



PSYCHOLOGICAL MECHANISMS OF DEVELOPING PERSONAL CREATIVITY IN UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: SELF-REGULATION AND INTRINSIC MOTIVATION



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Abstract

This article presents a theoretical and analytical overview of the psychological mechanisms that support the development of personal creativity in university students. Creativity is understood not only as a cognitive ability but also as an integrated system encompassing motivational, emotional, self-regulatory, and socio-contextual components. The paper synthesizes well-established perspectives in creativity research and proposes a structured model in which divergent thinking, domain knowledge, intrinsic motivation, self-efficacy, metacognitive regulation, and supportive learning environments jointly enable creative performance. Special attention is given to self-regulation (goal setting, monitoring, reflection) and intrinsic motivation (autonomy, interest, meaning) as mechanisms that connect creative potential with real creative actions. The article outlines practical implications for higher education, including psychological factors in designing creative tasks, feedback strategies, and classroom climates that reduce fear of mistakes while strengthening students' creative identity.

Keywords: Personal creativity; creativity development; university students; self-regulation; intrinsic motivation; metacognition; self-efficacy; divergent thinking; creative identity; educational psychology.

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Introduction

TALABALARDA SHAXS IJODKORLIGINI RIVOJLANTIRISHNING PSIXOLOGIK MEXANIZMLARI: O‘ZINI BOSHQARISH VA ICHKI MOTIVATSIYA

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“Psixologiya” kafedrası mustaqil izlanuvchisi


Annotatsiya:

Mazkur maqolada shaxs ijodkorligini rivojlantirishning psixologik mexanizmlari talaba yoshlar misolida nazariy-tahliliy yondashuv asosida yoritiladi. Ijodkorlik faqatgina fikrlash tezligi yoki noodatij g‘oya topish qobiliyati emas, balki motivatsion, emotsional, metakognitiv va ijtimoiy-psixologik omillar bilan uzviy bog‘langan integral tizim sifatida talqin qilinadi. Maqolada divergent fikrlash va bilim (kognitiv asos), ichki motivatsiya va ma‘no (motivatsion asos), o‘ziga ishonch (self-efficacy), o‘zini boshqarish (maqsad qo‘yish, nazorat, refleksiya) hamda qo‘llab-quvvatlovchi ta‘lim muhiti (ijtimoiy kontekst) shaxs ijodkorligini “potensialdan amaliy natijaga” olib chiquvchi mexanizmlar sifatida tizimlashtiriladi. Natijada oliy ta‘lim sharoitida ijodkorlikni rivojlantirish uchun psixologik shart-sharoitlar, topshiriq dizayni, baholash va fikr-mulohaza (feedback) strategiyalari bo‘yicha amaliy tavsiyalar beriladi.

Kalit so‘zlar: shaxs ijodkorligi; ijodkorlikni rivojlantirish; talaba yoshlar; o‘zini boshqarish; ichki motivatsiya; metakognitsiya; o‘ziga ishonch; divergent fikrlash; ijodiy identifikatsiya; ta‘lim psixologiyasi.

Introduction

Creativity has become a central psychological and educational construct in the 21st century because it supports adaptation, problem solving, innovation, and professional flexibility. In teacher education and pedagogical universities, creativity is especially important: future educators need not only subject

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knowledge but also the ability to design engaging learning experiences, respond to unexpected classroom situations, and model independent thinking for learners. At the same time, creativity is often misunderstood as a rare “talent” or a spontaneous gift, which leads to two practical risks in higher education: (a) students may underestimate their creative potential, and (b) educational practice may focus on reproduction of knowledge rather than creative action. A psychologically grounded view treats creativity as a developable phenomenon shaped by mechanisms that connect a person’s potential with their actual behavior and products.

The problem statement and aim: The broad theme “Psychological mechanisms of development of personal creativity” requires a clear structure that explains how creativity emerges, how it can be strengthened, and what psychological levers are most effective in educational settings. The aim of this article is to systematize key psychological mechanisms underlying the development of personal creativity among university students and to propose a coherent model that highlights self-regulation and intrinsic motivation as bridging mechanisms between creative potential and creative performance.

Conceptual clarification: what is personal creativity? Personal creativity in educational psychology can be understood as an individual’s capacity to generate ideas that are both novel and appropriate for a given context, and to transform these ideas into meaningful actions, solutions, or products. This definition implies three essential elements: novelty (originality), usefulness (appropriateness), and implementation (behavioral realization). Therefore, creativity is not only “thinking differently,” but also “acting creatively,” which requires motivational energy, emotional readiness, and regulation of effort over time.

Theoretical background: major perspectives in creativity research. Creativity research offers several complementary viewpoints that help describe mechanisms of development. Cognitive perspectives emphasize divergent

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thinking, problem representation, and domain knowledge; motivational perspectives highlight intrinsic motivation and the role of interest and autonomy; social-psychological perspectives focus on climate, evaluation, and social support; and personality-based perspectives point to openness, tolerance for ambiguity, and persistence. In real educational settings, these components do not operate in isolation: creativity develops through the interaction among cognition, motivation, emotion, and context.

A mechanism-based model of creativity development: To make the theme operational for higher education, creativity can be described through a set of mechanisms arranged from “input” to “output.” (1) Cognitive foundations provide mental resources for idea generation; (2) motivational mechanisms supply energy and direction; (3) emotional mechanisms modulate flexibility, risk taking, and resilience; (4) self-regulatory mechanisms coordinate goals, strategies, monitoring, and reflection; and (5) socio-contextual mechanisms shape the environment in which creative behavior becomes safe, meaningful, and valued. In this article, special emphasis is placed on self-regulation and intrinsic motivation because they often determine whether a student’s creative potential becomes a real creative result.


Cognitive mechanisms: divergent thinking and domain knowledge. Divergent thinking is typically associated with the generation of multiple ideas, alternative solutions, and non-standard associations. In educational practice, divergent thinking can be stimulated through open-ended questions, tasks with multiple correct answers, and activities requiring analogy, transformation, and recombination of concepts. However, divergent thinking alone is not sufficient: creativity also depends on domain knowledge and conceptual understanding. Without a knowledge base, originality may become superficial; with knowledge but no flexibility, thinking may become rigid. Therefore, creativity development requires a balance: students need both conceptual mastery and opportunities to reorganize knowledge in new ways.

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Motivational mechanisms: intrinsic motivation as a driver of creative engagement. Intrinsic motivation refers to engaging in an activity because it is interesting, enjoyable, or personally meaningful, rather than for external rewards or pressure. In the context of creativity, intrinsic motivation supports exploration, persistence, and willingness to try unconventional approaches. When students perceive autonomy (choice and self-direction), competence (a sense of growth), and relatedness (supportive relationships), they are more likely to engage deeply in tasks and maintain creative effort. In contrast, heavy control, fear of evaluation, and purely grade-driven performance often reduce creativity by narrowing attention and encouraging safe, conventional responses.

Self-efficacy and creative identity: believing “I can” and “I am.” Self-efficacy is a person’s belief in their capacity to perform actions needed to reach a goal. In creativity development, a specific form—creative self-efficacy—matters: if students believe they can produce creative outcomes, they are more likely to attempt difficult tasks and persist after setbacks. Over time, repeated experiences of creative success and constructive feedback form a creative identity: the student begins to see creativity as part of their self-concept. This identity functions as a psychological mechanism because it influences choices, effort allocation, and reactions to criticism. If a student’s identity is “I am not creative,” they avoid creative tasks; if it is “I am learning to be creative,” they approach challenges as growth opportunities.

Emotional mechanisms: affect, risk tolerance, and resilience. Emotional states influence cognitive flexibility and willingness to explore. Positive affect often broadens attention and supports associative thinking, while chronic anxiety and fear of mistakes can narrow thinking and push students toward conventional solutions. Importantly, creativity requires risk: expressing an original idea always carries uncertainty. Therefore, emotional mechanisms of creativity development include tolerance for ambiguity, acceptance of imperfection during early drafts, and resilience after negative feedback. In educational settings, this



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means that psychological safety—permission to make mistakes and revise—becomes a practical condition for emotional readiness to create.

Self-regulation as the bridge from potential to performance. Self-regulation is a central mechanism that turns creative intentions into structured activity. In university learning, creativity often fails not because students lack ideas, but because they lack regulation skills: planning, time management, strategy selection, and reflective revision. A self-regulatory cycle can be described in three phases: (1) forethought (goal setting and strategic planning), (2) performance (monitoring and controlling attention and effort), and (3) self-reflection (evaluating results, learning from feedback, and adjusting strategies). When applied to creative tasks, self-regulation helps students manage uncertainty: they can break complex creative assignments into smaller steps, experiment with alternatives, monitor progress, and revise products iteratively. This mechanism is particularly relevant for independent research work, where external structure is limited and the student must organize the process internally.

Interaction between intrinsic motivation and self-regulation. Intrinsic motivation and self-regulation mutually reinforce each other. When students are intrinsically motivated, they are more willing to invest time in planning and revision, making self-regulation easier. Conversely, self-regulation supports intrinsic motivation because successful progress increases feelings of competence and keeps tasks meaningful rather than chaotic. In practical terms, creativity development in higher education can be optimized by designing tasks that are autonomy-supportive (to activate intrinsic motivation) and process-structured (to scaffold self-regulation).



Socio-contextual mechanisms: climate, feedback, and evaluation. Even highly motivated and capable students may suppress creativity if the environment punishes originality or creates fear of negative judgment. A creativity-supportive learning climate includes respectful dialogue, recognition of multiple viewpoints, and evaluation criteria that value originality along with

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clarity and usefulness. Feedback is a powerful mechanism: when feedback is specific, process-focused, and oriented toward improvement, it supports creative growth; when feedback is vague, purely judgmental, or humiliating, it blocks exploration. In the context of teacher education, instructors can model constructive critique by emphasizing drafts, iterations, and learning from errors.

Educational implications: how to develop creativity in university students. Several practice-oriented recommendations follow from the mechanism-based model. First, use open-ended tasks that require synthesis, comparison, redesign, and creation of alternatives rather than simple reproduction. Second, build autonomy into assignments by allowing topic choice, format flexibility, or multiple solution paths. Third, explicitly teach self-regulation: show how to set creative goals, plan stages, keep idea logs, and conduct reflection after completing tasks. Fourth, support creative self-efficacy through progressive difficulty: start with manageable creative challenges and gradually increase complexity, ensuring that students experience mastery. Fifth, create psychological safety by normalizing revisions and treating mistakes as part of creative learning. Finally, align evaluation with creativity: include criteria such as originality, relevance, reasoning, and improvement across drafts.

A proposed integrated framework for research and practice. Based on the synthesis above, personal creativity development in university students can be described as an integrated system: cognitive resources (divergent thinking + knowledge) generate possibilities; intrinsic motivation supplies energy and curiosity; self-efficacy and creative identity stabilize engagement; emotional readiness enables risk taking and resilience; self-regulation organizes the process over time; and supportive context provides psychological safety and meaningful feedback. This framework can serve as a conceptual basis for empirical research (e.g., studying relationships between self-regulation and creative outcomes) and for designing educational interventions (e.g., creativity workshops embedded in coursework).

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Conclusion:

Personal creativity is a developable psychological phenomenon that emerges through the interaction of multiple mechanisms. For university students—especially in pedagogical education—creativity development is strengthened when intrinsic motivation and self-regulation are deliberately supported. Intrinsic motivation encourages exploration and persistence, while self-regulation transforms creative potential into disciplined creative action through planning, monitoring, and reflection. Educational environments that provide autonomy support, constructive feedback, and psychological safety can activate these mechanisms and foster sustainable creative identity. Therefore, creativity development should be treated not as an occasional activity, but as a systematic psychological and pedagogical process integrated into higher education practice.

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