A Management Framework for Fostering Creativity and Sustainability in Organizations

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Abstract

The study of individual creativity is well established in the fields of psychology and sociology but, more recently, management studies focused on the aspects of team and organization creativity in the workplace as part of a triad of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship. This paper employed a tri-level component analysis of individual, team, and organizational creativity as steps towards development of the creative sustainable organization. The main aim of the paper is to identify and explore the key issues and considerations involved in fostering creativity in the workplace as a guide to organization managers whose objective is organizational sustainability. The research process involved secondary research of published journals and reputable texts relevant to the field of creativity studies, and extrapolation of the author's experience in teaching creativity at the MBA level and in leading organizations. The main finding is that business and organization leaders must take full responsibility for promoting creative behavior among organization members as a precursor to innovation. The value of this work is that, the concept of creativity and its key elements are presented in a simple format to facilitate greater understanding by business practitioners, managers of businesses in developing countries, heads of non-profit organizations, and university staff and students. The model of organizational sustainability which is the main result of the study can serve as a framework to guide managerial action in organizations.

Keywords: theory of creativity, individual creativity, team creativity, organizational creativity, organization culture, barriers to creativity, creative team leadership, organizational sustainability.

Introduction

The study of the concepts of individual, team, and organizational creativity are usually conducted along with an examination of the companion concept of innovation in the workplace, thus the terms creativity and innovation were often used interchangeably. The generally accepted definition of creativity is "the creation of a valuable, useful new product, service, idea, procedure, or process by individuals working together in a complex social system" or organizations (Woodman, Sawyer & Griffin, 1993, p. 293). Nevertheless, creativity is considered an elusive concept because within organizations creativity concentrated on individual and team creativity, while the study or organizational creativity was viewed as an attributional process (Koch, Wenzel, Senf, & Maibier, 2017). The definition by Woodman et al. (1993) is applied in this paper because it embraced the tri-level analytical framework of individual, team, and organizational creativity, recognizing that the current focus in the literature moved from individual to organizational creativity (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou,

2014; Blomberg, Kallio, & Pohjanpää et al., 2017). The main argument of this paper is that, in order to survive and prosper, organizations must embrace creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship as the keys to success. However, the success path starts with individual, team, and organizational creativity, which are the main topics discussed in this paper, but it was recognized that creativity does not exist in a vacuum, but is integrally tied to innovation and entrepreneurship, and it is the entrepreneurial contribution that converts creativity and innovation into valuable products and services.

Thompson (2008) built on the generally cited definition of creativity (Woodman et al., 1993) and distinguished between creativity and innovation with creativity viewed as as the production of novel and useful ideas, and the ability to form concepts using existing knowledge, while innovation was the realization of novel and useful ideas in the form of products and services. Higgins (1995) focused on the skill component of creativity and viewed creativity as the skill to originate something new and to make it valuable, and argued that such a skill was not something mystical but everyone possessed an innate capacity for creativity. In most people, the transformation of their creative capacity to perform a skill was thwarted by parents, teachers, and leaders who provided and enforced rules about what behaviors were acceptable (Higgins, 2005). Because of such behavior restrictions, creativity, which involves exploring new realms (and thus breaking the rules), is stifled. Therefore, firms were mandated to develop the skill of creativity in their employees in order to unleash their untapped potential.

The product of the creative effort need not be a tangible physical object, but may be an idea, an association of facts, an insight, or a more effective or efficient process, and each of these had value when fully expressed and functioning. Baumgartner (2009) drew the distinction between individual creativity and organizational creativity and, simply put, individual creativity was the creativity of an individual person and people learned to be more creative by reading books, participating in workshops, learning creative thinking techniques and so on. Organizational creativity is the creativity produced by organizational effort, but unlike people, organizations cannot simply pick up a book and learn to be more creative. Likewise, even if an organization is full of creative people, that organization cannot be assumed to be more creative. This is an important distinction because as indicated by Thompson (2008) individuals are better than teams at divergent thinking which generates novel ideas, while teams are good at convergent thinking which is used to evaluate ideas. Both divergent and convergent thinking are required in companies.

Previous research on creativity focused on the concept in terms of individual personality traits that led to the generation of ideas, the process of generating new ideas, outcomes of the creative process, and the creation of an environment that fosters the development of new ideas (Maier, Olaru, & Maier,

2013). The subject was considered one of great complexity which defied agreement on definitions. Rather, different researchers viewed creativity as: a capacity to generate valuable ideas for new products, processes, services, and procedures judged to be original which descriptions are consistent with the definition by Woodman et al. (1993). A creativity framework was developed that identified the key components as: creativity techniques such as brainstorming; knowledge management which involves linking a person's knowledge base to a particular creative task; allocation of resources to the persons who have to perform the creative tasks; an environment of creative freedom to execute the assignments; and motivation through the provision of incentives appropriate to creative people (Maier et al., 2013). It was expected that the implementation of these creativity guidelines would lead to innovation in organizations.

This paper holds significance for the teaching of creativity at the tertiary level, and promoting creative action in organizations, particularly as a guide for organizational leaders based in some developing countries where such behavior may not be a regular practice. Therefore, the major purpose of the article is to identify and explore the key issues in the area of creativity research and practice towards the design of a framework for creating sustainable organizations. The study contributes to the field of creativity and organizational sustainability by utilizing a tri-level analytical approach which integrates the concept of creativity in its dimensions of individual, team, and organizational levels to present a holistic picture of the concept; it addressed the managerial question of the type of barriers that inhibit creativity in teams and organizations and suggested actions for leaders; and it proposed a framework that organization leaders could apply within their respective bodies to achieve sustainability. The sequence of the article follows with a discussion of the theoretical perspectives that underpin the study, the method adopted for researching the topic of creativity and organization sustainability, an analysis of the three levels of creativity, discussion of the proposed framework for developing organizational sustainability, and conclusions, implications and future research.

Theoretical Perspectives
Many theories of creativity were espoused in the literature, but two were established as the leading perspectives in the study of creativity, the componential theory and the interactionist perspective (Woodman et al. 1993; Amabile, 2012). The componential theory described influences internal to persons, as well as those from the external environment. The internal creativity influencers comprised domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant processes, and intrinsic task motivation. The external component was the work environment and the social setting which included the extrinsic factors which can either stimulate creativity or serve as barriers (Amabile, 2012). According to the author, this theory was distinct from the earlier psychology-based theories because it covered both internal and external factors, focused on the impact at

each stage of the creative process, and emphasized the social impact from the environment. However, its application to organizations was limited to internal factors, and did not include forces such as consumer preferences and economic changes reflecting gaps in its theoretical application (Amabile, 2012).

The interactionist perspective of creativity covered three levels of analysis involving individual, team, and organizational creativity aspects (Woodman et al., 1993). From this perspective, individual creativity is considered a function of antecedent conditions, cognitive style and ability, personality, relevant knowledge, motivational factors which, in turn, were fashioned by social influences and the physical environment. Team creativity is influenced by the composition of the group such as diversity and manner of team member interaction; characteristics including size and cohesiveness; group processes such as problem solving approaches and social information; and contextual influences such as organizational setting, culture, and reward systems. At the organization level, innovation was viewed as a function of both individual and team creativity. Organization creativity was therefore integrally linked to innovation which resulted from integrating the components of management practices, resources, and organizational motivation situated within the work environment (Sadi & Al-Dubaisi, 2008). This paper adopted those aspects of the componential and interactionist theories that related to the key elements of the broad study of creativity that emphasized that the creativity of individuals and teams served as the critical drivers of innovation in organizational settings.

Research Method
A qualitative research approach was adopted involving a bibliographic, descriptive, and analytical approach to the collection and distillation of relevant literature on the study area sourced from: the leading digital full-text aggregator databases ABI/Inform ProQuest and EBSCOhost; Google Scholar, recognized as the most comprehensive source for retrieving open access articles; the Directory of Open Access Journals, an initiative of Lund University of Sweden, considered the best source for accessing open access business journals; and reputable texts and related reports on creativity in organizations accessed from libraries and the Internet. These data sources were searched on the main keywords of organizational creativity, organization culture, barriers to creativity, and sustainability in organizations in order to focus the data collection exercise. Consistent with acknowledged qualitative procedures, the process involved: the researcher as the key instrument for conducting the research; multiple sources of data obtained from peer reviewed journals, texts, and specialist reports; a theoretical lens which sought to identify the social and political context of the issues studied, and represented a holistic account to better reflect the complex picture of the study elements (Cresswell, 2009).

A thematic analysis of the literature was undertaken to identify patterns across the research data and identify the critical issues through a process of data familiarization, coding and theme development (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The results of the analysis were achievement of a deeper understanding of the dynamics of the phenomenon of fostering creativity in organizations and the requirement for achieving organizational sustainability. The published documentary data were supplemented by the incorporation of the author's experience of more than 25 years in organizational leadership positions with public and private companies, and the teaching of creativity, innovation, and entrepreneurship at the MBA level (Allahar, 2017). The inclusion of creativity studies in entrepreneurship education was suggested as a means of transforming the teaching models in higher institutions and injecting creativity skills in low-growth businesses (Penaluma & Penaluma, 2009).

Understanding Individual, Team, and Organizational Creativity
The various perspectives on creativity were built upon the pioneering work of Amabile (1988) and Woodman et al. (1993) who viewed the concept on three levels and provided definitions that remained applicable. Research articles initially focused on the level of individual creativity as the prime area of interest but subsequently the topic of team or group creativity attracted the attention of scholars (Shalley, Zhou, & Oldham, 2004). More recently, the question of organizational creativity came to dominate the literature because it integrated the first two levels of creativity and emphasized innovative behavior (Amabile, 2012). The tri-level analysis presented in this paper examined these levels independently for ease of treatment, but recognized that the concept of creativity must be viewed in holistic terms in an organizational context.

Individual creativity
Individual creativity was described as "a function of antecedent conditions, cognitive styles and abilities, personality, motivational factors, and knowledge" (Woodman et al., 1993, p. 301). Based on a search of the literature, the main themes from the study of individual creativity were identified as self-management factors, motivation, mood or affect, and the acquisition of knowledge. It was suggested that an individual's confidence in their creative capability was directly linked to creative ideas and action; intrinsic motivation was vital to creativity but a balance of intrinsic motivation and external reward was needed; a positive mood aided creativity while a negative mood was a barrier; and knowledge and experience of a field facilitated creativity (Blomberg et al., 2017). If, as Higgins (1995) argued, individual creativity is a skill that can be learnt, and if creativity is vital to corporate creativity and innovation as argued variously in the literature, the challenge for business leaders and organization managers, is discover how individual creativity could be stimulated? This challenge was incorporated in the managerial framework presented in this paper.

The concept of creativity in individuals and teams, as identified earlier, involved the three main elements of domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant skills, and intrinsic task motivation attributed to the contention that this latter element was considered the most important in stimulating creativity (Amabile, 1988). Intrinsic task motivation is the internal motivation to do work because it is interesting, engaging, or positively challenging. Intrinsic motivation was considered a critical factor in stimulating individual creativity in organizations which was confirmed in a study of nonprofit Lithuanian organizations (Jaskyte & Kisieliene, 2006). Domain-relevant skills refer to the basic talents, knowledge, or skills and abilities individuals possess and constitute the raw materials for creativity. Creativity-relevant skills include divergent thinking, understanding complexities, avoiding premature judgments, following rules that help individuals approach tasks in novel ways (creativity heuristics), and using productive forgetting by abandoning unproductive ideas (Amabile, 1988).

Team creativity
Woodman et al. (1993) described team or group creativity, as not the simple aggregate of all group members' creativity, but a function of the creativity of individuals in the group. The question of team creativity invariably raised issues of leadership and creativity techniques that could be used by teams to generate creative solutions to organizational problems. The main themes that emerged from the research on team or group creativity were identified as: team diversity which covered background of members, resident skills, functional positions, and knowledge base; team management which included self-management, leadership, organizational support, facilitation of innovation, and feedback mechanisms; group culture and climate which addressed mutual trust, a sense of belonging and commitment, and a positive attitude towards members; and creativity enhancing techniques such as brainstorming, lateral thinking, and solution finding techniques (Blomberg, Kallio, & Pohjanpää, 2017).

The evidence from the literature is that there is a dearth of studies of team creativity because of the focus on individual creativity, while research on team creativity tended to be concerned with brainstorming as a creativity tool in organizations (Hoever, van Knippenberg, van Ginkel, Barkema, 2012). Creativity was considered a multidimensional concept that is manifested in varying fields of operation, domains, and contexts but lacks an authoritative definition (Brazdauskaite & Rasimaviciene, 2015). These authors, however, suggested that "team creativity infers that specialists with knowledge, skills, and abilities … may maximize the creative problem solving process" which generate outcomes ranging from incremental improvements to radical breakthrough products or processes (p. 50). A case was also made for forming transdisciplinary teams in universities because "highly innovative products … require broader viewpoints and a collaboration of different expertise, approaches and methodologies" (Brazdauskaite & Rasimaviciene, 2015, p. 51). A unique approach to the study of

team creativity utilized a group process model that investigated the emergence of self-organization in a group context and the evolution of group ideas from individual ideas (Backström & Söderberg, 2016). The findings of the study confirmed that team self-organization led to increases in team ideas and creativity.

The position was also held by Greenberg (2005) that creativity was promoted by encouraging openness to new ideas, taking the time to understand the problem, developing divergent thinking, ensuring that the work environment supported creativity, and allowing the cross-pollination of ideas. When organizations succeeded in encouraging creative practices among its individual members, then these organizations can embark upon the task of stimulating team creativity. The question arose of what prompted leaders to accept the need for team creativity and Kao (1996) asserted that society was witnessing the age of creativity because:
- Information technology dictated we go there
- It is the age of knowledge and creativity added value to knowledge
- Companies were obliged to reinvent themselves to grow
- Many feel entitled to creative jobs and talented people were mobile
- The new primacy of design
- The customer was discerning, demanding and loyalty was unsure
- Global competition was about a nation's ability to mobilize ideas, talents, and creative organizations
- The new managerial mindset was an emancipator of creativity.

Organization creativity and creative collaboration
The commonly accepted definition of organizational creativity by Woodman et al. (1993) was previously cited as involving novelty and usefulness, but creativity was also viewed as a continuum of incremental and radical actions (Duxbury, 2012). At the operational level, creative actions included formulating new business models, making strategic decisions, developing new products, and implementing improvements in the workplace. The current state of research on creativity concluded that creative collaboration extended the understanding of creativity beyond the confines of individual considerations because human cognition is both an interpersonal and intrapersonal process (Levine & Moreland, 2004). Thus it was argued that teams can display greater creativity based on the combined inputs of members (Zhou & Luo, 2012). It was also argued that by adopting the measures discussed in this paper, individual and team creativity can be enhanced, but success in the generation of creative ideas and solutions were dependent on team collaboration (Baumgartner, 2009). When a team of people come together to devise and develop ideas, there was greater scope for innovation than individual member action can produce. The generation of creative ideas and subsequent innovation was fueled by creating

diverse teams with a variety of people from different backgrounds and areas of expertise (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013). In a corporate setting this requires, at minimum, that teams are made up of people from different divisions within the company. At best, those people should also come from different locations or countries. As a rule of thumb, a greater variety of people participating in the idea generation process equals a higher level of creativity and innovation.

While these suggestions may be acceptable on a general level, Sethi, Smith & Whan Pak (2002), surveyed 141 project managers who led major new-product initiatives in a diverse array of consumer products and concluded that: including people from a large number of functional areas on a team did not necessarily improve innovation; while new ideas were generated, team problem-solving became more difficult because of information overload; deep-rooted functional allegiances could prevent innovative behavior in cross-functional teams; as social ties among members of cross-functional teams intensified, the innovativeness of its new products diminished; teams encouraged by management to be venturesome came up with the most innovative products, and close monitoring by senior management signaled the importance of the project.

Creativity and Organizational Sustainability Framework
The research on creativity identified a need to develop an integrated framework as an aid to managers and organizational leaders for moving from the stages of creativity to innovation and eventual organizational sustainability. A framework is proposed comprising the following key interlinked components: designing an effective organizational culture; stimulating creativity at all levels; and promoting organizational innovation that, if effectively executed, would achieve organizational sustainability (Figure 1).

Designing an effective organizational culture
Organizational culture was "perceived as a set of collective norms, which influence the behaviour of members within the company" (Andriopoulos, 2001, p. 835) and which depended on an innovative environment where divergent thinking thrived and a supportive culture that reflected empowerment and caring. Organizational culture was generally considered to comprise four dimensions which were configured as a competing values framework. These dimensions were made up of: a group culture which involved teamwork, participation, and commitment; a development culture which included creativity, flexibility, and innovation; a hierarchical culture based on centralization, regulation, control, and smooth operations; and a rational culture which promoted efficiency, task focus, goal orientation, and competition which fostered productivity (Quinn & Spreitzer, 1991).

It was suggested that the question of organizational culture attracted the

attention of scholars, managers, and organization leaders in the late 1970s and early 1980s (O'Reilly, Caldwell, Chatman, & Doerr, 2014). These authors argued that organizational culture was shaped by managers and leaders, and, citing the influential author Schein, agreed that the most important role of leaders is to create, manage, and even manipulate that culture. However, it was lamented that research on organizational culture rarely treated with the "relationships among leadership, culture and objective indicators of organizational performance" (O'Reilly et al., 2014, p. 616). The concept of organization culture also gained acceptance as a means of understanding the operations of human systems, which Rai (2011) cited as comprising many components such as: leadership, structure, reward systems, socialization mechanisms, and decision-making. Several definitions of organizational culture were cited in the literature, but it was suggested that a modern definition included "what is valued, the dominant leadership style, the language and symbols, the procedures and routines, and the definitions of success that characterize an organization" (Rai, 2011, p. 785).

The framework presented below emphasized the importance of instituting an organizational culture that was aligned to the strategic mission, core values, and competitive strategies of the organization, incorporated the elements of high performance cultures visible in successful companies, and in which top management was prepared to undertake changes in the existing culture in the face of the barriers recorded in this paper.
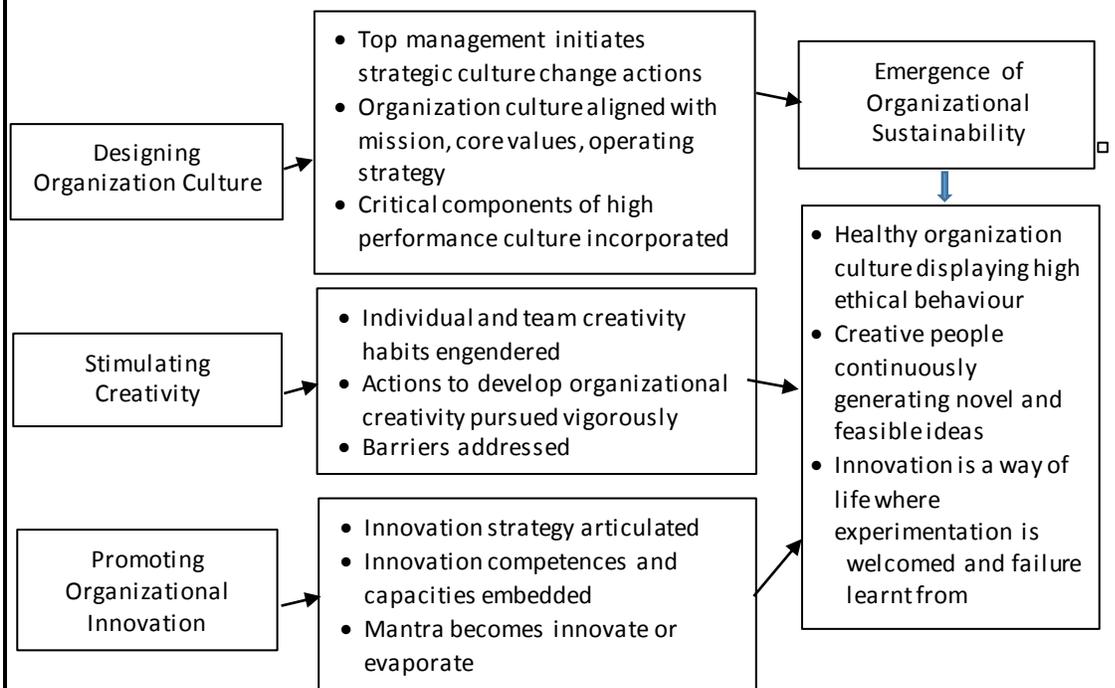

Figure 1. Managerial Model for Organizational Sustainability
Source: Author design

The framework endorsed the position of Woodbury (2005) that organization culture was the most critical factor determining an organization's capacity, effectiveness, and longevity and that when culture was out of alignment with mission, core values, and operational strategy, it could become a significant liability for the organization. If the culture within an organization failed to evolve and change as rapidly as the social conditions in the community or purpose that brought people together in the first place, the organizational culture then became an end in itself rather than the means. The framework also provided for incorporating the requirements for the development of a high performance culture which is a necessity for survival in modern organizations. Four critical components were identified as necessary for creating and sustaining a high performance culture: (a) a collaborative environment characterized by an over-riding belief in and the application of the power of collaboration at every level that resulted in an atmosphere in which all team members not only feel that their point of view and their ideas were welcomed and of value, but also felt an obligation to consistently participate fully and candidly; (b) a culture of accountability characterized by three consistent beliefs and/or practices: expectations around personal performance and behavior are clear; exceptional performance is recognized, reinforced and appropriately rewarded; and performance problems, including the failure to meet one's commitments, were addressed quickly and fairly; (c) focus which was the ability to limit our goals to those that allowed us to concentrate our limited resources in order to, not only establish clear priorities, but also to accomplish something of significance; and (d) robust processes which ensured explicit focus on the needs of the customer, and the ability to execute (Wriston, 2007).

The question arose of how was organization culture created and Greenberg (2005) identified the three main avenues as through company founders, experience with the environment, and contact with others. Companies founded by dynamic and charismatic persons who display strong ethical values and who communicate a clear vision for the company, normally infuse the organization with these traits which persist, often after the exit of the founder. A company's culture is often shaped by its interaction with the environment including its stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, and competitors, as well as the regulatory authorities. An organization's culture can also develop from contact with groups of individuals within an organization who shared their interpretations of events and actions as they took place. Such interpretations can be positive or negative which could influence people within the organization either way.

An organization's culture can be transmitted through different mechanisms and explicit statements of principle were used by some companies to transmit its culture which Thompson, Strickland, & Gamble (2007) identified as:
-   The values, business principles, and ethical standards that management

preached and practiced
- The company's approach to people management
- The spirit and character that pervaded the work climate
- How managers and employees interacted and related to each other
- The strength of peer pressure to do things in particular ways and conform to expected norms
- The company's revered traditions and oft-repeated stories
- The manner in which the company dealt with external stakeholders

Organization culture change is very difficult to achieve, and Greenberg (2005) discussed four ways in which culture within organizations can change: workforce composition, mergers and acquisitions, planned change, and impact of the internet. The workforce was becoming very diverse and as large numbers of people with different backgrounds and values were employed in organizations, culture change resulted from the impacts of the diversity. When a company merged with or was acquired by another, the clash of cultures invariably resulted in change which posed a complex managerial challenge. Organizations pursue planned change when new organizational objectives dictate the formulation of new strategic plans which will impact culture change. The arrival of the Internet age introduced radical changes in the way in which business was conducted requiring significant behavioral changes among managers and employees.

Stimulating creativity
Several techniques were suggested to aid in the development of individual creativity habits and the following habits were determined to be applicable (Adair, 1996):
- *Challenge assumptions*: Do not take assumptions for granted, they may be based on preconceptions or false opinions which are the main impediments to generating new ideas.
- *Welcome chance intrusions*: The creative thinker must be especially aware and observant of everything that is taking place around him/her while working on a solution. Such awareness permits us to take advantage of lucky chance occurrences or serendipity.
- *Listen to your depth mind*: Creative thinkers develop the habit of listening to their subconscious minds because our subconscious minds continue to work on solutions when relaxed or even asleep.
- *Suspend judgment*: If you want to encourage new ideas do not evaluate too early but let the ideas flow. Creative thinkers are open to constructive criticism and surround themselves with people who are not prone to premature criticism.
- *Use the stepping stones of analogy*: Analogy implies a likeness or parallelism in relations or attributes rather than in appearance. Many creative ideas

arose from drawing analogies from nature and using them for designing products or even organizational structures. This habit teaches that there are other models to be found in existing products and organizations without having to reinvent the wheel.

- *Tolerating ambiguity*: Creative thinking requires a higher threshold of tolerance for uncertainty, complexity, and apparent disorder which habit helps to develop the qualities of courage, perseverance and patience.
- *Ideas banking*: Ideas banking involves developing the habits of intellectual curiosity, observation, listening rather than thinking of what you want to say, reading, adventurous travelling, and recording ideas and experiences.

In terms of team creativity, the best practices for improving creative teamwork were grouped into three areas cognitive-goal instructions, social-organizational suggestions, and structural–environmental suggestions (Thompson, 2008). Cognitive-goal instructions discussed six specific instructions for improving team creativity: set high goals and an explicit set of rules; inculcate a positive mood; and increase individual accountability and analogical reasoning. Setting high goals was aimed at increasing the quantity of ideas generated and four new rules for making brainstorming more effective were suggested as: stay focused on the task; do not tell stories or explain ideas; when no one suggested ideas, restate the problem and encourage the generation of ideas; and encourage those who were silent to make a contribution (Paulus, 2003).

Research on team creativity confirmed that when cross-team networking was promoted, teams were more creative than those operating within tight or narrow boundaries, and companies were also experimenting with work playgrounds which define spaces designed to foster creativity by incorporating fun elements (Thompson, 2008). In this regard, Rosso (2016) commented on the positive role of playfulness in stimulating creativity, but lamented that the connection between organization creativity and the concept of playfulness, which utilized humor and amusement as a team process, was largely ignored by researchers.

Despite the imperative to develop organizational creativity, research showed that there were many barriers to creativity for both individuals and teams. Because team creativity depends on the creative ideas of individual members, it is critical to understand the blocks to individual creativity. Von Oech (cited in Zimmerer & Scarborough, 1996), identified 10 mental blocks as searching for the one right answer, focusing on being logical, blindly following the rules, constantly being practical, viewing play as frivolous, becoming overly specialized, avoiding ambiguity, fearing looking foolish, fear of failure, and lack of self-belief in one's creativity. Awareness of these barriers assisted individuals in stimulating their creative juices and could provide a guide to organizations that sought to identify the individual characteristics required for developing

team creativity.

The critical factors that determined organizational creativity were identified as based on: an organizational climate that had open participation and low barriers; a leadership style that was participative and built effective work teams; an organizational culture that reflected open communication, risk-taking, self-initiated activity, and trust; and resources and skills that were adequate for the tasks and offered challenging work; and a flat organization structure and systems that were fair and rewarded creative performance (Andriopoulos, 2001). Business managers and organizational leaders have a significant role to play in removing barriers to team and organizational creativity. In terms of team creativity, Linberg (1998) identified that the barriers included: lack of sustained problem solving, forced standardization, and lack of encouragement. The author also noted that the space for creativity in a group is one in which members of the group can hold the paradoxes, and ambiguities of their interaction, and can jointly reflect on these paradoxes and on their own group processes, in order to engage in double-loop learning. Based on an assessment of these barriers, organization leaders were provided by Linberg (1998) with the following creativity development guidelines:

- *Project planning*: Assign small teams (2-6 people) to work on challenging portions of the project while emphasizing the importance of a creative solution and building a product that delivers pride in accomplishment
- *Facilitate a congruent environment*: Leaders must manage risks and encourage exploration of optimum solutions, adjust schedules, effort, and scope, while building trust within the team and with the team supervisors
- *Tolerate ambiguity and do not force convergence*: Managers must manage the associated anxiety within the group and not create more anxiety by forcing convergence
- *Show incremental progress*: Conduct demonstrations for internal partners and external stakeholders which had theoretical support in that the demonstrations will increase intrinsic motivation and early user feedback
- *Avoid the silver bullet syndrome*: Explore new technologies before incorporating in a real project but avoid rapid changes to development processes, because immediate changes add to the burden of teams and can constitute a barrier
- *Select the best*: Recruit the best people available for your team, and encourage their creativity
- *Do not re-invent the wheel*: Emphasize communication with other team members and other teams within the organization and outside the organization as communication was identified as a key contributor to creativity
- *Invest in learning*: Cover creativity techniques, task relevant skills and productive work styles, knowledge management technologies, and knowledge distribution

- **Emphasize having fun**: Incorporating a sense of work and play was identified in the research as a source of creative energy.

As long as these practices became ingrained in the corporate framework, then successful creative teams displayed the specific traits of knowing why they existed, thrived in a culture of trust, reflected sound leadership, generated and evaluated ideas effectively, and produced more creative products and services (Massey, 2008). The concept of creativity training is generally recognized as a method of enhancing team performance but there is a continuing debate on the need to conduct needs analyses to focus on individual requirements (Batey, 2011). It was suggested that creativity training was based on the creativity-related process stages of cognitive processes, personality traits, social skills, and management skills (Valgeirsdottir & Onarheim, 2017). No team could perform satisfactorily if the leader did not communicate about creativity and innovation by talking about the importance of new ideas for improving product range and reducing costs, explaining why ideas were accepted or rejected, and giving recognition and rewards appropriately.

Promoting Organizational Innovation
Often innovation is confused with creativity and entrepreneurship, but innovation is more than this, it requires a company to marshal diverse resources to deliver commercial outcomes. In setting out on an innovation trajectory, a business needs to clearly articulate where there was scope for improvement and if the change required radical or incremental innovation (Hyland, 2005). On the other hand, the value of having a diverse workforce was highlighted in the literature, and it was found that diverse organizations promote creativity, innovation, and flexibility (Woodbury, 2005). The design of the framework acknowledged that innovative organizations required a set of competences and capacities that enabled them to win new business; these may be located within the organization or they could be accessed externally. While competences and capacities could be acquired externally, "the values that created an organizational culture that supported and encouraged innovation, needed to be embedded in the organization" (Hyland & Beckett, 2005, P. 351). The management and control systems within the organizations must allow for diversity and creativity; and time, financial and human resources must be made available, in order to generate and test different ideas. Invariably, organizations must adopt the mantra of 'innovate or evaporate', because businesses where creative thinking was not valued and nurtured, struggled to compete with more visionary enterprises.

The Sustainable Organization
When an organization achieved a healthy culture, succeeded in encouraging individual and team creativity, and actively promoted and supported innovative behavior, that organization was deemed to be on its way to sustainability. As

presented in the framework, organizational sustainability was attained when an organization: created a healthy workplace culture; ethical behavior became a feature of its membership; novel and feasible ideas were continuously generated, innovation was accepted as a way of life for managers and employees, and experimentation was welcomed while failure was viewed as a learning experience.

Conclusions, Implications, and Future Research

The main conclusion that emerged from the discussion was that fostering individual, team, and organizational creativity was essential to the development of successful organizations, because the dynamic business environment demanded new ideas and approaches to doing business. Increasingly, organizations are adopting a team approach to identifying problems in work processes and finding solutions to such problems. The paper highlighted the key issues surrounding the concept of individual, team, and organizational creativity and outlined the habits to be practiced for developing creative thinking; indicated the implications for organizational leaders suggesting that such leaders had a vital role in building creative teams and training the teams in creativity; supported the need for creative collaboration; and listed the main barriers to creativity.

The proposed model comprised the critical behaviors and actions that were imperatives for organizational leaders, in order to remove barriers and obstacles to creativity and innovation, and in so doing create an environment in which creative and innovative persons can flourish. To the extent that organizations are successful in creating a healthy organization culture, stimulating creativity among its members, and promoting innovative behavior within the organization, a sustainable organization will result, displaying the features highlighted in the sustainability framework.

The results of this study suggested several implications for business leaders, particularly those in developing-country settings, prime among which are: the need for managers to understand the importance of creativity and what is required to foster creativity at the individual, team, and organizational levels; the requirements for managers to apply the tools for developing creativity and building sustainable organizations; understanding the barriers to creativity and the actions needed for removing these barriers; and the need for organization leaders to dedicate efforts towards designing team composition, effectively managing its people, and the workplace environment and climate in order to enhance performance (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013). The authors emphasized that, in the absence of a supportive and participative environment, "team creativity will not be translated to innovation implementation" (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2013, p. 704)

The study pointed to the need for further studies on the performance of organizations that integrated individual, team, and organizational creativity into their design while adopting the mantra of 'innovate or evaporate', and the impact of "the organizational conditions and managerial activities that facilitate the conversion of ideas into actual innovations in the organization" (Shalley et al., 2004, p. 952).

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