

AN APPRAISAL OF SKILLS IN CREATIVITY IN CREATIVE WRITING AMONG TALENTED STUDENTS OF SCIENCE AND TECHNICAL SCHOOLS IN NASSARAWA EDUCATION ZONE, KANO STATE

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Abstract

The study investigated the students with talents in creativity in creative writing and the types of creativity in creative writing. There were 4,301 subjects in this study out of which 357 were used as a sample. This study was a descriptive survey design used to appraise skills in creativity in creative writing among talented students of science and technical schools in Nassarawa Education Zone. Two sampling techniques were used stratified and purposive sampling technique based on the nature of the population. Two instruments were used in the study, one was a teacher checklist for identification of students with talents in creativity adapted from Boswell, Team Solutions and the other was a creativity test developed by the researchers and was used in measuring students' talents in creativity in creative writing. Data gathered was statistically analyzed using frequency and percentages in tables. The findings indicated that there were students with high and less talents in creativity in creative writing like poetry writing, play writing and prose writing. The study recommended that the school authority should assign or find a specialist(s) who will be responsible in identification of children with creativity in different areas as soon as they enrolled in school and the parents of gifted and talented children with creative abilities should inform the specialists as soon as they see the signs or observed such abilities and gives them full support.

Keywords: Creativity, Creative writing, Gifted and Talented Students

Introduction The daily increasing speed of changes in today's world has overshadowed all of the areas of life. For any society, the presence of creative people is crucially important; because societies require creative solutions for survival and solving the problems of its present and future. If a society is able to use the blessing of creativity to the maximum level, it has brought man to his birthright which is being the noblest of all creatures. "Growth and development of creativity depends on various individual and social factors such as: intelligence, family, personality features etc." Although man's ability for creative thinking is innate and he has the potential for it, but its presence requires proper education (Mirkamali & Khorshidi, 2009). Renzulli (2004) also points out that there is a creative-productive giftedness that is based on the use and application of knowledge and thought processes. This type of giftedness describes those aspects of human activity which encourage the development of ideas, products, unique artistic expressions and knowledge that are purposely designed to have an impact on one or more target audiences. The situations of learning designed to promote creative-productive giftedness emphasize the use and application of knowledge and thought processes and an integrated inductive oriented way to a real problem. Statement of the Problem There are so many students with talents in creativity in our schools especially science and

technical schools but the problem is that there is no standard means of identification of such students and they need to be identified by the schools as well as the types of creativity they possessed. This investigation focused on identification of students with talents in creativity in creative writing and the types of creativity in creative writing. Programs of training creativity can help children in understanding the world around them and building relationship between its components and increase children's flexibility, imagination, skills of formulating issues (Benlliure, Meléndez & Juan., 2013). The research in this regard shows that creativity starts from the early childhood and becomes stable during adolescence. In the case of fostering it in this period of life one can extend it until the end of life (Mirgheydari, 2001). In fact, some experts believe that children are the real embodiment of human creativity (Glaveanu, 2011).

Kleiman (2008) creativity involves originality and novelty combined with utility or value, while Jackson offers creativity as the ability to 'move an idea from one state to another' (Jackson, 2006:8). Creative capacity is seen as a rich human characteristic. Creativity has been linked with: attitudes of curiosity; willingness to engage and explore; being proactive; being willing to take risks, having determination and even obsession. Jackson (2006) offers a set of characteristics for creativity, including in being: imaginative; original or inventive; able to adapt and improvise; curious and resourceful; and able to see things differently. Robinson (2006) argues creativity is an essential aspect for learning, since learning takes us into a future that we cannot yet grasp. He argues there is a need to promote divergent thinking in diverse and dynamic learning spaces. We need educational spaces that acknowledge human diversity and that privilege and exploit such diversity to develop our creative capital. Creativity is an ability to develop something novel and adapt to new situations. Unusual solutions alongside originality are seen as inevitable parts of creativity. (Hackbert, 2010; Lemons, 2005).

Creative Writing According to Bennett, Clarke, Motion, & Naidoo, (2008) Creative Writing is the study of writing (including poetry, fiction, drama, and creative non-fiction) and its contexts through creative production and reflection on process. By writing, we mean not only books and other printed materials, but also scripted and unscripted performances, oral and recorded outputs, and the variety of forms possible in electronic, digital, and other new media. Creative Writing can use any form or genre of writing as an exemplary subject of study, but the products of Creative Writing tend not to be informational, but imaginative interpretations of the world that invite the complex participation of the audience or reader. (Bennett, Clarke, Motion, & Naidoo, 2008). Creativity plays an important role in technological advance, in the social and behavioural sciences, and in the humanities and arts (Dudek, 2003; cited in Runco, 2004). Because of its role in innovation and entrepreneurship, creativity has become one of the key concerns of organizations and businesses (Runco, 2004). Creativity is 'the ability to come up with new ideas that are surprising yet intelligible, and also valuable in some way' (Boden 2001). The reflection of creative aspects of students in school environment can be seen mostly in the texts they produce by using writing skill. For this reason, creativity and writing skill are very close together and identical (Demir, 2013). Writing includes "creative thinking and relating new information with the prior knowledge and this make new information sense" (Lawwill, 1999; cited in Demir, 2013). Directly associated with creativity, creative writing means one's putting his or her ideas and feelings about a particular topic on paper by using his or her imagination freely (Oral, 2012).

Creative writing aids language development at all levels: grammar, vocabulary, phonology and discourse. It requires learners to manipulate the language in interesting and demanding ways in attempting to express uniquely personal meanings. In doing so, they necessarily engage with the language at a deeper level of processing than with most expository texts (Craik & Lockhart 1972). Writing can be viewed as a recursive process involving both cognitive and metacognitive processes. Task, environment, individual cognition and affective processes all impact on 5 producing written text (Larkin, 2009). Writing has an important

contribution to the development of other skills and also becomes a tool to express person's feelings, thoughts and information. Writing should be perceived and evaluated not as a mechanical process but as a skill which covering understanding, thinking, developing and producing skills. In this sense, the process oriented approach should be developed in the improvement of writing skills. Students should be expected to gain some various attainments such as planning, developing their products gradually, supporting ideas, evaluating their writing in writing process (MoNE, 2011). We need to find ways to integrate writing with other skills and activities, giving it more relevance and importance and also making it more interesting. We need to use meaningful, realistic and relevant writing tasks, based on our learners' needs and interests. We may need to design individual tasks based on what individual learners need to write.

In addition, we should talk about writing with our learners, how we write well, why we write and for who, and what makes it difficult (Monis & Rodriques, 2012). Teaching creative writing that is, encouraging students to write by drawing upon their imagination and other creative processes may support writing development in all its components (Barbot, Tan, Randi, Donato & Grigorenko, 2012). Creative writing on the other hand can help to teach how to behave creatively in their lives (Sternberg, 2009). Eckhoff and Urbach, (2008) asserted that children's imagination and creativity are quite advanced but components of an educational environment can either support or stifle children's imaginative abilities. Creative writing gives opportunity to students to choose their own writing subjects and methods. The importance of creative writing is undeniable to improve the cognitive and communicative skills of children (Tompkins, 1982; cited in Essex, 1996). Creative writing is a chance to free your imagination in which people get satisfaction. Through creative writing, students can use their linguistic capabilities and go deeper and further that they cannot do in oral expression. They express more personal thoughts and mental images. Therefore, creative writing tasks are motivating both for L1 and L2 students (Harmer, 2004). Everett (2005) indicates that a further role for creative writing in English: beyond assisting and enabling learning, it can also provide alternative ways of expressing and demonstrating learning. Raimes (1983) indicates that writing can help our students for those reasons; firstly, writing reinforces the grammatical structures, idioms and vocabulary that we teach, secondly when students write, they have a chance to be adventurous with the language to take risks, and lastly they become very involved with the new language; the effort to express ideas. There are many writing forms, some are creative, and some are not. However, all writing is creative writing because writing uses the materials of language, experiences, knowledge, textual sources, personal ideas and imaginings of the writer, bringing out something that did not exist before. All of the writings of students are important and any kind of writing is a creative act (McVey, 2008). İşeri and Ünal (2010) asserted that to acquire writing skill well enough, one should be developed in cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects. So, affective aspects of the students are also important and should be carefully considered while teaching them how to write creatively. Talented Students Gifted and Talented children defined by Colorado Spring School (2020) to mean persons between the ages of four and twenty one whose abilities, talent, and potential for accomplishment are so exceptional or developmentally advanced that they require special provisions to meet their educational programming needs.

Gagné (2005), proposed a model of giftedness that emphasizes the talent-development process. He proposed the Differentiated Model of Gifted and Talented (DMGT) to highlight the difference in these terms, in which he demonstrated that the words "gifted" and "talented" are often used interchangeably in the field of gifted education. The main aim of Gagné' model is to find out the environmental influences (home, school, parents, activities, encounters, etc.), non-intellective variables (motivation, temperament), and learning, training, and practicing, that transform basic, naturally determined "gifts" (intellectual, creative, sensorimotor, etc.) into specific talents (language, science, mathematics, art, music, leadership, etc.).

Objectives of the Study

The followings are the objectives of the study:

1. To identify the students with talents in creativity among talented students of Science and Technical Schools in Nassarawa Education Zone.
2. To determine the types of creativity in creative writing among talented students of Science and Technical Schools in Nassarawa Education Zone.

Research Questions

1. Are there students with talents in creativity among students of Science and Technical Schools in Nassarawa Education Zone?
2. What are the types of creativity in creative writing among talented students of Science and Technical Schools in Nassarawa Education Zone?

Methodology

This study was a descriptive research which employed survey design. Based on the statistics obtained from the schools, there were four Science and Technical schools within Nassarawa Education Zone with a population of 4,301 students (2,808 males and 1,493 females), a total of 357 used as a sample, using stratified sampling technique based on the school status and purposive sampling technique based on the nature of the population. Teacher Checklist for identification of Talents in Creativity, this instrument was a teacher checklist for identification of talents in creativity which was adapted from Boswell, TEAM Solutions and Norrie (2007) and Creativity Test. This instrument was a test of creativity developed by the researcher to find out the types of creativity in creative writing. The instrument has two (2) sections. Section (A) is a demographic data of the students and section (B) has three (3) parts, part 1, on short story, part 2, on short drama (play) and part 3 on short poem.

Validity of the Instruments The face validity of the instruments was validated by four experts in the Department of Special Education, Bayero University, Kano. The scores obtained from the first and second administration were analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique and $r=.84$ was obtained for teacher checklist for identification of creatively gifted and talented students. However, $r=.79$ was obtained for creativity test. The researchers distributed the teacher checklist for identification of talents in creativity to (3) English language teachers from each school making (12) teachers in order to nominate the students with such characteristics. The researchers with the help of four research assistants distributed the creativity test for measuring types of creative writing (e.g., short story, short play (drama), short poem) to the students. The data was statistically analyzed using frequency and percentages in tables and charts to show the frequencies and the percentages on talents in creativity in.

Results

Research Question One: Are There Students with Talents in Creativity Among Students of Science and Technical Schools in Nassarawa Education Zone?

Table 1: Identification of Creatively Gifted and Talented Students (N-357)

Questions	Students' Performance	Frequency
Percentage		
1. Can produce original & imaginative work	Basic	157
	Proficient	115
	Advanced	85
2. Generates a large number of ideas quickly	Basic	126
		43.9
		32.2
		23.8
		35.2

	Proficient	132	36.9
	Advanced	99	27.7
3. Produces original ideas & has unusual insights	Basic	139	38.9
	Proficient	130	36.4
	Advanced	88	24.6
4. Uses creative thinking to solve problems with imaginative and or logical ingenious methods	Basic	170	47.6
	Proficient	111	31.0
	Advanced	76	21.2
5. Problem-finds as well as problem solves	Basic	156	43.6
	Proficient	123	34.4
	Advanced	78	22.0
6. Keen sense of humor able to laugh at self.	Basic	141	39.4
	Proficient	137	38.3
	Advanced	79	22.1
7. Exhibits creative potential	Basic	153	42.8
	Proficient	119	33.3
	Advanced	85	23.8

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	Advanced	99
3. Produces original ideas & has unusual insights	Basic	139
	Proficient	130
	Advanced	88
4. Uses creative thinking to solve problems with imaginative and or logical ingenious methods	Basic	170
	Proficient	111
	Advanced	76
5. Problem-finds as well as problem solves	Basic	156
	Proficient	123
	Advanced	78
6. Keen sense of humor able to laugh at Self.	Basic	141
	Proficient	137
	Advanced	79

7. Exhibits creative potential	Basic	153	42.8
	Proficient	119	33.3
	Advanced	85	23.8

The table (1) above indicated the level of response of respondents, individual performance in creativity. Respondents with basic creativity that can produce original and imaginative work were 157 which are equal to 43.9%. and respondents with proficient creativity that can produce original and imaginative work were 115 which is equal to 32.2% while 10 respondents with advanced creativity that can produce original and imaginative work were 85 which is equal to 23.8%. The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in creativity. Respondents with respondents with basic creativity that can generate large number of ideas quickly were 126 which is equal to 35.2%. and respondents with proficient creativity that can generates large number of ideas quickly were 132 which is equal to 36.9% while advanced creativity that can generates large number of ideas quickly were 99 which is equal to 27.7%. The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in

creativity.

Respondents with basic creativity that can produce original ideas and have unusual insights were 139 which is equal to 38.9% and respondents with proficient creativity that can produce original ideas and have unusual insights were 130 which is equal to 36.4% while respondents with advanced creativity that can produce original ideas and have unusual insights were 88 which is equal to 24.6%. The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in creativity. Respondents with basic creativity use creative thinking to solve problems with imaginative or logical ingenious 170 which are equal to 47.6% and respondents with proficient creativity use creative thinking to solve problems with imaginative or logical ingenious were 111 which is equal to 31.0% while respondents with advanced creativity use creative thinking to solve problems with imaginative or logical ingenious were 76 which is equal to 21.2% The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in creativity. Respondents with respondents with basic creativity in problem-finds as well as problem solves 156 which is equal to 43.6% and respondents with proficient creativity in Problem-finds as well as problem solves were 123 which is equal to 34.4% while advanced creativity in Problem-finds as well as problem solves were 78 which is equal to 22.0% The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in creativity. Respondents with basic creativity of Keen sense of humor able to laugh at self were 141 which are equal to 39.4%. and respondents with proficient creativity of Keen sense of humor able to laugh at self were 137 which is equal to 38.3% while advanced creativity of keen sense of humor able to laugh at self were 79 which is equal to 22.1% The table also indicated that the respondents individual level of performance in creativity. Respondents with basic creativity that exhibits creative potential were 153 which is equal to 42.8% and respondents with proficient creativity that exhibits creative potential were 119 which is equal to 33.3% while respondents with advanced creativity that Exhibits creative potential were 85 which is equal to 23.8%.

Research Question Two: What are the Types of Creativity in Creative Writing among Talented Students of Science and Technical Schools in Nasarawa Education Zone?

Table 2: Types of Creativity in Creative Writing among Talented Students of Science and Technical Schools (N-357)

Technical Schools (N-357)

<u>Areas of Talent</u>	<u>Responses</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Short story	Yes	82	22.9
	No	275	77.1

Short play	Yes	59	16.6
	No	298	83.4
Short poem	Yes	48	13.4
	No	309	86.6

The table (2) above shows that 82 out of 357 students have talents in short story which is equals to 22.9 % of the respondents, while 275 out of 357 students which is equals to 77.1% of the respondents lacks talent in short story. The table also revealed that 59 out of 357 students which is equals to 16.6% of the respondents have talent in short play (drama) while 298 out of 357 students which is equals to 83.4 of the respondents lacks talents in short play. The table also shows that 48 out of 357 students which is equals to 13.4% of the respondents have talent in short poem while 309 out of 357 students which is equals to 86.6% of the respondents lacks talent in short poem.

Discussion of Findings

The first finding shows that there is narrow or no standard means of identification of students with talents in creativity in Science and Technical Schools in Nasarawa Education zone. This goes in line with the issue of identification of gifted and talented students by Pearson education (1995-2010). The issue of identification is highly problematic among the gifted and talented school age population and contentious among them among their educators. There are so many areas of functioning to be addressed, and at the moment, there are no adequate single identification procedures, or combination of procedures, that will effectively identify all the gifted and talented children. The second finding indicated that there are students with high and less talents creativity in creative writing such as short stories, short play (drama) and short poem. This is in line with study of Akkaya (2011) in a study to show the effectiveness of creative writing techniques on the students' attitudes in Turkish Course has done and the experimental groups were divided into two creative writing lessons and information provided about techniques. Experiment group, 8 weeks, were conducted in two hours in a week writing creative writing techniques.

According to the findings, as a result of the statistical analysis of data gathered in research it revealed that the exercises related to creative writing affected the attitudes of the students towards writing positively.

Conclusion

This paper described the concepts of creativity, and creativity in creative writing. The paper also discusses the identification procedure of students with talent in creativity, the types of creativity in creative writing and the gender differences in creative writing among talented students of science and technical schools in Nassarawa Education Zone.

Recommendations

The following recommendations could be used from the findings of the study:

1. The school authority should assign or find a specialist(s) who will be responsible in identification of children with creativity in different areas as soon as they enrolled in school.
2. The parents of gifted and talented children with creative abilities should inform the specialists as soon as they see the signs or observed such abilities and give them full support.

3. The teachers are recommended to encourage and put more effort in teaching male students creative writing.
4. Such children should be exposed to creativity and talent development centers so that their talents will be developed and nurtured.

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