

# **EXAMINATION OF THE PERCEPTION LEVEL OF TEACHERS ABOUT THE PROMOTERS TO CREATIVITY IN PAKISTAN: SEEING THROUGH THE DEMOGRAPHIC DIFFERENCES OF GENDER, AREA AND MARITAL STATUS**

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## **Abstract**

The main objective of the study was to know the level of perception of teachers about the promoters that promote creativity among the students. Further, the teachers' level of perception were compared regarding demographic variables of gender, area and marital status. The design of the study was quantitative in nature and used the survey method to accomplish the above-mentioned objectives. The target population was all the school-teachers in Pakistan at various levels. For data collection, an online questionnaire on social media platforms (WhatsApp, Emails and Facebook) was uploaded which was filled online by 400 school-teachers randomly. It must be noted that the original questionnaire was constructed, validated and made reliable by the Sarsani (1999) in India. The original questionnaire had 17 items with 5-point Likert scale but the current researchers just took (adopted) 11 items from the original questionnaire without changing a single word. The current researchers sought the Cronbach Alpha Reliability Coefficient to see if the adopted questionnaire is reliable in Pakistani

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context. The data were analyzed through SPSS by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results revealed that Pakistani teachers had a high level of perception about the promoters that promote creativity in students. The gender and area had no significant differences while the marital status had significant differences regarding the teachers' level of perception about the promoters to creativity. The results were discussed in light of past literature and recommendations were given.

## **Introduction**

Creativity is an attribute or concept that has been defined by the researchers in a variety of definitions because it has no fix and strict definition (Craft, 2003). Teacher is the agent that cultivate and nurture creativity and creative thinking among the students. Researchers found an interesting suggestion that creativity should be the part of school curricula (Gibson, 2005; Ng & Smith, 2004; Park, Lee, Oliver & Cramond, 2006; Arooj, Parveen, Iqbal, Kamran, 2021) because in 21<sup>st</sup> century creativity and creative thinking is the most important concept and has crucial role in teaching and learning (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2013; Cachia, & Ferrari, 2010; Glăveanu, 2011).

Past studies found that promoting creativity is increasing in the Asian context (Ng & Smith, 2004), therefore, it was felt that Pakistan being an Asian country should have such research as has been in other Asian countries like China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, South Korea and Singapore (Ng & Smith, 2004). The worst condition is many teachers although like the creative behavior but does not like the creative students (Ng & Smith, 2004) because of hard and tough behavior or may be any other reason. The past studies have shown varied level of perceptions of the teachers regarding creativity and creative thinking e.g., some studies (Scott 1999; Westby & Dawson 1995) have shown the low attitudes of teachers towards creativity while others (Al-Nouh, Abdul-Kareem & Taqi, 2014; Cachia & Ferrari, 2010; Park, Lee, Oliver & Crammond, 2006) have shown high attitudes towards creativity. Some studies (Akkanat & Gökdere, 2015; Ng & Smith, 2004) have shown the mix-attitudes of teachers towards the creativity. Here the mix-attitudes of teachers mean that to some factors they have positive attitudes while to others they have negative attitudes.

It means that there is a gap in the perceptions of teachers' about the promotion of creativity among the students. As research gap was found in other contexts so it was felt that, we should examine the Pakistani teachers' perception level about the said phenomenon. Therefore, a study was designed to contribute to the literature and might fill the gap.

## **Literature Review**

The creativity of the students is badly affected by the authoritarian style of teaching e.g., a study conducted by Ng and Smith (2004) in National Institute of Education in Singapore. The participants were enrolled in 1-year teaching diploma course in the National Institute of Education. It was showed that conservative and autocratic teachers were in favor of uncreative behavior and the liberal and democratic teachers were in favor of creative behavior.

Although the creativity is of importance and focused in various countries but the teachers' perceptions is not good about the promotion of creativity because the teachers do not like the creative habits of the students due to tough and worrying behavior. For example, Westby and Dawson (1995) revealed in their study that when the Albany (New York, USA) elementary schools teachers were asked to rate the favorite and least favorite students against the personality characteristics associated with creative children. Then they negatively correlated the judgments of the favorite students with creativity while positively correlated the judgements of the least favorite students with creativity. Another study, which was done by the Scott (1999) in USA from the perspective of elementary school teachers of California and undergraduate of Kansas state university. The study showed that the teachers and undergraduate students both considered the creative children disruptive and the interesting information was that the teachers were more likely to see the creative children as disruptive compared to the undergraduate students, which arises the question that teachers instill or kill the creativity.

Another study conducted by Park, et al., (2006) involving the Korean science teachers who revealed the changes in the perceptions of teachers about creativity. The Korean teachers showed a greater awareness and highly positive perception towards creativity and stated that creativity can be enhanced and every student can become creative. They further stated that a science subject has greater place for creativity fostering activities and creativity-led science teaching could be practiced in Korea.

Cachia and Ferrari (2010) conducted a study in Europe on teachers at specific school level to examine their perception about creativity and reflection of their own teaching practices in classrooms. They collected the data online from teachers which were from 32 countries in Europe resulting in 7659 total responses. Approximately, all the teachers showed their positive and democratic attitude towards creativity and revealed that almost all the teachers have a perception that creativity belongs to every domain of knowledge, every school subject and to every student. An astonishing result that were given in this study was the democratic perception of creativity where it was revealed by almost all teachers (nine out of ten) that every student could become creative. However, when it comes to practice

creativity in their classes, then the level of practicing of creativity as compared to their beliefs were lower due to traditional teaching and assessment methods.

Al-Nouh et al., (2014) conducted a study in Kuwait at primary school level. The participants were only female in this study. The female EFL teachers of Kuwait had shown the high attitudes towards the creative thinking. Further, the demographic variables i.e., age, major subject, educational zone, teaching experience and in-service training attributed to the significant differences when they tested against their attitudes towards creative thinking and perception of practices. Khan and Kamran (2021) conducted a study to reveal the attitudes of Pakistani teachers towards creativity in the sociocultural perspective of Pakistan because most of the studies were from Western context. Some studies were from the Asian context but still Pakistani context were lacking in such kind of studies. The study had a low sample of 155 (65 male and 90 female) teachers and the results fell in the category of medium attitudes towards the creativity. In the said study only the attitudes were examined, not the other areas of creativity. Therefore, the current researchers embark on the study to know the promoters that promote creativity because this area was left behind in the above-mentioned study. Besides, in a most recent study, Kamran, Maqbool, and Fatima (2021) examined the top-listed promotor (factor) that promotes creativity but left the overall perceptions of the Pakistani teachers about the promoters of creativity. The study found that “building of self-confidence promotes creativity among the students” is the top-listed promoter (factors) among the 11 factors to which most of the teachers were agreed. However, this study did not find what was the over-all level of perception of Pakistani teachers about the promoters to creativity.

Akkanat and Gökdere (2015) conducted their study to reveal the only chemistry teachers beliefs about creativity in Amasya Turkey. The study was qualitative in nature and involved the 13 chemistry teachers. The results showed that the teachers had well-established beliefs towards creativity and associated creativity with the intelligence. The teachers in this study also revealed that creativity could be used for the solving of problems and creating novel ideas. Contrary to the above, the teachers also expressed their concern that factors like cultural barriers, lack of knowledge about the creative teaching techniques, weekly lesson hours and the traditional chemistry curriculum block the creativity. Based on the above literature review a rational for the current study has been devised which is given in the following lines.

### **Rational of the Study**

The past studies have shown varied level of perceptions of the teachers about creativity and creative thinking e.g., some studies (Scott 1999; Westby & Dawson 1995) have shown the low attitudes of teachers towards creativity

while others (Al-Nouh et al., 2014; Cachia & Ferrari, 2010; Park, et al., 2006) have shown high attitudes towards creativity. Some studies (Akkanat & Gökdere, 2015; Ng & Smith, 2004) have shown the mix-attitudes of teachers towards the creativity. It means that there is a gap in the perceptions of teachers' towards the promotion of creativity among the students. Further, most of the studies were not conducted in Pakistani context. Therefore, a study was designed to know the perceptions of the Pakistani teachers about the promoters to creativity, which will contribute to the literature and might fill the gap.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- i. To know the level of perception (High, Medium and Low) that Pakistani teachers have about the promoters to creativity
- ii. To compare the level of perception of teachers across their demographic variables about the promoters to creativity

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

- i.  $H_0$ : Male and Female teachers will have same perception level about the promoters to creativity
- ii.  $H_1$ : Male and Female teachers will not have same perception level about the promoters to creativity
- iii.  $H_0$ : Rural and Urban teachers will have same perception level about the promoters to creativity
- iv.  $H_1$ : Rural and Urban teachers will not have same perception level about the promoters to creativity
- v.  $H_0$ : Married and Unmarried teachers will have same perception level about the promoters to creativity
- vi.  $H_1$ : Married and Unmarried teachers will not have same perception level about the promoters to creativity

### **Research Method**

#### **Design of the Study**

The design of the study was quantitative in nature and used the survey method. Survey is one of the common methods to study beliefs (Sarsani, 1999), because it involves the process of generalization. Further, survey method is used to explore the problems in local, national and international contexts (Sarsani, 1999).

The target population of the study was all the teachers from diverse areas of Pakistan. A survey questionnaire of five-point Likert scale was adopted from Sarsani (1999). The scale was relevant and used for the creative thinking and creativity in past studies (Sarsani (1999). The survey was ranged from SA (Strongly Agree) to SD (Strongly Disagree). The SA (Strongly Agree) had 05 score and SD (Strongly Disagree) had

01 score. The survey had 11 items and all items were positive so no reverse scoring was used.

### **Pilot Study and Reliability of the Instrument**

The current researchers opted only 11 items from the said questionnaire and after finalizing it, the said questionnaire was distributed among the 66 teachers to conduct the Pilot study. The Pilot study actually was done to see the feasibility of the said questionnaire in the Local context of Pakistan. The SPSS gave the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient, which was 0.7. which is considered strong reliability to go ahead with the study.

The detail of the Cronbach's Alpha Reliability and its Coefficient is given in table 1 below.

**Table1. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficient**

<b>Reliability Statistics of the Scale</b>		
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	Cronbach's Alpha based on standardized items	No of Items
0.72	0.72	11

### **Validity of the instrument**

Sarsani (1999) validated the instrument and explained that five experts in the field of Education and Psychology determined the content validity of the questionnaire. The suitability of culture and language of the questionnaire was also validated by the experts. Experts reviewed each item and their comments were positive. They agreed that the items of questionnaire covered all the aspects of creativity and its development. In the present Questionnaire, Principal Component Analysis and Varimax Rotation were applied by Sarsani (1999) to each batch of Likert-type items in the Questionnaire, to examine the common trait which would provide evidence for the validity of these items and justify their inclusion in the questionnaire. All the Likert-items in questionnaire were factor analyzed to examine the common trait. Only factors having an Eigenvalue greater than 1 were considered.

### **Population and Sample**

The target Population was all the teachers from Pakistan. The current researchers uploaded the adopted questionnaire on social media platforms (Facebook and WhatsApp) and was open for all the teachers. Randomly 467 Pakistani teachers who were from various backgrounds and taught different subjects with varied qualifications filled the questionnaire. The Participants were 467-school teachers having 59% male and 40% female teachers. Regarding the martial status, the 55.5%

of teachers were single (unmarried) while 45.5% teachers were married. Most of the teachers were from urban area (55%) while 45% of teachers were from the rural area.

### Scale of Measuring Perception Level of the Construct

A scale has been developed from past literature (Taqi, et al., 2014) for measurement of the perception level of the construct. The Taqi, et al., (2014) in their research paper, also used this as a measure. The scale is written as:

- 1 to 2.33 value of mean shows the low perception level of the construct
- 2.34 to 3.66 value of mean shows the medium perception level of the construct
- 3.67 to 5.00 value of mean shows the high perception level of the construct

### Test of the Normality

Test of normality was ignored because central limit theorem (CLT) states that when sample size has 100 or more observations, violation of the normality is not a major issue (Altman & Bland, 1995; Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012).

## Results, Analysis and its Discussion

### 1. Level of Teachers' Perception about the Promoters to Creativity

The first objective of the study was to find the level of teachers' perception about the promoters to creativity. It was simply analyzed by using descriptive statistics by calculating the mean value and standard deviation. It has been portrayed by the following table2.

**Table 2. Teachers' Perception Level about the Promoters to Creativity**

Descriptive Statistics			
Promoters to creativity	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
	467	3.9023	.61378

The above table 2 shows that the mean value of teachers' perception level is 3.9, which falls in the category of high perception range according to the aforementioned scale of Al-Nouh et al., (2014). It means that the Pakistani teachers had high level of perception about the promoters to creativity. It also meant that Pakistani teachers had recognized and approved those promoters that were given in the questionnaire. This result was supported by a study conducted by Ng and Smith (2004) in National Institute of Education in Singapore. Ng and Smith (2004) showed that

conservative and autocratic teachers were in favor of uncreative behavior while the liberal and democratic teachers were in favor of creative behavior. Since the Pakistani teachers in the current research showed the high level of perception about the promoters to creativity, which meant that, they were also in favor of creativity. Park et al., (2006) research results were also consistent with current study results where they showed a greater awareness and highly positive perception towards creativity and stated that creativity can be enhanced and every student can become creative.

The current study results were also reflected in Cachia and Ferrari (2010) who conducted a study in Europe on teachers about the said construct. Approximately, all the teachers showed their positive and democratic attitude towards creativity and revealed that almost all the teachers have a perception that creativity belongs to every domain of knowledge, every school subject and to every student. Al-Nouh et al., (2014) also supported the results of current study. The teachers’ attitudes and perceptions of practice about creative thinking are generally high. In study of Akkanat and Gökdere, (2015) teachers had viewed the creativity and intelligence in same connection and further linked the creativity with novel ideas, problem-solving skills and supported the current study results.

Some research studies showed opposing results. For example, Scott (1999) in USA conducted study from the perspective of elementary school teachers of California and undergraduates of Kansas State University. In Scott (1999) study, teachers and undergraduate students both saw the creative children disruptive. Further, the interesting information was that the teachers were more likely to see the creative children as disruptive compared to the undergraduates, which arises the question that teachers instill or kill the creativity. Therefore, this question should be explored from other perspective as well.

**2. Gender wise Differences in Promoters to Creativity**

The hypothesis about gender was tested by using inferential statistics through t-test. It has been portrayed by the following table3.

**Table 3. T-Test for Gender wise Differences**

T-Test for Gender Differences							
	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig.
Promoters creativity	Male	278	3.914	.60660	465	.514	.608
	Female	189	3.884	.62540	.04549		

The above Table 3 shows that the level of perception of male and female teachers are nearly equal because the mean values of both genders are approximately equal. Therefore, the difference between the level of perception in male and female teachers is insignificant ( $t=.514$ ;  $p=.608$ ) at



the alpha level of 0.05. The Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was accepted which meant that level of perception of both male and female teachers were same.

This result is examination of the teachers' perception level across gender. This study has just explored the new area that gender has no significance about the promoters to creativity. The future researchers should explore these results in more detail and should find the reason why gender has not significant in promoters to creativity. Since, most of the past studies were of the qualitative nature; therefore, past studies did not explored the gender factor specifically, which is again the research gap.

### 3. Area wise Differences in Promoters to Creativity

The hypothesis about area was tested by using inferential statistics through t-test. It has been portrayed by the following table4.

**Table 4. T Test For Area Wise Differences**

T test for area wise differences							
	Area	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig.
Promoters creativity	Rural	210	3.887	.55366	465	-.472	.637
	Urban	257	3.914	.65968	.04549		

The above Table 4 shows that the level of perception of rural and urban teachers are nearly equal because the mean values of both are approximately equal. Therefore, the difference between the level of perception in rural and urban teachers is insignificant ( $t=-.514$ ;  $p=.637$ ) at the alpha level of 0.05. The Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was accepted which meant that level of perception of both teachers were same.

Although the current study showed that teachers from urban and rural areas have same level of perception but mainly the society presumes that urban teachers should have high perception level about the promoters to creativity because the urban schools have more facilities and less students in their classes (Al-Nouh et al., 2014). Further, the society presumes that the students and their parents are sharper in the rural areas; therefore, the urban teachers should have high level of perception than the rural teachers. Further, in urban areas the parents put more pressure on the teachers for the creative activities (Al-Nouh et al., 2014); therefore, it might be possible that teachers from urban areas did not showed high perception than the rural teachers.

### 4. Marital Status Differences in Promoters to Creativity

The hypothesis about marital status was tested by using inferential statistics through t-test. It has been portrayed by the following table5.

**Table 5. T Test For Marital Status Differences**

T test for marital status differences								
	Marital Status	N	Mean	SD	Df	T	Sig.	
Promoters creativity	Married	259	3.840	.59752	465	-2.448	.015	
	Unmarried	208	3.979	.62635	.04549			

The above Table 5 shows that the level of perception of married and unmarried teachers are significantly different from each other because, the difference between the level of perception in married and unmarried teachers is significant ( $t=-2.448$ ;  $p=.015$ ) at the alpha level of 0.05. The Null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected which meant that level of perception of both teachers were not same.

The current study results showed that unmarried teachers (mean value=3.9) have high level of perception as compared to the married teachers (mean value=3.8). It might be due to the factor that married teachers possess more responsibilities i.e., family and other social responsibilities due to which they cannot find time for promotion of creativity. Further, the married teachers might have busy schedule with the children in the home. Thus, they showed least level of perception about the promoters to creativity.

## Conclusion

The Pakistani teachers in the current study possessed high level of perception about the promoters to creativity. The Pakistani teachers' perception level about demographic variables i.e., gender and area were same while in the marital status demographic variable, the unmarried teachers had high level of perception as compared to the married teachers.

## Recommendations and Limitations

In this study, the sampled Pakistani teachers had shown the high level of perception about the promoters to creativity therefore, the researchers want to generalize that the target population i.e., the whole teachers from Pakistan will possess the high level of perception about the promoters to creativity. It is recommended that creativity must be included in the school curricula at the various stages of creativity because Pakistani teachers had highly perceived the promoters to creativity.

The demographic variable of marital status have brought the significant differences in the level of perception of the Pakistani teachers about the promoters to creativity. The married teachers had least perception about the promoters to creativity therefore; it is recommended that some professional trainings should arrange for them to main their busy schedule.

This study is limited only to Pakistani teachers. Another limitation of the study is that the authors had used the adopted questionnaire. Due to time restriction and limited resources, they could not develop their own tool for data collection.

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