Sample Dissertation Titles and Abstracts

Master in Creativity and Innovation

The Edward de Bono Institute for the Design and Development of Thinking

University of Malta

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Poverty Portrayed: A Creative Role for Maltese Television

This study analyzed the level of creativity and portrayal of poverty within three Maltese television programmes aired at prime time on TVM, the Maltese National television station. This was accomplished through qualitative methods of data collection and analysis, namely in-depth personal interviews and textual analysis of a handpicked sample of the programmes under investigation. The interviews were conducted with nine different stakeholders, namely producers, human rights activists, advertisers and the Chief Executive of the Malta Broadcasting Authority. These interviews revealed that producers adopted a passive approach towards poverty as their ideas and suggestions reflect a short term vision. Conversely, human rights activists believed that in general Maltese TV applied a needs based approach towards the issue of poverty, and this resulted in a lack of creativity. Producers associated creativity mainly with the genre of their content. The interviews further revealed that producers were aware of producing sensationalist stories because in their view those stories form part of Maltese reality. The textual analysis revealed that producers limited creativity to the edited features within their programme. The study concluded that progress and creativity were limited in view of the growth of the popularity of the programmes. It suggested that creativity could be implemented to produce programmes that are persuasive, credible and influential, thus without portraying poverty as an irreversible cause.

Keywords: creativity, television
This dissertation is concerned with the exploration of special events carried out by public service broadcasters in Europe. For this purpose, a case study method will be employed. Seven companies, namely, British Broadcasting Company (BBC); British Broadcasting Company, Channel Three (BBC THREE); Norsk Rikskringkasting (NRK); Rundfunk Berlin Brandenburg (RBB); Vlaamse Radio- en Televisieomroep (VRT); Yleisradio Oy (YLE) and Norddeutscher Rundfunk (NDR) participated in the project.

The main hypothesis proposes that being the public broadcasters part of the creative industry they prepare and execute creative special events. The second research question intends to learn in which cases creativity is the main element leading to the success of the event. And the third study area is associated to organisational creativity. In this case, the researcher intends to learn if the creativity level of an organisation influences the creativity level of its outcomes or products.

Keywords: creativity, creative product assessment techniques, organisational creativity, special events, public service broadcasters
Olga Bogdanova

Enhancing the Creative Process through the Loesje Creative Text Writing Technique

The discussion is centered on creativity in the context of process and stimulation of creative potential through the techniques. As it is premised, the creative action has various circumstances which can be fostered by a particular method; hence the references are made, where appropriate, to the main concepts of the theory of creativity and other fields of study. Particular attention is drawn to creative writing as a creative process and specific tools that help to develop creative attitudes and harness the process. Thus, several topics seem to recur in the discussions which are likely to foster the process, namely group work, environment and conformity, enjoyment, self and leadership, motivation, preliminary instructions and practical tools.

The experiment is based on the Loesje creative text writing workshops wherein the participants collectively create short texts (slogans) by being guided by the facilitator of the workshop. Loesje is seen as an enhancing creativity tool, parallel with acknowledged tools for fostering creativity. The analysis is divided into six major factors highlighted by the respondents as stimulating their creative potential.

Keywords: creativity, creative process, creative writing, Loesje.
The objective of this dissertation is to explore the relationship between innovation and social entrepreneurship, to investigate the ways in which social entrepreneurship can be innovative, and to understand how such innovativeness can be evaluated. In order to complete the research objectives, six international awards of social entrepreneurship have been investigated. A representative of each organization has been interviewed and organizational documents have been researched. The findings show a strong connection between innovation and social entrepreneurship, a relationship that can be considered inherent to the concept of social entrepreneurship. The most common types of innovations among social entrepreneurs are found to be (1) the use and reuse of existing assets of marginalized groups, (2) the provision of tailor made service packages to the ones in need, (3) business model innovation, (4) incremental technological innovation and (5) the opening of new markets. Social entrepreneurs can be labeled as creative imitators and constant innovators. The most widespread system of assessment among the investigated organizations regarding the evaluation of the relative innovativeness of social entrepreneurship is the utilization of experts. These findings shed light on the topic of social entrepreneurship which, in spite of the interest demonstrated by scholars in the topic, is still in its infancy where research is concerned.

Keywords: Social Entrepreneurship, Social Entrepreneurs, Innovation, Evaluation of Innovativeness, International Awards of Social Entrepreneurship
Tania Farrugia

Creativity and Innovation in a Non-Governmental Organisation in Malta

It can generally be deduced that Non-Governmental Organisations are usually focused on providing services and support the needs of different groups of people within the community. NGOs are functioning in an increasingly changing world with an increasing competition for resources. Hence they need to continuously adapt, redesign and reinvent themselves through the process of creativity and innovation (Ross & Segal 2002, Jaskyte & Kisieliene 2006). This dissertation aims at taking a single case study approach and analyses in depth one of the largest Maltese NGOs and seeks to answer the following: To what extent are creativity and innovation moving forward the NGO? How are creativity and innovation being fostered or inhibited? How are creativity and innovation perceived and considered? The research employs qualitative research which enables the researcher to be closer to the organisation and its members and explore its environment to gain a clear understanding of the culture and climate through observations, semi-structured interviews and document analysis.

Results outline no common understanding amongst employees about the meaning of creativity. Definitions emphasise divergent thinking, the practice of creating something out of nothing and the association of creativity with manual and/or artistic work. Those who differentiate between creativity and innovation refer to the ‘usefulness’ of innovation. Consensus on the importance of creativity and innovation is apparent throughout. Promoters and inhibitors of creativity and innovation at the organisation are outlined. Inhibitors include time constraints, heavy workloads, lack of funding and staff shortage. A lack of a structured format for the stimulation of ideas might keep employees back from suggesting ideas even in an open door ambience. A degree of risk taking, decision making, staff motivation, partnerships with other organisations, social activities and investment in training are amongst promoters of creativity and innovation.

Keywords: creativity, innovation, NGOs, culture, climate
The world economy has been restructuring itself; the fastest growing industries in the UK are the Creative Industries. Attracting the best creative minds to London is imperative for the city’s economic advantage. We must understand what makes the industry so unique in the present economic landscape in order to ensure its continued success. There is no doubt, that understanding how the best creative work is conceived and produced, is paramount. To achieve this, ‘Adland’ and distinctively a London Media Agency provide the setting for a qualitative case study.

The literature review evaluated some of the different approaches to general creativity. This has helped to identify patterns within various academic contributions, and explain the ways media planners negotiated creativity. Further review of the academic and trade press publications on advertising creativity, gave the research a vital background.

This research has discovered that the new economy is altering the very structure of advertising. The role of media planner is also changing as dynamically as the business, in response to the need for constant new ideas and solutions. However results showed that the most creative part of the process was not as was expected, limited to actual idea generation sessions. Creative thought was found to be necessary in the whole process of developing one cohesive message, and then above all to clearly communicate it.

Media planners were found to be largely unaware that government has labelled the creative industries as the bedrock for ensuring the country’s economic success. They were equally surprised to hear of the concept of the ‘creative class’. They do, however see the bigger picture, and the need for good ideas. The agency as a whole appeared ready to operate as an ideas powerhouse in the marketing arena.

Keywords: advertising, media planning, creativity, thinking tools, creative class.
Marcia Grima

Museums and Local Communities in Valletta

Valletta’s extraordinary concentration of well-preserved monuments and fortifications has earned it recognition as a city of ‘outstanding universal value’ in terms of the UNESCO (1972) World Heritage Convention. As Malta’s capital, it is also the administrative and commercial centre of a small state on the southern fringe of Europe and also home to a diverse mix of resident communities. The demands and visions for Valletta as a World Heritage City, as a vibrant capital and as a residential neighbourhood may easily diverge. The fact that Valletta has to fulfil this triple role make it an interesting case study in the tensions and synergies that may develop between global and local values and their consequences with regard to the way people engage with cultural heritage. This dissertation examines the role museums play in this interface between local values and world heritage.

The dissertation applies an assets-based approach to creative community building. It takes a glimpse at the creative energies that exist within Valletta, but mainly go unnoticed. By highlighting museums’ attitudes towards Valletta and her residents, and in turn taking a look at residents’ sense of identity and perception of the city, this dissertation seeks to identify assets that can form the basis for a creative synergy between residents, museums and the city.

Keywords: culture, creative synergy
Christine Lofaro

Creativity and Art in Overcoming Boredom in the Primary Classroom

The present research endeavors to shed light onto the role that creativity and art play in overcoming boredom in the primary classroom setting. Boredom along with other learning obstacles can make school appear dull and monotonous. Therefore it is imperative to investigate the effects of employing creativity and art in the primary classroom in an attempt to minimize these obstacles. In order to understand and define the concept of creativity, various models and theories of creativity are explored, which in turn shed light on several important concepts. The characteristics of the creative individual, myths on creativity and barriers to creativity. In an attempt to identify how creativity and art can influence learning, the current research delves into literature that investigates the role that creative and artistic practices have in combating obstacles to the teaching and learning process. Using a qualitative approach this study attempts to obtain a clear insight of the perceptions of primary school teachers vis-à-vis their understanding of creativity, the causes of boredom in the classroom, ways of stimulating interest amongst students and the effects of incorporating creativity and art across the curriculum.

The findings of this study demonstrate that creativity and art are perceived as playing a key role in overcoming boredom in the primary classroom and in providing a quality education to all students. The findings reveal that the respondents in this research attach importance and value to creativity in education, however, a number of drawbacks and restrictions, such as, dense syllabi, lack of resources and emphasis on getting right answers, are uncovered. The results substantiate both local and international literature. The research proposes recommendations on how creativity and art can be incorporated in educational practices and on how teachers can make use of this approach to ensure more interesting and effective learning within schools in Malta.

Keywords: creativity, art, boredom, learning obstacles, education
Marylyn Mifsud

Reading Edward de Bono - Teaching Thinking and Teaching Creativity

This research is original in its nature since it not only gathers and outlines the main concepts in reading Edward de Bono, presenting them in parallel with the results from the various sources but it also presents an attentive analysis and criticism of some of his books. This study isolates the major concepts related to thinking and creativity. An exploration of some of the major paradigms for teaching thinking and creativity is carried out through the review of literature in the field. It includes an assessment of the relationship between intelligence and thinking. An exploration of what is actually meant by teaching thinking ensues followed by a description of the existing most popular thinking skills programmes. An audit of Edward de Bono’s programmes, theories, concepts and frameworks was carried out through an exploration of some of his literature; insights are extrapolated and patterns, themes, sequences and relationships are identified. A description of the methodology of the study conducted follows together with the analysis of the data collected. The data is presented in the findings and discussion chapter which involves a parallel discussion on the results obtained from the triangulation of data used; namely by means of interviews and questionnaires.

Further data was gathered thanks to an in-depth interview with Edward de Bono himself; this gives more background on de Bono’s understanding of the teaching of thinking and creativity in action. The results of the data analysis reveal that educators suggest that the various methodologies can be used in conjunction with each other and that teaching thinking formally can go together with infusing thinking across the curriculum; there is no absolute method. The concluding chapter includes the summary of the main findings with the researcher’s conclusions and proposes recommendations on the teaching of thinking.

Keywords: thinking, thinking skills, teaching thinking, creativity, teaching creativity
Matt Poschwald

Analysis of the UK’s Nightclub Industry and Creativity

The problem motivating this research is the author’s belief that nightclubs have a great deal of unused potential which can be unleashed by entrepreneurial creativity. Therefore the general idea behind the research was to find out what can entrepreneurs do in order to successfully start or improve such enterprise through effective management, marketing techniques and, most importantly, a creative and innovative approach. In spite of that, the primary aim of this research was to analyse current situation of the nightclub industry and creativity in the UK, along with the factors affecting both. As the night-time economy constantly changes and new trends emerge frequently, clubs, in order to satisfy their customers, need to adopt their service according to these changes. Therefore, to identify the latest trends, it is essential to analyze the market constantly. The industry is experiencing serious difficulties due to issues such as increasing competition within the leisure sector (oversupply and price cutting), rising drugs usage and alcohol consumption (binge drinking and bad publicity) and shortage in professional door staff (safety) and management (quality of service provided). All these problems result in lack of investments in the industry and low customer satisfaction. They also seriously affect the way nightclubs are being perceived nowadays. Yet, there are still many challenges awaiting the market, including impending changes in legislation.

To identify possible ways of improving the nightclubs’ situation, a research involving collection of secondary and primary data, was carried out. The secondary data analysed and highlighted the most important issues affecting clubs and creativity in UK, providing good background for the study. Primary data, obtained from interviewing numerous nightclub managers and surveying potential clubbers, provided the research with valuable information on how the recent industry problems could be solved. The analysis of collected primary and secondary data showed that in order to overcome recent market difficulties, effectively cope with the new legislation, improve image and attract more customers, nightclubs should concentrate on differentiating themselves from competition, creating new USPs, investing in new technologies and conducting frequent market research. Furthermore, more attention should be paid to advertisement and promotion techniques, to avoid strong dependency on word of mouth. Finally, creativity was identified as a possible solution to all of the above problems. However its application still remains an issue, due to misconceptions predominant in society. Conclusions drawn indicate that examined market is very hard to predict and therefore must be constantly analysed. Recommendations are made, advising operators and government to face the current problems immediately, without underestimating their gravity.

Keywords: nightclubs, creativity, business
Innovation Patterns in the Video Gaming Industry

In an industry that in 2007 generated more than $9.5 billion of sales in the United States alone, creativity and innovation are the driving force behind each company’s success. The gaming market follows a strict generation era where companies need to develop a product which is able to compete in a war of standards. The aim of this research is to follow the journey of the video gaming industry, from the early primitive machines to the state of the art consoles which are available today. Particular focus will be given to Nintendo’s evolution of hardware starting from the ground breaking NES (Nintendo Entertainment System) which revived the video gaming market after it crashed in 1983. This study will concentrate on Nintendo’s latest console, the Wii, which has triumphed in the recent console wars between its rivals, the Xbox360 and the Playstation3. The development of the Wii will be given particular importance so as to understand the concrete vision behind such an idea while evaluating the Wii’s progress with ICT rules such as Network Effects, Lock-in, Switching and Versioning. This process will provide insight into Nintendo’s strategies and their approach to hardware development, together with providing a blueprint of the video gaming industry’s evolutionary patterns.

Key words: innovation, Nintendo, Wii, video games
Wendy Shapiro

Promoting Creative Thinking Skills in Post-Soviet Countries: An Evaluation of a Summer Program for Youths in Ukraine and Armenia

The purpose of this research was to determine whether creative thinking skills could be improved in participants of a youth leadership program in the post-Soviet countries of Ukraine and Armenia. A secondary hypothesis of this research was that historical and cultural influences impeded the use of creative thinking skills in post-Soviet countries. The argument was presented that the need for these skills has become more urgent because of the worldwide shift from industrial-based economies to a knowledge economy. As Joseph Stiglitz, winner of the Nobel Prize in economics and former president and chief economist of the World Bank, states “First, in the long run, success in the knowledge economy requires creativity, higher order cognitive skills in addition to basic skills. Those countries that find ways of fostering this kind of creativity will, in the long run, have more success in the competition of the knowledge economy”.

The youth leadership program conducted in Ukraine and Armenia entitled International Outreach Coalition (IOC) was presented as a model for long-term change that would provide youth with skills in idea-generation tools and problem exploration in an environment that was conducive for creativity. Participants were tested at the beginning and end of the program. An increase in confidence in approaching problems in their communities was found to be significant. Other results were inconclusive. The research resulted in several recommendations for improvement of the IOC program as well as the suggestion for a longer-term study.

Keywords: Creativity, Ukraine, Armenia, Knowledge economy, Youth
Elizabeth Vella

Fostering a Creative Environment in Maltese Primary Schools

The study starts with an analysis of the Maltese educational system as seen in the eyes of local authors concerned with the issue. The literature portrays the positive aspects within the system but also considers the flaws or blocks that might hinder the learning process of individuals.

An extensive literature review, presented in Chapter 2, offers different definitions of creativity, highlighting sources from where creativity stems, with particular emphasis to everyday creativity. These are all discussed in the light of creativity in education and the benefits to curriculum quality. After establishing and describing the methodology of the study conducted, the analysis and the results of this same study are presented, organised according to how the questions appear in the pre-defined sequence. The data collected deals with the participants’ view of creativity, both in terms of definition but also in view of the importance, if any, that creativity should have on the educational agenda. Special emphasis is placed on the physical and ‘mental’ environments present in Maltese primary schools, and to what extent they can be considered to be conducive to creativity.

The results of the data analysis reveal constraints to creativity in the Maltese educational system, but nevertheless also show the commitment of Heads of primary schools and their teams. The final chapter summarises what has been learned through the findings and proposes recommendations on how creative environments could be encouraged and ensured so as to be more in line with the proposals of the National Minimum Curriculum.

Keywords: creativity, creative thinking, creative environment, education.
Online Game Obsession in Mainland China concerning the Enhancement of Creativity

An in-depth literature review delves into the phenomenon of Chinese urban youngsters’ obsession about online games, highlighted from the perspectives of anthropology, sociology, cyber-culture, and psychology. A discussion carries on of the different creativity theories and models in relation to the proposal of enhancing creativity among Chinese online gamers, aiming to offer an insight into the possibility of fostering creativity with respect to online game knowledge and experiences. After presenting and describing the methodology of the research used, data analysis and discussion reveal the attitudes and perceptions towards online games as a hobby, the roles that online games play in Chinese players’ life, the feel of online gaming and the understanding of enhancing creativity in online gaming domain. Moreover, data analysis displays the constraints of the existing solutions to the online game obsession. The final chapter submits recommendations and conclusions, encapsulating what have been obtained from the research, how it can be extended to future research in relation to the development of creativity strategies and how the current China societal environment, such as the industry of online game, schools, government, and families, parents, etc. can ensure the enhancement of creativity consistently in guiding Chinese urban youngsters to develop their potential regarding online gaming, from a positive perspective.

Keywords: creativity, gaming
An Enquiry into the Possible Correlation between Creativity and Negative Behavioural Patterns

This dissertation seeks to explore the possible link between creativity and its effect on behaviour labelled as deviant. I put forward a number of recommendations, based on an interpretation of the role creativity plays in forming our behaviour patterns. A suggested three-dimensional deviance model is based on a cross-disciplinary approach and integrates the changing societal perception of deviance, the evolving ideas on creativity and seeks to find correlations, which may further our understanding of society’s dynamics. Present research offers an insight into causes that influence creativity expression and behavioural patterns.

The practical application of the proposal that is put forward would help educational professionals to understand that a number of troubled children exhibit deviant behaviour through a sense of disassociation with their perceived surroundings, their teachers and their peers, as they feel tormented by the need to express their creativity, yet they feel stifled by a given dismissive environment. The proposed recommendations may allow those marginalised into subcultures to find acceptance and value in a broader and more inclusive society.

Keywords: creativity, deviance, behaviour, correlation, school.
Leonie Baldacchino

The Role of Creativity and Innovation in Maltese Start-up Success

This study investigated the role of creativity and innovation in Maltese start-up success using qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis in two phases of research. During the first phase, semi-structured personal interviews were carried out with 13 owner-managers of enterprises set up in Malta from January 2002 onwards. These interviews revealed that creativity and innovation are major factors in the success of local start-ups. They also indicated that Malta’s small island state context accentuates the importance of family influence and support, building and maintaining a good reputation, and making good use of personal contacts and word of mouth through effective networking activities. During the second phase of research, structured telephone interviews were held with 90 owner-managers of enterprises set up in Malta from January 2002 onwards. These telephone interviews found that creativity and innovation are reflected in Maltese start-ups through innovative products or services, through innovative methods of production or delivery, and through a creative climate fostered by creative owner managers. These telephone interviews also found that when respondents weighed creativity and innovation against other key success factors, they rated 7 factors as significantly more important, 3 factors as equally important, and 2 factors as significantly less important. Reputation and contacts, networking and word of mouth were rated as the most important of all factors, confirming their criticality in starting a successful enterprise in a small island state such as Malta. This study concluded that creativity and innovation are crucial but insufficient for start-up success. It suggested that together, creativity and innovation should be regarded as a vital element that permeates through several other success factors which all play a central role in enhancing start-up success.

**Key words:** creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, start-up success
Narrowly interpreted as an unintelligible act of the genius or an ex-nihilo expression, creativity and the spirit it proposes are the result of an overall aesthetic, of a cultivated knowledge-base and perceptive sensibility, ably acknowledged, and made a significant part of one’s continually evolving repertoire. The subject of an ever-increasing acknowledgement, creativity has for some time now been part of both academic as well as more practically oriented discourse. Likewise, contemporary art, accentuated by the nature of its parasitical expression, is all too often either elevated to a somewhat mystical status appreciated solely by the chosen few, or disregarded as a confused bohemian babble - something, in other words, that does not concern the practical mind. A more immersive approach to the subject leads one to think otherwise – that we should be aware of the mechanistic tendency of thought, and that we should cultivate a sensitivity and constant awareness of the medium we are adopting and surrounded by; that we are able to appreciate the relevance of the ‘spirit’ proposed by art and creativity within our own context, cultivating an approach that is not limited to the strict shapes of proposed bias.

In so doing, we disclose the potentiality of perception and allow ourselves the recognition of our personal aesthetic, the proposition to notice new similarities and new differences, of our ability for creative expression and its potential. Recognition that each one of us can be creative within our own context, not only in our ability to acknowledge the validity of our imagination and express our thoughts, but also in our ability to relate our expression to their interpretative aspect, acknowledging how our thoughts can be effected in others. A call then, for a legitimation, not by performance within a given game or domain, but by the paralogical ability of our expression to propose itself as truly creative – as a move in the game of knowledge – effecting itself in others, helping them be more imaginative and expressive in their own plight.

Keywords: creativity, paralogy, expression, language games, contemporary art.
Conrad Buttigieg

A Critical Evaluation of the New Product Development Experiences of Malta Based Manufacturers

The purpose of the research is to understand the process involved in creating a product from the initial concept right down to its production and sale.

Design/methodology/approach: In-depth interviews with open-ended questions with three CEO’s and an R&D head provide a deep understanding of the processes practiced by the sampled manufacturers. This format, allowed the researcher to gain further explanation when necessary. Four manufacturers – all based on the Island of Malta in the Mediterranean Sea – are considered and all the individuals interviewed are involved “hands-on” in the product development process with the exception of one executive that runs a plant focused on process innovation whilst products are developed beyond Maltese shores.

Main Findings: The sampled firms: a) Prefer to self-develop their own innovation process rather than look for external formulas, such as Stage-Gate, Ulrich or Portfolio Management and consciously decide to adopt them; b) Idea generation sessions are literally inexistent because none of the sampled firms make a concrete effort to organise brainstorming sessions that specifically target new products; c) The respondents work hard to deliver process innovation but are reluctant to invest the same amount of energy and time to develop radically innovative products, process innovation is given priority relative to product innovation; d) Most of the respondents half-heartedly believe in creativity, that is, they fail to view creativity as an asset, as an investment that enhances the company’s wealth generating abilities, and; e) The findings once again prove that innovation works backwards: first set a culture/ an atmosphere that embraces innovation (with the company’s CEO leading this) then expect radical ideas because innovation is one whole system. This research provides a glimpse of product development and the fuzzy front end as applied in small manufacturing enterprises.

Keywords: design Malta, manufacturing Malta, innovation
Louis John Camilleri

Eyes Open Wide: Thinking about Race and Broadening Perception to Combat Racism

Thinking about race is a taboo subject in Malta. This is because the Maltese rebuff the thought that they are concerned, influenced, and distressed by skin colour and race. It is apparent that the Maltese community is one which is concerned about race and it is the study’s goal to investigate the Maltese individual’s perspectives regarding race and racism.

The human thinking machine is increasingly seeking to classify the given information and constantly trying to stereotype and compartmentalize the world - Pleasure and pain, good and evil, Democrats and Republicans, man and woman, Ying and Yang, black and white, Catholics and Muslims – in essential opposites. Racial thinking is not simply a catalogue of human difference, but it encompasses beliefs about the very nature of difference. The current racial thinking patterns in Malta seem to be gradually contracting, and will eventually blind anyone who endorses them. Current philosophies or dogmas have led the Maltese individual to a blind alley. What one needs are the tools to manoeuvre oneself out of the alley.

The study proposes that mistakes in thinking could be resulting from defectiveness in perceptions rather than blunders of logic. It proposes that what one seems to be overlooking is the true capacity of the mind - what one seems to be denying, is that by acknowledging and changing one’s negative, distorted beliefs about oneself, one could live a richer and more fulfilling life.

The study strives to tap the full potential of the mind and investigate how the mind works with regards perception and how it in turn influences the creation of racist dogmas. The findings show that perceptual distortions could in fact be the cause of prejudice and thus contribute to the harbouring of racism, hatred and discrimination towards members of other races.

Keywords: mind, race, racism, prejudice, perception.
Creativity in Early Childhood

This study sought to investigate the extent to which Kindergarten Assistants in one particular school were promoting creativity in their daily activities while catering for the children’s holistic development. Anecdotal evidence suggests that in the local context formal teaching starts from a very early age.

The current study was an in-depth case study with five Kindergarten classes in a small state school. Forty-five classroom observations were conducted in five Kindergarten classes followed by semi-structured interviews with seven Kindergarten Assistants. The observations and interviews provided data to find out how creativity was perceived and promoted by the kindergarten assistants. The evidence from the observations was compared against the practitioners’ perceptions.

Results indicate that creativity was hardly ever being promoted in the Kindergarten classes observed. Children were engaged in repetitive tasks like colouring or pasting collage with strict control and instructions by the educator. Kindergarten assistants did not plan the activities beforehand and there was very little evidence of their interacting with the children. These practices could be due to lack of formal training of the adults both prior to and during their years of service. On a positive note, the kindergarten assistants admitted a willingness to have substantial training to help them in their work with the children.

Keywords: creativity, early childhood, holistic development, promoting everyday creativity.
Andreana Dibben

Creativity in Professional Social Work Supervision

Through this explorative study, I sought to procure a better understanding of how creativity is perceived by supervisors and supervisees, what value is attached to it, how it is utilised in the supervision process, what helps and hinders its use and what impact it may have on the profession of social work. Grounded theory was used to analyse eight (8) audiotapes of supervision sessions, eight (8) taped interviews and eight (8) taped discussions with sixteen (16) participating supervisors and supervisees from different agencies in Malta. Findings portrayed creativity in supervision as a budding concept. There was a general recognition that creativity can enhance supervision. Respondents defined creativity as being an element that can help achieve new perspectives, enhance the problem-solving process and aid purposeful reflection. Its applicability in supervision was recognised both through the use of techniques and also through a creative approach that a supervisor consciously adopts. It was further recognised that there needs to exist the right conditions for its applicability such as know-how of creativity, a conducive environment and a positive supervisory relationship as well as creative permission allowed by organisations through their philosophy, structure and policies. Despite its perceived benefits, it was acknowledged that the use of creativity is peripheral in supervision.

The main reasons for this were noted as being the lack of familiarity with the concept of creativity in supervision, an absence of conditions that enhance its use and / or a presence of conditions that hinder it. These findings will hopefully become a step towards ameliorating the supervision process in the profession of social work.

Keywords: creativity, supervision, social work practice.
The broad aim of this research is to investigate what the persons in the real world think of the future of education. The focus is to research the reflections of Maltese nationals regarding learning outcomes for Maltese primary schools of the future. The viewpoints of members of the general public are studied in the light of the writings of professional Maltese nationals on education, taken within the context of Maltese society.

This dissertation presents a brief literature review of the reflections of professional Maltese nationals on education. This is followed by a presentation of foresight rationales, methodologies and techniques applied to various studies of the future and its implications. The research section explains the methods of inquiry in detail. The results and the discussion present the findings and discuss these in the context of the current discussion on learning outcomes.

This research exercise uses a small-scale Foresight, Scenario-Building exercise to determine set scenarios of education for the future of Maltese primary schools, as viewed by Maltese nationals. The paper uses face-to-face interviews with a random sample of the general public.

The results provide the perspectives on learning outcomes by a random sample of the general public. These could be considered when planning and directing desired learning outcomes for future primary schools.

Keywords: foresight, scenarios, future, primary schools, learning outcomes, subjects, curriculum.
Due to the fact that not much research has been conducted on creativity and innovation in micro-organisations, this study investigates the perceptions of owners, managers and employees in eight micro-organisations and one medium-sized organisation in Gozo (Malta). It explores the manner in which these micro- and medium sized organisations approach creativity and innovation and the factors that enable and hinder their creativity and innovation. The topics discussed include risk taking, idea generation, support systems and reward systems.

The methodology employed in this investigation is that of questionnaires distributed to the owner-manager and two employees from each of the nine organisations as well as interviews conducted with the Minister for Gozo and the Parliamentary Secretary for Small Businesses and the Self-Employed.

The investigation mainly concludes that the key characteristic of the processes of creativity and innovation within these micro- and medium-sized organisations is their informality. The research moreover sheds light on how the size and the geographical position of the island of Gozo influence the processes of creativity and innovation of these organisations.

Keywords: creativity, innovation, manufacturing industry, micro-organisations, Gozo.
Creativity and its Practical Use in Everyday Situations: Implementing Creativity in the Everyday

The main purpose of this dissertation is to make ordinary people understand what creativity is and how it can be applied into the everyday. A complete literature review provides salient points on the ways and means of creativity throughout time. It deals with the misperceptions which surround the field of creativity and explains why these misperceptions exist. The literature discusses what is needed to remove these misperceptions and how ordinary people can become better at understanding the concepts of creativity. After the methodology has been established and described a comprehensive analysis is made of three creative methodologies. The analysis focuses on analysing the three chosen creative methodologies; Creative Platform, TRIZ and Lateral Thinking through four dimensions. The analysis gives a better understanding of how important the use of creative techniques and tools is in order to create new and feasible ideas. Learning the techniques of creativity will make them become able to use their new applied skills and change their daily perceptions which control their lives. In order to see if ordinary people can be taught creative techniques chapter five works with the implementation of creative techniques which exist in the three creative methodologies. The chapter works with several problem statements where the creative techniques have been used in order to create successful results. The final chapter summarises the findings, comes forward with the conclusions and makes recommendations on how ordinary people can implement creativity in the everyday.

Keywords: creativity, everyday creativity, creative techniques, creative platform, Triz, lateral thinking
Kathryn Konrath

The Emerging American Workplace and the Skills Needed by Young People for Successful Future Employability

This study examines the forces changing the American workplace today to determine which skills college graduates must develop in order to succeed, how these skills may be obtained and what relevance they may have with the selection of a college major. The study is related to creativity because research should show that the study of creativity and innovation provides many important skills that young people need to succeed.

As a result of increasing globalisation and advancing technology, the world is changing very quickly. Large companies, many of them traditional providers of jobs for American college graduates and lifelong careers for faithful workers, face increasing difficulties adapting to the speeding up of the business world. In the past, workers concentrated on learning their job well and such reliability was rewarded with steady advancement down a stable career path. Technological advancements, increased global connectivity and the inclusion of educated workers from India and China into the workforce is changing the nature of jobs in the US and the global marketplace. American professional workers today face decreased job security and competition from all over the world. Literature advising young people about what to study still operates with the assumption that the workplace is stable.

This study investigates how the American workplace will be in the future and what students should learn in college to best prepare themselves for it. Results indicate that the workplace of the next ten years will be reliant on the mental flexibility of employees. Experienced workplace professionals recommend that young people learn thinking skills as an all-important building block for their future personal and professional success. This study uncovers incentives for young people to study specific skills as essential job training. This provides value because many young people just entering college are very confused about their future and this study will give them guidance.
Keith Pisani

Applying the de Bono Tools and Ideas to Mediation

Thinking in general and creativity in particular are central factors in human development and human affairs. Edward de Bono dedicated his career to the development of these special human activities. He first sought to understand and explain their basic mechanism, and then to improve their general performance through practical tools. Mediation, like any other human endeavour, involves the sometimes covert, sometimes overt, activity of thinking. It cannot afford to ignore the process that takes place, whether it takes place consciously or subconsciously.

This work has two aims: to investigate whether the work of de Bono has any relevance to International and Inter-ethnic mediation, and how it can be variously applied. In this way this work seeks a synthesis between the work of de Bono and international and inter-ethnic mediation. More generally defined, this work tries to make the practice of mediation a bit more self-conscious; i.e. conscious of the possible thinking processes that can take place during mediation. The conclusions of this work can be grouped into two sets: those which do not deal directly with the synthesis of de Bono to mediation, however still relevant to such a study, and those which deal directly with the mentioned synthesis. An example of the former is that de Bono’s corpus in general ignores the social aspect of thinking and creativity; an example of the latter is the assimilatory potential between the de Bono ideas and Kelman’s workshops and many other similar potential workshops and discussion groups which can be on during all the phases of the mediation process.

Keywords: thinking, creativity, international/interethnic mediation, peace studies, psychology.
David Pulis

Innovations in Governance in the Contemporary Commonwealth

As shown by the Commonwealth Association for Public Administration and Management (CAPAM)'s Innovation Awards along with numerous other innovation programs worldwide, there is capacity in all corners of the world to reinvent and launch innovative practices in government. This study analyses such innovative trends in Commonwealth states, using entries submitted for the biennial CAPAM Innovation Awards. Although problems and challenges differ from one country to another, sharing good practices and networking governments is a step forward in instilling innovation in the daily lexicon of public administration.

This dissertation is set to examine what makes the CAPAM award winning submissions successful and analyse policy statements. Because it is comparative, with access to a data set numbering several detailed submissions, this study examines a range of perspectives and attitudes among different countries towards the implementation of innovation in their public administration. This dissertation focuses on pivotal themes including: barriers and enablers of innovation in governance; the management of good practices in governance; transferability/replication of good practices in governance; and analyses whether the 'CAPAM Innovation Awards' reflects broader thinking about public sector innovation.

The final chapter summarizes what has been learned through the findings and proposes recommendations and conclusions with regards to fostering an innovative climate in governance.

Keywords: innovation, governance
Emanuel Pulis

Sports Marketing: Creative and Innovative Solutions on Campus

The increased quest for international sporting success has inevitably meant that the role of the education system in Malta in contributing to elite success becomes the subject of considerable debate. The focus of this dissertation is to first explore the current situation with regards to opportunities for student-athletes to practice and participate in competitive sport. Ethical issues and social-justice considerations will be analysed by using a mixed methodological approach. The study aims at shedding light on how a specialisation in sport at school would encourage students to further their sports career as well as their educational attainment.

The mixed methodology applied to this research investigates the current position of students, as well as stakeholders involved in policy making. A questionnaire was used with 400 university undergraduate and postgraduate students. In contrast, a series of semi-structured interviews were conducted with four stakeholders. This triangulation research made it clear that there is agreement on the need to promote a culture of sport on campus. The study suggests that, first; there is a need to refurbish a number of sports facilities on campus, particularly when compared to sports facilities in other universities overseas. Following this, it would be possible to implement a number of marketing plans aimed at promoting a culture of sport on campus.

Keywords: creativity, innovation, sports marketing, marketing, campus.
Creative Thinking for Social Interventions

This exploratory qualitative research endeavours to shed light on whether social work practitioners who are exposed to creative thinking techniques will be more creative in their everyday practice interventions and what can be done to enhance their creative potential. In an attempt to understand and explain creativity a comprehensive literature review is presented on the differing major theoretical perspectives on creativity. The implicit relationship between creativity and social work practice interventions is then highlighted. Creativity is established as one of the main ingredients for effective social work practice. This research suggests that special steps need to be taken to enhance social work practitioners’ ability to perform more creatively during the interviewing process. It is suggested that teaching creativity techniques is simply not enough. If social work practitioners are to transfer their creative knowledge and skills to practice situations a number of organisational barriers that hinder creativity need to be addressed. Ultimately, this research attempts to draw attention to those factors that will either encourage or hinder social service practitioners from being creative in the interviewing process. The findings that emerge from this research suggest that there is a link between the organisational environment, intrinsic motivation and creativity. The dissertation concludes by proposing recommendations that would help promote the fostering of creativity in social work practice interventions.

Keywords: creative thinking, social work interventions, interviewing process
Adriana Tedesco

Enhancing Creativity and Innovation in the Hotel Industry

Tourism generates a quarter of the national wealth in Malta, and the hotel industry is deemed to be one of the core pillars of the local economy. The turbulent state and various challenges faced by the hospitality industry necessitate continuous adaptation within establishments’ practices, operations and services. Organisations which remain successful and maintain a significant competitive edge are those which innovate continuously. Organisational innovation, however, is dependent on the creativity exhibited by employees, which in turn depends to a large extent on managerial practices utilised by supervisors and managers. This study sought a deeper understanding of management practices which enable creativity to flourish in employees working in the five-star hotel industry in Malta. A qualitative design was employed, and data was obtained by means of semi-structured interviews carried out with supervisors and managers employed within 3 local five-star hotels. The main findings suggest that the presence of a culture for innovation, combined with a carefully designed idea management system, as well as effective personnel management systems, need to be in place for the stimulation of the creative potential present within all employees. The study underscores a number of managerial practices which provide staff with the impetus to go the extra mile in generating ideas for continuous improvement within the organisation, as well as practices which act as barriers impeding organisational creativity and innovation. It is hoped that this study will serve as a catalyst which enables hospitality establishments to maintain a competitive advantage through making creativity and innovation their main focus.

Keywords: creativity, innovation, management, tourism industry.
Barbara Trotman

Retail Therapy? The Importance of Creativity in Customer Service in a Competitive Market

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the importance of creativity in Customer Service in a competitive market. This study considers the modern history, tradition and culture in Malta and East Germany and asks if the consumer of the 21st Century has been affected by these factors in the two countries. Furthermore, this study asks whether creativity and innovation could be resisted in Malta due to the local mindset. It states the necessity of offering added value to consumers and of giving high quality Customer Service in a competitive economy.

The study explores Customer Service styles in two countries; Malta and Germany. It recognises creative approaches and recommends ways of enhancing or establishing high quality customer care. This study investigates the reasons for inadequate Customer Service and questions the importance of internal communication within companies. It also explores how ineffective communication affects the customer and stresses the value of efficient complaint handling. This study examines the research collected from companies and consumers in Malta and Germany. It considers the expectations and requirements of consumers in the two countries. It also notes the differences in consumer protection offered in each. This study makes recommendations to improve Customer Service in the Maltese Islands by training those involved in this profession in creativity and communication skills.

Keywords: creativity, communication skills, customer service, culture, quality.
Form Follows Concept: Generation of Architectural Concepts

The Greek words ‘idea’ and ‘eidos’, virtually synonymous, and etymologically linked with Latin words ‘forma’ and ‘vision’, may originally have meant ‘visible form’. In all things not generated by chance, the form must be the end of any generation” which implies that the agent of this generation already has in itself some analogy or resemblance with this form and thus the likeness of a house pre-exists in the mind of the builder. And this may be called the idea of the house, since the builder intended to build his house like the form conceived in his mind.

The notion of ‘pre-exist house in mind’ is synonymous with the modern use of the term ‘concept of the house’. The term ‘concept’ was distinguished from the ambiguous term ‘idea’, perhaps partly because ideas suggest images, a visual form. To have a concept of anything is to be able to distinguish it from other things, or be able in some way to think or reason about it without images. To have an “idea of a house” is to have a visual correspondence resembling to the end generation of form, while to have a ‘concept’ of a house is to have collective referential characteristics which make a “concept house” and not necessarily a visual idea. A Concept can be expressed in the form of text, a mental image, as a symbol or merely a gesture. The analogy or resemblance in this case does not necessarily imply a visual image but it could only be a conceptual meaning.

Today architectural practice inevitably embraces the importance of concepts in projects and assimilates concepts and ideas outside architecture to expand the discipline of architecture. Louis Kahn claims architecture starts with concept. In order to understand the meaning of ‘concept in architecture’ this dissertation studies the system of ‘concepts’ in language where the term originated to give a more comprehensive understanding of ‘concept in architecture’.

The dissertation also studies various methodologies of how concepts in architecture are generated together with various well know creative techniques such as brainstorming, lateral thinking, TRIZ and conceptual synthesis.

Having studied these creative techniques and design methodologies, this dissertation proposes a graphical way of observing movement patterns in creative thinking as a tool for architects and designers to reflect on their design thinking rather than thinking about the problem at hand. This proposed tool gives control and guidance to architects to generate concepts and ideas in architecture.

Keywords: architecture, creative techniques, design methodologies
Yuanyuan Zhang

The Idea System in China Cultural Centre in Malta

The Chinese Cultural Centre in Malta (CCCM) has achieved success by offering free information and organising various cultural programmes and activities to the general public in Malta. The achievements have benefited the CCCM while also improving the recognition and acknowledgement of China and Chinese culture and as well as its own reputation in Malta. However, the research results revealed that creativity and innovation are required both in the general operational management and the production management of organising cultural programmes in the CCCM. By analyzing the findings of the research, the Idea System is shown to be the appropriate and effective system for exploring the creativity and innovation in the CCCM. Moreover, recommendations are also given to build up the context for the establishment of the Idea System in the CCCM.

This research was undertaken to investigate the management and performance of the CCCM in order to find out an approach to develop the creativity and innovation in its operational management and production management. Primary data collection methods (the application of the questionnaires and personal interviews) and secondary research methods (study on the official records, documents and programme reports in the CCCM) were applied in order to collect the concrete figures, facts and opinions on the management and performance of the CCCM.

Keywords: CCCM, idea system, creativity and innovation.
The Mediterranean was always the cradle of civilization and cultural heritage abounds in all of the countries that surround it. Recent efforts of digitization of this cultural heritage are trying to conserve in digital format what has been, in the hope that future generations will have access to it even if the original ceases to exist due to disasters, war, theft or other reasons. Many efforts have been done in this respect but policies need to be developed and harmonized for the proper conservation of this treasure of all mankind.

This research has focused on identifying existing policies and projects in this area and understanding the underlying innovative concepts. It has compared and contrasted policies and projects of EU member states with Mediterranean countries. Thanks to the results from questionnaires and focus groups, it concludes that there is scope for working together in this field with all the relevant countries involved, using a common tool – foresight – as the way to identify priorities, areas, exploitation potentials and ultimately giving input to policy makers whilst keeping innovation paramount. Foresight has already been used in other areas in some of the Mediterranean (non-EU member states) countries that were targeted in this research, but no direct use of it has been made for looking at the digitization of cultural heritage to date.

The results of this research give an encouraging view of the future and of the benefits to be reaped by using foresight as a tool that binds together people from very diverse countries with a common vision – whereby we can still hope to have Mediterranean heritage at hand – even if in digital format.

Keywords: foresight, digitization, policy development, Euro-Mediterranean culture
In spite of increasing attention given to innovation at European Union (EU) level, insufficient innovative activity is cited as a key factor behind the EU’s underperformance in productivity growth. Statistics reveal the need of concerted measures and new approaches. This dissertation addresses some of the shortcomings within the Maltese dimension by developing and testing a bottom-up approach as a model to encourage innovation in information and communication technologies (ICT); bringing together academia (students reading a degree in Information Technology at the University of Malta) as technical specialists, and representatives from industry as experts within their domain area.

The theoretical development is presented in the literature review, where the paper starts with a review of the Lisbon Strategy as the major impetus behind innovation in Europe. Then, the meaning of innovation is analysed within literature, policy documents and contemporary articles. Finally, the Maltese context is reviewed, eliciting the need for a new approach and presenting the framework for interaction. The practical study follows (as a result of the literature) in the analysis of two case studies, following distinct procedures. The process and the knowledge generated are compared and contrasted, highlighting the potential value and difficulties of such an interaction. The findings and implications provide a potential approach to foster innovation and directions for future research.

Keywords: innovation, creativity, knowledge interaction, ICT, government policy.
Monica Bugeja

Innovative Approach to Music Education: Combining Eastern and Western Thought

One very important characteristic which immediately sticks out between East and West is the way each perceives music. Many of the concepts which differentiate the music of the east have remained true to their past whereas European concepts underwent an evolution which took music along a different path. As such non-European music (which I am here referring to as Eastern) can impart different possibilities but can also provide a musical insight which is different than that of the west but which continues to enrich European music by way of composers who have and who are fusing non-western influences in their compositions.

This study aims to create an awareness of some of the concepts that give life to non-European music. Melodic and rhythmic examples will illustrate some non-European characteristics and will highlight a number of musical possibilities that can be fused into one’s work.

This study also looks at the results of a questionnaire which was handed out to a number of students taking instrumental studies. More importantly this exercise reveals the students’ need for more creative work and for improvisation. Seven instrumental teachers were interviewed to learn about their views on the inclusion of some world music aspects. Despite an awareness of world music issues, it seems that no real effort is being made to include elements which are non-European. What also emerged was that the teaching is still very much based on western tradition and that little or no time is dedicated to creative work.

A chapter on the historical background traces out the eastern influence which has left its mark on the European scene and which highlights the importance of being acquainted with these non-western ideas. To conclude characteristics of different scales and rhythms will serve as a springboard for creating an awareness of non-western characteristics.

Keywords: innovation, music
Ing. Emanuel Darmanin

The Creative Leader: An Asset or a Hindrance for Organisational Creativity and Innovation?

This study sheds some light on how a creative leader correlates to organisational creativity. Based on the literature review, a conceptual model referred to as the Leadership Influence Model is developed. The model designates the creative leader (the influencing factor) as the factor that influences a number of organisational realities: mission and objectives, people, internal environment, external environment, systems and structures, inhibitors and fosterers. In turn each organisational reality is deemed to influence the creativity level of the organisation’s products and services and the creativity level of the organisation itself (referred to as the consequence). The research evaluates this model amongst three Information Communication Technology companies operating in Malta. Each organisation represents one of the categories that are deemed to characterise the Maltese ICT industry. The leaders of the three organisations were first assessed for their level of creativity; interviews were then held with them to gather further insights on the subject matter. Data was collated through questionnaires from the employees (NA=181 for case-study organisation A, NB=38 for case-study organisation B and NC=18 for case-study organisation C). The results indicate that various aspects characterise creative leaders; that creative leaders influence each of the organisational realities, albeit to different levels; that the organisational realities correlate to the consequence; and that the influencing factor also correlates to the consequence. The research further reveals that differences due to organisational characteristics (such as job roles and reporting relationships) exist. A comparative analysis is held for the three organisations. The results are interpreted and a number of recommendations, including a revised model, are put forward.

Keywords: creative leader, organisational creativity, leadership influence, information communication technology (ICT), Maltese industry.
Natalie Debono

Creative Thinking: An Untapped Resource in Voluntary Youth Organizations

Whereas much attention is given to commercial organisations in relation to creativity, minimal attention is given to the youth voluntary organisations. Voluntary youth organisations are the grassroots of society and they should be targeted for research and development.

Creativity is still an untapped resource within the voluntary scenario and its introduction will strengthen the organisation whilst training the volunteers. The objectives of this dissertation are: to acquire a deeper understanding of the voluntary youth organisations’ climate as experienced during board meetings, to identify the main activities and processes and determine the key factors that hinder creativity and to introduce the concept of creativity through the introduction of creative thinking tools targeting the individual volunteers as being the main components of the voluntary organisation. The focus is on movers and shapers, group dynamics, discussions and decision-making and idea-generation discussed through the creative elements of person, press, process and product. The quantitative method used was a cross-case analysis between observations sessions and creativity-training session with eight Maltese voluntary youth organizations.

The main contribution of this research is to highlight the essential intervention of creative thinking as a resource and highlight its importance to ameliorate the climate and train volunteers for their personal growth and for the well being of the voluntary youth organisation.

Keywords: voluntary youth organisations, creativity, creative thinking tools, mover/shaper, discussion, decision-making, resources.
Innovation is becoming an increasingly important corporate goal in today’s world, however developing and sustaining a successful innovation process is not an easy endeavour. Innovation, a human activity, is driven by diversity in thinking and approach. Managing human diversity is the key to successful innovation. The goal of this study is to advance the understanding of personality styles as an aspect of diversity and the impact this diversity has on innovation and creative performance.

Despite a century of research human personality remains one of the most elusive and profound of all mysteries. For the last half-century personality assessment instruments have been designed and used to help understand human behaviour.

This study examines three of these instruments - The Four Ways System, The Enneagram Personality Profiler and The Orchid Model at the strategic level through experts who have designed or chosen a specific instrument in their organizational development work. It further delves into the experience of 10 participants following the introduction of one of these instruments - The Four Ways System, five years previous.

The results of the research supported the hypothesis that it is through the systematic recognition and management of the diversity in skills and strengths of each personality type we find the key to successful innovation. Understanding the diversity of personality styles improves interpersonal communication and tolerance of others in their unique approach to work and problem solving.

Keywords: managing innovation, diversity, personality types, communication.
The importance of Small and Medium Sized Enterprises (SME) in commercial and social structures is widely recognised. In an era characterised by Globalisation where defending competitive advantage, ensuring product quality and saleability to the market and ensuring the financial survival and sustainability of an activity is becoming increasingly complicated, tools and methods to sustain these efforts are sought more than ever before, particularly by SME. Of such tools, conventional marketing science, whilst being undoubtedly of fundamental importance is of limited use to resource constrained SME due to its rigid and linear-processes. Entrepreneurial marketing that is an area branching off conventional theory into a distinct subject, seeks to address these limitations. A common denominator of these two interpretations of marketing is the relevance of creativity within – whilst it has a peripheral role in conventional marketing, it is a fundamental construct for entrepreneurial marketing. Moreover, independently of its application to marketing the relevance of creativity, may be rightly considered as a fundamental and universal tool for any SME organisation. Taking this consideration further, the author believes that creativity should be considered as “the” fundamental business tool for SME owners/ managers.

This dissertation sought to understand, where between the application of marketing tools or creativity tools, it is better to place more emphasis in an effort to increase the success possibilities of Maltese SME. From the research conducted, it transpires that Maltese SME owners unconsciously apply marketing practices that reflect the limited resources that characterise such organisations. This is indirectly confirmed by their high perception of their own creativity, which is fundamental to the application of entrepreneurial marketing.

This finding should suggest a rethink of the business tools training offered so far by public and private institutions in an effort to enhance SME potential for success.

Keywords: marketing, creativity, SMEs
Systematic Simplicity: The Value of Simplicity in Entrepreneurial Ventures

Many authors have advocated simplicity as being a key value in society, science and entrepreneurship (Cohen and Stewart, 1994; Cooper, 2004; de Bono, 1998; Gell-Mann, 1994; Jenson, 2002; Maeda, 2006). Indeed qualities such as simplicity, ease of-use, and clarity are undeniably desirable features to many individuals and organisations. Entrepreneurship and innovation have also proven to be key factors in fuelling economic growth, generating employment, and providing higher quality of life for entrepreneurs and the societies in which they function (Autio, 2005).

These three fields—simplicity, innovation and entrepreneurship—are relative newcomers to the landscape of rigorous academic research. Nonetheless a quantity of literature has been generated on the subjects and robust research frameworks have been proposed.

The advent and increase of significant computing power during the twentieth century led scientists to pursue studies in computational complexity and complex adaptive systems: areas in which problems are ‘large’ and often intractable. In turn this fueled interdisciplinary interest in complexity science, complex systems and emergence. This dissertation investigates theories of complexity and focuses on the model known as ‘effective complexity’. By regarding the entrepreneurial venture as a complex adaptive system, ‘effective complexity’ will be positioned as a theoretical model for evaluating complexity in an entrepreneurial context. Subsequently, by means of a detailed case study the model is contrasted to the real-world scenario of a company that has focused exclusively on creating simple products. Results from the case study indicate a degree of correlation between the theoretical notions of complexity and the entrepreneurial perceptions of simplicity. Hence effective complexity could potentially provide a sound theoretical foundation for developing systematic simplicity techniques.

Keywords: complexity, creativity, entrepreneurship, innovation, simplicity
Stephen Portelli

Innovation in the Financial Services Industry in Malta

The financial services sector in Malta has experienced rapid growth in the last 12 years and developed from a low rated offshore regime to a reliable and reputable financial services centre in the Mediterranean Region.

The main objective of the dissertation is to investigate innovation in organizations operating in the financial services industry in Malta. The conceptual framework and research instruments were designed following an in depth analysis of literature on the subject. The research was conducted by means of a questionnaire administered to the whole population. The instrument used was pilot tested for reliability and validity. The data collected was analysed using statistical techniques.

The results of this research demonstrate that the major stumbling blocks in building organisational innovation within the financial services sector in Malta are organizational culture and time constraints. Investment in innovation, including investment in training, rewards, recognition and adequate resource allocation, is perceived to be low. Respondents perceive ideas originating from external sources to be more valuable than ideas generated internally while resources allocated to cross-functional project teams are very limited.

For organisations in the financial services sector to compete through innovation, more investment and organisational commitment is required in innovative activities including training and development of human resources in entrepreneurship, creativity and knowledge sharing skills, allocation of adequate resources together with setting up of formal systems for the storage and selection of innovative ideas.

Keywords: innovation, financial services, organizational innovation
Shirley Pulis Xerxen

Perceptions of Teachers in Malta concerning Creativity in Education

A comprehensive literature review presents different models and theories of creativity, highlighting the relationship between creativity and intelligence and what is meant by everyday creativity, followed by the different characteristics of the creative individual. A discussion of the relationship of creativity to curriculum quality ensues. This includes teachers’ perceptions on creativity and their role in promoting creativity in the classroom. The literature dealing with assessing creativity and transfer is reviewed. After establishing and describing the methodology of the study conducted, the analyses and results of the study are presented, organised in terms of how the problem statement was posed. Data was collected regarding the training in creativity that respondents had received, on their perspectives on the creative person, on whether creativity can be taught, together with their suggestions regarding creativity in the classroom. The results of the data analysis reveal perceived constraints to creativity and the role of creativity within the National Minimum Curriculum. The final chapter summarizes what has been learned through the findings and proposes recommendations and conclusions regarding creativity in education and how teachers, administrators and policy makers can ensure the development of creativity in education in Maltese schools.

Keywords: creativity, creative thinking, thinking skills, education