

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

# Investigation of Teachers' Perceptions on Organizational Creativity

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### Ethical Statement

The authors collected the research data with the permission of Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Commission with the protocol numbered 16/43 dated 28.12.2023.

### Funding Information

No funding was received for the study.

### Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest is present in the conduction or the reporting of this study.

### ABSTRACT

The aim of this research is to reveal the perceptions of teachers in the context of organizational creativity and to examine their experiences. The study group of the research consists of 10 teachers working in the public schools of the Ministry of National Education in the spring term of the 2023-2024 academic year, five of whom received the Global Teachers Award. Semi-structured interview technique was used in the research. The data obtained were analyzed by content analysis and descriptive analysis methods. In consequence of the interviews with 10 teachers, the themes of opinions on the characteristics of a creative organization, the way in which creative ideas are expressed and evaluated in the organization, positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity, evaluation of managerial, educational and social activities in the context of creativity, management strategies that can be creatively evaluated, characteristics of a creative management approach and manager, characteristics of a creative teacher, characteristics of a creative student and suggestions for increasing creativity in schools were identified. As a result, it was seen that the opinions of the teachers who received awards and the teachers who did not receive awards did not differ much. The necessity and importance of providing a working environment where everyone is in the same boat, where they can easily express their new ideas and suggestions, and the necessity and importance of updating or improving the conditions in a way that they can realize their new ideas or suggestions were emphasized.

**Keywords:** Creativity, organizational creativity, teacher.

Received: 01/02/2024

Accepted: 11/08/2024

## INTRODUCTION

Since the early 2000s, the concept of creativity is considered to have an important place in organizations. Organizational creativity is a concept that has been emphasized by researchers since the 1960s. In this context, there are different definitions of the concept of organizational creativity that have changed over time. According to Genç (2007), organizational creativity is a new idea, a useful product or a procedure shaped by people working together. Furthermore, organizational creativity is "the development of new and useful ideas about products, services and processes by individuals or groups within an organization" (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Regarding at the most common definition of organizational creativity, Woodman et al. (1993, p.293) define it as "the creation of a valuable, useful, new product, service, idea, procedure or process by individuals working together in a complex social system".

Considering that everything is constantly changing and developing, organizations need to keep pace with this change and development. For this reason, organizations need creative individuals in order to be able to change and develop. Because new and different products, useful ideas and services are developed by creative individuals. Establishing a creative organizational environment, especially in educational organizations, has an important position in terms of developing students' creativity abilities.

It is an undeniable fact that knowledge is a dynamic concept, constantly changing and spreading at a rapid pace. Therefore, in order for a society to be characterized as developed, an environment that encourages creative ideas within the society is needed. In this case, educational institutions are one of the institutions where creative ideas are most expected. Recently, with the increase in the value and importance given to education and educational institutions, firm steps have started to be taken towards becoming an information society. However, in order to be able to compete with the developed countries, it is important for educational institutions to train qualified people and provide an educational environment that will develop their creative characteristics (Çelebi & Bayhan, 2008).

As educational institutions, schools are both required and expected to have a dynamic and effective structure and to maintain this structure. For this reason, teachers have many duties such as understanding, recognizing and guiding their students, being tolerant to different and various opinions and identifying problems. However, creating these situations is not only the responsibility of teachers but also a process that can be carried out jointly by school administrators, teachers and students. As a result, in order to encourage creativity in educational institutions, school administrators, teachers and students should make efforts to realize their responsibilities (Töremen & Yörük, 2004).

Defining and solving the problems encountered creatively is seen as a real skill for a successful organization. Otherwise, with the lack of development, similar situations will repeat themselves (Yerli, 2009). Therefore, it can be stated that creativity has a significant effect on solving the problems within the school efficiently and realizing different attitudes. In addition, Gupta (2015) states that school administration has a reaction, although not directly, in the development of teachers' creativity skills as well as students. At the same time, school administrators encourage teachers to work in educational institutions by listening to them in order to support their thoughts and by providing an efficient method of communication that maintains the existence of the flow of experience and thought within the teachers themselves. It is argued that it is important that they should encourage creative thinking and help creative thinking both economically and morally, as well as financing teachers (Fidan, 2018).

For an educational institution to be creative, the teachers working in that institution must also be creative. It can be said that the way to be a creative school is to have creative teachers. Therefore, teachers should establish an environment where they can develop, exhibit and strengthen their talents and creative skills by ensuring that their students take them as role models. In other words, teachers need to have advanced thinking skills, flexibility and basic

thinking skills in order to create a learning and teaching environment that can nurture students' creativity and encourage the development of creativity. Programs that focus on academic progress that are particularly sensitive to students' needs, developmental levels and characteristics emphasize student work, questioning and problem solving, as well as strengthening students' decision-making to develop their creative skills (Bloom & Sosniak, 1981).

The aim of the research is to reveal the perceptions of teachers in the context of organizational creativity and to examine their experiences. In accordance with the aim of the research, the following questions were sought to be answered:

1. Which characteristics should a creative organization have?
2. How are creative thoughts expressed and evaluated in educational institutions?
3. What are the positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity?
4. How are administrative, educational and social activities in educational institutions evaluated in terms of creativity?
5. What are the creative management strategies in educational institutions?
6. What characteristics should a creative management approach and manager have?
7. What characteristics should a creative teacher have?
8. What characteristics should a creative student have?
9. What are the suggestions for increasing creativity in educational institutions?

When the literature is reviewed, it is seen that there are studies examining the relationship between teachers' organizational creativity and different concepts, but the studies examining teachers' views only on organizational creativity are limited. For this reason, it is thought that this research will make an important contribution to the field. In addition, it is expected that the findings to be obtained by determining the views and experiences of teachers regarding organizational creativity in this research will be useful for the studies and academic researches to be conducted in the field of educational administration.

## **METHOD**

In this part of the research, there are explanations about the research design, setting and participants, instruments, procedure, data analysis, plausibility of the study and ethical issues.

### **Research Design**

Phenomenology design, one of the qualitative research methods, was used in the study. In the phenomenological design, the experiences, perceptions and meanings that individuals attribute to an event or phenomenon are tried to be determined (Dönmez, 2017). Studies carried out with the phenomenology design provide a lot of useful and productive information to the literature on the explanation and characteristics of the phenomenon under consideration, the meanings that the participants experience, are affected by and put forward in line with this phenomenon, and creating theories thanks to all these (Özmen & Karamustafaoglu, 2019). In this context, the research was designed in accordance

with the phenomenological design, one of the qualitative research methods, in order to determine the views of teachers on the concept of organizational creativity.

### Setting and Participants

The study group of the research consists of 10 teachers working in the public schools of the Ministry of National Education in the spring term of the 2023-2024 academic year, five of whom received the Global Teachers Award. The reason for selecting five of the teachers from among the award-winning teachers is to examine whether the ideas about the concept of creativity differ between the award-winning teachers and the teachers who have not received any awards before. In the process of determining the study group, maximum diversity sampling, which is one of the purposeful sampling methods, was used. While selecting a sample that can represent the universe through purposive sampling, researchers select sampling units subjectively (Yıldız, 2017). In other words, the probability of selecting a particular sampling unit is limited by the personal judgement of the researcher. Maximum diversity sampling is to create a relatively small sample group and to reflect the diversity of people who are likely to be involved in the issues under investigation to the greatest extent possible (Christensen, Johnson, & Turner, 2015). The main idea in maximum diversity sampling is that the researcher consciously identifies participants with different characteristics. The views or perceptions of the participants reflect these differences and provide an efficient qualitative study that aims to clarify a complex phenomenon (Creswell & Clark, 2014). In this context, teachers who have received the Global Teacher Award and teachers who have not received any award working in the public schools of the Ministry of National Education were included in the research.

Teachers were coded as T1, T2, ..., T10 in order to hide their identity information in the study. Information about the demographic variables of the participants in the study group such as gender, age, professional seniority, marital status, educational status and branch are given in Table 1.

**Table 1. Participant information**

Code	Gender	Age	Professional Seniority	Marital Status	Educational Background	Branch
T1	W	36-40	11-15 year	Married	Postgraduate	Special Education
T2	M	31-35	6-10 year	Single	Postgraduate	Class
T3	M	36-40	11-15 year	Married	Postgraduate	Class
T4	M	31-35	6-10 year	Married	Postgraduate	English
T5	W	36-40	16-20 year	Married	Postgraduate	Science
T6	W	26-30	1-5 year	Single	Undergraduate	Turkish
T7	W	26-30	6-10 year	Single	Postgraduate	English
T8	M	31-35	6-10 year	Single	Undergraduate	Class
T9	W	26-30	1-5 year	Married	Undergraduate	Visual Arts
T10	W	36-40	11-15 year	Married	Undergraduate	Pre-school

### Instruments

In the research, semi-structured interview technique was used according to the structuring process from qualitative research techniques in order to reach the inner worlds of the participants and to determine their perspectives specific to the research topic. The interview provides access to unobservable information such as participants' experiences, different perspectives, thoughts, comments, mental perceptions, reactions, and interpretations on the topic under investigation (Bengtsson, 2016; Cansız-Aktaş, 2019). Semi-structured interview technique is an interview technique in

which the interview questions are prepared more flexibly and allow open-ended responses (Karahan, Uca, & Gdk, 2022). It was considered appropriate to use the semi-structured interview form as a data collection tool in this research because it facilitates the researcher to make a comprehensive examination and keep the study within the parameters determined for the purpose.

In the process of developing the semi-structured interview form, a draft interview form was prepared by reviewing the literature on the subject and expert opinion was sought for the draft form. The final version of the interview form was created by making the necessary arrangements in accordance with the expert opinion. While developing the semi-structured interview form, it was paid attention that the questions were purposeful, clear, understandable, explicit and flexible enough to give the participants the opportunity to express their thoughts comfortably.

## **Procedure**

Participants were contacted before the interview and the day and time of the interview were determined according to their availability. Detailed information about the research was given and the data collection tool was shared with them. Participant consent form and personal information form were asked to be filled in before the interviews. However, it was emphasized that the data obtained would be used only for scientific purposes and confidentiality would be protected. The interviews were conducted in an environment where the participants could express themselves comfortably by using an online platform under the guidance of the researcher. The interview with each participant lasted approximately 55 minutes. The interviews, which were recorded by voice recording after obtaining permission from the participants, were also converted into written text by the researcher. A total of 9 open-ended questions were asked to the participants during the interview. According to the answers of the participants, the questions were rearranged or repeated when necessary to deepen the subject. In addition, code names such as T1, T2, T3, ... T10 were used for each participant in order to protect the confidentiality of the participants' identities.

## **Data Analysis**

The data obtained after the interviews with the participants were analyzed by content analysis and descriptive analysis methods. Content analysis is defined as "a research technique that makes repeatable and valuable inferences from the data in a message" (Krippendorff, 2012). However, it is a systematic technique in which concepts are created by coding the data within the framework of certain rules, the concepts obtained are classified and categorized by establishing relationships between them, and the categories formed are collected under a theme (Bykztrk et al., 2014). Content analysis consists of four stages: coding the data, searching for themes, organizing the codes and themes, defining and interpreting the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Descriptive analysis is the quoting, summarizing and interpreting of data based on previously created themes in order to convey information to the reader (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; ltay et al., 2021). Descriptive analysis also consists of four stages: creating a framework for analysis, processing the data according to the theme, describing and interpreting the findings (Baltacı, 2019).

In the first stage of data analysis, the researcher converted the interviews into a written text by listening to the audio recordings and examining the notes taken. The written text was read and analyzed repeatedly and coded by dividing it into sections in such a way that there would be an integrity of meaning within itself. After the coding was completed, categories were formed according to the codes and the main themes were accessed based on the categories. The findings were defined and interpreted based on the themes obtained. In the second stage of data analysis, the data were analyzed by using descriptive analysis method and quoting the participants' different answers to

the same questions without changing them. The data obtained by the descriptive analysis method were summarized and interpreted in the form of previously created themes.

### **Plausibility of the Study**

Plausibility in qualitative research is ensured by conducting the process with care. Gube and Lincoln (1982) identified four main characteristics for plausibility: plausibility, reliability, transferability and approvability. In this research, the process was carried out by taking these criteria into consideration. Since it is common to get support from experts to ensure validity in qualitative research (Çepni, 2018), expert opinion was consulted in the preparation of the data collection tool. In addition, the answers of the participants were checked by an expert, which increases the plausibility of the data (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996; Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2018). During the data analysis process, codes and themes were created by the researcher in order to increase the validity of the data. The codes and themes were checked by an expert. In order to strengthen the plausibility of the data, direct quotations were made from the participants' statements (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

### **Ethics Issues**

In this research, ethics committee permission was obtained from Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University Scientific Research and Publication Ethics Commission with protocol number 16/43 dated 28.12.2023. After the study group was formed, participant information form and voluntary acceptance forms were prepared; all participants were given detailed information about each stage of the research before the interviews; it was also stated that they had the right to withdraw from the research at any time and their permission was obtained to voluntarily participate in the research. The data obtained were saved on an encrypted computer and made accessible only by the researchers. Code names such as T1, T2, T3, ... T10 were used to hide the identities of the participants and the participants were identified with these codes in the research report.

## **RESULTS**

The data obtained through the semi-structured interview form within the scope of the research are summarized in tables. The first column of the tables includes themes, the second column includes codes, the third column includes frequency and the fourth column includes participants.

### **1. Findings for Determining the Characteristics of a Creative Organization**

The participants were asked which characteristics a creative organization should have and they were asked to explain these characteristics especially in the context of a creative school. The views of the participants are given in Table 2 below.

**Table 2.** Teachers' views on determining the characteristics of a creative organization

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Codes</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Characteristics of a creative organization	Innovative	4	T6, T7, T8, 10
	Development-orientated	3	T1, T5, T8
	Free atmosphere	2	T7, T8
	Flexible	2	T5, T7

Collaborator

2

T8, T10

Teachers' views on the characteristics of creative organizations were stated as "innovative" (f=4), "development-oriented" (f=3), "free atmosphere" (f=2), "flexible" (f=2) and collaborative" (f=2). Some of the prominent teacher views are given below:

T1: ... Thinking is important and supported in creative organizations. It is development orientated.

T5: A creative organization should be open to development and change within the framework of flexible and time-appropriate planning, consisting of highly motivated individuals, without strict rules ...

T6: Open to innovations, having creative thinking skills, able to take risks, open-minded to experiments.

T7: A creative organization should encourage a flexible, dynamic and innovative environment ... It is important to create a comfortable and free atmosphere where teachers, students and administrators can exchange ideas with each other.

T8: I think that the members (students, teachers, administrators) ... should be open to innovation and development, open to the application of different methods and techniques, open to co-operation.

T10: Curious, researcher, innovative, co-operative.

## 2. Findings Regarding the Method Followed in Expressing and Evaluating Creative Thoughts

The participants were asked how creative ideas are expressed and evaluated in their organizations and they were asked to share their experiences. The views of the participants are given in Table 3 below.

**Table 3.** Teachers' opinions on the way of expressing and evaluating creative thoughts in the institution

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
The way in which creative ideas are expressed and evaluated in the organization	Brainstorming	4	T3, T4, T5, T10
	Democratic	2	T1, T5

Teachers' views on the way of expressing and evaluating creative ideas in their institutions were expressed as "brainstorming" (f=4) and "democratic" (f=2). Some of the prominent teacher views are given below:

T1: *Democracy is necessary to think creatively, to talk about them, to evaluate them ...*

T3: ... *School administrators listen when these ideas are expressed. The majority of the teachers in the school also listen and express their opinions. Then the applicability of these ideas is discussed ...*

T4: ... *Creative ideas from students are evaluated in the classroom. Brainstorming is done with the students and information is exchanged about how the ideas can be realized ...*

T5: *In my institution, brainstorming is generally used to express creative ideas ... Individuals evaluate their own ideas and other ideas and decide the most appropriate one in a democratic way.*

T10: Teachers generally share their ideas among themselves, help each other in practice and come up with common preparations. Apart from this, our school administration holds meetings and frequently asks for ideas from teachers, asking what we can do, what are your thoughts, ideas are evaluated and developed.

### 3. Findings on the Positive and Negative Aspects of Organizational Creativity

The participants were asked about the positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity. The views of the participants are given in Table 4 below.

**Table 4.** The positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity as perceived by teachers

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
Positive aspects of organizational creativity	Collaboration	6	T2, T4, T5, T7, T8, T10
	Sharing ideas	3	T4, T9, T10
Negative aspects of organizational creativity	Non-innovative colleague	4	T2, T4, T5, T7
	Lack of vision	2	T1, T6

Teachers' views on the positive aspects of organizational creativity were expressed as "collaboration" (f=6) and "sharing ideas" (f=3), while teachers' views on the negative aspects were expressed as "non-innovative colleagues" (f=4) and "lack of vision" (f=2). Some of the prominent teacher opinions about the positive aspects are as follows:

T2: *Organizational creativity supports other skills such as collaboration, communication, problem solving besides creativity...*

T5: *... Cooperation should be done in accordance with common goals rather than competition-oriented.*

T7: *... Increased cooperation and thus more efficient division of labor.*

T8: *... I think brainstorming, working collaboratively, group activities will develop positive feelings towards the time spent in the classroom.*

Some of the prominent teacher opinions about the negative aspects are as follows:

T2: *Negative aspects include more workload, more effort, and the point of view of people who do not care about this situation.*

T4: *... Having members in the team who are not open to innovation and who close themselves to new ideas can also be an obstacle in the process of producing creative work.*

T5: *... For this reason, if the thoughts or actions of self-sacrificing people are seen as worthless by people who do not care, creativity can be blunted.*

### 4. Findings on the Evaluation of Administrative, Educational and Social Activities in the Context of Creativity

Participants were asked to evaluate administrative, educational and social activities in their organizations in terms of creativity and share their experiences. The views of the participants are given in Table 5 below.



**Table 5.** Teachers' views on the evaluation of administrative, educational and social activities in the institution in the context of creativity

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
Evaluating managerial, educational and social activities in the context of creativity	Project-based learning	2	T4, T7
	Interdisciplinary approach	2	T4, T7
	Adhering to the MoNE program	2	T5, T8

Teachers' views on the evaluation of administrative, educational and social activities in the context of creativity were expressed as "project-based learning" (f=2), "interdisciplinary approach" (f=2) and "adhering to the MoNE program" (f=2). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

*T4: In my school where project-based approach is adopted, student ideas are highly valued ... Teachers from different branches support each other by conducting interdisciplinary studies ...*

*T7: ... d out on project-based learning in the context of educational activities. I think that an interdisciplinary approach will also encourage creativity ...*

*T5: ... I did not observe much creativity because of the administrative and educational adherence to the MoNE program.*

## 5. Findings on Management Strategies that can be considered as Creative

Participants were asked whether there were any management strategies in their organizations that they would characterize as creative and were asked to briefly describe these creative management strategies. The views of the participants are presented in Table 6 below.

**Table 6.** Teachers' views on management strategies that can be considered creative in the organization

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
Management strategies that can be creatively evaluated	Collaboration	3	T4, T7, T10
	Contact	2	T4, T7
	Giving importance to thoughts	2	T3, T10

Teachers' views on management strategies that can be considered creative were as follows: "cooperation" (f=3), "communication" (f=2) and "giving importance to ideas" (f=2). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

*T3: In the primary school where I work, the school does not have a generalized management strategy. Our school administration listens to all ideas, examines them and implements the ones it finds useful...*

*T4: Thanks to the healthy communication and collaboration between teachers and between teachers and the school administration, many creative works are carried out in our institution.*

*T7: Providing an open communication environment, the principal leaving the door open, allowing students to make mistakes, supporting collaboration between teachers, especially in projects.*

T10: The administration is not oppressive but collaborative and gives importance to ideas.

## 6. Findings on a Creative Management Approach and Characteristics of the Manager

Participants were asked which characteristics a creative management approach and manager should have. The views of the participants are given in Table 7 below.

**Table 7.** Teachers' views on the characteristics of a creative management approach and administrator

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
Characteristics of a creative management approach and manager	Valuing ideas	7	T1, T3, T4, T6, T8, T9, T10
	Innovative	3	T4, T9, T10
	Visionary	2	T4, T9
	Fair	2	T1, T7

Teachers' views on a creative management approach and the characteristics of the administrator were as follows: "valuing ideas" (f=7), "innovative" (f=3), "visionary" (f=2) and "fair" (f=2). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

T1: A creative management should be a management style that is understanding, fair, harmonious, attaches importance to creating a corporate culture, where feelings and thoughts are expressed freely...

T3: A creative management should be open to every idea. It should listen to all ideas ...

T6: Open-minded, solution-oriented, versatile, open to change, able to listen, consult.

T9: Must be visionary, open-minded, follow innovations and have the ability to empathize ...

T10: Supportive and developing ideas, researcher, curious, innovative, stable.

## 7. Findings on the Characteristics of the Creative Teacher

Participants were asked which characteristics a creative teacher should have. The views of the participants are given in Table 8 below.

**Table 8.** Teachers' views on the characteristics of a creative teacher

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
The characteristics of a creative teacher	Open to innovation	5	T3, T6, T8, T9, T10
	Self-development	3	T2, T5, T8
	Researcher	2	T3, T10
	Curious	2	T9, T10

Teachers' views on the characteristics of a creative teacher were as follows: "open to innovations" (f=5), "self-developing" (f=3), "researcher" (f=2) and "curious" (f=2). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

T3: A creative teacher should be open to innovations ...

T5: ... should continuously improve himself/herself, keep up with the developing science and technology and

*integrate every new information into education ...*

*T8: It should not be confined within the curriculum; it should be open to innovation and self-development ...*

*T9: ... The first condition, of course, is to be able to follow the technology, to be open to innovations, to be curious, to have not lost his passion ...*

*T10: Energetic, researcher, curious, innovative, original.*

## 8. Findings Regarding the Characteristics of the Creative Student

Participants were asked which characteristics a creative student should have. The views of the participants are given in Table 9 below.

**Table 9.** Teachers' views on the characteristics of the creative student

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
The characteristics of a creative student	Curious	7	T2, T4, T5, T7, T8, T9, T10
	Thinking differently	4	T1, T2, T3, T7
	Can express themselves	4	T1, T2, T4, T8
	Researcher	3	T5, T7, T9

Teachers' views on the characteristics of a creative student were as follows: "curious" (f=7), "different thinker" (f=4), "self-expressive" (f=4) and "researcher" (f=3). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

*T1: Can express themselves, are self-confident and respectful, love school, love learning, think differently, recognize and respect different opinions.*

*T3: ... He presents his work in different ways. They develop different perspectives on each event.*

*T4: They should have a developed sense of curiosity, ... they should be able to express themselves easily.*

*T7: A creative student should have a natural curiosity and interest in learning ...*

*T8: They should be curious, read, express their thoughts without hesitation, and have the ability to work together.*

## 9. Findings on Increasing Creativity in Schools

Participants were asked how creativity in schools could be increased and their suggestions on this issue. The views of the participants are given in Table 9 below.

**Table 10.** Teachers' views on increasing creativity in schools

Theme	Codes	Frequency	Participants
Suggestions for increasing creativity in schools	An environment that supports creativity	4	T3, T5, T9, T10
	Student-centered learning	3	T4, T6, T9
	Flexible plan	2	T5, T7
	Individualized education	2	T1, T6

Award

2

T2 ,T9

Teachers' views on increasing creativity in schools were expressed as "environment supporting creativity" (f=4), "student-centered learning" (f=3), "flexible plan" (f=2), "individualized education" (f=2) and "reward" (f=2). Some prominent teacher opinions are given below:

*T1: ... An individualized education system where the individual is valued.*

*T3: Creativity in schools can be increased by providing creative environments ...*

*T6: ... As long as the conditions allow, there can be a transition from teacher-oriented lessons to student-centered lessons ...*

*T7: The curriculum should be flexible in its implementation ...*

*T9: ... Creative thinking should be encouraged and reward method should be used ...*

## **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

In this research, which aims to reveal the perceptions of teachers in the context of organizational creativity and to examine their experiences, firstly, teachers were asked to evaluate the characteristics that a creative organization should have in the context of a creative school. Then, they were expected to express the way of expressing and evaluating creative thoughts in their organizations, the positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity, and evaluate the managerial, educational and social activities in their organizations in terms of creativity. However, their opinions on what are the management strategies that they can evaluate as creative in their organizations, a creative management approach and the characteristics that a manager should have, which characteristics of a creative teacher and student should come to the forefront, and what can be done to increase creativity in schools were determined.

As a result of evaluating the characteristics that a creative organization should have in the context of a creative school, teachers defined a creative organization as innovative, development-oriented, having a free atmosphere, flexible and collaborative. In a study conducted by Koşar and Ölmez-Ceylan (2016), it was found that participants defined organizational creativity as "revealing potential, creating the new, generating ideas, and process". In a study conducted by Gürcüoğlu (2022), it was seen that the participants evaluated creativity as "using new methods, using technology, developing new ideas, trying new ideas and practices". In a study conducted by Aslan and Cansever (2009), the themes that emerged from teachers' definitions of creativity were "curiosity, research, the effort to create something on one's own, free work, looking at things from different perspectives, originality and one's own creations". When the results of this research and the mentioned research are evaluated, it is thought that organizational creativity requires innovation and that it would be beneficial to produce these innovations flexibly in a free atmosphere.

It has been determined that teachers associate the way in which creative ideas are expressed and evaluated with brainstorming and a democratic environment in the institutions where they work. Teachers generally stated that the most appropriate one was decided democratically by evaluating their own ideas and other ideas together with the school administration. In a study conducted by Uygur (2022), it is seen that the statements made by teachers such as democratic and sharing attitude, asking teachers for their ideas, providing freedom of expression, and the openness of school administrators to innovation are stated as supportive factors in the expression and evaluation of creative thoughts. However, from the opinions of the teachers who received awards, it was concluded that creative ideas from

students were also evaluated in the classroom environment, information was exchanged on how the ideas could be put into practice by brainstorming with the students, and discussions were held on the suitability of the idea to the level of the students, its sustainability, and its dissemination; while some of the teachers who did not receive awards concluded that ideas could be expressed easily in their schools, but problems could be experienced in the realization of ideas.

In the context of the positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity, it was determined that teachers expressed their views that the positive aspects of organizational creativity are cooperation and idea sharing, while the negative aspects of organizational creativity are non-innovative colleagues and lack of vision. The themes obtained from the positive aspects of organizational creativity are partially similar to the findings of a study conducted by Çavuşoğlu (2007). In the mentioned study, the importance of changing managerial attitudes towards behaviors such as supporting the development of ideas, creating an environment where employees can freely express their thoughts, preparing an environment where new ideas can be implemented, involving employees in the decision-making process, developing internal motivation, and being a problem solver was emphasized. In addition, it was determined that managers should work together to improve creativity by sharing their knowledge and experience. In a study conducted by Koşar and Ölmez-Ceylan (2016), it was stated that teachers' solidarity and sharing positively affected creativity. It is thought that the themes obtained on the negative aspects of organizational creativity are similar to the finding of using traditional methods in Uygur's (2022) study. When it is assumed that most of the teachers who are not innovative or who do not adopt any vision have a traditional perspective, it will be difficult to generate new ideas, express ideas easily, create opportunities for brainstorming and strengthen communication in institutions with a high number of such teachers, and it will be difficult to provide development and change in terms of creativity.

The themes that emerged from the teachers' evaluations of the managerial, educational and social activities in their institutions in terms of creativity were project-based learning, interdisciplinary approach and adherence to the MoNE program. It was inferred that project-based approach was adopted in the school of an award-winning teacher and that student ideas were highly valued. In addition, from the statements of another award-winning teacher, it was inferred that teachers from different branches in the school support each other by conducting interdisciplinary studies. In addition, it was concluded that the common problem of both award-winning and non-award-winning teachers was that creativity could not be developed due to the administrative and educational adherence to the MoNE program. Therefore, it is thought that focusing on qualitative studies rather than quantitative studies in educational institutions will increase both creativity and the quality of the projects, products, etc. worked on.

Teachers expressed the management strategies that can be considered creative in their organizations as cooperation, communication and giving importance to ideas. The findings of this study are partially similar to the findings of a study conducted by Koşar and Ölmez-Ceylan (2016). In the mentioned study, it was concluded that a creative environment emerges when the manager gives importance to ideas and enables the implementation of these ideas, and when the working environment is based on trust and sharing. In addition, Uygur (2022) concluded that teachers consider strategies such as making decisions together, establishing a creative system, and providing equal opportunities as creative. While the teachers who received awards inferred that many creative works were carried out with the formation of a healthy communication and cooperation culture in their institutions, and that teachers with expertise or experience in a subject or field guided and supported teachers in need; some of the teachers who did not receive awards did not observe any management strategies that could be considered creative in their institutions and that a management that could be called classical was dominant.

Teachers expressed the characteristics that a creative management approach and administrator should have as

valuing ideas, innovative, visionary and fair. The common theme that both the teachers who received an award and those who did not receive an award shared was that a creative management approach and a manager should value ideas. From the views of the teacher who received an award, it was inferred that a creative management should be open to all ideas and listen to all ideas. Similarly, from the views of a teacher who did not receive an award, it was inferred that a creative management should support and develop ideas. The results of this research are partially similar to the findings of a study conducted by Uygur (2022). In the mentioned study, the participants stated that a creative management approach and a manager should be fair, be able to develop new and different ideas, be open to innovation, support creative thinking, and have professional equipment. In addition, in a study conducted by Çavuşoğlu (2007), it was concluded that in order to create a creative organizational culture, the management approach and the manager should provide the opportunity to access new information, that is, be open to innovation, help the development of ideas and allow the implementation of new ideas. Therefore, being a manager with a creative management approach requires supporting creative teachers, creating flexible environments and conditions where they can display their creativity and ideas, encouraging collaborative work, being able to both listen and consult, and taking risks when necessary.

It was determined that teachers expressed the characteristics of a creative teacher as open to innovations, self-developing, researcher and curious. The themes obtained in this research are partially similar to the findings of a study conducted by Aslan and Cansever (2009). In the mentioned study, teachers stated that the characteristics of a creative teacher are open to new ideas and formations, feels the need for continuous self-renewal, and encourages the use of imagination. In addition, Koşar and Ölmez-Ceylan (2016) also mentioned in their study that teachers stated that having a perspective open to innovation would affect creativity. From the views of the teacher who received the award, it was concluded that a creative teacher should follow current developments, use technology actively, encourage students to question, and adopt student-centered education under teacher guidance. Likewise, from the views of a teacher who did not receive an award, it was concluded that a creative teacher should follow the technology and integrate especially information technologies into lesson teaching strategies, be open to learning and make students feel the importance of being open to learning, and create a comfortable classroom environment that will enable students to think creatively. Creativity is a skill that can be applied in every lesson in line with the width of the teacher's imagination, professional experience and knowledge. In this context, teachers need to move away from one-way and stereotypical thinking. Therefore, first of all, teachers should be role models for their students in terms of creativity and should not be afraid of innovations.

Teachers mentioned the characteristics of a creative student as being curious, thinking differently, being able to express themselves and being a researcher. In this research, it was concluded that both the award-winning and non-award-winning teachers agreed that a creative student should be the most curious. From the statements of a teacher who received an award, it was inferred that a creative student should be curious, have developed problem solving skills, be open to communication, be determined, not give up easily in difficulties, be able to look at things from different perspectives, and not hesitate to express themselves. In a similar way, from the views of a teacher who did not receive an award, it was inferred that a creative student should be curious and willing to investigate, and should be determined to continue thinking creatively even if he/she is rejected when he/she presents out-of-the-box answers or suggestions to others. In a study by Çelik, et al. (2022), participants identified the characteristics of a creative child as a mind hungry for knowledge, collaboration, curiosity, imagination, multilingualism, entrepreneurship, critical thinking and self-awareness. When the teachers' statements about the characteristics of a creative student are considered together, it is

seen that the student should question and develop critical skills, be self-confident, not be afraid of making mistakes, not give up, have empathy, be able to work harmoniously in both individual and group work, and make interdisciplinary connections.

In terms of what can be done to increase creativity in schools, teachers expressed their suggestions as environment supporting creativity, student-centered learning, flexible planning, individualized education and rewards. Davies et al. (2013) found that the environment affects not only students' achievements but also teachers' professional development (Cited in Pecheanu & Tudorie, 2015). In this context, the school, and primarily the classroom, is considered as a privileged environment that encourages creativity with the aim of enhancing social and individual development. Based on the statements of the teachers participating in the research, it is thought that creativity in schools will increase by organizing creative environments, classrooms, drama rooms, paving the way for creative thinking, creative writing, creative drama and play, and giving more space to such practices in schools. Apart from this, teachers generally stated that the curriculum should be flexible in its implementation. At this point, Carnes, et al. (1961) also stated in their study that curricula should be organized in a flexible structure in order to provide more effective service to students (Cited in Fasko, 2001). However, from the views of a teacher who received an award, it was concluded that the teacher should be in the position of a guide by adopting student-centered learning and in this direction, environments that will increase students' creativity should be provided. Similarly, from the views of a teacher who did not receive an award, it was concluded that it would be beneficial to adopt differentiated or individualized education and to teach the lessons in accordance with the level and learning style of the students. At this point, it was concluded that it is important to carry out activities such as poetry, composition, painting, theater, drama according to the level and interest of the students and to reward those who work in this direction. Therefore, schools need to adopt and use creative approaches in order to make learning interesting and effective.

As a result, this study provides important information about teachers' views and experiences regarding organizational creativity. In this context, it can be said that teachers' experiences in terms of creativity in the institutions where they work, their thoughts about the creative organization, creative management approach and manager, creative teacher and creative student, their suggestions for increasing creativity in schools, and the positive and negative aspects of organizational creativity for teachers are elaborated. This research was conducted with the participation of teachers from different branches and working at different levels using qualitative data collection techniques. Various studies using different methodologies will provide more insights on how organizations can increase creativity. In addition, it can be suggested that practitioners should create working environments where employees can freely express their creative thoughts, provide a working atmosphere that makes employees feel that their ideas are valuable, recognize the importance of teamwork in the organizational environment and encourage employees to teamwork, and ensure that new and creative ideas are implemented. Furthermore, it is important for practitioners or managers to be open to innovation and to value and listen to the ideas of their subordinates. At this point, seminars, training programs and conferences can be organized to encourage organizational creativity, and courses on creativity can be included in the education curriculum.

### **Statement Of Researchers' Contribution Rate**

The first author contributed 60% and the second author contributed 40% to this study. While the first author contributed to the process of obtaining the necessary permissions and collecting the data, both authors contributed to the process of analyzing, analyzing and reporting the data and these stages were carried out together.

### **Conflict Statement**

In this research, there is no harm to any institution, organization or participants and the research has no commercial purpose.



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