

Women's creativity: statistical and actual approach

Afterthoughts from the conference of the Polish Patent Office titled "Innovation and Creativity of Women. Design as an Opportunity for SME", March 21, 2013.

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CREATIVITY (Latin: *creatus*) is, to put it simply, the ability to give rise to something new. Such a potential has magical properties. "You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have," to quote

Maya Angelou, American poet, memoirist and actress. Creativity is a mental process leading to new and original ideas, concepts, associations, and to innovative ways of putting them into practice. This process is difficult to define, as it does not fit with simple schemes. Therefore, there is no clear definition of creativity. Something can be created as a result of painstaking research and quite by accident, through intuitive impulses and imagination that are encouraged by knowledge and in-depth reflection. To put things half jokingly, half seriously, it is about the so-called "well-informed intuition".

Creativity involves unconventional thinking. Although it often defies the canons of rationality and, at first glance, may even have the features of absurd, it can actually lead to the discovery of something new. Albert Einstein put it bluntly: "I never made one of my discoveries through the process of rational thinking". At the same time, this great scientist highlighted the fundamental role of imagination in creativity and innovation: "Imagination is everything. It is the preview of life's coming attractions".

It is difficult to precisely define, identify and measure creativity as a process of giving rise to something new because the word "new" is often differently understood and perceived, and sometimes even ignored.

Moreover, paraphrasing the famous book by Tomáš Seulek titled "The Economics of Good and Evil," creativity can be considered good or bad depending on whether it is aimed at improving the quality of social and economic life, or not. Examples of bad creativity can well be multiplied. In recent years, it was spectacularly showcased by the global crisis whose underlying cause was the creation of new financial instruments, including fraudulent pyramid schemes, toxic derivatives and other innovations (or rather pseudo-innovations).

Similarly, a creativity focused on the so-called antifeatures has some negative overtones too. It involves activities that are highly detrimental to consumers and to the environment (but they drive profits for producers) and that are designed to create products that are either short-lived or need additional products to be fit for use, like for example adapters that match only one type of device, such as computer, telephone, etc.. It is no coincidence that more and more researchers point to the emerging new social phenomenon which is tiredness with progress. In this context, it is worth citing the anthropological dilemma between progress and satisfaction. It further involves a visible in practice decrease in the marginal utility of progress.

Difficulty in assessing and measuring creativity is also due to deficiencies in relevant statistics. On top of that, a variety of social stereotypes and misleading assessments interfere here.

According to official statistics, women are much less represented in the field of creativity, innovation, invention, and scientific achievements. This is reflected by the Nobel Prize statistics: women account for less than 5% of the overall number of Nobel Prize winners. The picture looks slightly better if you look at the number of double Nobel Prize

laureates in which case the prize has been so far awarded to four researchers, including one woman - a Pole Maria Skłodowska-Curie (the first Nobel Prize in physics in 1903 for the discovery of radioactivity, and the second Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1911 for the discovery and isolation of pure radium). However, in assessing the true role of women in the field of creativity, on no account can we rely merely on figures. By way of illustration, let me quote again Albert Einstein: "Not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted".

Women's resourcefulness and creativity in solving many difficult problems of everyday life is not to be overestimated. This is extremely important, but at the same time hardly, if at all, measurable because not as spectacular as for example scientific discoveries. In this sense, women are great but quiet creators. Polish proverb saying "where the devil can't go, he'll send a woman", although admitting various interpretations, highlights an enormous creative potential of women. It is something not to be overestimated, especially in such areas as education, design and fashion, but also in other fields of social and economic life. Not to be neglected is also the creative role of women in fine arts, the latter being a driving force of creativity in various areas social and economic areas.

The Internet and information revolution will surely help make better use of women's creativity potential. Unleashing their potential paves the way for the implementation of "social futurism", as suggested by Alvin Toffler, by creating in every community "imagined centres" aimed at an interdisciplinary "brain activation". This can be a source of ideas that "technocrats never dreamed of", since what may appear to be naive in the industrial era is not naive today in the era of the Internet and information revolution. ::