belongs to the sanctioning public and another belongs to the successive subject. The mechanism of the dominant success is always the reaction of the public. "When public opinion is favorable to a man or to a work (even when they are fictional and especially then), it means with certainty that it is a game of real interest of the social group, satisfied in this way" (Kang et al., 2010). All the psychologists who worked for success found the stimulating, the excitatory of success. The man who succeeds becomes more dynamic, gains confidence in his forces, is tempted to take other actions with a view to other successes. Success is a way of thinking, feeling, acting that contributes to personality formation and development.

### ***1.3. The relationship between creativity and professional success***

None of the variables of personality arouse at present more interest than creativity. This highly important variable has been the subject of controversial controversy and even considered by generations of psychologists unworthy of consideration. Only in recent decades has creativity been recognized as not only a minority specific feature but a personality factor existing in any of us, to a lesser or greater extent. Today, many companies recognize the importance of their own employees' creativity for their economic success. Creativity manifests with great efficiency in the fields of technology and management or arts of all kinds. The tendency is now to consider creativity as one of the variables of major importance for the evolution of human society. Through our way of thinking, we create the world we live in every moment, and our way of thinking and being is the direct result of the creative power of our thinking. Being creative means being open and curious about the world and yourself. Creativity is the ability to see things in a whole new way, a logical process that guides us towards a solution.

Professional success is the desired state, a destination that every man sets himself. The need to succeed in the profession is natural but to achieve it, professional success must be programmed. The greatest gift of man is the ability to learn. All interactions with the environment we live in are sources of learning. One of the most efficient ways we learn is modeling. In adulthood, we realize that we model the people we admire. Developing this ability to take over and use other people's success strategies is a model of professional success. Man expresses himself through work and creativity plays a decisive role on the road to achieving professional success. Creativity has been interpreted as a holistic system, emphasizing that the whole must be understood as a higher-order synthesis of the parts, rather than a summation of them. This synthesis can be done in an organization because the creative behavior is based on the interaction between some skills: imagination, intuition, adaptability to changes, professional responsibility. For professional success, it is necessary for the management of the organization to focus its evolution on creativity and to be characterized by flexibility and diversity. They favor change through the generation, continuous development, and transposition of new ideas into practice.

The ability to innovate and transform has become more important to today's man than the ability to reason. The reality of work illustrates the need for this transformation. We are in the age of a new logic, of a dynamic culture, of change. Within it must necessarily predominate intuition,

behavioral flexibility, intellectual agility, and the capacity for initiative, adaptation, imagination, and renewal; in a word, creativity. This evolution of modern human society forces us to personal investment and an important mobilization of our effort. "We are constantly constrained to overcome difficulties, obstacles to finding the path to professional success." The individual who succeeds has a psychological potential and a specific, mental, and strategic mode of functioning. Also, it uses techniques and methods that constitute the elements of an efficient system producing performance and, consequently, professional success.

Social research has shown that the human factor is an important source of increasing the profitability of an organization. The way of carrying out the activity of an organization is directly influenced by the state of the social system, the productivity of the company, the flexibility, and the creativity of its members. "The staff with creative ideas can be successfully used to generate new ideas and solutions related to the work carried out in the workplace" (Rusu, 2004). The predominant nature of creativity in achieving professional success is underlined by the role of creative management in each organization. Creative management is the one that can coordinate and train the other categories of resources of the organization for creative solving of the working situations.

In Romania, the decision-making act is emphasized using techniques and methods that stimulate creativity. Some aspects related to the involvement of creativity in the subsystems of the management system of the organization should be emphasized. Ciobanu and Androniceanu (2018) think that the first step in human performance is the quality of human resources activities. In the cited paper, the authors conducted research in Romanian public institutions and the findings of the results show that there is a differently perceived meaning of the career development system by respondents. Regarding the organizational subsystem, the creativity of the staff can be manifested in the process organization, by elaborating new timely solutions related to the way the processes are carried out in the company, the use of new methods that will lead to the achievement of the company objectives. Developing creative management strategies with a high degree of flexibility also involves creating a climate that encourages the creative behavior of the members of the organization.

#### ***1.4. The aim of the research***

The present study aims to verify the role that creativity factors play in determining professional success. It is anticipated that people with high creative potential will be able to present a high level of professional satisfaction, a level associated especially with professional success. We are also interested in studying which dimensions of professional success are related to aspects of creativity.

To achieve the objectives of the present study, we have designed a research plan through which we will verify the following hypothesis: There is a strong connection between professional success and the factors that determine creativity (we have to establish the correlation between a variable characteristic for professional success and the determinants of creativity).

## **2. Research Methodology**

### ***2.1. Research group***

The study was carried out on several 78 participants (teachers in high-school), participants in the training course of the "Train of trainers", in Bucharest. In terms of gender, 43 of the respondents are men (55.1%) and 35 are women (44.9%). All of them have more than 10 years of experience in teaching activities, in urban areas.

## 2.2. Research instruments

The battery of creativity tests was developed by Horst H. Siewert (2000). Accepting the notion that all the novelties that appear on the market have existed beforehand, in the minds of those who discovered them, Horst H. Siewert proposes this creativity test. By restructuring the connections existing between the notions accumulated subconsciously, new ideas can be brought to light that can be highlighted and realized. The test highlights the ability of the subject to leave the normal, largely logical, structured way of thinking to acquire the talent of thinking about new coordinates. The test of the creative capacity is realized through several subtests with which the speed of the response to different stimuli can be verified, each set of stimuli being addressed to dimensions of the creative power. There are five subtypes of creativity, as follows: lexical background, lexical association, divergent thinking, visual creativity, free association.

The questionnaire for evaluation of professional success contains many 24 items grouped into 4 representative dimensions of professional success: working group appreciation, leadership/expertise, money, social position. At the level of the whole questionnaire, internal consistency of 0.74 was obtained and the instrument can be considered faithful. The total score can be between 24 and 120 points, the small scores being representative of low professional satisfaction and the big one's characteristic of high professional satisfaction. In analyzing data, there are used SPSS Statistics, the Spearman's correlation coefficient, and the diagrams for descriptive sources.

## 3. Results

The hypothesis affirms the existence of a strong connection between professional success and the factors that determine creativity. One of the variables is professional success and the other variables are the factors of creativity. Due to the lack of a Gaussian distribution, we used Spearman's correlation coefficient of "rho" ranks.

**Table 1.** Relationships between professional satisfaction and creativity factors

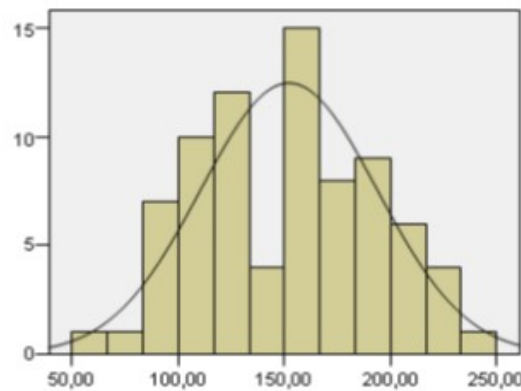
	professional satisfaction	lexical background	lexical association	divergent thinking	visual creativity	free association
Spearman's rho	1.000	-.123	-.016	.899	.880	.844
Professional satisfaction	.	.284	.889	.000	.000	.000
N	78	78	78	78	78	78

We note the existence of significant, positive and very strong correlations between professional success and three of the investigated creativity factors. As can be seen in Table 1 there are positive, significant and strong correlations between professional satisfaction and divergent thinking ( $r = 0.89$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ), between professional satisfaction and visual creativity ( $r = 0.88$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ) but also between professional satisfaction and free association ( $r = 0.84$ ;  $p < 0.01$ ). From a psychological point of view, people who present professional success are characterized by divergent thinking developed, visual creativity, free association. It can be assumed that, due to the specificity of the sample chosen, the creativity criteria associated with professional success refer more to divergent thinking and the ability to imagine concrete solutions than to operating with a lexical background.

Because the rating system, for each of the 5 factors of creativity is a unitary, we could associate the five creativity factors in a global creativity score. Thus, we obtain a new variable, called creativity (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Creativity Statistics

N	Valid	78
Mean		152.0897
Median		154.0000
Standard deviation		41.63015
Skewness		.103
Standard error Skewness		.272
Kurtosis		-.766
Standard error Kurtosis		.538
Amplitude of this distribution		183.00
Minimum		62.00
Maximum		245.00



**Histogram 1.** Distribution of respondents' scores on the Creativity variable

We observe a multimodal distribution at the level of this variable, symmetrical (Skewness = 0.10; Standard error Skewness = 0.27) and mesokurtic (Kurtosis = -0.76; Standard error Kurtosis = 0.53) with the mean 152.08, median 154 and standard deviation 41.63. The amplitude of this distribution is 183 points, between a minimum of 52 points and a maximum of 245 points. Although the distribution is multimodal, because the symmetry and vaulting criteria are met at the same time, we can consider the distribution as normal.

**Table 3.** The relationship between creativity and professional success

			Professional satisfaction	Creativity
Spearman's rho Coefficient	Professional satisfaction	Correlation	1.000	.898
		Sig.(2-tailed)	.	.000
	Creativity	N	78	78
		Correlation	.898	1.000
Coefficient	Creativity	Correlation	.000	.
		Sig.(2-tailed)	78	78
	N			

Despite this fact, we cannot use the Pearson correlation coefficient in analyzing the link between creativity and job satisfaction because the second variable does not have a normal distribution. Between professional satisfaction and creativity, we obtain a correlation coefficient



of ranks of 0.89 at a significance threshold of less than 0.01 which indicates a strong, positive, and significant connection (Table 3).

#### **4. Conclusions**

Following this analysis, the main hypothesis of the study was confirmed that there is a connection between creativity and professional satisfaction. I showed that creative people have a high level of professional satisfaction, more professional success, the connection between these two variables is a strong link. We have also shown the dimensions of creativity that contribute to increasing the degree of professional success. Professional success can be defined as “the positive result of one's efforts in the profession of the profession I have chosen (respondent).” The person expresses himself by action, by work, by the meaning that the work has for him, by the motivations that channel his energy towards the fulfillment of the activity's goals, by the way he identifies with the work. Typically, studies show that work serves as a basis for outlining and verifying one's self-concept. The way to achieve success in the activity is learned from childhood, the whole process of education and self-education being, in essence, an optimal way of self-realization of the individual capacities at the desired levels of society and compatible with the age. Thus, it is found insufficient the professional training only during the period when we are students or students, and this must continue in the workplace.

Today, there is more talk about organizations that are learning continuously, even talking about a current movement. It refers to continuous, permanent improvements, anchored in the unwavering interest in reality and progressive learning. Schools and teachers are involved in continuous learning. The question arises here: can success be planned? The answer is yes, a “trained eye” can detect individuals with certain performance qualities and will apply the strategies that will lead them to success. These strategies can also be used in modern education that aims to achieve high results. The success must be anticipated by designing a future “scenario” in which the person plays the role he wants the goal and the intermediate stages must be established by establishing the objectives and deadlines, the working methods and a system for evaluating each objective, to learn from previous failures and successes, that is, “do not make the same mistake twice”, to use of systems: cognitive, affective, emotional and relational promoting teamwork from which one learns by observing others, comparing one's abilities and activity with those of others, and having the opportunity to value them. Learning organizations measure what is learned within them by determining the time that elapses until the improvement of 50% in each element of performance is achieved. This is a way to correlate financial performance with the learning curve. It is a well-known fact that, at present, the volume of information is very large and, at the same time, it is circulating very rapidly, increasing with each year. Therefore, in any discipline, a doctorate or other academic degree, it remains relevant only six to eight years. In the big organizations, so-called “infopreneurs” have been formed, that is, those dealing with the collection, analysis, sorting, storage, interrogation, and communication of information. It can be said that “the most successful person is the person who has the most information.”

One of the 21st-century skills valuable in the labor market is creativity and teachers are used in many strategies to promote disciplinary competencies, in designing learning experiences. According to Chmelárová, Pasiarb, and Vargovác (2020), the development of learners' creativity can be improved using project-based learning. This view has been confirmed by Akhtara and Kartika (2020) in their research about the connection between creativity and intelligence and the results obtained shows that there are too many factors that can become more predictive to develop creativity like the creative climate, the parenting style, emotional intelligence, and others.

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