Exploring teachers views of creativity: A comparative study

Kagari SHIBAZAKI [1)] Nigel A MARSHALL [2)]

1) Seirei Christopher University, Japan
2) University of Sussex, UK

Key words : creativity, cultural ideology, music education

Abstract

Previous research on creativity has focussed on what Balkin (1990) called *'the three 'P's of the creative equation'*. Interviews were carried out with 12 music teachers; six in Japan and six in England. The two countries were selected as being appropriate representations of an 'individualist' and a 'collectivist' culture (Triandis, 1995). The study aimed to explore the extent to which the cultural ideology existing on a macro level, can impact on the beliefs and practices of teachers on a 'micro' level, in this instance the music classroom. The data suggested that teachers' basic beliefs about creativity often seemed to reflect their cultural contexts, namely individualism and collectivism. The study also explored the extent to which teachers in both countries worked towards adaptive or innovative forms of creativity and what impact this appeared to have on the resulting creative musical products.

Introduction

Currently, many governments, including those in Japan and UK, believe that creativity has to be an important aim of any school curriculum. It has been argued that becoming creative and learning to be creative, better prepares individuals for their life in the world of business and leisure. In fact, the National Curriculum of UK states that the development of the creative potential of children is essential for the future of any country (DfEE, 2010). It further argues that pupils who are encouraged to think creatively and to develop their creativity tend to be more interested in discovering things for themselves, have increased motivation to accept new ideas and work with others and are frequently found to work beyond the normal lesson time and in formal, non-formal and informal settings. The way in which increased levels of creativity can contribute to the individual appears to be relatively well researched however, the question as to what creativity actually is, is more difficult to answer (Economidou- Stavrou, 2012; Ryhammar & Brolin, 1999).

Historically, creativity has been investigated from a wide range of perspectives and as a result, the definition of what it is and how it can be investigated, has become increasingly complex and varied. Sternberg and Lubert (1991, 1995) for example, suggested that creativity is related to a confluence of six distinct but interrelated resources, namely, intellectual abilities, knowledge, style of thinking, personality, motivation and environment. Therefore, from this perspective, creativity could either be related to innate abilities, or influenced by external factors, such as educational, social and cultural contexts. The UK department for education argues that 'creativity' must consist of four characteristics namely:

- thinking or behaving in an imaginative way
- imaginative activity that has purpose and is directed towards a particular objective
- the end product is original and
- the end product must be of value

However, in social science research, including psychology and education, creativity is frequently explored and discussed from three distinct perspectives, namely process, product and person; as Balkin (1990) suggested: *'the three 'P's of the creativity equation'* into which most research on creativity can be positioned.

Process: Studies which can be allocated to this category have tended to focus on the creative process and therefore, creativity has been investigated according to how people actively engage in making / creating a product (Collins, 2005; Sloboda, 1985, 1995). The most well-known creative process model is Wallas's stage theory (1926), and this still continues to impact and influence research into the creative process (e.g. Webster, 1990).

Product: Studies in this category tend to pay little attention to the creative process but instead focus on the created product and therefore, creativity is defined according to criteria which enables people to judge the final outcome of the creative process with little or no attention paid to the process which has produced it (Auh, 1995; Guilford, 1957; Kiehn, 2003; Laycock, 1992; Torrance, 1974; Vaughan, 1971).

Person: Studies in this category have tended to explore ways in which the level of creativity within the individual person, or the personality traits of the creative individual can be identified and classified. Therefore, creativity tends to be defined according to a series of personality traits (Balkin, 1990; Gardner, 2011; Goncy and Waehler, 2006; Kemp, 1996)

To this trio of perspectives, Hickey and Webster (2001) added one further category, namely that of 'place', which they defined as the teaching classroom *"and it is perhaps the one in which teachers have the most control (p21)"*. 'Place', is the space in which creativity and creative behaviours are either encouraged or discouraged and where pupils may, or may not feel confident, relaxed, motivated and psychologically safe.

Similarly, the process or method, by which levels of creativity can be investigated or measured has been shown to be equally complex and difficult (e.g. Amabile, 1996; Kaufmann, 2003; Burnard, 2012) with most previous studies being carried out in non-naturalistic settings. Whilst these studies have often produced very specific and clearly focussed empirical results, these have often been limited in terms of identifying or demonstrating the level of impact which additional factors beyond either the process, product or person (e.g. gender or cultural environment) can have (Rudowicz, 2003). For example, Lubart (1999) suggested that different cultures often have different concepts of creativity and Nisbett (2003) argued that in addition to our belief systems, language, and social cognitive systems, culture can be a strong influence on how people think and perceive. For example, within an individualistic culture, individuals tend to recognise themselves as the most important social unit, valuing and promoting uniqueness, separateness, and autonomy (Markus and

Kitayama, 1991). In contrast, within collectivist cultures, individuals tend to acknowledge groups over individuals, and promote harmony and cooperation within the group rather than individual differences (Noon and Lewis, 1992). Therefore, in this particular respect, the differences which people from Western and Eastern cultures have towards creativity has been identified as a potentially valuable and exciting issue in educational and psychological research (e.g. Goncalo and Staw; 2006; Lau, Hui and Ng, 2004; Niu and Sternberg, 2006).

Therefore, in part, this research addressed the extent to which this cultural difference impacted on the concept of creativity.

In individualistic societies (mainly associated with the West), creativity is often required to include issues relating to individuality, uniqueness and originality and the creative product is assessed according to the individual purpose or goal. Alternatively, in collectivistic societies (mainly in the East), collaborative and collectivist creativity which achieves social rather than individual gaols is preferred. Hence, Niu and Sternberg (2006) noted that whilst collectivistic and individualistic cultures appear to share the belief that creativity can include a degree of individuality and novelty, collectivistic societies also believe in the notion that creativity should include a contribution to society and this difference may well impact on the educational context, particularly in the way in which children are taught and the context and the way in which their creative products are assessed. Western education generally aims to promote the potential and ability of the individual, and therefore Chang (1998) argued that schools should encourage, but not command and shape the way children think. However, Eastern education often focuses more on encouraging children to be responsible and conform to society and the basic knowledge and skills required to achieve this are deemed to be the most important in order to become a productive member of a collectivistic society (Biggs, 1996; Kim, 2005).

Creativity in Music Education

As stated previously, both the Japanese and UK governments regard creativity as an important feature of any national curriculum and an essential skill for children to develop. In fact, all teachers in most European countries are required to include elements of creativity in all compulsory curriculum subjects, including Religious Education. Yet one major problem is that many of the features associated with creative children are also often associated with 'problematic' behaviours. The 'Creative Partnerships' project (QCA, 2010) suggested that creative pupils are curious individuals who ask questions and often challenge the knowledge the teacher offers. Often, they do not follow rules and they frequently think independently. So from this perspective, whether or not a particular characteristic or behaviour is judged as being 'creative' or 'rebellious'; and therefore the extent to which it is supported, encouraged and assisted to develop, is more connected with the view of creativity which the teacher holds and as Crow (2006) argues, the perception a teacher

has of what is creativity in music education, is often very subjective.

A number of previous studies, carried out in contrasting settings have focused on teachers' perception of creativity. For example, Odena and Welch (2009, 2012) working with secondary school music teachers found that their perception of creativity was often influenced by their own past musical experiences, their current working context and teaching styles, and their personal musical activities. Kokotsaki (2011) found that student teachers working in UK, believed that pupils could improve their creativity through appropriate instruction and guidance. In contrast however, Zbainos and Anastasopoulou (2008) found that Greek music teachers believed that creativity included a number of innate factors and therefore could not be taught. This discrepancy could be accounted for by the fact that in the UK, a wide range of formal documents highlight not only the definition of creativity, the value and the use of creativity but also explain how it can be promoted in the classroom, whilst in Greece, appropriate definitions and explicit guidance on the development of creativity is not readily available in most formal documents (Kampylis, Berki, and Saariluoma, 2009; Kokotsaki, 2011).

The case for creativity in music tends to be complex. Coulson and Burke (2013) for example, highlight the problematic issue of designing music lessons which can on the one hand, enable children to explore and demonstrate their creativity whilst on the other hand allowing children to learn and practice a complex musical technique. They argue that the way in which teachers organise and present their lessons influences how and what students learn therefore, we would argue that the way in which the teacher conceptualises creativity influences how the teacher organises the lessons. In this respect, the view the teacher has of what is creativity – whether or not it is a biological or a learned characteristic – whether or not it is learned or acquired – can impact directly on the pupil learning.

Given the contrasting outcomes of previous work, the overwhelming number of studies previously positioned in secondary schools and the apparent impact which the teachers perceptions of creativity may have on the creativity and musical learning of pupils, in this research we chose to focus on primary music teachers working either in Japan or in England in order to more fully understand their views of creativity. Our working hypothesis was that those teachers from the more collectivistic culture (Japan) would tend to display more examples of 'adaptive' creativity whilst their colleagues working within a more individualistic culture (England) would display more examples of 'innovative' creativity. Therefore our research explored the extent to which cultural differences impacted on teachers views of creativity and the extent to which teachers from each culture used adaptive or innovative creativity?

Method

We interviewed twelve primary school

specialist music teachers about their perceptions of creativity. Prior to carrying out the research, informed consent was given on behalf of the school, by each Headteacher, and by all teachers involved in the interview process. The research was given prior approval by the UK university ethics board.

The participants were 12 specialist primary school music teachers; six in Tokyo, Japan and six from London, England. Participants were specifically selected and matched for background experience and qualification as closely as possible. That is, all teachers were female with training and qualifications in music education. All teachers were matched for years of experience namely, between 5 and 27 years of teaching. All schools were located in similar urban catchment areas. Interviews took place in a private setting in each individual school. Participants were not notified of the questions prior to the interview. All interviews took place between 2010 and 2012 were recorded and later transcribed and analysed using standard qualitative thematic procedures. All interviews took place within a quiet area of the school during a period in which the teacher had designated free time. The date and time of the interview were chosen by the individual teacher. All participants were provided with a transcript of their interview responses prior to analysis thus providing them with an opportunity to comment further or clarify a matters arising. Analysis of interview data was carried out according to qualitative procedures for content analysis (Cohen, Manion and Morrision, 2011). Data were processed in four stages. Stage one involved the development of summary data sheets for each question out of which (stage two) suitable themed categories were generated. Data from these summary sheets was categorised and re-categorised until a number of themes emerged into which all of the content could be assigned (stage three).

Although a number of small and unique differences exist amongst some nationalities, globally, music education in most countries is almost unanimously based around three main objectives namely: performing, listening and creating (composing / improvising). In order to discuss creativity, it is necessary to investigate attitudes and ideas about those contexts within which creativity can be taught, learned or developed and therefore in our interviews, our questions covered the teachers' perceptions, ideas, opinions and attitudes towards group musical composition. Whilst there is no doubt that creative listeners exist in the same way that creative performers can frequently attract our attention, it is generally accepted that it is through the objective of 'creating', that children have their best chance to provide evidence of their individual levels of creativity and teachers have the best chance of teaching how to be creative. Therefore within our interviews, teachers were asked to illustrate their ideas, opinions and responses with reference to the way they organised, used and assessed group collaborative composition within their own music classrooms.

Three main themes emerged from this data into which all content could be categorised,

namely; a) Understanding and cultivating creativity; b) Assessing creativity; and c) Creativity and life skills. Data are presented according to each individual country followed by a summary.

Results and analysis

a) Theme One: Understanding and cultivating creativity

Teachers in both countries expressed some similar opinions and tended to agree that creativity could be cultivated through experiences and that skills should be taught that ultimately enabled pupils to express their own ideas.

> *"You can teach them to be more creative by giving them more skills to be creative with – they are creative but sometimes they do not have the skills to demonstrate this"* (Teacher 3 England)

However, some significant differences were also found to exist between the two countries.

Japan: Japanese teachers did not link creativity with individual emotions and whilst there was some agreement with the English teachers that 'creativity' should be related to 'innovation', Japanese teachers noted that creativity was most effectively taught through experiences which facilitated the creation of a product that developed following a highly structured and controlled process enabling the mastery of basic skills.

> *"Children cannot make new things without experiences. So we should give children rules and format and then they can produce a creative product."* (Teacher 8 Japan)

England: In contrast, English teachers tended to focus more on the link between creativity and the expression of individual ideas and emotions:

> *"It is a lovely way to express their moods with sounds. Even' low ability' children can express their moods, ideas and opinions as their creativity, so this is necessary in music education."* (Teacher 2 England)

English teachers also tended to focus on creating and developing a positive attitude towards creativity, which often centred on challenging the ideas of others, challenging their own thinking and experimenting. So for English teachers, teaching creativity was facilitated through providing experiences in which children could challenge the ideas of others, through which they could continue to; i) develop their own individual ideas and better understand their own uniqueness; ii) link their own musical expression to their own emotions; and iii) improve the skills they required to express their own ideas. Three of the English teachers also commented on the need to encourage children to create individual responses or to ensure that their individual role within the group composition could be clearly distinguishable in order that all pupils could be assessed on an individual basis.

Overall, English teachers tended to provide responses which linked imagination and originality with emotions and the individual experiences in music. In reality, this provided more freedom to each individual child to experiment and react to their own sounds

and musical products. Teachers from England spoke more about 'experimenting with sounds'; 'trying and seeing' and 'seeing what works best'. In contrast, Japanese teachers tended to suggest a more structured approach to experiences. Phrases such as 'suggesting format', 'setting rules' or 'demonstrating rules' regularly appeared throughout their responses and therefore how pupils could achieve 'originality' and 'individuality' within such a pre-set framework was frequently seen as being problematic.

English teachers favoured the children themselves deciding which skills to learn as a result of their individual decisions which in turn demonstrated their individual creativity. Similarly, English teachers favoured creative outputs which enabled individuals to demonstrate their individual contribution within the collective output. In contrast, Japanese teachers favoured all children learning the same basic skills and subsequently demonstrating their creativity in terms of firstly, how these skills were then applied to their collective product and secondly how these skills were incorporated in a creative way into a harmonious and collective output.

b) Theme two: Assessing creativity

Japan: Japanese teachers recognised imagination and originality as being important elements in assessing creativity, but their comments about assessing levels of creativity and imagination where somewhat different. With the exception of one teacher, overall responses suggested that creativity was not seen as the most important element when assessing musical products.

> *"The uniqueness of musical outcomes is sometimes less important for me because I often demonstrate a rule or format about composition, so children's work tends to be similar to each other – but this is good because then I can compare their progress."* (Teacher 9 Japan)

and

> *"Originality in a group composition is very important but even if outcomes are interesting, if they are not related to the content of music classes, the outcomes are of less value."* (Teacher 8 Japan)

Whilst Japanese teachers tended to agree that the process and the product should be of equal importance, half the teachers commented that the process was far harder to assess than the product.

> *"I try to assess both process and outcome. However, it is difficult to assess all processes, so I focus more on outcomes to see if they have developed the skills and to see how all children have contributed."* (Teacher 7 Japan)

England: Although English teachers recognised the value of originality and imagination as important creative elements, no English teachers mentioned these elements when discussing their methods for assessing musical products. In terms of assessment criteria, they focussed more on general musicianship, musical skills and achievement of the National Curriculum

objectives. In addition, teachers tended to agree that in terms of assessment, the process was often as important as the product as this enabled teachers to assess individual children's creativity (or progress?) by way of their individual contribution and their communication and thinking skills as required by the National Curriculum.

"Outcomes are joys, but process is more important as this includes communication and problem-solving and you need to see very clearly what each child has contributed." (Teacher 2 England)

Teachers in England most often measured creativity in terms of how far pupils had moved away from the original idea set by the teacher and whilst the quality of the musical products were seen as important, teachers also valued the extent to which each child was different from others in the process of music making.

"I don't like it when you just get endless repetitions of the idea you gave them to start with, I like them to do something 'different' with my idea"(Teacher 6 England)

c) Theme three: Life skills and creativity

Of further interest was the fact that non-musical outcomes were seen to be just as important as musical features within the process. For example:

"It is during the process of working in a group that they learn they have to work together- so music develops their social skills - sometimes more than their musical skills" (Teacher 3 England)

England: Teachers from England felt that working in groups was an important element in the teaching and acquisition of creativity and their responses were divided into the musical and non-musical benefits. Responses in the non-musical category included teaching and learning social skills for working together creatively and developing individual ideas by identifying ways in which they were different from others. Also language skills and an increased understanding of themselves featured frequently in their responses. The musical benefits cited included experiencing musical elements in a concrete and specific way, demonstrating their individual level of understanding and musical development, learning to express their individual emotions and providing sound evidence of their individual improvement. Mainly teachers felt that children spent far more time learning to work together than acquiring musical skills but this did not appear to be an issue in terms of developing creativity:

"They discuss a lot – I like it when they begin to separate their idea from somebody else and the more they have to do that – the better they get at it – more creative" (Teacher 1 England)

Japan: In common with English teachers, Japanese interviewees tended to include both non-musical and musical benefits arising from the teaching of creativity through composition. Japanese teachers focussed far more on the musical benefits than the non-musical benefits, and the overall responses from Japanese

teachers tended to be more uniform. Non-musical benefits included similar concepts to those presented by English teachers with the three most frequently mentioned non-musical benefits being learning to communicate, developing logical thinking and developing human relationships. The main musical benefits included developing musical ability in one or more of the other musical objectives, learning to manipulate musical elements in a creative way, demonstrate their individual abilities and surprisingly, three out of six teachers mentioned, for the first time, enabling children to learn how to express emotion in music.

One significant point to emerge was the fact that English teachers tended to be of the opinion that children should first develop a creative idea and then work on the skills to perform or present it whilst Japanese teachers felt that children should first be given the musical skills with which they could then be creative. For example:

"They always discuss first and get an outline of what they want to do and this is where the creative ideas come out – then they will work out who does what – when – and how" (Teacher 2 England)

and

"They have to learn the basic rules so they can play something – more creative children are not always good at this part but then they can be creative with what they have learned. Otherwise, we have no idea how they are creative" (Teacher 8 Japan)

So for English teachers, musical creativity came through creative talk and exchange of ideas which set the framework for the performance or presentation of the product. For Japanese teachers, the creativity began following the mastery of basic musical skills which facilitated the resulting performance.

All teachers fully understood the importance of creativity in everyday life yet freely admitted they were unclear as to how to most effectively cultivate it or value it within the confines of a music lesson. English teachers felt that working creatively enabled children to develop social skills and learn to work with friends, build confidence and self-esteem, develop individual problem solving skills and develop a sense of individual ownership and the opportunity to learn more about themselves. Japanese teachers felt that working creatively enabled children to develop social skills such as learning to cope with difficult situations and friendships; collective problem solving skills, developing logical thinking and creating higher levels of happiness, imagination and positive emotions.

For example:

"Through composing they have to solve problems and one might be how to include their own music choices in a piece of group work" (Teacher 2 England)

as opposed to:

"They need to realise that the composition is not just about themselves and what they want to do - they have to sort out how this fits in with other people and their wishes" (Teacher 8 Japan)

Teachers in both countries felt that creativity was an important aspect in enhancing children's lives and many found it easier to describe the development or the teaching of creativity in terms of life skills rather than in musical terms. One possible explanation for this is that teachers find it difficult to conceptualise creativity, especially within the concept of music education without having to consider issues of policy and curriculum.

> *"Cultivating creativity is related to the development of mentality. It means that children realise their own value, and belief in themselves through social working with others. Also cultivating creativity is thinking about our identities then children can accept we are still the same even with individual differences".* (Teacher 10 Japan)

The concepts and values expressed in this quote were frequently echoed by the Japanese teachers and demonstrates a clear understanding of the social context in which they sense they need to operate and the way in which individual creativity can enhance the identity of the individual. Certainly, two significant issues arose. First, it was accepted that it was good for children to become aware of unique and individual differences but once this has been achieved, it was argued that these should be suppressed in favour of greater uniformity. Secondly, it was felt that although music could be a useful and productive arena in which to acquire an individual identity, it should always be seen as secondary to following the rules. Essentially, English teachers valued the pupil becoming more individual and valued their individuality (creativity) in all contexts, whereas for the Japanese teachers the focus was not restricted to finding the individual identity but also about being an individual for the good of the community.

Summary

All teachers in this study fundamentally recognised that creativity enhanced children's lives. English teachers rated *'challenging'* one's own ideas, being unique, thinking and experimenting, and creativity linked to personal emotions as being most important. In contrast, Japanese teachers tended not to connect individual emotions and creativity, but rather emphasised that creativity was achieved through *'making'* something rather than *'expressing'* something. Appropriate experiences for developing or enabling creativity for Japanese teachers tended to be described as being more structured, confined, or teacher-directed. However, although teachers in both countries believed in the importance of cultivating creativity, in reality, they were not sure how to develop it within the context of music education. As stated in the introduction, there are many official documents relating to creativity in the UK. Similarly, although English teachers in this research mentioned the value of these official documents, they were still unclear how they could apply such documents to their practical aspects. Similarly in Japan, a range of research literature has been published regarding the

teaching of composition in a music class. However, in the interviews, several Japanese teachers reported that they had found it difficult to find a clear rational in the literature for teaching composition and developing creativity in class. Therefore, it is clear that there is a gap between practitioners, policy-makers, and researchers in both countries in terms of cultivating creativity in music class.

Overall, English teachers evaluated the importance of the creative process more than the creative product, while Japanese teachers tended to consider both to be equally important. This difference is possibly related to the extent to which teachers focus on either musical or non-musical elements in composition classes. The interviews suggested that Japanese teachers found the benefits of teaching composition to be more musical in terms of what children gained than the English teachers who tended to discuss the non-musical issues far more. English teachers felt that working in groups enabled children to work together and improve their musical language, while Japanese teachers tended to feel that the subsequent benefits related to teaching and experiencing musical forms.

Overall, responses from Japanese teachers tended to be more uniform than those of the English teachers. Although this shows a degree of evidence for the 'collectivist' cultural background of the Japanese teachers, it might also reflect real issues and the purposes behind a number of other factors such as the increased amount of professional development in which Japanese teachers appeared to engage. That is, the purpose of professional development for Japanese teachers could be far more about ensuring they remain in alignment with other teachers, and not just about developing the self as a teacher and gaining new ideas about the teaching of music. All six teachers from Japan presented almost the identical responses to some questions, something that never occurred amongst the English teachers.

Furthermore, data from the interviews appeared to suggest that the development of children's creativity could be said to be linked with different levels of 'place' namely, on micro and macro levels. In terms of the micro level of 'place', music teachers in both countries reported that the classroom environment in which children engaged in group activities tended not to be appropriate for creating music, due to teachers concerns over the high level of noise. That is, the level of noise appears to affect the creative process, and it is often difficult for children to listen to each other. Some children cannot hear other children's musical ideas and opinions within their own group discussion, and this may also affect their motivation and attitudes towards their group composition. Although teachers claim the necessity of having extra rooms when children make music, it actually seems to be very difficult. This is because physically, each school lacked space and the level of teacher-monitoring of all groups was low. In addition, it was difficult for teachers to organise grouping system in advance (e.g. children's ability, gender, the level of

friendship and seating position in a group). Although teachers' grouping plan has a strong impact on children's group work, this aspect received limited consideration by teachers (Baines, et al., 2003; Blatchford, et al., 2003). Therefore, classroom setting appears to influence the creative process, and therefore also impacting on the creative product.

On a macro level of 'place', this research revealed that the rationale for creativity can reflect the cultural contexts. Teachers in England stressed creativity from the perspectives of individuality, originality, and imagination, whilst Japanese teachers regarded creativity being cultivated within a more structured, confined, and teacher-centred environment. Therefore, the teachers' basic ideas about creativity seemed to reflect their own cultural contexts, namely individualism and collectivism. As discussed in the beginning, people in an individualistic society tend to recognise their creativity related to their own personal goals, such as novelty and individuality, while in the East, the level of creativity tends to be evaluated within their community, such as the link with social and moral aspects. This different concept appeared to influence every aspect including the design of composition classes, the teaching approaches and the assessment. As discussed earlier, creativity has been examined from different perspectives in many different fields. Although the number of research studies which have focused on the relationship between creativity and culture, has increased, many studies tend to be conducted in line with the western concept of creativity. Particularly, in terms of the measurement of creativity, almost all previous tests have been based on the western concept of creativity (Niu and Sternberg, 2002). Therefore, one implication for future research would be that the creative process, product and person could perhaps also be investigated and assessed from the different perspectives of 'place'.

Finally, the UK department for education argues that 'creativity' must consist of the four characteristics of thinking or behaving in an imaginative way and with purpose to produce a product that is both original and valuable. Findings from this study suggest that numerous differences appear to exist in terms of what creativity is, if and how it should be taught and how it can be assessed. These differences could possibly be as a result of 'place' i.e. the cultural values of 'collectivism' or 'individualism', or because of the focus and impact of different curricula approaches and policies prominent within each country.

One further point. Kaufmann (2003) distinguished between the creativity in people who were 'innovators', and those who were 'adaptors'. 'Innovators' prefer to break rules and ignore traditions and they focus on originality, new ideas and new solutions. In contrast, people who are 'adaptors' prefer to find creative ways to solve problems by changing things within existing rules. Hence, the individual working with a collectivistic culture who appears to lack originality and individuality, could in reality be seen as a creative 'adaptor' as opposed to a creative

'innovator'.

The data in this study also appears to suggest that UK teachers appear to opt for more 'innovative' forms of creativity whilst Japanese colleagues appear to opt for a more 'adaptive' form. However, in conclusion, when placed alongside the criteria set down by the UK policy statements on creativity, both the adaptive form and the innovative form adopted by the Japanese and UK teachers respectively, appear equal in terms of producing creative products that are 'purposeful', 'imaginative', 'original' and 'valuable'.

In this paper we have presented the results of an initial and tentative research project comparing the views and ideas about creativity in music teachers from UK and Japan. Currently, relatively few research studies have explored this issue from a comparative perspective within the area of music education. Although this current study included a relatively small sample of teachers, a number of key themes could be seen to be emerging; a point which suggests that further research in this area could make a valuable contribution to the current body of literature.

References

Amabile, T.M. (1996). *Creativity in context: Update to "The Social Psychology of Creativity."* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Auh, M. (1995). *Prediction of musical creativity in composition among selected variable for upper elementary students.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Cleveland, OH: Case Western Reserve University.

Baines, E., Blatchford, P. & Kutnick, P. (2003). Changes in grouping practices over primary and secondary school. *International Journal of Educational Research*, **39**, 9-34.

Balkin, A. (1990). What is creativity? What is it not? *Music Educators Journal*, **76**(9), 29-32.

Biggs, J.B. (1996). Western misperceptions of the Confucian-heritage learning culture. In D.A. Watkins. & J.B. Biggs (Eds.), *The Chinese learner: Cultural psychological and contextual influences*, 45-68, Hong Kong and Melbourne: Comparative Education Centre and the Australian Council for Educational Research.

Blatchford, P., Kutnick, P., Baines, E., & Galton, M. (2003). Towards a social pedagogy of classroom group work. *International Journal of Educational Research*, **39**, 153-172.

Burnard, P. (2012). Rethinking 'musical creativity' and the notion of multiple creativities in music. In O. Odena. (Ed.), *Musical Creativity: Insights from Music Education Research*, 5-28, London: Ashgate.

Chang, K.M. (1998). Can education values be borrowed? Look into cultural differences. *Peabody Journal of Education*, **73**(2), 11-30.

Cohen, L., Manion,L., & Morrision, K. (2011) *Research Methods in Education*. London and New York: Routledge.

Collins, D. (2005). A synthesis process model of creative thinking in music composition. *Psychology of Music*, **33**(2), 193-216.

Crow, W.G. (2006). Musical Creativity and the New Technology. Music Education Research. 8(1). P. 121-130.

DfEE. (2010). *All our Futures: Creativity,*

Culture and Education. Accessed January 2016 from http://www.creativityculture education.org/all-our-futures-creativity-culture-and-education

Economidou Stavrou, N. (2012). Fostering musical creativity in pre-service teacher education: Challenges and possibilities. *International Journal of Music Education*. 31(1) 35–52

Gardner, H. (2011). *Creating minds: An anatomy of creativity seen*. New York: Basic books.

Goncalo, J.A., & Staw, B.M. (2006). Individualism-collectivism and group creativity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, **100**, 96-109.

Goncy, E.A., & Waehler, C.A. (2006). An empirical investigation of creativity and musical experience. *Psychology of Music*, **34**(3), 307-321.

Guildford, J.P. (1957). Creative ability in the arts. *Psychological review*, **64**(2), 110-118.

Hickey, M. & Webster, P. (2001). Creative thinking in music. *Music Educators Journal*. 88(1), p.19-23

Kampylis, P., Berki, E., & Saariluoma, P. (2009). In-service and prospective teachers' conceptions of creativity. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, **4**(1), 15–29.

Kaufmann, G. (2003) What to Measure? A new look at the concept of creativity. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 47:3, 235-251.

Kemp, A.E. (1996). *The musical Temperament: Psychology and Personality of Musicians*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kiehn, M.T. (2003). Development of music creativity among elementary school students. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, **51**(4), 278-288.

Kim, K.H. (2005). Learning from each other: Creativity in East Asian and American education. *Creativity Research Journal*, **17**(4), 337-347.

Kokotsaki, D. (2011). Student teachers' conceptions of creativity in the secondary music classroom. *Thinking Skills and Creativity*, **6**(2), 100-113.

Lau, S., Hui, A.N.N., & Ng, Y.C. (2004). *Creativity: when East meets West*. Singapore: World Science.

Laycock, R.P. (1992). The relationship of musical experience, musical aptitude, self-concept, age, and academic achievement to the musical problem solving abilities of high school students (Doctoral dissertation, Case Western Reserve University). *Dissertation Abstract International*, **53**, 2728A.

Lubart, T.I. (1999). Creativity. In R.J. Sternberg (Ed.), *Thinking and problem solving*, 290-332, San Diego: Academic Press.

Markus, H.R., & Kitayama, S. (1991). Culture and the self: Implications for cognition, emotion, and motivation. *Psychological Review*, **20**, 568-579.

Nisbett, R.E. (2003) *The Geography of thought: How Asians and Westerners think differently and why*. New York: Free Press.

Niu, W., & Sternberg, R.J. (2002). Contemporary studies on the concept of creativity: the East and the West. *Journal of Creative Behavior*, **36**(4), 269-288.

Niu, W., & Sternberg, R.J. (2006). The philosophical roots of western and eastern conceptions of creativity. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, **26**, 18-38.

Noon, J. M., & Lewis, J. R. (1992). Therapeutic strategies and outcomes: Perspectives from different cultures. *British Journal of Medical Psychology*, **65**, 107-117.

Odena, O., & Welch, G. (2009). A generative model of teachers' thinking on musical creativity. *Psychology of Music*, **37**(4), 416-442.

Odena, O., & Welch, G. (2012). Teachers perception of creativity, In O. Odena. (Ed.), *Musical Creativity: Insights from Music Education Research*, 29-49, London: Ashgate.

QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority). (2010). Accessed January, 2016. From http://www.creativityculture education.org/creative-partnerships

Rudowicz, E. (2003) Creativity and Culture: A two way interaction. Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research, 47:3, 273-290.

Ryhammar, L. & Brolin, C. (1999). Creativity Research: historical considerations and main lines of development. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*. 43(3) pp 259

Sloboda, J. (1985). *The Musical Mind*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Sloboda, J. (1995) Do psychologists have anything useful to say about composition? *Proceeding paper at the Third European Conference of Music Analysis*, Montpellier, France, 16-19 February.

Sternberg, R.J., & Lubert, T.I. (1991). An investment theory of creativity and its development. *Human Development*, **34**, 1-31.

Sternberg, R.J., & Lubert, T.I. (1995). *Defying the crowd: Cultivating creativity in a culture of conformity*. New York: Free Press.

Triandis, H.C. (1995). *Individualism and Collectivism*. Boulder, San Francisco, Oxford: Westview Press.

Torrance, E.P. (1974). *Torrance tests of creative thinking: Technical-norms manual*. Bensenville, IL: Scholastic Testing Service, Inc.

Vaughan, M. (1971). Music as model and metaphor in the cultivation and measurement of creative behavior in children (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, 1971). *Dissertation Abstract International*, **32**(10), 5833A.

Wallas, G. (1926). *The art of thought*. New York, Harcourt: Brace & World.

Webster, P.R. (1990). Creativity as creative thinking. *Music Educators Journal*, **76**(9), 22-28.

Zbainos, D., & Anastasopoulou, A. (2008). The role of creative music activities in Greek compulsory education: An investigation of Greek music teachers' perceptions. In *Conference proceedings, excellence in education 2008: Future minds & creativity*, Paris, 1-4 July.