



CREATIVITY IN EDUCATION FROM THE TEACHER'S PERSPECTIVE

Slavica Maksić and Jelena Pavlović (2022). *Creativity in education from the teacher's perspective*. Belgrade: Institute for Educational Research, 24 cm, 208 p.

The book entitled *Creativity in Education From the Teacher's Perspective*¹ was published in 2022 by the Institute for Educational Research (Belgrade). The authors of the publication are Slavica Maksić, PhD (the Institute for Educational Research in Belgrade) and Jelena Pavlović, PhD (the Department of Psychology at the Faculty of Philosophy, University of Belgrade).

Creativity is one of the most widely researched areas in the field of psychology as well as other social sciences and humanities. Hence, it also represents a key research topic in education, since this area of human activity is meant to foster the expression and development of creativity from an early age. However, in spite of the extensive body of research on creativity, there are discrepancies between the existing theoretical findings and the current state of the practice. *Creativity in Education From the Teacher's Perspective* was conceived as a response to this situation. The authors' intention was to establish a stronger link between theoretical models of creativity development and the educational practice. The publication is thematically oriented towards school and preschool teachers' implicit theories and beliefs about the nature of creativity and the way it is fostered in educational institutions. The book comprises eight chapters organized in a logical sequence.

In Chapter One, entitled *Scientific Theories and Models of Creativity*, the authors offer a particularly intriguing and cogent introduction to the contents of the book. They discuss different definitions of creativity, while highlighting the continuity of scientific research on this topic and summarizing previously published findings. They

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provide a systematic overview of the most influential theories and models concerning the nature of the phenomenon of creativity as well as its development and modes of expression in education. The analyzed models include the 4P's Creativity Model, the 5A's Model of Creativity, the Systems Model of Creativity, the 4C's Model of Creativity, the Investment Theory of Creativity and the Propulsion Model of Creative Contributions, and the Dynamic Componential Model of Creativity and Innovation. The chapter comprises a detailed deliberation on the existing scientific interpretations of creativity, thus providing creativity researchers with a comprehensive overview of the field. Furthermore, it enables practitioners to better understand and analyze their own beliefs and ideas about creativity in relation to the most prominent theoretical conceptions in the field.

In the chapter *Implicit Theories of Creativity*, the authors first provide a luculent explanation of the essential and substantive differences between explicit and implicit theories. They offer fresh insights into the contributions of implicit theories to a comprehensive understanding of creativity, especially in the domain of research on the creativity of individuals and groups. The chapter discusses different approaches to examining implicit theories of creativity and the existing empirical findings. The crucial segments of this chapter pertain to the interpretation of the results of research on implicit theories of the creativity of different influential groups (especially preschool and school teachers) and the analysis of similarities and differences in implicit conceptions of creativity among different cultures. By adopting this approach, the authors highlight the important role of the wider social context in the understanding of creativity in the educational practice.

In Chapter Three, entitled *Creativity and Education*, the authors explore the intertwining relationships between creativity and learning and teaching. They discuss the recent experiences in encouraging creativity in education and refer to European and national strategic documents as well as relevant laws and bylaws that emphasize the need for developing creativity in education. Likewise, they highlight the role of preschool and school teachers in conducting activities that foster creativity. Additionally, the authors' critically approach findings on the characteristics of preschool and school teachers and the current state of the practice while discussing prerequisites to the realization of the set goals. Thereupon, the authors establish links between the imperatives of modern society, the current state of the practice, and opportunities for encouraging creativity, thus offering readers a valuable insight into the two conflicting realities: the ideal and the present.

Chapter Four, *Applied Creativity Research in Education in Serbia*, sets the methodological foundation and introduces the following three chapters, which present the authors' studies on implicit theories of the creativity of education workers. Readers are familiarized with the subject of the research, general and specific research goals, sample characteristics, and the mixed-method approach applied to data collection and analysis.

Chapter Five, entitled *Study 1. The Development of Models for Examining Implicit Creativity Theories in Education*, summarizes the results of research on the ways researchers and teachers conceptualize and define creativity, perceive its manifestations, and identify opportunities for its development within the education system. The authors use the results of their studies as the foundation for models for interpreting implicit creativity theories. The findings presented in this chapter do not only offer an insight into both researchers' and teachers' beliefs about creativity, but also support the viability of the 4P's Creativity Model (with certain modifications) and the foundations of the Developmental, Expert, and Integrated models of creativity. The immense contribution of the contents of this chapter lies in the validation of one of the most prominent models of creativity as well as the construction of novel, empirically founded creativity models.

In the chapter *Study 2. The Validation of Models for Examining Implicit Creativity Theories in Education*, the authors describe the research whose results validate the application of the newly constructed models, while enriching them with additional content not encompassed by the models. In addition to its singular scientific contribution, the chapter offers a more comprehensive view of the existing beliefs of primary and secondary school teachers regarding the nature, manifestations, and development of creativity.

Building on the previous two chapters, in Chapter Seven, entitled *Study 3. The Application of Models for Examining Implicit Creativity Theories in Education*, Maksić and Pavlović provide an extensive overview of the results of the quantitative segment of the research concerning similarities and differences in beliefs of education workers (from preschool to university) as well as the ways participants' select characteristics and specific features of their institutions affected their beliefs about creativity, its manifestations, and opportunities for its development. The authors provide information on similarities and differences in participants' beliefs about creativity in relation to their position or workplace. The contents of this chapter offer a crystalline insight into the state of educational practice and point to the roles of different factors in the formation of beliefs about creativity. Hence, the chapter provides a strong foundation for planning interventions and future research.

The final chapter entitled *Conclusions, Implications, and Future Research* offers a brief recapitulation of the contents of the book and an overview of the key findings, interpreted in the light of the existing literature on the subject. Additionally, the authors list the critical implications for the nurture and development of creativity in educational practices and provide clear and specific guidelines for future research in this area.

Creativity in Education From the Teacher's Perspective offers a compelling and lucid summary of the current conceptions of creativity while encompassing valuable research findings. The singular scientific contribution of this publication is reflected in its extensive scientific interpretation of creativity, its summary of the existing

theoretical and empirical data, and its overview of an immense number of original sources. The particular value of the book lies in the validation of one of the most prominent models of creativity as well as the construction of novel models. Thus, the book can inspire researchers to test other theoretical models of creativity and realize future research focusing on other important actors. In addition to providing scientific value, the contents can serve as a useful tool for education workers to analyze and reexamine their own beliefs about creativity, which constitutes the first step towards changing the existing practice. The book highlights the factors that significantly contribute to fostering creativity in education, thus raising practitioners' awareness of their own influence as well as the effects of other school factors on students' creativity. The authors' style makes the contents of the book digestible and appealing to readers of various educational backgrounds and interests. The end of each chapter features drawings made by preschoolers and primary and secondary school students depicting the way they see their kindergarten or school, which further enriches the contents of the book and allows readers to analyze the drawings and speculate about the "hidden" messages.

Having in mind the statements made above, we could conclude that the publication is intended for a wide audience and represents a valuable resource for researchers, practitioners, and education policy creators, who are both interested in and responsible for the encouragement and development of creativity in the education system.

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