

CREATIVITY AND MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS: SEX DIFFERENCES AMONG MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONALS¹

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Abstract

The article is devoted to the study of creativity, its criteria, the personality traits facilitating its manifestation, and the interrelationships between creativity and motivational orientations among female and male professionals in the field of management. Of the study participants, 52 were women, and 40 were men. The findings showed that, compared with men, women demonstrated higher scores in fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, overall creativity, complexity, risk-taking ability, and creativity self-assessment. The study also found that the structure of the interrelationships between creativity and motivational orientations differ between women and men. Among women, the creativity indicators are positively correlated with the motivational orientations of altruism and power. In contrast, among men, they are negatively correlated with result orientation, work orientation, and process orientation.

Keywords: Creativity, sex differences, motivation, interrelationships, management.

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ՍՏԵՂԾԱՐԱՐՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԵՎ ՄՈՏԻՎԱՅԻՈՆ ՈՒՂՂՎԱԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ ՍԵՌԱՅԻՆ ԱՌԱՆՁՆԱՀԱՏԿՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԸ ԿԱՌԱՎԱՐՉԱԿԱՆ ՈԼՈՐՏԻ ՄԱՍՆԱԳԵՏՆԵՐԻ ՄՈՏ²

ՍՈՆԱ ՊՈԳՈՍՅԱՆ

ՀՀ պետական կառավարման ակադեմիայի որակի
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Համառոտագիր

Հոդվածը նվիրված է ստեղծարարության, դրա չափորոշիչների, դրսևորմանը նպաստող անձնային որակների և մոտիվացիոն ուղղվածության փոխկապվածությունների ուսումնասիրությանը կառավարման ոլորտի կին և տղամարդ մասնագետների շրջանում: Հետազոտությունը մասնակցել են 52 կին և 40 տղամարդ: Հետազոտության արդյունքները ցույց տվեցին, որ կանանց շրջանում, ի տարբերություն տղամարդկանց, ավելի բարձր են արագության, ձկունության, յուրօրինակության, մշակվածության, ստեղծարարության, բարդության, ռիսկի հակվածության, ինքնագնահատման ցուցանիշները: Պարզվել է նաև, որ կանանց և տղամարդկանց շրջանում ստեղծարարության և մոտիվացիոն ուղղվածությունների փոխկապվածությունների կառուցվածքը տարբերվում է: Կանանց շրջանում ստեղծարարության ցուցանիշները դրական են՝ փոխկապված ալտրոիզմի և իշխանության մոտիվացիոն ուղղվածության հետ: Տղամարդկանց շրջանում բացասական են՝ փոխկապված արդյունքի, աշխատանքի և գործընթացի հետ:

Բանալի բառեր՝ Ստեղծարարություն, սեռային տարբերություններ, մոտիվացիա, փոխկապվածություն, կառավարչական ոլորտ:

Introduction

Modern managerial activity requires not only professional knowledge but also creative thinking, the ability to make unconventional decisions, and an effective motivational system. Creativity is an important characteristic of the modern professional, enabling them to respond to continuous changes, adapt creatively, and thereby increase the effectiveness of their professional activity. However, creativity often enables an individual not only to adapt quickly and

2 Աշխատանքն իրականացվել է ՀՀ ԿԳՄՍ նախարարության Բարձրագույն կրթության և գիտության կոմիտեի աջակցությամբ՝ 25RG-5A220 գիտական նախագծի շրջանակում «Անձի ստեղծարարության հոգեֆիզիոլոգիական առանձնահատկությունները և դրա զարգացման հոգեբանական մոդելները»

easily to changes and overcome uncertainty, but also to develop new methods and new tools. Despite the relevance and necessity of studying individual creativity, and the existence of various theoretical approaches, the relationships among the structural components of creativity, creative personality traits, and motivational orientations among male and female professionals remain insufficiently explored. In particular, there is a limited number of studies that combine the different components of creativity and the individual's motivational system within the context of managerial activity. This circumstance determines the relevance of the present study.

Theoretical Basis

Creativity is examined within the framework of various theoretical approaches. However, in the context of managerial activity, the most widely recognised theories include T. Amabile's Componential Model, Sternberg and Lubart's Investment Theory, as well as M. Csikszentmihalyi's Systems Model. The following observation on creativity is noteworthy, according to which Creativity plays a fundamental role in the advancement of society. It emerges from the dynamic interaction of individual abilities, cognitive processes, and environmental conditions, resulting in products or ideas that are considered both novel and useful within a given social context (Plucker et al., 2004). Consequently, scientific innovation and cultural development are largely driven by the creative efforts of individuals and groups. (Taylor, 2025).

Baer and Kaufman consider creativity a multifactorial phenomenon, the manifestation of which is determined not only by an individual's creative abilities but also by intelligence, motivation, professional knowledge, and the social environment in which creative activity develops and is evaluated. According to the authors' proposed APT (Amusement Park Theory) model, the manifestation of creativity requires general prerequisites (intelligence, motivation, and a supportive environment), as well as domain-specific and specialised knowledge that enables creative potential to become actual creative outcomes. (Baer J., Kaufman J. C., 2008) This theory is consistent with R. Sternberg's investment approach, which identifies six factors necessary for creativity: knowledge, thinking style, personal characteristics, intelligence, motivation, and environment. (Sternberg, R. J., 2009)

Nakano and colleagues define creativity as the result of the interaction between an individual's abilities, cognitive processes, and the environment, resulting in an outcome that is both novel and useful for a given society. The authors note that creativity is a multidimensional construct that is characteristic of every individual, although it varies in its degree of expression and across different domains of activity. (Nakano T. de C., Oliveira K. da S., Zaia P., 2021)

At the same time, the authors emphasise the role of external conditions, highlighting that the social and cultural environment can both facilitate and constrain the manifestation of creativity.

In models of creativity, particularly in the context of managerial activity, T. Amabile's approach is of particular importance, according to which creativity is the unity of three components: domain-relevant skills (expertise), creativity-relevant processes (the ability to think creatively), which depend on specific personal characteristics and determine the flexibility and originality of problem solving, and motivation. The third component is motivation, which may be either intrinsic or extrinsic. T. Amabile stated that employees are more creative when they possess intrinsic motivation. (Amabile, T. M. 2012)

In our proposed model of creativity, creativity is viewed as a systemic quality and includes criteria of creativity, personality traits, factors that facilitate and hinder creativity, and motivation.

Regarding sex differences in creativity, one of the earliest approaches to explaining them is the biological and neuropsychological approach. According to this approach, differences in the creative achievements of men and women may be explained by hormonal characteristics, structural and functional differences in the brain, as well as the characteristics of cognitive processes (Taylor, 2025). In particular, it is assumed that sex hormones, especially different levels of testosterone, may influence brain development and, consequently, the formation of certain mechanisms of creative thinking.

Some authors note that women show a relatively higher degree of cognitive specialisation, that is, more targeted activation of specific brain regions and suppression of others when performing a particular task. In addition, some researchers assume that women have more developed interhemispheric connectivity, which may contribute to more integrated information processing (Abra & Valentine-French, 1991, as cited in Taylor, 2025). Some researchers also suggest that men and women may use different cognitive strategies when performing creative tasks.

However, contemporary studies indicate that these explanations still lack sufficient empirical support. As Taylor (2025) notes, knowledge of the neurobiological mechanisms of creative thinking remains incomplete, and the causal relationship between sex differences in the brain and creativity has not been convincingly demonstrated. Therefore, observed differences in the creative achievements of men and women cannot be explained solely by biological factors.

Another approach to explaining sex differences in creative achievement focuses on personality characteristics and motivation. According to this approach, differences between men and women may be determined less by creative ability than by personality traits and motivational factors that contribute to the realisation of creative potential (Taylor, 2025).

The central premise of these theories is that creative achievement is determined not only by creative ability but also by such personality traits as goal orientation, perseverance, competitiveness, self-confidence, independence, and willingness to take risks (Abra & Valentine-French, 1991; Eagly, 1987). These

characteristics are assumed to contribute to the realisation of creative ideas and their recognition by society.

At the same time, contemporary studies do not confirm that women have lower creative motivation than men. On the contrary, it is assumed that women often realise their creative potential in fields or forms of activity that are less valued by society or receive less public recognition (Reis, 2002; Taylor, 2025).

Baer and Kaufman, having analysed numerous studies conducted over several decades, conclude that no consistent sex differences have been identified in the results of creativity tests between men and women. Moreover, when a certain advantage has been observed, it has more often been in favour of women.

At the same time, the authors note that, in real life, men are more represented in terms of creative achievements across many fields. According to the authors, this contradiction cannot be explained solely by differences in innate creative abilities. It is more likely to be determined by the social environment, educational opportunities, societal expectations, professional barriers, and the characteristics of the evaluation of creative activity.

The authors particularly emphasise that an insufficiently supportive environment, social expectations associated with motherhood, and the fact that many professional fields were long managed and controlled by men have played an important role in limiting women's creative achievements. (Baer J., Kaufman J. C., 2008)

Nakano and colleagues argue that sex differences in creativity cannot be explained solely by the fact of being male or female. Cultural characteristics, age, educational level, the methodologies employed, and factors such as motivation, attitudes, opportunities, and social support also influence the results. (Nakano T. de C., Oliveira K. da S., Zaia P., 2021)

Different patterns may also be observed across specific types of creativity. For example, in several studies, women have demonstrated higher performance on verbal creativity tasks, whereas men have shown higher performance on certain indicators of visual-spatial or mathematical creativity. However, these findings have not been replicated across all studies, further confirming that sex differences depend on the type of creativity assessed and the methodology used.

In contemporary research, the sociocultural approach has received the broadest support, arguing that social and cultural influences primarily determine sex differences in creative achievement. Society-shaped gender roles and expectations often direct women to devote more attention to family and interpersonal relationships, which may limit their opportunities for professional creative activity. (Taylor, 2023, 2025)

Although manifestations of explicit discrimination have significantly decreased in contemporary societies, studies indicate that women still often receive less support, recognition, and encouragement for creative activity. This phenomenon is shaped not only by external constraints but also by gender

stereotypes and unconscious bias about creativity, which may influence the evaluation of creative outcomes are evaluated (Taylor et al., 2020; Proudfoot et al., 2015).

According to Conti and colleagues (2001), the manifestation of creativity is significantly influenced by the relationship between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation, which is also associated with the degree of expression of gender role stereotypes. Studies indicate that intrinsic motivation plays a more significant role in the realisation of creative abilities among women, whereas men's creative performance is more often stimulated by competitive situations (Geary, 1998; Hall, 1990). (Ильин Е. П., 2009, pp.191-192)

The analysis of the above-mentioned studies indicates that a unified perspective on sex differences in creativity has not yet been established. At the same time, contemporary research more frequently emphasises the importance of personality, motivational, and sociocultural factors rather than creative abilities. However, the sex differences in creativity and motivational orientations among professionals working in the field of management remain insufficiently studied, which determines the relevance of the present research.

This article aims to identify sex differences in creativity, creative personality traits, and motivational orientations, as well as the interrelationships among them, among management professionals.

The study's scientific novelty of the study lies in the fact that, for the first time in an Armenian sample, it identifies not only sex differences in creativity, creative personality traits, and motivational orientations, but also the different structures of the interrelationships among these variables in male and female management professionals.

Research Methodology and Methods

The methodological basis of the study was the principle of the unity of personality and activity, as well as the systems approach. The study used a psychometric approach to creativity, which holds that creativity can be measured and has specific criteria. The present study is based on T. Amabile's Componential Model of Creativity, as well as S. Poghosyan's model for the study of creativity (Poghosyan, 2024).

The study used testing and interviews. The following instruments were administered: F. Williams' Divergent Thinking Test, the Creative Personality Traits Test (Tunik, 2003), and O. Potyomkina's Test of Socio-Psychological Attitudes in the Motivational-Need Sphere. The purpose of the interview aimed to determine how important professionals considered creativity in their work, how they used it, and how it helped them.

One hundred middle-level managers participated in the study; however, the data of 92 participants were considered valid. Of the participants, 52 were women, and 40 were men.

The results of the interviews revealed that although all participants consid-

ered creativity important in their professional activity, they used it less frequently. Many of them regarded themselves as not creative; however, the test results indicated a high level of creativity. The most frequently encountered statements during the interviews were: *“I cannot be creative,” “Who needs my creativity?”* and *“It is a luxury that I can afford.”* The interview findings indicate a contradiction between professionals’ positive attitude toward creativity and their assessment of their own creative potential, which is also confirmed by the results of the Creativity Self-Assessment Test results also confirm.

Results and Discussion

The comparison of creativity and its criteria between women and men shows that women demonstrate higher scores in fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, and overall creativity (Table 1).

Table 1.

Mean Creativity Scores Among Women and Men

Variable	Female n=52	Male n=40	t	Cohen’s d
Fluency	12	11	2.90	0.61
Flexibility	7	6	3.12	0.66
Originality	27	23	2.89	0.61
Elaboration	16	13	2.61	0.55
Naming	16	16	–	–
Creativity	78	68	3.05	0.64

Higher fluency scores indicate that they generate a greater number of ideas and are able to propose not just one but several appropriate responses to a given question. Flexibility scores indicate that women generate a large number of ideas and a wide variety of ideas, shifting from one category to another, and being capable of approaching problems through unconventional paths. Flexibility enables individuals to avoid repetition and stereotypical thinking. Originality refers to the generation of new, unexpected, and unconventional ideas. Through originality, an individual moves beyond what is common and obvious and proposes something new. Higher elaboration scores among women indicate that they develop, enrich, and deepen their ideas, making them more interesting. The Student’s t-test shows these differences are statistically significant ($p < .001$). Among the criteria, Creative Use of Words had the lowest score, indicating that they use language creatively to a lesser extent. According to Cohen’s d, all statistically significant

differences demonstrate a medium effect size ($d = 0.55\text{--}0.66$), with the highest values observed for flexibility and overall creativity.

Thus, women’s overall creativity score is higher, indicating they generate a large number of diverse, unexpected, and novel ideas, propose alternative solutions to problems, and further develop their ideas. If the findings obtained in the present study are compared with the views of other authors, studies based on the results of creative task performance indicate that gender differences in creative potential and creative abilities are minimal (Taylor et al., 2024). Although the findings of different studies vary to some extent, theoretical reviews and meta-analyses (Abdulla Alabbasi et al., 2025; Abraham, 2016; Baer & Kaufman, 2008; Runco et al., 2010; Taylor et al., 2024) indicate that, on average, women and girls perform slightly better than men and boys on **divergent thinking** tasks. Divergent thinking assesses an individual’s ability to generate multiple original responses to a task or stimulus (Guilford, 1956). (Christa & Taylor, 2025)

The comparison of creative personality traits and creativity self-assessment scores shows that both women and men have high levels of curiosity but low imagination (Table 2).

Table 2.

Mean Scores of Creative Personality Traits Among Women and Men

Variable	Female n=52	Male n=40	t	Cohen’s d
Curiosity	15	15	–	
Imagination	10	10	–	
Complexity	14	12	2.34	0.49
Risk-taking ability	16	13	4.47	0.95
Self-assessment of creativity	55	51	3.81	0.80

Women demonstrate a higher complexity score. According to Student’s *t*-test, this difference is statistically significant ($p < .01$). Compared with men, women also have higher risk-taking and creativity self-assessment scores. According to Student’s *t*-test, these differences are statistically significant ($p < .001$).

High curiosity scores indicate that both women and men are interested in and reflect on the hidden meaning of phenomena and enjoy working with different ideas. Low imagination scores indicate that they visualise and construct mental images less frequently and rely less on intuition. Particularly noteworthy are women’s higher complexity scores than men’s, indicating that women are more likely to consider multiple alternatives, question the existence of a single correct solution, and explore new phenomena and solve complex problems.

Compared with men, women show significantly higher risk-taking ability scores, indicating that women are courageous, accept criticism constructively, anticipate the possibility of failure, formulate assumptions and predictions, act under unstructured conditions, and defend their own ideas. Our findings contradict those of Kim et al. (2024), according to whom men’s creativity is more closely associated with risk-taking propensity, whereas women’s creativity is more closely associated with empathic tendencies (Christa L. Taylor, 2025)

Women’s creativity self-assessment score is significantly higher, indicating they evaluate their own creativity more highly than men do. According to Cohen’s *d*, the effect sizes for the differences in creative personality traits range from medium to large ($d = 0.49$ – 0.95). The largest effect sizes were observed for Risk-taking Ability ($d = 0.95$) and Self-assessment of Creativity ($d = 0.80$), while Complexity showed a medium effect size ($d = 0.49$).

The comparison of motivational orientation scores shows that both women and men are oriented toward results, altruism, and freedom, whereas they are less oriented toward power and money (Table 3.).

Table 3.

Mean Motivational Orientation Scores Among Women and Men

Variable	Male n=40	Female n=52	t	Cohen’s d
Process	6	5	2.87	0.60
Result	7	7	–	
Altruism	7	7	–	
Egoism	4	4	–	
Work	6	6	–	
Freedom	8	7	2.96	0.62
Power	4	4		
Money	2	2		

Differences between women and men were found only in the process and freedom scores, and according to Student’s *t*-test, these differences are statistically significant ($p < .01$). According to Cohen’s *d*, both differences demonstrate a medium effect size (Process: $d = 0.60$; Freedom: $d = 0.62$). Men are more oriented toward the process and freedom, indicating that, for them, the activity itself should be interesting, and they are less concerned with the outcome.

If these findings are compared with those of other studies, a similar view has been reported, according to which women often pay greater attention to the creative process. In contrast, men place greater emphasis on its outcome and social recognition (Ruth & Birren, 1985). (Taylor, 2025)

For both women and men, result orientation indicates a willingness to achieve results despite obstacles. Individuals with this orientation are the most reliable employees. Altruistic orientation among both women and men indicates a willingness to act for the benefit of others, even at their own expense. Altruism is a valuable motivational orientation characteristic of a mature personality. In the case of freedom orientation, freedom represents the primary value, and this orientation is more pronounced among men. The motivational orientations of both women and men are not harmonious, since some orientations (results, altruism, and freedom) are strongly expressed. In contrast, others (power and money) are expressed at a low level.

We conducted a correlation analysis between creativity results, creative personality traits, and motivational orientations among women and men.

Table 4.

Correlations Between the Results of Creativity and Motivational Orientations Among Women

P<0,05* p<0.01** p<0.001***

Naming	Egoism	-0.286**
Flexibility	Power	-0.234*
Elaboration	Altruism	0.254*
creativity	Altruism	0.267*
Curiosity	Result	0.269*
	Altruism	0.281**
	Power	0.451***
Risk-taking ability	Power	0.334**
Imagination	Power	0.332**
Self-assessment of creativity	Power	0.430***

The correlation analysis showed that, among women, flexibility is negatively correlated with power orientation, indicating that the more diverse the ideas women generate, the less they strive to exert influence over other people (Table 4.). Elaboration is positively correlated with altruism, indicating that the more women develop and refine their ideas, the more they tend to act for the benefit of others. A negative correlation was found between Creative Use of Words (Title) and egoism, indicating that the more creatively women use language, the less they are focused on their own interests. The positive correlation between creativity and altruism indicates that the more women generate new and unexpected ideas, the more inclined they are to act for the benefit of others.

Curiosity is positively correlated with the results. The results show that curiosity, result orientation, altruism, and power orientation are positively correlated, indicating that the more women demonstrate curiosity and discover new phenomena, the more they are oriented toward achieving results, acting for the benefit of others, and striving to influence other people in their professional activity. Risk-taking ability, imagination, and creativity self-assessment are positively correlated with power orientation, indicating that the more courageous women are, the more capable they are of defending their ideas, constructing mental images, trusting their intuition, and evaluating their own creativity highly; the more they strive to have influence over other people. Thus, among women, the manifestations of creativity manifest as altruism, egoism, result orientation, and power orientation. Among women, the creativity indicators and creative personality traits are positively correlated with the motivational orientations of altruism and power.

Table 5.

Correlations Between the Results of Creativity and Motivational Orientations Among Men		
P<0,05* p<0.01** p<0.001***		
Originality	Result	-0.275*
	Work	-0.322*
Complexity	Result	-0.322*
	Freedom	-0.304*
Flexibility	Work	-0.295*
creativity	Work	-0.309*
Curiosity	Power	0.306*
	Process	-0.352**
Imagination	Altruism	-0.343**
Self-assessment of creativity	Power	0.317*
	Process	-0.330**

As shown in the table, fluency, flexibility, and originality are negatively correlated with work orientation, indicating that the more men generate a large number of diverse, unexpected, and novel ideas, the less they are oriented toward work, and the less satisfaction work may bring them (Table 5). Particularly noteworthy are the negative correlations of originality and complexity with result orientation, indicating that the more men generate new and unexpected ideas, solve complex problems, and propose alternative solutions, the less they are oriented toward achieving results. When solving complex problems, they are also less oriented toward freedom.

Among men, curiosity and creativity self-assessment are positively correlated with power orientation and negatively correlated with process orientation, indicating that the more curious they are, the more they strive for novelty, and the more highly they evaluate their own creativity, the more they strive to influence other people and the less they are oriented toward the interest of the process itself. This suggests they are more concerned with outcomes. Among men, imagination is negatively correlated with altruism, indicating that the more they construct mental images and trust their intuition, the less inclined they are to act for the benefit of others.

Thus, among men, creativity, originality, complexity, flexibility, imagination, and creativity self-assessment are associated with result orientation, work orientation, freedom orientation, process orientation, and altruism.

Comparing the correlation results for creativity and motivational orientations among women and men, curiosity and creativity self-assessment are positively correlated with power orientation for both women and men. In the remaining cases, among women, creativity is more strongly associated with altruism, egoism, result orientation, money orientation, and power orientation. In contrast, among men, it is associated with result orientation, work orientation, freedom orientation, process orientation, and altruism. Among women, creativity indicators and creative personality traits are positively correlated with the motivational orientations of altruism and power orientation. Among men, they are negatively correlated with result orientation, work orientation, and process orientation.

Conclusions

Women score significantly higher than men in fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, and overall creativity. They generate a greater number of diverse, original, and unconventional ideas, propose alternative solutions to problems, and elaborate on their ideas more extensively.

Women also report significantly higher creativity self-assessment scores, indicating they perceive themselves as more creative than men. Both women and men demonstrate high levels of curiosity but relatively low levels of imagination. In addition, women score higher on complexity and willingness to take risks.

The comparison of motivational orientations indicates that both women and men are primarily oriented toward results, altruism, and freedom, whereas ori-

entations toward power and money are relatively weak. Significant gender differences are observed only in process orientation and freedom orientation. Overall, both groups' motivational profiles of both groups are unbalanced, with some orientations (results, altruism, and freedom) strongly expressed, while others (power and money) remain weak.

Among both women and men, curiosity, creativity self-assessment, and power orientation are positively correlated, suggesting that individuals who are more curious, more open to novelty, and who perceive themselves as more creative also show a stronger tendency to influence others. Among women, creativity is more closely associated with altruism, egoism, result orientation, and power orientation. Among men, it is associated with result orientation, work orientation, freedom orientation, process orientation, and altruism. Furthermore, among men, fluency, flexibility, and originality are negatively correlated with work orientation, indicating that the more able they are to generate numerous, diverse, and original ideas, the less strongly they are oriented toward work and the less satisfaction they derive from it.

The pattern of relationships between creativity and motivational orientations differs by gender. Among women, creativity indicators and creative personality traits are positively associated with altruism and power orientation. In contrast, among men, these indicators are negatively associated with result orientation, work orientation, and process orientation.

The findings of the study can inform creativity development programs for management professionals by considering the relationships between creativity and motivational orientations.

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