

SOCIAL PSYCHOLOGY

**CURRENT RESEARCHES OF NOTION
“CREATIVITY” IN PSYCHOLOGY AND
ITS RELATION TO RISK**

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Abstract: The article considers theoretical sources for the purpose of systematization of notion “creativity”, as well as its related notion “risk appetite”. The author analyzes classical and the latest studies of the creativity and its related phenomena, remaining within a focus of research concerned with social instability. The author studies scope of an inquiry of creativity and creative individuals, as well as the risk appetite and scope of an inquiry of risk in psychology. It is suggested that creativity is a multifaceted phenomenon that has to be explored in the interdisciplinary discourse. The risk appetite can be a prerequisite for the ability to express creativity.

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Introduction

One of the prerequisites for individual to survive in modern life is creativity or creativeness. The survival and development are the notions that are very closely related. They are especially topical both in the crisis conditions and in situations of social instability, existing in Latvia in recent years. In the situation of the economical crisis, lack of creative approach poses risks not only to the survival of the particular individual but even the entire enterprises can cease to exist. If people are unable to develop, their survival is endangered.

Creativity supposes the ability of taking the reasonable risk, overcoming obstacles and the readiness to withstand the opinion of the others. Often the resistance of creative people towards the reproductive jobs, their high sensitivity towards monotonous work is considered to be laziness, stubbornness or foolishness.

Creativity is realization by the individual of one's personality. But before the individuality can be expressed, it should be in some or another way recognized by a person. Everything a person is doing is highly conditioned by the conception of himself. The possibility of discovering the creative faculty depends on how well the person knows and understands strong and weak points of one's identity, one's inner potential. Our creativity, indeed, to a degree is blocked by the prejudice. Many authors have ascertained the inner relationship between creative and antiauthoritarian behaviour. Both in past centuries and in the present time, the creative activity of a person brings not only the personal development, but moves a progress and creates a culture of entire humanity. The notion “creation” can be applied for both the activity of a person and the material values created by this person, which from the factors of individual history that become the facts of culture.

As well, risk is often stereotypically interpreted as something negative, hazardous. However, the positive nature of risk-taking should be also recognized - that is related to creativity. In the general psychology the

readiness for risk is considered as a prerequisite for creative activity of the individual.

The scope of an inquiry of creativity

The literary sources concerned with creativity suggest so many different theories. For the present moment, there is multitude of definitions for the notion of “creativity”. Creativity is studied by various psychological schools and is subject of interest for many scientific disciplines, thus adopting an interdisciplinary discourse. Creativity from the scientific point of view is considered to be a complex, multi-aspect and nonuniform phenomena, which is conveyed by the diversity of theoretical and experimental directions of its study. For the time period from first attempts of studying the creative abilities and till the present day the researchers had created broad view of phenomenology of creativity. The creativity is studied as a general phenomenon expressed in different spheres of life (including language learning): from the philosophical (Nikolko, 1990), psychological (Sternberg, 1988; Ponomarev, 1986; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2002), humanistic (May, 1994), associationistic (Fasko, 1999), behaviourist (Skinner, 1973), cognitive (Ellis and Hunt 1993; Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001) points of view. Creativity is studied as a specific phenomenon as well: activity (Ponomarev, 1986), state (Amabile, 1987, 2001), a process (Welsch, 1973), aspect of intelligence (Sternberg and Davidson, 1986), function of reason (Boden, 1991; Krippner, 1999), form of irrationality (Neihart, 1998; Koestler, 1973), aspect of problem solving (Osborn, 1953; Parnes, 1967; Altshuller, 1996; Treffinger, 1990), associative or analogical process (Spearman, 1931; Holyoak and Thagard, 1997), trait-factorial approach (MacKinnon, 1961; Barron, 1963; Guilford, 1959).

In 1950 Guilford (Guilford, 1950) had formulated in his lecture on “Creativity”, that became a history, the arguments on the needed acceptance of the aspects of creative thinking, which were formerly forgotten. In the course of time in the psychological science the crisis in

understanding the paradigm and psychodiagnostics of creativity developed. It was conditioned by difficulty in operationalization on the notion "creativity" itself and fuzziness of the characteristics measured. Today, many years later, the interest towards creativity has increased; that is determined by the development of computer technologies, which allow modelling strictly logical processes of mind.

All the studies of creativity can be divided in two groups. First ones are the studies based on the concept of creativity as universal cognitive creative abilities. Representatives of "cognitive" school study the relations between creativity, intellect, cognitive abilities and actual achievements. The brightest representatives of this school are: J. Guilford, S. Taylor, E. Torrens, A. Ponamarev, S. Mednick. Mostly the influence of intellectual and cognitive characteristics onto the ability to produce new ideas is presented in their works. The other group of studies describes individual traits of the creative individuals. Many experimental studies are dedicated to creating the "portrait of the creative individual"; identifying typical personality traits; defining personal, motivational and socio-cultural correlates of creativity. The brightest representatives of the second school are: F. Barron, A. Maslow, D. Bogoyavlenskaya.

The creative components of the intellectual processes always attract the attention of many scientists. However, in the majority of studies of creativeness the differences in the creative abilities themselves were practically not considered, whilst it was acknowledged that different people are gifted to different extent. The interest to the individual differences in creative abilities arose in connection with the obvious attainments in the sphere of testometric studies of intellect.

One of the definitions of creativity assumes that creativity is the creative potential of the individual, which is characterized by readiness to generate essentially new ideas, different from traditional and established patterns of thinking and included in the structure of giftedness as an independent factor, as well as an ability to solve problems, arising within the static systems. According to A. Maslow it is creative orientation, inherited by all but lost by the majority under the influence of the environment. In the daily life creativity shows as keenness of wit, the ability to reach the goal that seems unachievable at the first sight, to find a way out of the dead end, using the environment, objects and circumstances in an unusual way.

Two hypotheses about the origin of peoples' creative abilities exist. Traditionally it was believed that the creativeness developed gradually, over the periods of time and it is a consequence of cultural and demographic changes, particularly the growth of population. In agreement with the second hypothesis, stated by the anthropologist Richard Klein from Stanford University in 2002 (Klein, 2002), creativity appeared as a result of sudden genetic mutation of the human brain about 50 thousand years ago.

The absence of general large theory, while there is detected a variety of new regularities and factors, is the evidence of complexity of this issue. Although the studies on creativity are carried out actively for several decades, the collected data does not clarify the situation; it, contrariwise, complicates understanding of this phenomena. Forty years ago there were about 60

definitions of "creativity", but for present moment it is already impossible to count them. Therefore, some of the researchers ironically note: "The process of understanding of what the creativity is? requires the creative actions itself." Unfortunately, till the present time the scholars have not reached the consent even on the problem "Does the creativity exist or it is a scientific construct?".

The scope of an inquiry of creative individual

The problem of creativity traditionally is considered in the framework of psychology of creativeness, psychology of subject, psychology of personality and individuality. In the abovementioned studies creativity is, on one hand, one of the leading factors providing for the creative activity of a person; on the other - one of major problems in psychology of personality and its development. The stated problem was and is studied by many scholars and researchers. They use the notion creativity for denoting creative abilities of a person. In the study of phenomena the cognitive and personality school can be singled out.

Nominally, four areas of investigation of creative individuals can be marked out. The first area is research of their individual traits and motives. The second area, which is very close to the first one, consists of studies of "ego" identity in connection with the creativity. The third area includes works on creativity in the context of self actualization. The fourth area of the individual creativity investigation borders to the psychiatry and deals with psychopathologic or other phenomena that are close to the pathology.

Amabile and Collins (1996) list the different set of traits of a creative personality. Their set of characteristics includes: self-discipline concerning work, ability to delay the delight, perseverance in the state of frustration, inner-directedness, tolerance towards the uncertainty, high level of autonomy, absence of gender stereotypes, internal locus of control, readiness for risk, high level of self-initiation and tendency for fulfilling the tasks to the best advantage.

Originality of motivation of the creative individuals is conditional upon a wide range of their interests, considers Martindale (1989). They are open to new experience and prefer novelty. The internal motivation prevails over the external. Beside this, the creative individuals demonstrate the ability for broad categorizing and idiosyncrasy (Dailey, Martindale, and Borkum, 1997).

Some authors tend to build the categorization of creative individuals. For example Farley (1986) marks out a particular type - T personality. It is defined as the sensation seeker. People of such type of individuality may both achieve the high level of creativity, and demonstrate destructive and even the criminal behaviour. Dutta (1996) proposed the model of the artists' personality, bringing into a view their individual styles and dispositions.

Apparently it is connected to that fact that till the present day there is no fairly admitted conceptions of "ego" identity and its structure, despite the vast massive of the other studies of "ego" identity. Another equally important issue of research remained beyond the field of attention of psychologists. The issue is that the major attention is paid to separate the creativity out of the individuality, to isolate the creative factors from "non-creative". The set onto isolation and differentiation, in its turn, leads to definite strategies of research. They consist

of dividing of a sampling into the "creative" and "normal" and using accordingly ex post facto design of research. Meanwhile the issue of the inverse effect of the creativity on the personality and "ego" identity, peculiarities of their content and structure remains absolutely unstudied. This is another synthetic set. The major question of the researchers which can be set is the following: which role does the creativity plays in relation to the structure of personality and "ego" identity? Does the creativity integrates the personality and "ego" identity, or contrariwise, leads to differentiation and fragmentation? Substantively this means, if the creative parameters of the individuality are able of fulfilling the function of moderators and mediators.

Risk taking and fields of risk study in psychology

Studying the theoretical sources related to the topic has found that the notion of risk as a systematic phenomenon was not paid sufficient attention in existing scientific literature. It seems appropriate to follow the formation dynamics of the notion "creativity" starting from the classical theories (Petrovsky and Lefevr, 1968) to the modern researches, which are presented in works of such famous authors (Breakwell, 2008; Zuckerman, 1994; Kornilova, 2003; etc.). In psychology risk was studied by Burkard (1987), Schubert (1997), Ehlers (1967), Zuckerman (1994), Mehrabian (1969), Stoner (1961), Atkinson (1964). But in the process of study the author had not found any researches that have been carried out under the social instability.

The term risk is connected with such notions as "risk awareness", "risk perception", "risk assessment", "readiness for risk", "risk taking" and takes the shape of the social behaviour of the subject, carried out under the conditions of uncertainty. The process of taking the risky decisions often diverges from the prescript rational model, because the uncertainty deforms the perception and exerts strong influence on the consciousness by means of the subject of given situation.

Many specific social and natural sciences use the notion of risk. Each of them has its own subject and its own direction in study of risk and uses its own methods. Such situation allows singling out many different aspects in which the risk is examined. Before coming to examination of the concept of risk, the meaning of the notion of risk should be exposed. At the moment there is no generally accepted definition for this notion and there are numerous divergences in its interpretation. It is described by the multidimensionality of this phenomenon, which has distinct or sometimes even contrary solid grounds. A number of qualities are peculiar to risk, such as contradictoriness, alternativeness, uncertainty, specific historical nature. Along with this, risk has many subjective matters. According to the data received during current research, people are inherent either the aspiration for risk or the tendency for risk aversion, when the risk appraisal is based on the subjective criterion but decisions are taken on the grounds of subjective evaluation of the balance between the risk and benefit (Bazerman, 2001). For the present moment there is no generally accepted definition for risk, but exists a variety of definitions, which are sometimes antipodal. The method of estimation of composite index risk for theoretical and practical researches has not been formed.

Notion readiness for risk is studied and examined primarily as an individually-psychological category. In the social psychology repeated efforts were made for study of the phenomenon revealed in general psychology at the group or interpersonal level. Thus, if a group of people serves as a subject taking a decision under the risk, than it could be spoken of the group preparedness for risk. In addition, in the general psychology the readiness for risk is considered as a prerequisite for creative activity of the individual.

At the present situation of crisis the risk is stereotypically considered as something negative and hazardous. However, for the sake of scientific objectiveness also the positive nature of risk-taking should be mentioned - that is related to creativity. Yun and Weinzweig were the first to note this relation. Readiness for risk as the characteristic component of courage was postulated by Weinzweig (1990). On the examples of analysis of definite situations of life, which should be called critical, he demonstrates the positive role of this quality in case the individual was willing to act in accordance with his convictions.

The author is planning to continue the theoretical study on the base of empiric research: which is to analyze the relation of the risk appetite with the presence of creativity of the representatives of different social groups in Latvia under the social instability. In fact, such variable as stability/instability practically was not present in the studies. If the thesis, that the questions of the social psychology are set forth by the society, is correct, then one should admit its duty to search the answers for questions of changing society. Otherwise, the social psychology finds oneself disarmed in the face of global social transformations: its apparatus and facilities are not adjusted to the study of socio-psychological phenomena in the changing world. In the situations of instability individuals experience the time of their lives in a different way, reconsider the past, present and future, sometimes loose the internal sense, and, thereafter, the purpose of life, which for psychologist is a sign of life crisis. The study of different aspects of human life under the social instability gains increasingly greater dissemination in psychology. In the Western psychology the whole range of studies of life crisis stands out. Among them of a particular interest are works of German scholars Fisher and Kooper (1990); Peltsman (1992). These works study the different states of individual related to the changes in a field of professional activity, particularly in connection to the loss of job.

Author considers the topicality of research of different social groups for the purpose of ascertainment of the following hypotheses:

- risk appetite of individuals can differ in accordance with type of risk, the content of risk-taking activity;
- sufficiency level influences the risk appetite towards different types of risk of the individual;
- age can influence the risk appetite towards different types of risk;
- risk appetite of individuals with different sufficiency levels in the situation of instability is interrelated with the individual psychological features;
- there are gender differences towards different types of risk;

- there is statistically significant connection between the risk appetite and creativity.

Conclusions

Creativity is a multifaceted phenomenon that has to be explored in the interdisciplinary discourse. It must be noted that traditional psychodiagnostics proved to be helpless in solving the problem concerned to the methods of defining the higher intellectual abilities of a person. From the very beginning for the founders of testology it was clear that the structure of creative personality is many-sided and in one or another way influences the outcome of activity (Bogoyavlenskaya, 2009).

In the situation of social instability and economical crisis the problem of development and survival becomes very topical both for an individual, and for the entire enterprises. In such situation the competitiveness is important. The competitive individual - is an individual possessing large reserves, higher than the others have. In this context the gifted, creative individuals are such reserve for solving the set problems. However, it should be mentioned that the creativity is often blocked by the prejudice. Similarly, the negative perception of risk exists; while risk can be a prerequisite for the ability of outpouring of creativity.

The study shows that there were carried out a variety of correlation researches on both creativity and risk, however there are no studies dedicated to the study of relation between this notions under the social instability. This stipulates the rational for empirical study of the range of above-mentioned hypotheses within the focus.

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