

## Chapter 14

# The Development of Creativity: Integral Analysis of Creative Adolescents and Young Adults – Abstract, Introduction, Background, Theoretical Perspectives

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### ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this chapter was to investigate creativity in adolescents and young adults and its role in psychological development. For this qualitative research, hermeneutic phenomenology/ontology linked with the narrative/biography methodology was chosen. To interpret the data, the pattern models of creativity were generated, by applying the concepts of complexity science, especially self-organization, with the theory of positive disintegration and the psycho-evolutionary theory of emotions. It was discovered that the process of creativity in young people is intertwined with the strong emotions of passion, curiosity, enthusiasm, and delight. These emotions are the driving forces that generate order and complexity not only in the creative process but also in overall psychological development. The presence of these strong emotions often contributes to lesser tension in young people's development, including a greater ability to integrate their experiences, to take their psychological development into their own hands, and to find direction for their future.*

### INTRODUCTION

In order to locate the research topic in the overall context of existing literature and research, I review the main theories concerning the process of creativity and its relation to human development. They are Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology of perception, Piaget's theory of knowledge development, Heidegger and Gadamer's hermeneutic phenomenology, Dilthey's theory of understanding human life, Dąbrowski's theory of positive disintegration, Vygotsky's theory of social development, and the neurophenomenology of Varela. In searching for explanatory frameworks, I focus on the main concepts of chaos theory and self-organization and how they can be applied to emotional processes.

The review of the literature demonstrates the complexity of creativity and its role in human development. Wilber's Integral Theory provides an excellent conceptual framework for the journey through the different areas of study.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-5873-6.ch014

## ***The Development of Creativity***

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the role of creativity during the periods of adolescence and young adulthood, especially as it relates to psychological development. The research investigates whether adolescents spontaneously use the process of creativity to gain the capacity to differentiate and integrate their own inner experiences in order to achieve internal dynamic order and find direction for their future.

Creativity is an expression of our unique perspective toward situations or problems. Abraham Maslow refers to a self-actualizing (SA) type of creativeness that stresses highly valuable traits like boldness, courage, freedom, spontaneity, integration, and self-acceptance (Maslow, 1968, p. 145). This description aligns with Rogers' idea that people become creative by going within themselves and developing trust in their own thoughts and feelings. The resulting authenticity allows individuals to live by their truest values and to express themselves in their own unique ways. With this sensitive openness to their world, they are able to form new relationships with their environment and become the individuals from whom creative products and creative living emerge (Rogers, 1961/1989, p. 193). This is why we need more creativity! By introducing creative programs to our schools in a deliberate and coherent manner, we could help young people develop their ability to question, to make connections, to express their thoughts and feelings, to innovate, and to reflect critically.

Research on creativity is, by necessity, in-depth, personal, and small-scale; therefore, a number of similar studies carried out across Canada would be needed in order to assess the value of including more creativity in the education of young people. It is reasonable to anticipate that the significance of creativity would be demonstrated as a result of these studies.

## **BACKGROUND**

Wilber's Integral Theory (2008) serves as a map of the literature on creativity and its role in human development. According to Integral Theory, there are four major perspectives that must be studied when we are challenging ourselves to fully comprehend any phenomena of reality: the subjective (intentional), intersubjective (cultural), objective (behavioral), and interobjective (social).

### **The Upper-Left Quadrant: Subjective**

In the upper-left quadrant, Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception*, Dąbrowski's *Theory of Positive Disintegration*, and Piaget's *Theory of Knowledge Development* are placed. This quadrant represents the intentional first-person perspective. Phenomenology is the study of the structure of human consciousness as experienced from the first-person point of view, and concerns perception, thought, memory, imagination, emotion, and desire, will, embodied action, and social activity.

The French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1908-1961) was the first phenomenologist to identify the body itself as the conscious subject of experience responding to the world by its faculty of sense. Central to Merleau-Ponty's philosophy is his emphasis on the foundational role of perception (Merleau-Ponty, 2004a, 2004b). He claims that sense-perception is fundamental to being in the world and is essential to the creative and aesthetic activities of human beings. The artist's body is "not a chunk of space or a bundle of function but that body which is an intertwining of vision and movement" (Merleau-Ponty, 2004b, p. 294). Vision and movement are essential to both life and art.

Next, I introduce Dąbrowski's theory of positive disintegration, which describes patterns and explains mechanisms of human development, placing great emphasis on emotional development. Kazimierz

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