
Initiative: Organizing and Disseminating Knowledge About Creativity
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Thesis Title: Investigating Implicit Perceptions of Creative Style and Level

Rationale and Questions: At a broad level, this thesis is aimed at identifying laypersons' implicit perceptions of what characterizes creative individuals and considers both their style and level. Michael Kirton's research and theory on adaptor-innovator style, in which he argues that creative level is theoretically unrelated to style, provides the impetus for investigating the extent to which laypersons mix level and style in characterizing the creative person.

- What are laypersons' implicit perceptions of creativity?
- Is creative style implicitly related to creative level?

Statement of Significance: A brief review of KAI literature, including Kirton's own list of publications and current work using Adaptor-Innovator Theory, indicates that a relatively small number of scholarly works focus on style/level. In fact, Kirton (1978) explicitly stated that, while adaptors and innovators may often vary in their perceptions and approaches to problem solving "there should be no characteristic differences in the level of creativity of the solutions." (p. 695)

Sternberg (1985) pointed out that the literature tends to focus on explicit theories of creativity, yet laypersons have "systematic implicit theories of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom, and that they use these implicit theories accurately both in evaluating themselves and in evaluating hypothetical others." (p. 607)

There may be an important link between creative style and level that the general population perceives and therefore holds to be true. The implications of the layperson's perceptions may be directly related to the evolution of educational programs focusing on creativity.

Description of the Method or Process: The process will involve literature research, data collection, data analysis, and summative work. Methodology will be both quantitative and qualitative in nature.

The literature research will establish baseline information for identifying gaps both in discussing the link between creative style/level and literature supporting this link. It will further provide critical baseline information on Kirton's Adaptor-Innovator Theory.

The design will include primarily quantitative research, analysis, and summary, as well as qualitative investigation. A set of four scenarios, each describing the characteristics of a creative individual (high-adaptor, low-adaptor, high-innovator, low-innovator) will be developed and tested through canvassing creativity faculty, creative studies students and alumni, and other scholars. A point rating scale will be developed to rate each of the scenarios for creativity characteristics. Once the baseline instrument is sufficiently developed, a convenience sample of the population will be asked to rate each of the scenarios. A brief set of open-ended questions may be asked as well to gain deeper insights into individuals' ratings, which in sum will reflect their implicit perceptions of creativity.

The data will be analyzed and conclusions drawn.

Learning Goals: Learning goals include both content and process issues.

- Through the experience of learning about lay people's implicit perceptions of creativity, be able to put into perspective the value of the creative studies degree.
- Gain practical experience in research methodology, specifically instrument development, sampling strategies, and data analysis.
- Become knowledgeable about the A-I theory and determine if style and level are areas of interest for further investigation.
- How to prepare to write for publication and experience the scholarly publication process.

Outcomes:

- A baseline instrument for identifying individual perceptions of creativity.
- Identify implicit perceptions of creativity in a significant sample of the population.
- A research report that can be modified for publication in a creativity journal.

Timeline:

1998

December

Concept paper approval

Literature research

Research methodology investigation

1999

MM/CRS 690/795

V3.0

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January	Literature research Methodology research Begin instrument design Multi-task
February	Continue instrument design Continue literature research Multi-task
March	Develop and test instrument Literature review Multi-task
April	Revise instrument as necessary Literature review Multi-task
May	Finalize instrument Human Subjects Form Collect data Multi-task
June-August	Continue to collect data Record and analyze data Literature review Begin first draft Multi-task
August	First draft
September	Review first draft with adviser Subsequent drafts
October	Final draft

Principal Investigators: Dr. Gerard Puccio, Patricia Chambers Alessandra

Related Literature:

Cutright, P.S. (1990). Predicting adaption-innovation styles: Selected demographic characteristics of the KAI inventory. Perceptual and motor skills, 70, 173-174.

Kirton, M. J. (September 1998). Publications and current work using adaption-innovation theory.

Kirton, M. J. (1976). Adaptors and innovators: A description and measure. Journal of applied psychology. 61, 622-629.

Kirton, M. J. (1978). Have adaptors and innovators equal levels of creativity? Psychological reports. 42, 695-698.

MacKinnon, D. W. (1978). In search of human effectiveness: Identifying and developing creativity. Buffalo, New York: The Creative Education Foundation, Inc.

Sternberg, R. J. (1985). Implicit theories of intelligence, creativity, and wisdom. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology. 49, 607-627.