

The Role of Group Dynamics in Creativity: A Study Case from Italy

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Abstract : Modern society requires people to be flexible and to develop innovative solutions to unexpected situations. Creativity refers to the “interaction among aptitude, process, and the environment by which an individual or group produces a perceptible product that is both novel and useful as defined within a social context”. It allows humans to produce novel ideas, generate new solutions, and express themselves uniquely. Only a few scientific studies have examined group dynamics' influence on individuals' creativity. There exist some gaps in the research on creative thinking, such as the fact that collaborative effort frequently results in the enhanced production of new information and knowledge. Therefore, it is critical to evaluate creativity via social settings. The study aimed at exploring the group dynamics of young adults in small group settings and the influence of these dynamics on their creativity. The study included 30 participants aged 20 to 25 who were attending university after completing a bachelor's degree. The participants were divided into groups of three, in gender homogenous and heterogeneous groups. The groups' creative task was tied to the Lego mosaic created for the Scintillae laboratory at the Reggio Children Foundation. Group dynamics were operationalized into patterns of behaviors classified into three major categories: 1) Social Interactions, 2) Play, and 3) Distraction. Data were collected through audio and video recording and observation. The qualitative data were converted into quantitative data using the observational coding system; then, they were analyzed, revealing correlations between behaviors using median points and averages. For each participant and group, the percentages of represented behavior signals were computed. The findings revealed a link between social interaction, creative thinking, and creative activities. Other findings revealed that the more intense the social interaction, the lower the amount of creativity demonstrated. This study bridges the research gap between group dynamics and creativity. The approach calls for further research on the relationship between creativity and social interaction.

Keywords : group dynamics, creative thinking, creative action, social interactions, group play

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