Cakrawala Dini: Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini | **p-ISSN** 2087-1317 | **e-ISSN** 2621-8321
Vol. 14. No.1 May 2023 | Page 23-32

EARLY CHILDHOOD TEACHER TEACHING PROFILE: TEACHING CREATIVELY OR TEACHING FOR CREATIVITY

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Abstract: *Teaching creatively and teaching for creativity are two critical things in implementing the concept of teaching creativity. This study aims to find out whether teachers tend to teach creatively or teach for creativity. A quantitative approach using the survey method was chosen to see trends in the teaching abilities of early childhood teachers. Seventy-six teachers of Early Childhood Education (PAUD) in Malang City participated in this study. Quantitative data were processed using non-parametric statistics, the Wilcoxon test. The findings in the study show that teachers are more likely to teach creatively than teach for creativity, although, in general, the teachers in this study also have high scores in teaching for creativity. The main obstacle for teachers in implementing a teaching for creativity is the ability to identify creative students, encourage creativity and facilitate student creativity. Additional policies are needed to facilitate teacher teaching for creativity, especially in identifying, encouraging, and facilitating student creativity.*
Keyword: *Early Childhood Education Teacher, Survey, Teaching Creatively, Teaching for Creativity.*

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of creativity in teaching practice has emerged as traditional teaching styles have shifted towards more modern ones (Mullet, Willerson, N. Lamb, & Kettler, 2016; Skiba, Tan, Sternberg, & Grigorenko, 2010). Teachers are beginning to accept the concept of creativity, trying to implement creativity in the classroom and developing it within the school system (Chien & Hui, 2010; Xianhan Huang, Chin-Hsi, Mingyao, & Peng, 2021; Xianhan Huang, Lee, & Dong, 2019). Nonetheless, teachers' understanding of creativity is said to be still not in line with the concept of creativity in research and also the characteristics associated with creative students (Kettler, Lamb, Willerson, & Mullet, 2018). Teachers tend to think of creativity as limited to a creative teaching style (Beghetto, 2017; NACCCE, 1999), even though the concept of creativity in teaching is much more than that.

Community views regarding the role of schools have also begun to shift, not only regarding the fulfillment of knowledge but also about the development of creativity (Dababneh, Ihmeideh, & Al-Omari, 2010; Mullet et al., 2016; Skiba et al., 2010). Society considers creativity one of the most critical competencies to survive in a dynamic world (Xianhan Huang et al., 2021; Wei, Lacaste, Rodliyah, Nguyen, & Chuang, 2022). The researchers further stated that the school environment, the social dynamics that occur in the classroom, and the interactions between students and teachers clearly impact the growth of students' creative abilities (Dababneh et al., 2010; Shi, Chen, & Zhou, 2023). Beghetto & Kaufman (2014) further states that the learning environment is one of the most critical factors in maintaining creativity because it determines whether creative potential will be supported.

Although schools have a crucial role in developing creative potential, the findings of several kinds of literature show that teachers are more focused on teaching creatively and are still lacking in teaching practices that can increase student creativity (de Souza Fleith, 2000; Rubenstein, McCoach, & Siegle, 2013). The evidence is that many teachers still prefer obedience and discipline in the classroom and do not like students with creative characteristics (Anderson et al., 2022; Chien & Hui, 2010; Xian-han Huang & Lee, 2015; Xianhan Huang et al., 2019).

Many studies state that teachers also focus a lot on developing teaching styles that make learning more exciting and compelling, commonly referred to as teaching creatively (Anderson et al., 2022; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Wei et al., 2022). Even though creative teaching cannot always foster student creativity (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009; NACCCE, 1999a), students' creative abilities are most likely to be developed in an atmosphere where the teacher's creative abilities are well involved (Jeffrey & Craft, 2004).

Teaching creatively and teaching for creativity are two critical things in creative pedagogy. In an education system emphasizing traditional teaching approaches, it is important to understand teachers' perceptions of creativity to develop a creativity pedagogy. Therefore, researchers want to know how creative pedagogy practices of teachers, especially teachers in Early Childhood Education institutions. Are teachers more likely to teach creatively or teach for creativity? The hypothesis used in this study is Ha: Teachers tend to teach creatively rather than teach for creativity. H0: Teachers are more likely to teach for creativity than teach creatively. Hypotheses or temporary conjectures in this study will then be proven at the analysis stage.

Teaching Creatively

Creative teaching is defined as the use of an imaginative approach in the teaching process to make learning more engaging and effective (Cremin, 2015; NACCCE, 1999). Creative teaching involves a unique, customized, and meaningful knowledge exchange between all individuals in a learning context (Rinkevich, 2011). Furthermore, Cremin (2015) states that creative teaching is about creativity and the type of teacher's personality manifested in everyday life.

Beghetto (2017) mentions that teaching creatively requires a more diverse approach. To teach creatively teachers need to use multiple strategies by combining various ideas and making modifications to develop solutions for more exciting learning activities (Dababneh et al., 2010). Generally, teaching creatively is the teacher's creativity in preparing and delivering learning materials to increase students' interest in learning so that the learning process can run effectively.

This definition gives us the idea that teaching creatively involves teacher creativity, student interest, and learning effectiveness. Teacher creativity can be measured using aspects of divergent thinking. Those aspects explained by Munandar (2004) include flexibility, originality, fluency, and elaboration. Meanwhile, according to Renninger, Hidi, & Krapp (2014), student's interest in learning can be seen based on greater attention and concentration, feelings of pleasure to learn, and increased willingness to learn.

Setyosari (2014) explains that effective learning is not only about achieving specific learning objectives but also related to learning aspects and how much effort the teacher has in carrying out the learning process that leads to the desired goals. Slavin (1995) proposed an effective learning model consisting of learning elements that teachers and schools can manage. These models consist of teaching quality, the right level of teaching, providing incentives, and sufficient learning time.

Teaching for Creativity

Beghetto (2017) calls teaching for creativity an effort to increase student creativity. Meanwhile, according to Jeffrey & Craft (2004), teaching for creativity focuses on the teacher's teaching attitude toward student creativity and how to develop their creative thinking skills and behavior.

Directly teaching for creativity can be seen from the teacher's ability to identify (Cremin, 2015). Teaching for creativity is one of the most critical priorities and is an area that has been extensively researched in scientific literature around the world (Xianhan Huang et al., 2021; Xian-han Huang & Lee, 2015; Kettler et al., 2018; Mullet et al., 2016; Rinkevich, 2011; Wei et al., 2022). Teaching for creativity becomes possible only if the teacher is willing to teach creatively. There is agreement that creative teaching has four features: relevance, ownership, control, and innovation (Cremin, 2009).

The report on the results of the NACCCE conference (1999) put forward three principles in teaching for creativity. The three principles are encouraging, identifying, and fostering. Not all children have high self-confidence and courage in taking the first steps to develop their creativity. Therefore, the first task of the educator is to encourage students to believe in their creative potential.

Every child has a different creative capacity. Identifying students' interests and creative abilities can help them discover their creative potential. Therefore, teachers need to know what students' interests are and what creative potential they have. What can be done to foster student creativity is increasing student knowledge about the surrounding environment and providing a learning environment that stimulates student

creativity (NACCCE, 1999). A creative learning environment is characterized by appreciating ideas, which shows that students are not only allowed but also encouraged to take risks (dare to do new things) and understand student deficiencies during the learning process (Fan & Cai, 2022; Shi et al., 2023).

Teaching for creativity needs a creative teaching style. This is because the teacher must make students interested in the learning process to stimulate students' creative minds. However, teachers tend to focus more on creative teaching styles only when teaching, even though creative teaching does not necessarily teach for creativity, but when teachers can teach for creativity, of course, the teacher also practices creative teaching styles (Saebø, McCammon, & O'Farrell, 2007)

So far, the biggest challenge in teaching creatively is finding teachers who understand how to teach creativity (Beghetto, 2017). This was confirmed by Debabneh et al. (2010), who found that teachers have high confidence that they are able to increase student creativity. However, Debabneh et al. (2010) emphasize again that this is only sometimes reflected in actual teaching practice. The same thing was found by Cheung (2012), which stated that most teachers had reasonable beliefs and understanding of teaching practices to increase student creativity. However, Cheung also found that only 20% of 15 teachers applied their understanding to actual teaching practice.

Kettler et al. (2018) found that teachers less liked students with creative characteristics in measuring teachers' perceptions of the student character they want. As explained by many studies, most teachers focus more on obedience, discipline, courtesy, and cognitive achievement rather than emphasizing creativity (Anderson et al., 2022; Chien & Hui, 2010; Xian-han Huang & Lee, 2015; Xianhan Huang et al. ., 2019; Saracho, 2012). Teachers consider students with creative characteristics to interfere with learning and are less obedient to rules (Xianhan Huang et al., 2021; Mullet et al., 2016; Ucus & Acar, 2019). The teacher's erroneous perception of these creative characteristics will cause the teacher to find it challenging to recognize creative values in the classroom (Mullet, Willerson, N. Lamb, & Kettler, 2016), and some students with specific characteristics will be ignored (Kettler et al., 2018). Problems like these hinder the practice of teaching creativity.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a quantitative approach, the survey method. The research was conducted in Klojen Malang City with 76 early childhood teachers as participants. Data collection was carried out directly and manually with assistance from researchers if the further explanation was needed.

The creative teaching questionnaire consists of 10 statement items from three indicators: teacher creativity, student interest, and learning effectiveness. The teaching questionnaire for creativity consists of 14 questions formed from three indicators: encouraging, identifying, and fostering. In general, the theoretical framework for the two questionnaires was taken from NACCCE (1999), Cremin (2015), and also Beghetto (2017).

The normality test uses the Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test technique on both scales. Data analysis was performed using a non-parametric statistics comparison of two variables using the Wilcoxon test. The analysis results are then presented in a narrative form according to the research questions.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of hypothesis testing using a nonparametric statistical test, the Wilcoxon test. The assumption in the Wilcoxon test is that if the Asymp.Sig. < 0.05, then Ha is accepted, whereas if the Asymp.Sig. Value> 0.05, then Ha is

rejected. The following table shows the results of the Wilcoxon Test analysis.

Table 1. Wilcoxon test

	Teaching for Creativity-Teaching Creatively
Z	-6.335
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

Based on the Wilcoxon test analysis table results, the 2-tailed Asymptotic significance value obtained is 0.000. With a significance level of 0.05, the working hypothesis (Ha) is accepted. Therefore, the conclusion is that PAUD teachers in Klojen District, Malang City, tend to teach creatively compared than teaching for creativity.

The data obtained from the results of filling out the survey questionnaire were divided into two data groups: teaching creatively and teaching for creativity. The highest and lowest average scores for creative teaching variables were 4.9 and 3.5, respectively. At the same time, the teaching variable for creativity obtained a score of 4.6 for the highest average score and 3.4 for the lowest average score. The average maximum score of the two variables is 5.0. The mapping of the average score obtained from the survey results can be seen in the diagram in Figure 1.

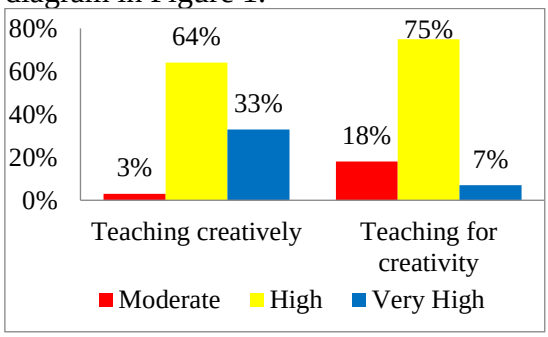

Figure 1. Graph of average score mapping

Teaching creatively and teaching for creativity are two things that are equally necessary for teaching practice. This is as found by Cheung (2012), who researched teacher understanding and practice in teaching creativity (teaching for creativity). The results showed that most teachers had reasonable beliefs or understanding; however, only 20% of 15 teachers applied their understanding in teaching practice. The same thing was found in various other studies, which stated that many teachers experienced difficulties teaching practice for creativity (Al-Dababneh, Al-Zboon, & Ahmad, 2019; Xianhan Huang et al., 2021; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Rinkevich, 2011).

Although this study's findings are that teachers need teaching practices for creativity, this is okay. As can be seen in the acquisition of scores (see Figure 1), there were no teachers who scored in the "low" or "shallow" categories. Of 76 teachers, 18% scored in the moderate category, 75% in the high category, and 7% in the very high category. While the percentage of creative teaching variables, 3% scored in the moderate category, 64% in the high category, and 33% in the very high category.

Creative Teaching Practice

There are three indicators in creative teaching practice. These indicators are teacher creativity, student interest, and learning effectiveness. The following is the percentage of scores obtained from the results of filling out the questionnaire:

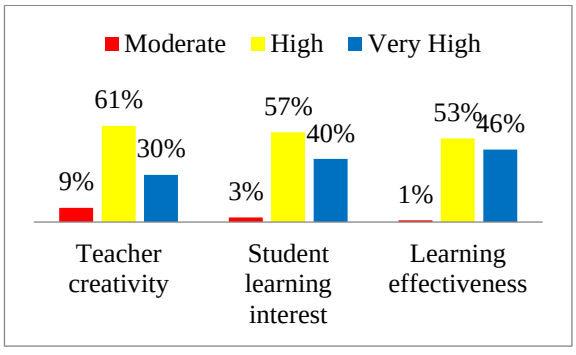

Figure 2. Graph of creative teaching score percentages

Teacher creativity is assessed based on aspects of divergent thinking as a characteristic of creativity. These aspects

are flexibility, originality, fluency, and elaboration. Flexibility is the teacher's flexibility in obtaining various ideas, while originality is the level of novelty. Fluency or fluency is related to the smoothness of the teacher in executing his ideas. The elaboration is the addition of particular objects so that the results obtained are more attractive.

Figure 2 also shows that, in general teacher, creativity has a good score; 9% of respondents get an adequate score, 61% get a high score, and the other 30% get a very high score. The four dimensions of teacher creativity measured in this study is flexibility.

Students' interest in learning is measured based on attention or great concentration while studying, happiness, and willingness to learn. On the interest in learning indicator, 3% of respondents got an adequate score, 57% got a high score, and 40% got a very high score.

Learning effectiveness is measured based on the quality of learning, materials according to needs, provision of incentives, and sufficient time. Regarding learning effectiveness, 1% of respondents scored in the moderate category, 53%, and 46% scored in the very high category.

The research respondents showed a high score category in all indicators of the ability to teach creatively. This is following what is conveyed by various literature that teachers are more likely to use teaching styles creatively in their classes (Beghetto, 2017; Craft, 2003; Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009).

Teaching for Creativity Practice

There are three principles used as indicators in teaching variables for creativity. These indicators are the principle of encouraging, the principle of identifying, and the principle of fostering. The percentage of scores obtained in each dimension can be seen in Figure 3.

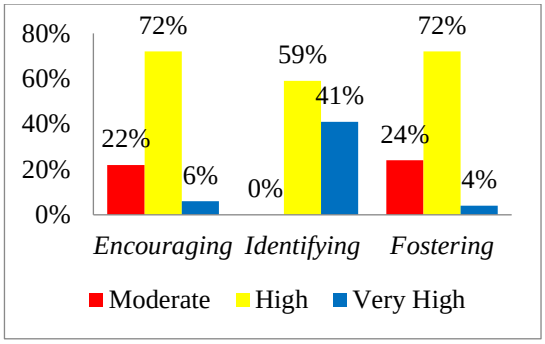

Figure 3. Graph of the percentage of teaching scores for creativity

The principle of encouragement is measured based on how the teacher encourages student creativity by encouraging students to solve problems, increasing student self-efficacy, and helping students find things they like. Based on the score percentage graph above on the principle of encouragement, 22% scored in the moderate category, 72% in the high category, and 6% in the very high category. Based on these percentages, on the principle of pushing indicators, most of the respondents scored in the high category.

Based on Figure 3, on the principle of identifying no respondents who get a good score category. The principle of identification is the teacher's ability to identify students' interests and creativity. In this principle, 59% scored in the high category, and the other 41% scored very high.

The principle of fostering is related to giving children an understanding of the surrounding environment and providing a learning environment that can increase student creativity. On the guiding principle indicator, 24% of respondents scored in the moderate category, 72% in the high category, and the other 4% scored very high. From the results of these percentages, the writer can conclude that most teachers get high scores on the principle of coaching.

Most respondents got a high score category in each indicator on the teaching variable for creativity. However, 22% and 24% scored in the excellent category on

the indicators of encouraging and fostering principles. In addition, in these two categories, only a few respondents scored in the very high category, namely 6% and 4%, respectively. Therefore, even though most of the respondents got high scores, some still needed to improve in teaching practice for creativity, especially on the principles of nurturing and encouraging.

Several previous studies also found a need for more teachers to teach practice for creativity (Al-Dababneh, Al-Zboon, & Ahmad, 2019; Cheung, 2012). Another study by Kettler et al. (2018) and Saracho (2012) also found that teachers did not encourage creative potential in the classroom. In this study, it was explained that the cause of teachers' lack of encouragement of creative potential was the favoritism factor, in which teachers were more pleased with the characteristics of specific students and less fond of creative students.

CONCLUSIONS

In general, the early childhood teachers who participated in this study tended to have higher scores for teaching creative abilities than teaching scores for creativity. Although this does not mean those early childhood teachers in Indonesia cannot teach creativity because, in general, there are no respondents with less than the two teaching abilities.

This finding is in line with several previous studies which stated that teachers are aware of the importance of fostering creativity (de Souza Fleith, 2000; Kettler et al., 2018; Saracho, 2012) but weak in practice (Al-Dababneh et al., 2019; Cheung, 2012) for failing to identify creative students when teaching (Kettler et al., 2018; Mullet et al., 2016).

The main difference between the results of this study and several previous studies is that the early childhood teachers in this study also scored high on the teaching score for creativity. This also shows that early childhood education teachers have adequate capital to teach creativity to their students. This capital is in the form of the teacher's ability to creatively foster students' learning interests and the effectiveness of learning. As has been mentioned by many previous studies, in order to be able to teach creativity, teachers must also be able to teach creatively (Al-Dababneh et al., 2019; Beghetto, 2017b; Cheung, 2012; Jeffrey & Craft, 2004; Mullet et al., 2016). Our next task is to help teachers to be able to practice the ability to teach creativity to their students, starting from identifying the creative side of students, encouraging it, and fostering and developing these abilities into valuable life provisions for students.

Policies are needed to help teachers develop their teaching potential for creativity, especially in identifying, encouraging, and facilitating creative students. Teachers need training in teaching for creativity, objective and periodic evaluation of learning, and support from facilities and related stakeholders.

Future researchers need to identify further the problems teachers face in class when teaching creativity to their students. Thus, the support of study reviews will make it easier for the government to adopt policies that facilitate teachers to teach creativity in the future.

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