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Athanasios Adrimis
The Flow of the Mechanism of the Mind: A Conceptual Analysis of the Relations Between Csikszentmihalyi’s and de Bono’s Notions on Intrapersonal Creativity

The field of creativity is comprised of a variety of diverse approaches. The scope of the present dissertation is to correlate the terms of two theories which contribute significant insight to the understanding and the development of the creative function. This study provides a core understanding of the field of creativity research, enriched with a novel correlation between two seemingly distant approaches to the creative process of consciousness. The present dissertation explores the relations between Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi’s and Edward de Bono’s approaches to intrapersonal creativity, by isolating the terms through which the two descriptions illustrate this process and discussing their potential points of affinity. Csikszentmihalyi is a leading researcher in positive psychology, while de Bono’s is an insightful author of creativity and a leading figure in the development of thinking.

The research questions pursued by the present dissertation inquire on the characteristic processes of the flow state and the active self-organization of information as well as on the relations between these processes. The first question is addressed by means of deductive thematic analysis on selected key texts of the two authors. The analysed texts are Csikszentmihalyi’s Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience (1990) and de Bono’s The Mechanism of Mind (1969), and Serious Creativity: Using the Power of Lateral Thinking to Create New Ideas (1992). The method of analysis combines meaning condensation and interpretation, through the application of a set of coding techniques. This set includes initial, structural, descriptive, holistic, and thematic coding which gradually consolidate the textual data into concise categories, followed by focused, axial, and theoretical coding which translate those categories into themes. The second question is addressed in an inductive discussion through which the themes of the analysis are synthesized into a unifying theme which formulates the common elements of the creative process in the two approaches as the flexibility of consciousness to accommodate opposite perspectives on given information.

The derived point of relation allows for a more complex view of creativity, one which relates the points of reference of the two reviewed perspectives. The implications of the established relation between their approaches on the creative function reflect progress on the academic understanding as well as on the practical development of creativity.

Keywords: Flow
Mechanism of Mind
Lateral Thinking
Creativity
Thematic Analysis
This study investigated the role of leadership in organizations and its influence on employee creativity and employee well-being. This research adopted mixed methods to undertake data collection and analysis, which is divided into two phases. The sample included eleven social workers from two different organizations within the healthcare field.

Phase One comprised a quantitative method by utilizing a diary study in which data was collected on a daily basis for five consecutive working days. This quantitative tool revealed an overall low rate of successful implementation of creative ideas in the workplace. It showed how employee creativity and well-being is greatly affected by emotions and leadership style amongst other factors. A positive relationship between creativity and well-being at work was consistently exhibited during the first phase.

Phase Two of this study involved a qualitative inquiry through three focus groups which were carried out with the same sample as Phase One. These focus groups provided further insight and understanding of quantitative data and exposed interesting findings which affect the leader-employee relationship. These include the organization’s management, climate and culture, team members, nature of work, and personal characteristics.

This study concluded that employee creativity and employee well-being are positively related. Moreover, when the leader adopts transformational leadership behaviours, employee creativity and well-being is further enhanced. It also recommended further analysis of other variables, such as management teams and team dynamics in the light of creativity and well-being and its impact on leadership.

Keywords: Employee Creativity, Employee Well-being, Leadership, Social Work, Malta
Cultural innovation is a hybrid area between innovation and socio-anthropological studies. This research sets out to explore a phenomenon of cultural innovation by looking at Maltese gender role innovations over the last fifty years. It aims to gain a deeper understanding of the innovations themselves, as well as the factors, which have contributed and have impinged upon these innovations. An evolutionary perspective was used as this lends itself well to the study of cultural innovation. Hence, the research questions are: 1) How have gender roles, in the domestic/private space, innovated in Maltese society in the past fifty years? and 2) What are the underlying factors impacting on domestic gender role innovation?

The study adopted a qualitative inquiry through the use of a feminist grounded theory methodology. Data was collected by conducting 4 focus groups of different age groups; children, adolescents, young adults and adults. A Straussarian data analysis was chosen, which identified 3 main categories affecting gender roles in the private space; long-lasting factors, contingent factors and actual division of labour. A framework for understanding gender role innovation was then developed. This consisted of a cycle, whereby environmental changes catalyse individual innovation. Eventually, innovation diffusion creates societal changes, for example shifts in gender role boundaries and values, which have an enduring element.

**Keywords:** Cultural Innovation, Gender Roles, Feminist Research, Grounded Theory, Malta
Design thinking has gained popularity over recent years through the investigation of practices adopted by design professionals. Providing definitions of creativity, innovation, design, the design professional and design thinking raise a number of questions. Such questions aim to link the terms and identify the adopted thought processes and behaviour, together with the stages involved in the implementation of the design thinking processes, usually occurring within a system. Through an understanding of its core components, design thinking could be applied in other business sectors as a means of developing creative and innovative practice.

This study addresses the literature gap by exploring how design professionals, such as architects and designers, innovate through design thinking, applied as a tool within a design firm and how it could be applied in other business sectors leading organisations into innovation. The research questions are addressed through a qualitative approach by means of semi-structured interviews with eight design professionals and observations of design practice application with four design professionals. The sample was therefore made up of nine design professionals in total.

The results obtained through thematic analysis present themes which define and link creativity, design thinking and innovation. The themes explored the career progression of the design professional, which relies on ongoing personal development and knowledge acquisition leading towards the important skills needed for success. Skills required refer to communication, visual thinking, technical skills, creativity, developing a mind-set that shifts from problems to solution and risk-taking. The results provide a suggestive five stage design thinking process which requires the ideal design firm set up, identifying the benefits of design thinking.

The study provides recommendations for further research identifying the possible use of idea generation tools within the process and its application within other business sectors as a means to further define the term and obtain more insight on the process.

Keywords: Design Thinking, Design Process, Creativity, Innovation, Design Professionals, Organisational Design
Rachel Grima
The Application of Creativity Theory to Literary Texts: An Exploration of the Use of Lateral Thinking Techniques in Selected Texts

The aim of this study is to explore the under-researched relationship between creativity and the analysis of literary texts. This relationship has not been directly investigated in literary theory, and this study aims to explore whether and how creativity theory might be useful in the field of literary analysis. The dissertation briefly explores the perception of creativity in creative writing courses. The term “creative writing” embodies the idea of creativity, and therefore, this research could not ignore a brief investigation of any existing link between creativity and creative writing.

For the purposes of this research, two of Professor Edward de Bono’s lateral thinking techniques, challenge and provocation, are explored and investigated in four selected literary texts, in order to establish lateral thinking as a theory of creativity that could be applied to textual analysis. The four selected texts are:


Firstly, this research aims to investigate instances of lateral thinking techniques in the four selected literary texts. The investigation adopted a qualitative approach. Textual analysis on the selected texts was conducted in order to explore and identify the use of challenge and provocation in the four novels. Secondly, nine semi-structured interviews with students and graduates of English at Masters Level at the University of Malta were conducted. The purpose of the interviews was to elicit the perceptions of participants regarding creativity and lateral thinking.

The results of this research demonstrate that instances of two lateral thinking techniques, challenge and provocation, could be identified in the literary texts. The discussion on lateral thinking in the selected texts provides an exploration of some of the surprising elements, which cause a shift in perception and a restructuring of thought-patterns on the part of the reader. Participants did not elicit excerpts where they thought the novels were challenging or provoking in terms of lateral thinking. However, since only two participants claimed to be familiar with lateral thinking, the participants could not be expected to generate an in-depth analysis of challenge and provocation in the selected texts.

**Keywords:** Lateral Thinking, Creativity Theory, Literary Theory, Literary Criticism, Literary Analysis


Sustainable development is on the rise and hereby the role of sustainable entrepreneurship is of growing interest. Despite sustainability being a worldwide issue, some areas show an especially high engagement in this field, for example Berlin, a large city characterized by a relatively large amount of sustainable entrepreneurs. This dissertation focuses on exploring the process of opportunity recognition in sustainable entrepreneurship using the city of Berlin as an example. This includes an exploration of how sustainable entrepreneurs identify opportunities in Berlin, which characteristics of the city contribute to this process, and which barriers hinder it.

A qualitative approach was taken to explore these issues, conducting eight semi-structured interviews with Berlin-based sustainable entrepreneurs and analysing the data using thematic analysis. This revealed that sustainable entrepreneurs identify opportunities in Berlin as a result of (1) recognizing social, economic and ecological aspects, (2) experience and knowledge, (3) personal ambitions and (4) characteristics of the city itself. Moreover, this study found that the identification of sustainable opportunities is possibly hindered by cost- and price-related barriers, people’s perceptions about sustainability, bureaucracy, initial mistakes, dependency as well as temptations to be unsustainable.

The study concluded that all of the involved factors are interconnected and collectively determine which opportunities are recognized by sustainable entrepreneurs. It suggested that sustainable entrepreneurs can deliberately enhance their abilities to recognize opportunities by (1) increasing their relevant cognitive abilities, (2) choosing an appropriate city/place, and (3) being aware of possible barriers and possibilities to overcome them.

Keywords: Sustainable Entrepreneurship
Sustainable Development
Opportunity Recognition
Berlin
Large Cities
The purpose of this study is to demonstrate that user experience approaches to innovation should not be limited to new product development but have the potential for other types of organizational innovation. By focusing on process innovation, the investigation seeks to look into three key areas: how user experience could serve as a driver of organizational change, the influence of the organizational context and the impediments to user experience process innovation, and the consequences of process innovations on the delivery of the company offering. These three areas present the main and subsidiary questions of the investigation.

Due to the scarce literature on the topic of user experience-driven process innovation, the topics of user experience and process innovation are reviewed separately in the present study. Afterwards, they are integrated within the conceptual framework of the investigation. Adopting a view of the organization as a transformational system, the theoretical model of van Gigch (1991) is extended with the experience-operations model of Johnston and Kong (2011). By that, the link between business processes and user experience is illustrated. Based on the introduced framework and the overview of the literature pertaining to user experience and process innovation, the research questions outlined above were formulated.

Examination of the questions of investigation was devised as a single case-study of a service providing organization, where perspectives from employees, service users and company documents were integrated. Through thematic analysis, the following themes emerged from the data. Firstly, the most significant attribute of user experience appears to be the speed of problem resolution, thus suggesting an objective for user experience-driven process innovation. Secondly, customer surveys are not a true representation of user experiences as suggested by the gap between evaluated dimensions and user perspective. And lastly, weakened communication and organizational control were identified as key factors affecting user experience-driven innovation.

Keywords: User Experience
Customer Experience
Process Innovation
Systems Theory
This study explored the entrepreneurial perceptions, trainings and opportunities among the skilled, unemployed of Ireland. The current unemployment rate in Ireland stands at 11.5% which is an alarmingly high rate for a developed country. This level of unemployment has had many deeper social impacts in Ireland such as isolation, desperation, depression and has also caused a severe brain drain. However, Ireland’s current economic conditions and increasing rate of entrepreneurship capital have provided a potential avenue for economic improvement. The theories developed by Audretsch and Acs (1994) among others suggest that an entrepreneurial solution to the recession has merit for investigation. This was explored using a two phased qualitative research method. 

During the first phase, five experts in enterprise support services were interviewed and six skilled, unemployed individuals with an interest in self-employment participated in a focus group between November, 2014 and June, 2015. The data collection found that a number of entrepreneurial skills are lacking in the unemployed and that a tailored programme is necessary to serve the unemployed moving to self-employment in Ireland. In phase two, the data from phase one was combined with the review of the theory and current enterprise support structure of Ireland to develop a tailor made enterprise programme for the skilled, unemployed. This was then refined by the potential recipients.

Both phases presented a number of interesting findings and noted that soft skills such as confidence and networking were at risk due to unemployment and become more at risk depending on the duration of unemployment. A number of ancillary issues with Irish support services were exposed and counteracted in the findings and discussion. Access to information, exclusivity of networks and social welfare perceptions all deterred people from this route to employment.

The study concluded that a number of gaps and areas for improvement exist in the current enterprise support services and programmes. The study closes with suggestions for feasible enhancements to the enterprise systems and the design for a tailored and potentially more effective enterprise programme.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Support Services  
Skilld  
Unemployed  
Entrepreneurship Training  
Self-employed
Roman Repovas
How does Space affect Creativity? A Study of the Influence of the University of Malta’s Environment on Students

This dissertation explores the influence of the physical environment and its effects on creativity. The study focuses on the physical environment of the University of Malta and how various spaces on the Msida campus affect students. The main aim is to identify which environmental factors affect students and their creative performance.

Contemporary academic literature does not sufficiently explore the relationship between creativity and physical space. As a result, the study attempts to fill this gap in knowledge and provide a detailed evaluation of any potential correlation between one’s surroundings and creativity.

The research focus pursues attainment of a relevant perspective of the University of Malta’s environment, as well as students’ perceptions about creativity and its antecedents. Fieldwork takes place on the Msida campus, which provides a valid and multi-faceted context for the exploration of a relationship between space and creativity.

The study’s results indicate that a relationship between physical environment and creativity does in fact exist. Furthermore, students seem to be aware of various environmental features which have the potential to encourage or hinder creative outcomes. Various physical factors are identified as having noticeable effects on creative performance, such as natural elements, noise levels and spatial complexity. Additionally, complementing antecedents are determined which also affect creativity on campus.

The dissertation concludes that a number of improvements may be implemented to spaces on campus in order to foster creativity. The spaces may also be utilized in a better way in order to engage the full potential of features which are conducive to creative outcomes. Nonetheless, the context of the Msida campus of University of Malta proves that its environment affects students’ creativity.

Keywords: Creativity
Physical Environment
University of Malta
Spaces
Antecedents of Creativity
Innovation is one of the most important resources of the 21st century and crucial for organisations to keep a competitive advantage. Organisations are complex systems and therefore, several aspects of an organisation affect innovation in a direct or indirect manner. Several researchers have looked at how aspects of organisation contribute to innovation, yet few researchers have looked at the effect these aspects have on innovation when they interact together.

The variables chosen for this study were transformational leadership, organisational climate, and organisational strategy which are three variables which have been found to relate to organisation innovation by several authors. This study looked at how the interaction of the variables of transformational leadership, organisational climate, and organisational strategy interact to predict innovation using a quantitative approach and hierarchical regression analysis. The sample was made out of employees from four Maltese companies who agreed to help in this study and the total sample was made up of 108 participants.

The results show that all three are significant predictors of innovation and when combined using a hierarchical linear regression model they can predict 62% of the variance of innovation. The strongest predictor of innovation was found to be organisational strategy, followed by organisational climate, and finally leadership. However, the study did not find evidence that the interaction of these variables contribute to innovation over and above their individual contributions. This study also provides further theoretical implications for the future study of these three variables and innovation as well as practical implications which can be implemented in organisations.

**Keywords:** Alignment, Innovation, Organisational Climate, Strategy, Leadership
Roman Voytovich
Creative advertising as a method for increasing the organisational competitive advantage in the sphere of online gaming

The main topic of this dissertation is centred on creativity in the context of advertising and marketing mechanisms developed in order to promote products and services in an efficient way. The concepts analysed in the study are taken from various sources and centuries in order to reveal the possible recipe for creative advertising. The main aim of this thesis is to link the concept of creative advertising with the organisational competitive advantage on the market of on-line gaming. Special attention is drawn to the methods of creative advertising used in this business field to facilitate sales and keep existing audience. Throughout the study concepts are analysed and compared to identify the most constructive methods.

The literature review focuses on the main methods of creative advertising and the basis of competitive advantage including the works of Porter, Nussbaum and Leavy to organise the logical pattern for the research. A number of definitions for creativity are analysed and the most suitable one is chosen to serve as a general definition for this thesis.

The research is based on a case study that involves a large international gaming company, one of the leaders in the field of online gaming. The chosen company has a great creative potential and was acknowledged by game reviewers and business analytics (Gerdes, 2012) to be one of the best game-developing and creative companies in the world, with more than 97 different awards, which include: Spike TV Video Game Awards (2011), "Gamer God" awards (2010, 2011), Ranked second Best Role-Playing game of All Time, Gamecenter (2009), most creative game design in “on-line game review” (2007).

Creativity is overviewed as an essential part of the business’s success and as the unique resource that increases the organisational competitive advantage. This idea is extrapolated on the products of the chosen company and the experimental approach is used to link the creative advertising with the competitive advantage.

Findings of the data collection exercise, including literature review, questioners, interviews and financial data together with the conducted experiments provide the study with the probable co-relation between the creative advertising and sales of the company over the period of marketing campaign. This co-relation can serve as a joining point for creative advertising as the method of increasing the organisational competitive advantage and lead to the future research and the creation of the creative business developing strategy.

Conclusions of this dissertation suggest the unique influence of creativity on the business in general and particularly on the marketing aspects of product development that result in better sales, creation of unique qualities of the product; therefore creating competitive advantage for the company.

Keywords: Creativity, Competitive Advantage, Business, Advertising