



*Administrative Creativity among Public Administration Employees:
Concept and Rooting/Originality*

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Abstract

In this article, we have reviewed a theoretical approach to the concept of administrative creativity in terms of its historical development. We have also discussed the most important theories that have adopted the subject of creativity, its importance, its basic elements and types, in addition to the principles on which it is based, as well as the special features that characterize the creative person, and the stages that the creative process goes through. Then, we went through its levels in the organization passing to the most important obstacles that stand in the way of the employees' creativity within their departments. The significance of this study is also reflected in the importance of the topic, from a scientific point of view, as it is a current topic that still receives great attention in the context of the progress of societies and the development and continuity of their organizations, as it depends on the innovative capabilities and creative talents they possess.

-Keywords:

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1. INTRODUCTION

Since creativity is a human concept par excellence and a manifestation of human genius, business institutions and organizations of all types and fields of specialization have begun to turn to “administrative development,” which depends primarily on the ability of the organization and its employees to excellence, creation, and innovation ; this necessitates the management of these organizations to develop its concepts and administrative methods to create the suitable conditions for human minds to create and innovate in a continuous manner. The creative individual is considered a fortune that exceeds material wealth. Indeed, investing in the human element is considered the most successful source of investment ; therefore, the organizations ‘direction towards paying more attention to creativity has become represented by making actual changes in the employees’ behaviors through the introduction of advanced tools and technologies.

In addition, the development of the administration is based primarily on the set of administrative and intellectual values that it adopts to achieve its goals. Through notable efforts to provide an appropriate climate, organizations’ workers are enabled, at all levels, to demonstrate their creative abilities and make optimal use of them in a way that would positively impact their morale. Subsequently, enthusiasm would lead them to work and search for solutions to the problems they face in a creative manner, which leads to achieving administrative development and advancing the growth of the organization as an interactive entity among the employees.

- The Concept of Creativity:

- It is an action (work) aimed at achieving production characterized by novelty, suitability, and the possibility of development.

-It is the unusual production (carried out by an individual or a small working group) distinguished by its novelty/innovation and characterized by relevant and

implementable ideas that can be employed for specific uses.

-Creativity is the creation of something new, which is the companion of innovation.

-The concept of creativity refers to the integrated unity of a set of internal factors that leads to the realization of a new, original and valuable production by the individual and the group.

- It is the process that leads to a product or valuable outputs (Creativity is a product).

-Many agree that it is a mental ability that appears at the level of the individual, group, or organization. It is a multi-stage process that results in a new thought or action that is characterized by the highest degree of fluency, elasticity, flexibility, originality, sensitivity to problems, and the retention and continuation of the direction / trend. It is also characterized by the ability to focus for long periods on the area of interest. The ability to form new connections, discoveries, and relationships, and this ability can be cultivated and developed according to the abilities and capabilities of individuals, groups, and organizations.

The Concept of Administrative Creativity:

1-It is to make major improvement in strategies, policies, procedures, work tools and methods and review them from time to time to ensure the quality of work.

2-We can also define it as: creating a new mechanism of work through optimal employment of available capabilities in order to reach the target at the lowest cost and fastest time possible.

A creative person in the field of management is a person who loves to take risks, tries to think of new ways of working, has the ability to imagine many alternatives

when dealing with problems, and he has confidence in himself and others, as well as the courage in expressing opinions and suggestions along with individual autonomy.

Administrative Creativity Theories:

1/ The Theory of the Search for Excellence : Excellence Theory of Search

Peters and Waterman, after an analytical study of a group of superior organizations in their book “In Search of Excellence”, concluded the following:

The common values and principles of superior organizations characterized by a high degree of innovation and creativity are:

- * The desire and motivation for achievement and always giving priority to action and initiating performance over having a lot of time spent on analysis, meetings, and the detailed reports of the committees.

- *Developing relationships and connections with the service beneficiaries to get to know them and benefit from their suggestions.

- * Giving autonomy to units and departments in a way that encourages independent thinking and creativity and stimulates competition with other units and departments to outstanding performance.

- * Establishing the concept of productivity and achieving it by developing the capabilities of all workers and deepening the principles that make the individual present his best abilities and efforts, knowing that he participated in all the positive outcomes resulting from the organization’s superiority.

- *Simplifying the administrative levels by relying on a few of them, and the tendency to permanently reduce leadership positions.

- * Developing an organizational environment that ensures adherence to the main values of the organization, and at the same time achieves the required and specified

flexibility.

*The organization continues to provide goods or services in which it has proven its ability and excellence, and limits the expansion of areas in which the organization does not have any knowledge or experience.

*The organization's executive leadership should remain permanently relevant and connected to the main activities to identify the extent to which these activities are consistent with the values and principles according to which the organization operates. (Mohammed Hussein Al-Ajmi, 2008, p. 89)

2/ The Winning Performance Theory :

During their study of winning performance, Clifford and Caveney concluded that distinguished small organizations with high creative and innovative capabilities are characterized by multiple features that distinguish their organizational environment, which are:

-Setting and developing a specific message for the organization, and it is necessary that this message represent the shared values of the employees.

-It is necessary to pay attention to the essential components and constituents of the work.

-The bureaucratic approach should be viewed as a major enemy.

-Motivating all employees for training and experimentation.

-Developing and strengthening close relationships with those who benefit from the service or those who want the product to the extent that makes all development, innovation and creativity processes as efforts devoted to achieving the desires of those dealing with the organization.

-Giving distinct priority to developing and improving the capabilities of employees and motivating them for outstanding performance and creativity. (Raad Hassan Al-Sarn, 2004, p. 403)

3/ Innovative Thinking Theory :

In the late sixties, Edward De Bono came out with a theory that accuses the human mind of inadequacy and inability to reach what he called creative thinking, or his innovative way of thinking called the Six Hats.

At the beginning, many people disparaged and denied it, but after a while it gained admiration, then persuasion, and application in many international organizations and companies ; some of them even established centers for innovative and creative thinking. This method relies on mental positions that help decision-makers do what it is called parallel thinking : meaning that everyone thinks in one way or one approach so that the communal mental energy is able to achieve the highest possible thinking ability.

Hats are found useful in innovative meetings, as they help in parallel collective thinking, which depends on everyone wearing the same hat in order to have the same way of thinking.

"De Bono" divided the hat colors into six colors, each color has a specific meaning: for instance, the white hat is responsible for collecting information and knowing the current situation and the problems and circumstances surrounding it, that is, an objective view of matters.

- The red hat: It is specified with feelings, meaning that when you wear it, you only say what you feel about a proposal without giving reasons. It is specific to emotion, intuition, and innate thinking.

Thus, each hat has its own meaning and symbol. This theory was put forward by its proponents and each hat is divided into its work and function. For example, we find in an institution a worker wearing a hat of a specific color, without speaking, we can know what type he is, and what he should speak. This is the core of creativity in thinking and advanced thinking, and this is what simplifies the process of communication between the leader and his subordinates. Instead of a dialogue that may be for or against an opinion, this method - the six hats method - simplified and facilitated the leader's knowledge of the opinions of his superiors through the colors of the hats. Its application is easy, saves time and effort for more important creative matters, allows the expression of feelings without shame, facilitates learning and use, allows for free and unrestricted thinking, as well as it provides a practical method for using different thinking styles ; this method leads to more productive and effective meetings. (Ibid., p. 404)

4/William Jordan's Theory of Creative Thinking:

William Gordon is considered one of the pioneers who contributed to developing the contemporary concept of creativity, and his theory of creativity and innovative thinking is based on the following principles:

*Individuals associate art, music, and invention, therefore, it constitutes an important aspect of daily activity.

*The creative process is not something mysterious or secret. It can be described and individuals can be trained directly to increase their creative abilities.

*Creativity is similar in all fields : in art, science and engineering, and is characterized by the same mental processes. it is believed with the strong relationship between creative thinking in performance and science.

*Individual and collective creativity are completely similar. Individuals and groups generate similar ideas, but this differs when saying that creativity is only born from personal experiences.

The theory is based on three main assumptions:

a. Individual and collective creative capabilities can be increased through awareness and understanding of the creative process, and developing clear concepts and meanings.

b. The emotional components of the creative process are more important than the mental content, and the unreasonable is more important than the reasonable and the logical, given that creativity is concerned with developing new mental patterns.

c. Irrational emotional elements must be understandable to help increase the possibility of success in finding new solutions to problems. (Ibid., p. 407)

Components of Administrative Creativity:

Administrative creativity consists of three main parts:

A- Creative thinking skills: This enables him to depart from the traditional scope of thinking and collect the greatest amount of good, unique, and diverse unexpected ideas. These skills include:

1- Fluency : is defined and measured by the number and quantity a person gives of a specific type of information in a specific unit of time. There are three distinguishing factors of fluency, which are:

* Intellectual fluency: It is concerned with the rate of generating a quantity of ideas.

* Associative fluency: It refers to the completion of relationships.

* Expressive fluency: It is meant with the easiness of constructing sentences.

2- Flexibility : means the ability to move appropriately from one place to another quickly, and not to become rigid and cling to one point of view.

3- Originality : is the new responses that an individual brings to certain existing stimuli, and these responses are unknown and do not exist.

4- Sensitivity to problems and awareness of shortcomings : A creative person can see many problems in one situation.

5- Creative imagination: the ability to imagine and create relationships through multiple readings and meetings, developing the mind's perceptions and enriching its knowledge.

6- Internal motivation for creativity : is the availability of internal motivation and enthusiasm for creativity, and the extent of acceptance of it as a basic matter for creative thinking.

B- Experience: It represents the background that enables administrative leaders to reach creative solutions, makes their ideas more powerful, and pushes others to adopt their vision at work.

C- Motivation: Creativity requires intense behavior from the leader, with a great motivation behind : the motivation stems from within the person, which is the desire to reach the optimal solution to the problem by exploiting the available opportunities.

Characteristics of Administrative Creativity:

Regarding the characteristics of creativity, considering their importance in the possibility of employing this creativity by the organization or not, Zackman, Zanken, and Halbek have come to define these characteristics as follows:

- Cost: When any organization wants to adopt or sponsor creativity, it looks at the social and economic cost of the new thing. In terms of the social cost, it includes something new of change and development that is likely to occur to individuals and groups within the organization, whether in their job positions or the benefit that turns to them. As for the economic cost, it includes the costs of adopting creativity as well as maintaining it.

- Return/outcome: Creativity must bring benefits whose impact is evident, either by increasing the return or improving the service, whenever it leads to an increase in the probability of adopting this idea, especially in commercial sectors, and it is difficult to verify it in governmental sectors unless this return is estimated on the basis of the service provided to the public.

- Efficiency: Organizations adopt the most efficient creative ideas, compared to other innovations, which helps them be accepted and preferred over the current situation.

- Degree of consistency: This characteristic indicates that organizations adopt innovations that are consistent with current trends and future aspirations, and therefore they prefer gradual innovations that come in stages rather than sudden changes.

- Degree of risk and uncertainty: This characteristic includes that organizations are keen to adopt innovations that involve a lower degree of risk and uncertainty.

- Degree of complexity: This characteristic includes that organizations are keen to adopt flexible innovations that are characterized by their ability to adapt and are far from complexity.

- Scientific reputation: meaning that it would develop and improve the institution's scientific reputation so it would be approved by senior management. (Annan Al-Jaabari, 2009 (24-25))

- Stages of the Creativity Process:

Organizational creativity goes through several sequential steps, and these stages can be summarized as follows:

1. The conception/visualization stage: The basic step of successful innovation begins with a new idea or a complete perception of the technological capabilities and required needs, in addition to studying the economic and social benefits that the creator takes into account or the nature of the expected demand, and comparing the expected benefits with the cost of the required production.

2. The idea-formation stage: where the design of what is required and this step is the work and potential technology to form the required design, and this step is an innovative and creative work to unify all the factors required to be adopted. This also represents an evaluation process that accompanies the management of creativity in all its required stages, in light of which it is decided whether it is possible to continue, or if there is a necessity to stop working.

3. Addressing the problem: Some problems and obstacles may appear for which possible treatments and solutions must be taken to continue the effectiveness of creativity. If the organization does not succeed in implementing the possible treatment, the project will stop or work on it will be cancelled.

4. The solution: If the problem-solving activities are successful, this stage comes in which creativity exists, and the success of the project is achieved through the available technological capabilities : this type is called creativity-by-adoption. However, if the available resources do not achieve the possibility of implementation, the organization resorts to adopting the other stage of creativity which is the development stage.

5. Development stage: This stage represents one of the forms of uncertainty faced by the innovator, as the possibility of measuring the need for the expected technology to complete the project is usually unknown, so the innovator tries to solve the problems of uncertainty by taking into account the market need and the production obstacles accompanying that. Innovation can only be achieved when goods and services (outputs) are actually provided to the market.

6. The stage of use and spread: This stage represents the last and final step in the creativity process, where creativity is used or the idea of creativity is spread as well as the results achieved from it. (Majed Abdel Mahdi, 2013, p. 183)

The first period of operating the project (implementing the idea) is often very expensive due to the organization's investment and operational costs and the possibility of surplus production capacities awaiting greater use in the future.

- The Importance of Administrative Creativity:

The importance of administrative creativity can be explained through the following points:

- It is considered an integral part of the culture of any organization seeking success, as it occupies the heart of its activities and operations.

- Creativity in organizations creates the appropriate climate that enables the organization to be able to develop new products to satisfy the needs of customers in the market on the one hand, and the ability to achieve the growth goals that the organization seeks on the other hand.

- It helps the organization adapt and interact with all environmental variables surrounding it, improve its productivity, and raise the level of its performance and the performance of its workers.

- it works to find discoveries, proposals, and ideas to develop systems, regulations,

procedures, and practical methods which results in the emergence of programs and services outside the organization's main activities.

- It contributes to improving the quality of the products and services it provides to the public benefiting from the service, and increasing its financial inputs.

- It is considered as an essential factor in increasing production and sales ; thus, attracting more investments, especially from abroad, providing new job opportunities and opening new markets.

- It is considered the primary incentive for creating new job opportunities, supporting competitiveness, and then achieving leadership in creative organizations. (Asmaa Jalouli, 2013, p. 39)

4. CONCLUSION

From the above mentioned, the need of institutions and organizations for creativity has become an important requirement if these organizations want to achieve their administrative goals through excellence in performance and maintain their continuity of survival and growth. Therefore, the role of the organization is to provide an appropriate climate that works on developing the capabilities of its individuals through systems and methods that support creative thinking, considering that creativity is the most important field especially in the interaction between the organization and achieving its goals derived from the needs of the surrounding environment. Given the rapid changes and developments taking place in our present era, this has required the individual to also be more creative in order to keep pace with the circumstances and changes. For the organization to achieve its goal, this requires it to deal with new thinking and different methods to release creative energies and then achieving administrative development and thus stability and growth of the institution.

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