



Introduction to the special issue “Intelligence, Creativity and Giftedness”



1. Introduction

Intelligence, creativity and giftedness are often studied separately. Journals and conferences are mainly focused on just one of these topics. However their joint examination presents interest in theoretical, social and practical respects.

From the theoretical point, these research areas are complimentary. Studies of intelligence benefited greatly from psychometrics. Empirical investigations through the application of sophisticated methodology have led to structural models where different kinds of intelligence found their place. However, discussions between proponents of different models continue and today it is obvious that theories of intelligence should be based on research of underlying cognitive processes. Working and short-term memory, executive processes and attention, mental speed and many other cognitive structures are intensively studied in this respect.

The situation with creativity is different. Of course, the study of creativity benefited greatly from psychometrics, and the cognitive basis of creativity is also a popular research topic. However, creativity cannot be reduced to a cognitive process such as divergent thinking or even to a set of cognitive processes. Creation of a new products involves personality including affective and motivational aspects. Moreover, creativity takes different forms in different areas – in music and sciences, business and poetry. These different forms of creativity are based on different cognitive processes and different personality, emotional and volitional traits. Consequently, creativity research, although sometimes less sophisticated methodologically than intelligence research, requires taking into account a wider psychological context.

Finally, giftedness requires an even broader perspective. Giftedness is now conceived to encompass both intelligence and creativity, as well as additional competency areas such as leadership according to some authors. However, in any case, the essential point of giftedness studies consists of modeling the process through which subject's cognitive potential transforms to his or her academic and creative realizations. This process occurs in a specific social and cultural (sometimes – multicultural) context who's role is not less important than the role of cognitive abilities or personality factors.

Thus, to study intelligence, creativity and giftedness jointly means to take into account a wide range of interrelated psychological structures and phenomena. We hope that the articles in this issue give a kind of a multifaceted view of this broad area.

In a social respect, intelligence, creativity and giftedness studies are particularly important. Modern economics, which relies more and more on knowledge and innovation and allows handing over some routine functions from humans to computers, requires

additional cognitive competencies. In this context social scientists advance the concept of the creative class and empirical findings relate cognitive abilities and competences to economic development and well-being. This situation challenges the psychology of intelligence, creativity and giftedness.

For practical purposes, this research is important for education and business in two main ways – assessment and promotion of human abilities. Development of assessment tools is based on structural theories of cognitive abilities that allow more adaptive and fine-grade diagnostics. Attribution, attribution styles, self-efficacy and influence of relevant people (parents, teachers) upon these constructs have become, among others, a subject in vogue for human abilities enhancement. Together with cognitive education and different methods of fostering creativity this research offers perspectives on making the most of human abilities.

The articles of this special issue reflect the cooperation initiated by researchers from Germany, France and Russia. This cooperation lead to a number of conferences held in Moscow, Paris and Muenster with the large international participation. We would like to acknowledge particularly the role of Emeritus Professor of Muenster University and Professor h.c. of State Human Science University (Moscow) Bernd Schaefer who was at the origin of this cooperation.

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