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The Historical and Cultural Perspectives of Creativity: A Qualitative Study of Thai Early Childhood Curriculum

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Abstract

This article analyzed creativity in Early Childhood Curriculum in Thailand. Since, creativity appears in several disciplines and has had a major role in childhood education for decades. The paper includes the main points of the overview of creativity in early childhood curriculum in Thailand for the past decades, then focuses on the perspectives of creativity in the school curriculum and discusses the perspective of creativity and cultural context in the curriculum. This article analyzes the aspects of creativity in Thailand's school curriculum based on the cultural perspectives stated by Anoumou and Formella (2016). The qualitative analysis conducted through document analysis was set as follows; the challenge of early childhood curriculum during the 1970s-2003, the promotion of children's creativity in the classroom after curriculum reform 2003-2010, and the Early Childhood Curriculum (2017). Overall, the main themes of prior research were seen in three perspectives including the view of creativity in the curriculum, instructional methods and teaching media, and subject domains towards creativity. The view of creativity was linked to several activities such as play, arts, and sciences. This agrees with several authors who proposed that children can use their imagination to theorize and develop skills and knowledge to improve creativity through those activities (Innamorato, 1998; Isenberg & Jalongo, 2001; Craft, McConnon, & Matthews, 2012). It is important to note that the perspective of creativity depends upon the cultural context. Lastly, the research findings recommend that cross-curricular activities are essential for children's creativity and that the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively. Creativity should be set as the central pedagogy concept in every domain of learning rather than separated. Furthermore, it can be suggested that the real factors such as school context, adult role, or cultural perspective should be investigated for future research.

Introduction

The goal of education has been shifting globally with emphasis on 21st Century Skills that includes a broad range of skill sets and professional attributes, such as: creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem solving, communication and expression, and

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collaboration and teamwork. (Joynes, Rossignoli, & Fenyiwa Amonoo-Kuofi, 2019). Vividly, creativity has been placed as the soft skills that comes with the elements of "an idea that is novel, good, and useful" (Beghetto & Kaufman, 2009). In Thailand, creativity has received an increasing amount of attention for many years. The first Early Childhood Curriculum in Thailand (2003) emphasized creativity as an essential trait of young children and highlights the process of learning for promoting knowledge construction, academic progression, growth and exuberance of population's life, the inheritance of culture and society, and supportive factors for creative lifelong learning. Later, the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (2017) aims to develop all children's physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development with quality and continuous. Children are provided with a happy and appropriate learning experiences by age, have life skills and practice in accordance with the principle of sufficiency economy philosophy. Be a good person with discipline and a sense of Thai, through collaboration between educational institutions, parents, families, communities, and all parties involved in child development. Yet, the history of creativity in Thai education exists in only some earlier works. To understand the background of creativity in Thai education, this paper begins with the history of creativity in Thai education as the challenge of early childhood curriculum during 1970s-2003. Then, it shifts to the view of the rise of children's creativity in the classroom since curriculum reform in 2003. Finally, it analyses the concepts and traits of creativity in the Early Childhood Curriculum of 2017.

Concept of creativity in education

Creativity, generally, means 'create', 'creation', 'creative force' and the 'power to create new works' (Anwar, Aness, Khizar, Naseer, & Muhammad, 2012). The major characteristics of creativity largely links to the product that links to ability to produce newness, usefulness, or imaginative and productive results (Averill, 1999; Sharp, 2004; Craft, McConnon, & Matthews, 2012; Shernoff, Abdi, Anderson, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; Poincaré, 1970; Runco, 2013; Ciez-Volz, 2008). This clearly stated in the work of Beghetto and Kaufman (2009) who defined creativity as novelty that useful. Moreover, creativity has also been indicated to be the knowledge creation (Dacey & Lennon, 2000) and 'the generation of ideas that are both novel and valuable' (Boden, 2004). While, Amabile (2001) stated the common traits of creativity are concerned with being 'novel and appropriate' and aim to 'discover generalizable principles'. Apparently, the new-and useful/valuable definition of creativity seems to gain wide spread acceptance (Lubart, 1999). Novelty refers to originality, newness, freshness, of the work which is distinct from existing work, while usefulness/valuable refers to appropriate work that fulfill people's needs.

Furthermore, the different aspects of creative have long been examined in the education disciplines. More than 100 definitions have been used in the research literature since the 1950s (Treffinger, Schoonover, & Selby, 2013) as theorists make no agreement about "whether creativity is located in a person, process, and product" (Fleith, 2000; Petroski, 2000). The Four Ps model was proposed by Rhodes in 1961. The model constituted four elements including creative persons (the particular abilities, personality and characteristics of creators), creative processes (searching and connecting existing knowledge with new experiences), creative products (novel outcomes), and creative press (the external context that encourages creative processes) (Rhodes, 1961). The model demonstrated a practical framework and the main traits of creativity yet there were no clear tests suggested in this model. Comparably, Treffinger, Schoonover, and Selby (2013) proposed COCO model of creativity. The model outlined the four similar elements but it demonstrated the relation of 'characteristics' of the person 'operation' 'outcomes' and it placed the importance of 'context' as the environment that influences other elements. Accordingly, the Four Ps creativity model and COCO model deal with P(press) and C(context) as the context factors which effects the other elements. Culture, therefore, can be seen as a vital element of the 'Press' or 'Context', that can complete the whole process of developing learners' creativity in particular contexts. The integration of creativity and culture is discussed in the following chapter.

Concept of creativity and culture

Several research have acknowledged that the word creativity is defined dependent upon the worldview and the nature of the individual or society under scrutiny (Amabile, 2001; Beghetto & Kaufman, 2009; Craft, 2002; Cziksentmihalyi, 1999; Duffy, 2006; Robinson, 2006; Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010, Lubart, 1999; Treffinger, Schoonover, & Selby, 2013). The impact of culture on creativity is typically manifested in three ways: 1) people from different cultures or settings have distinct implicit and/or explicit conceptions of creativity;

2) individuals from different cultures, particularly those from individualist and collectivist cultures, show differences in preferred creative processes and creative processing modes (e.g., usefulness seems more important than novelty in the East, whereas novelty seems equally important as usefulness, if not more so, in the West) when they are engaged in creative endeavours; and (3) creativity may be assessed using different measures based on culture-related contents or materials, and findings are accurate only when culturally appropriate or culturally fair measures are used.

Several researchers outline a distinction between the concept of creativity and the characteristics of society between what we familiarly term the West and the East. For instance, Nisbett (2003) explained the difference between the East and West, where the Western culture is characterized by putting an emphasis on notable people or products, while classifying and applying logic to express and comprehend these items. In contrast, 'East Asian thought can be characterised as "holistic", focusing on the "whole picture". the Asian reasoning process can be described as 'dialectic', seeking to find a 'middle way' between opposing thoughts' (ibid). Moreover, Leung and Morris (2010) debated whether Western society gives precedence to creative novelty and originality more than utility and appropriateness, while Eastern society highlights the utility and appropriateness over the novelty and originality. Lubart (1999) noted that the concept of creativity in Western culture places a priority on creating innovation while creativity in Eastern culture highlights the reinterpretation of culture rather than changing traditions. He suggested that creativity in the West seems to be noticeable by its outcomes, whereas creativity in the East seems to be associated with personal satisfaction rather than the tangible outcomes. While many authors noted the opposition views of creativity in different culture. Niu and Sternberg (2006) demonstrated that Easterners and Westerners may not appreciate identical conceptions of creativity but they share some similarities. To understand these concepts profoundly, the comparison of Western and Eastern concept of creativity was elucidated by Niu and Sternberg (2006) cited in Anoumou and Formella (2016) in the table below:

In the table above, both conceptions of creativity share similarities in emphasising novelty and transforming or changing society and traditions. In comparison, the concept of creativity in the East seems more focused on individual accomplishment, relating in some way to

Table 1 The comparison of Western and Eastern concept of creativity

Western concept of creativity	Eastern concept of creativity
a. Create *novel* and *useful* product	a. Express an *inner* sense
b. Find *original* solutions to problems	b. Find *new* point of tradition
c. Transform or *change* the world	c. *Fulfill or enlighten the self* (Self-actualisation)
d. *Break with* the traditional	d. *Re-interpretation* of the tradition
e. *Product* centered	e. *Process/subject* centered
f. *Individual* orientation	f. *Ecology* orientation

Source: Niu and Sternberg, 2006

primitive (or indigenous) customs or crafts, or the expression of inner thoughts, whilst, in the Western, creativity could be seen as product-centered. Eastern concepts are comparable to a humanistic view of creativity where individuals appreciate the true nature of self, things, and phenomena (Amabile, 2001). This aspect of creativity involves self-actualisation where people aim to be "fully awake and alive, the ultimate goal being personal enlightenment" (Anoumou & Formella, 2016). This explicit explanation by Niu and Sternberg (2006) can be seen in Chinese culture, where they see the features of creativity linking to novelty, usefulness, and moral goodness. Meanwhile, in India, creative work is appreciated as belonging to the community (Mishra, Henriksen, & the Deep-Play Research Group, 2013) and creativity is linked to interpersonal concepts and social responsibility, rather than cognitive domains and unconventional personal orientation (Panda & Yadava, 2005). In such a society, creative persons are often anonymous and creative outcomes belong to the communities rather than to the individuals. Among all these definitions, the Western concept of creativity has been seen in great use in scientific activities (Sternberg, 2006) while the members of Eastern societies are more concerned about creativity and valuableness of the society.

Culture, education and learning style

In terms of cultural context, Pagram and Pagram (2006) emphasized that "schools are the second home and teachers are the second parents to Thai children". The relationship between teacher and pupil is comparable to the one between children and family, pupils are required to obey their teacher as their parents. The role of teacher was noted by McNamara who published the report of "Country of the Month: Thailand" in The Guardian 2000. He observed Thai society and analysed living in Bangkok, Thai students, and Thai classroom. McNamara (2000) emphasised that Thai students love to be entertained as well as educated. He stressed that

the successful teacher need to have 4 Ss which are Sanook(fun) Suay (beautiful) Suparb (politeness) and Serious. Sanook (fun) is embedded in the learning and teaching process which includes a couple of games, keeping things moving along, laugh to oneself and pupils rather than mindless choral repetition. Suay (beautiful) is about beautiful appearance such as neat uniform, hairstyle, formal shirt, trousers, and polished shoes. Suparb (politeness) covers everything from the style, behaviour to speak and action, stay calm, do not raise their voice. And, Serious is about putting importance on pupil's homework and exam. Moving on, the nature of Thai culture impact classroom interaction. Students tend to be tranquil in class. They are unlikely to introduce the discussion until they have been asked and are inclined to be shy or feel that they are humble to express the capacity to analyse or synthesise knowledge and ideas (ibid). In this sense, the individuals may desire to answer the questions that they feel sure about which seems to minimise the process of creative thinking, risks taking, and making decision process. They may have the equal ability to think, but the obstacle for developing creativity may be caused from the perception of the individual towards themselves or social reflections. This indicated that certain contexts such as; tolerate criticism, rejection, or resistance, can defeat people's confident and ability to express their creativity in the classroom.

Methodology

The qualitative analysis was conducted through the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (2017), the school curriculum, the school course outlines, the timetables, and the lesson plans to explore the concept of creativity, pedagogy approaches and creative activities that promote creativity/ creative learning/ creative environment. The document analysis was set as following themes; 1) the challenge of early childhood curriculum during 1970s-2003, 2) the promotion of children's creativity in the classroom after the curriculum reform 2003-2010, and 3) the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (2017).

Creativity in Thailand: the challenge of early childhood curriculum during 1970s-2003

Creativity boomed in education for Asia in late 20th century (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2007). The definition, and values of creativity for promoting creativity in the Thai education appeared in 1970s. The first scientific research was made to investigate the effect of the learning material such as drawing worksheet to promote children's creativity (Burodom, 1980). Later, the trend of the studies involved with creativity as a cognition was proposed by Guilford (1950) and Torrance (1981) which emphasised the originality, fluency, flexibility, elaboration. For example, Khajornsilp (1989) studied children's creativity and self-confidence comparing child initiated free play activities and teacher directed activities. The test was formed on the framework of Torrance Test of Creative Thinking which aims to measure originality, fluency, flexibility, and elaboration. The findings showed that creative art activities and free play influence higher level of children's creativity and self-confidence. Chomkesorn (1998) undertook the comparison of children's creativity by studying children who play with blocks independently and those who play with blocks with teacher's support. The results showed that pre-schoolers who played with blocks with teacher's guidance showed higher levels of originality and fluency in creativity than those who played independently. Yet, the results also presented that both groups had no difference in levels of creativity in terms of flexibility and elaboration. This seems that teacher's role has an important influence on developing children's creativity. In the meantime, Boonyarat (1998) studied the comparison of children's creativity between children who experienced the natural learning such as rubber toys and children who did not. The rubber toy had been made into five different games including arrangement, insertion, dimension building, sticky hook, and cooperative sets. The findings displayed that the children who used the rubber toy set had significantly more creativity. Susam (2003) examined the effects of using Project-Approach on developing children's creativity. The results displayed those children who participated in the Project-Approach showed a higher level of creativity than those who did not. Overall, creativity was acknowledged as essential traits for children's learning in Thailand for more than four decades. Most of the prior studies were implemented as small-scale experimental research and the trend of the research was inclined to examine the factors such as free play, toy, and Project-Approach Learning Model in promoting children's creativity.

The promotion of children's creativity in classroom after curriculum reform 2003-2010

Thai education was reformed and the Early Childhood Curriculum (2003, B.E. 2546) was launched in 2003. The curriculum emphasised creativity as crucial traits of young children in broader domains such as art,

music, science, play, making projects, and exhibitions. It aims to develop imagination and creativity in young children aged 3 to 5 through 6 essential activities. Teachers are responsible to 6 daily activities including circle time, free play, creative art and craft, music and movement, educational game, and outdoor play. Circle time aims to develop knowledge and skills with children. Children may observe, discuss, and generate ideas or concepts through large group- or small group activities. Free play is the flexible activities that allow children to choose and play in different play corners. The play corners may include house corner, block corner, books corner, science corner, art corner, music corner, water or sand areas etc. Creativity and craft aim to support children's expression of artwork such as drawings, painting, making collage, crafts. Music and movement allow children to hear, talk, sing a song, make poem or rhyme, dance or playing with music instrument. Educational game offers children to develop understanding of simple concepts such as matching, classifying, categorising, or finding correlation between shape, colour, number, alphabet etc. Outdoor play mainly aims to develop physical health. The activities may involve with exercise, playing with a plaything, wood, rocks, water, or sand or acting in a Thai traditional play.

Accordingly, the curriculum led the trend of creativity research to move from merely testing specific tools towards 6 essential activities. As reported by Yooumpai (2011), there are approximately 70 experimental studies about creativity in early childhood education during 2000-2010. She noted that the most common topics were involved with language and creativity such as storytelling, reading story books, naming the story, play-role, etc. Some research focused on creativity and imagination by exploring children's imagination, when they listen to different sounds or songs. Besides, creative art and creativity is the most popular topic in finding the factors or program to promote children's creativity. Since, there are several research that examined creativity in the preschool in the last decade, the related literature is clarified and exemplified based on 6 essential activities. For instance, Susam (2003) studied the comparison of children's creativity in those who experienced the project approach. She developed and used 40 lesson plans based on the project approach with preschool children for 12 weeks. The results demonstrated that pre-schoolers showed higher level of originality, fluency, flexibility and elaboration in creativity than those who did not participate in the project. Later on, Boonwong (2008) studied children's creativity and self-esteem through the High Scope model, whilst Sosaennoi (2012) studied the effects of High Scope creative arts activity supplemented with opened-ended questions on creativity and group behaviour of preschool children. Phromputta (2007) studied the development of children's creativity using Mind Mapping techniques. The researcher employed 3 steps in teaching including a) performing activity with songs, stories, rhythms, and games, b) brainstorming through group work and discussion, and c) setting up children's individual work. Buachum (2010) examined children's creativity through environmental-friendly materials. Supasuk (2013) carried out the development of creative thinking in preschool children through storytelling with structured open-ended questions and social reinforcement. Banjong and Khayankij (2014) studied the effects of organising art experiences by integrating an IDesign approach on kindergarteners' creativity.

Moving on to other popular topics, music and movement and creativity have been examined in order to establish the effectiveness of different types of music activities in developing children's creativity. Petchuensakul (2004) examined the effects of music and games in children's creativity. The results exhibited that children who joined music and games activities showed higher scores of creativities in post-test than pre-test. Meanwhile, Poramart (2010) studied the effect of Carl Orff's music on creativity and self-confidence in preschool children. The study showed that children who experienced such activities gained higher scores of creativity in the post-test than pre-test.

Science and technology have become one of the most important areas in developing children's creativity. Bunyarit (2006) studied the effect of scientific process skills on children's creativity. The researchers concluded that children had a higher level of creative fluency, originality, and elaboration after attending science activities.

Overall, the main themes of prior research were seen in three perspectives including instructional methods, teaching media, and subject domains towards creativity. Many frameworks were based on well-known theory such as Guildford, Edward De Bono's Six Thinking Hats or Torrance test in order to measure the level of creativity in young children. Nevertheless, there is a small number of studies that explored the factors such as school context, adult role, curriculum, or cultural perspective towards creativity in school.

The Early Childhood Curriculum BE 2560 (2017)

The research of creativity in Thailand has brought wide range views of creativity in Thai education. The definition of 'creativity' recently was referred to as the characteristics of new, original, workable, and practical outcomes. This reflects how creativity links to social values and the acceptance of novelty, originality, usefulness, and appropriateness in the context.

Examining the framework of the Early Childhood Curriculum BE 2560 (2017), it describes creativity as related to the criteria or expectations for successful performance on the tasks, assignment and works, including the specific explanation of performance at a variety of levels of quality, accuracy, or completeness of tasks. It stresses the learning standards and criteria along with the national curriculum as guidelines for creative learning. For instance, a child should show: 1) the admiration of art work; 2) the ability to connect picture, drawings and patterns with real objects; and 3) the skills to percept and express their emotions and creativity through materials, toys and project work. The expected skills, or the rubric, are drawn from essential experience, which focuses on specific action to help teachers to assess children's creativity. For example: 1) use various materials to create artworks; 2) enjoy beauty of the things; 3) develop hand and eye coordination; 4) numbering; 5) expressing ideas and emotions through communication; 6) the ability to connect picture, drawings, and pattern with real objects; 7) the skills to percept and express their emotions and creativity through materials, toy, and project work; 8) the ability to play and imitate behaviour and sound, and 9) the ability to show the movement based on ideas with fluency, novelty, originality, and elaboration. This aims to plan the learning of lessons and assess children's fine motor skills; emotional, mental, and social development; imagination and creativity, and is harmonized with the scope of creativity, in art, music and languages. This is shown in Tables 1 and 2 below:

Table 2 Learning standard 11 in the national curriculum (The Early Childhood Curriculum, BE 2560, 2017)

Standard 11: Creativity and imagination			
Learning indicator	**Criteria or expectations for successful performance**		
	Child 3-4 years	**Child 4-5 years**	**Child 5-6 years**
11.1 Imaginative and creative art work	11.1.1 creating artwork, express ideas, and feelings	11.1.1 creating artwork, express ideas, and feelings, adapting for originality and elaboration	11.1.1 creating artwork, express ideas, and feelings, adapting for originality and elaboration
11.2 Imaginative and creative movement and expression	11.2.1 moving, express ideas and feelings	11.2.1 moving, express various and original ideas and feelings	11.2.1 moving, express various and original ideas and feelings

Table 3 The terms of creativity in the domain of leaning (The Early Childhood Curriculum BE 2560, 2017)

The terms of creativity in the domain of leaning, displayed in Early Childhood Curriculum (2017)			
Area of learning	**Art, craft, and aesthetics**	**Music and movement**	**Languages**
1. Concept of learning	1.1a. Different kinds of art activities 1.2b. Expressing ideas and imagination through art work	1.1b. Rhythm, music, and movement 1.2b. Music instrument	1.1c Expressing ideas and imagination through speech or story telling
2. Essential experience	2.1a Interesting and delighting to do artwork 2.2a Creating artefacts with originality and elaboration 2.3a. Appreciate art work 2.4a. Link the picture and shape to the real objects or place. 2.5a Perceive and express emotions and creative thinking through various objects, materials, toy, and artefacts	2.1b. Expressing ideas and Imagination through different movement 2.2b. Expressing and moving and playing freely and creatively 2.3b. Being imaginative 2.4b. Mimic the action, movement, and sound 2.5b. Perceive and express emotions and creative thinking through various song and sound 2.6b. Enjoy the show and performance 2.7b. Listening for joyfulness, listening with purpose 2.8b. Classification of different sound 2.9b. Imagine and feel with the story 2.10b. Listening and analysis the story 2.11b. Listening to story, poet, and rhyme, and creative talking.	2.1c. Perceive and express emotions and creative thinking through speech, narrations, or story-telling 2.2c. Express feelings through words and speech 2.3c. Talk to the others about their own story or experience 2.4.c. Listen to the storytelling, poem, and rhymes 2.5c. Explain the objects, matters, events, or place with different modes 2.6c. Listening, comprehending, and communicating key ideas of the story or narration 2.7c. Using language for communication

Examining the concept of creativity, the word creativity is marked in several parts of the Early Childhood Curriculum and the school curricular. The Early Childhood Curriculum for children 3–6-year-olds sets desirable characteristic standards 1. Physical Development. 2. Emotional Development 3. Social Development 4. Cognitive Development. The place of creativity can be seen obviously in standard 11 and can be linked to standard 9, 10 and 12. The standard 9, Language is used to communicate meaningfully within appropriate age standards. Standard 10, Children develop thinking skills for fundamental learning. Standard 11, Imagination and creative thinking is demonstrated. Standard 12, a positive attitude to learning is expressed and is able to search for new knowledge within an appropriate age. Furthermore, the curriculum, rather, uses the word creativity with imagination and 'creative' to employ creativity in a way that is coterminous with creative concepts such as 'creative ideas' 'creative language' 'creative activity' and 'creative toys' 'creative media, materials, toys and work products.' 'creating work' 'creating beautiful things or creativity' 'speaking creatively' and 'expressing creativity through language, gestures, movement and art'. In this sense, the term creativity is used in many ways to emphasise essentials of creativity in preschool settings. Comparing those terms of creativity based on the Creative Four Ps by Rhodes (1961), the explanation of each feature hints at the key ideas of the creative process (creative activity, language and communication), creative press (toy, media and materials) and creative product (creative ideas, work product and beautiful things). The term 'creative activity' can be referred to as 'creative process' that create or generate novel and original outcomes, cope with creative problem solving, imagination, and the relationship between previous knowledge and experiences by taking many possibilities and accepting various approaches. They emphasise 'creative activity' in the arts, language, communication that involves a holistic approach, constructive learning, and purposeful play in the classroom that is linked to the imagination, sense of aesthetics, and creating new and creative ideas. It can be said that the curriculum offers a wide range of activities and the opportunities for learners to experience interesting and engaging activities, inspire their creative thoughts with joyfulness, and build up their self-confidence, self-esteem and positive reinforcement towards oneself (Craft, 2001). In this sense, the view of creativity in a variety of domains of learning can be compared to the Qualification and Curriculum Authority (QCA/DfEE) (2000) who implied creativity not as a subject but associated to the skill to make connections, create innovation, use imagination, and originate ideas between the areas of learning. Creativity is mentioned to art, music, dance, and drama – which clearly refers to the arts areas. The effective learning, including play and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – by having their own ideas, making links, and choosing ways to do things (QCA, 2004) is emphasised as a platform for creative learning in the school.

In terms of learning domains, the interpretation of creative learning implies that creativity is involved vividly in some parts of the curriculum and certain forms of learning such as art, music, and language activity, and that features of creativity include novelty, originality, flexibility, and elaboration. Visual arts such as drawing, painting, clay work, rubbing, and print making, and free play such as role play and block play are significant factors in developing creativity since the creation of visual experience relates to the imagination and the process of the mind's representation (Dziedziewicz & Karwowski, 2015). Expressive art allows children to express their emotions and thoughts, and develop mental representation and imagination (Bruce, 2011). Children can obtain freedom to create their own stories and represent the images in their mind. Music allows children to express their creativity through their sense, body language, and their speech to convey their emotions. Furthermore, play serves the nature of the child who has enthusiasm and is curious to learn from new experiences (Craft, 2001). Such processes are major contributions of creativity, as they can capture children's interests in ways that give them the motivation to explore, try out, and reflect on ideas and discover phenomena by themselves.

When we compare the school documents, it adopts identical structures from the Early Childhood Curriculum but define its own curriculum in broader areas. The curriculum in 'school A' in Bangkok focuses on holistic learning along with thinking-process skills and scientific thinking skills to reach holistic development for children. Scientific thinking involved using sensory motor activities, working with curiosity in planning, comparing, inquiry, classifying, and linking the previous knowledge to new expertise. Meanwhile, thinking process skills focused on communication skills, knowledge acquisition skills and advanced thinking skills. The guidance recommended the educator to merge science concepts,

content, and processes into early childhood learning. The processes of science help children to explore, observe, infer, classify, predict, measure, use numbers, learn the relationship of space and time, organise information and communicate with others. This motivates their imaginations as they need to create a visual image, thinking about possibility to make scientific assumption, expand their thought, accept the different results, and extend their knowledge to the new aspects. In this way, it showed the efforts to add alternative modes of learning and offer more dimension of creative learning into art, play, science and language and are complementary for the purpose of expressing creative ideas (Isenberg & Jalongo, 2001; Maxwell, 2013). This agrees with DfEE and QCA who in 2005 requested creativity to be nurtured in all areas of learning. They recommended that cross-curricular activities are essential for children's creativity, and that 'the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively… it should give them the opportunity to become creative…'. To sum up, creativity should be an integral part of every domain of learning rather than separated (Kerry, 2015) or else it can be said that creativity should be a central pedagogical concept for all levels of education.

In perspective of creativity and culture, the terms of creativity or -creative- involved with both a) Western concept of creativity and b) Eastern concept of creativity stated by Anoumou and Formella (2016). The curriculum highlighted the traits of creativity in the Western perspective such as to the novel and useful product, and the original ideas. On the other hand, the traits of creativity in Eastern perspective are to express an inner sense. This agreed with Lubart (2016) that the aspects of creativity in Eastern culture is less focused on observable or innovative products. It engages to "the personal fulfilment, a connection to a primordial realm, or the expression of an inner essence or ultimate reality". Nevertheless, some traits of creativity do not appear evidently in the curriculum for example in the view of Western concept of creativity - Transform or change the world - Break with the traditional – and Individual orientation does not exist. Additionally, traits of creativity such as - Find new point of tradition - Re-interpretation of the tradition - and Ecology orientation are not stated clearly. On balance, the analysis of the Early Childhood Curriculum B.E. 2560 (2017) can exclaim that the traits of creativity links to a range of traits such as novelty, originality, value (Craft, 2001), surprise, originality, beauty, and usefulness (Boden, 2004) and uniqueness, unexpectedness, and functionality (Sternberg & Lubart, 1995). In this sense, we can say that the view of creativity in Thailand's school curriculum are broaden since the exploration of a numerous research and studies. This can be a beneficial point to address further whether the traits of creativity exist in real settings? or how creativity plays a role in the real context?

Conclusion and recommendations

Overall, the main themes of prior research were seen in three perspectives including the view of creativity in the curriculum, instructional methods and teaching media, and subject domains towards creativity. The view of creativity in the curriculum reflects the interest for creativity in the policy. Creativity is seen as a natural disposition that help children to express their thoughts and feelings and represent the abstract concepts of things. The meaning of creativity was discussed in different ways; novelty, originality, uniqueness, diversity, elaboration, flexibility, adaptation, and imagination. The instructional methods and teaching media refer to the effective learning, including play and exploring, active learning, and creating and thinking critically – by bridging their prior knowledge to new ideas and choosing ways to do things is important for promoting creative learning in the school. The subject domains towards creativity are creative art activity, language, and communication while in the school curriculum highlights art, play, science and language. This includes art, play, science, music, dance, and drama as well as creative language activity by creating beautiful things or creativity, speaking creatively, and expressing creativity through language, gestures, and movement. Indeed, creativity became an essential element in children's learning in the school in Thailand. It is a notable feature of the document that it suggested that creativity is now mentioned everywhere in the curriculum and can be seen in many open-ended daily activities. The findings suggest that the cross-curricular activities are essential for children's creativity, and that 'the curriculum should enable pupils to think creatively and critically, to solve problems and to make a difference for the better. It should give them the opportunity to become creative, innovative, enterprising and capable of leadership to equip them for their future lives as workers and citizens.' (QCA, 1999). In fact, creativity should be a central pedagogical concept. The school should set the integral part of creativity in every domain of learning rather than separated. However, there is lack of research

that explores the real factors such as school context, adult role, or cultural perspective that exists within schools. It is recommended that other factors such as school context including region, geography, school affiliation, role of the adult, or cultural perspective should be examined for future research.

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