A Project entitled

Comparison of local and international school teachers' perspectives on teaching creativity

in Hong Kong kindergarten classrooms

Submitted by

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Declaration

 I, HWANG Jin Young   declare that this research report represents my own work

under the supervision of Dr. LAM Chi Ming, and that it has not been submitted

previously for examination to any tertiary institution.

Signed

Jin Young Hwang

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Contents

List of Figures

Abstract

Creativity has long been hailed as one of the key traits to a student's success. However, the educational pursuit of instilling creativity is a major concern for teachers in Hong Kong, especially since it is a quality that many perceive need to be taught from a young age. Although several studies have attempted to look into teaching creativity in Hong Kong kindergartens, they have failed to distinguish between the local and international school systems as both exist in the city. This study is an attempt to identify and compare the perspectives and methods in which local and international kindergarten kindergarten school teachers teach creativity to kindergarten students in Hong Kong between the ages of 3 to 5 and analyse the difference in teaching creativity between the two education systems. Both groups share similar views on the definition of creativity and activities implemented in the classroom to a certain extent, such as by acknowledging that creativity leads to unique ideas. Both groups also incorporate music and arts into their creativity modules. However, the differences between the two become apparent in the challenges they encounter in teaching creativity and the support they receive from their respective schools. One of the biggest contrasts in the results is that time is a major limitation for local teachers in teaching creativity whereas the international teachers named parents and the home environment as a hindrance to teaching creativity. According to the study results, both groups can take a page out of each other's books. Local schools can consider embedding free play into their curriculum which will help counter the time limitations in conducting activities. On the other hand, international schools may prioritise supporting teachers in communicating with the children's parents so that the teachers can teach creativity without as many roadblocks.

Comparison of local and international school teachers' perspectives on teaching creativity

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1. Introduction

The purpose of the study is to compare the perspectives and methods in which local and international schools teach creativity to kindergarten students in Hong Kong aged 3 to 5 and analyse if there is a difference in teaching creativity between the two education systems.

Creativity is fundamental to the student's success both in the school setting and outside in real life, but the pressure to learn literacy and mathematics in early childhood classrooms is an obstacle in implementing activities promoting creative thinking (Eckhoff, 2011). The kindergarten setting is one of the earliest opportunities to start honing in on nurturing creativity. Hui et al. (2015) stated that teachers play a crucial role in developing children's creativity. However, concerns arise as Cheung (2010) conducted a study on Hong Kong kindergarten teachers and their perception of teaching creativity. They observed that limited knowledge, skills and experiences were a challenge for the teachers to foster children's creativity. Since different school categories – international and local – adopt different curriculums, it can be hypothesized that they also deliver teachings of creativity differently. Yet, there are few studies comparing the two educational systems in terms of teaching creativity.

2. Literature review

Ata-Akturk and Sevimli-Celik (2020) stated that it is difficult to define creativity and there is a variety of definitions applicable to the concept. The Hong Kong Kindergarten Education Curriculum Guide (2017), has placed emphasis on nurturing creativity as it lists 'Arts and Creativity' as one of its six learning areas. The Hong Kong Curriculum Development Council (CDC) stated in the Kindergarten Curriculum Guide that creativity can be nurtured through children "…creating, presenting and appreciating arts" (Curriculum Development Council, 2017, p. 47). In contrast, the International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP) lists creativity as one of the twelve IB attitudes that students should demonstrate. It defines creativity as "being creative and imaginative in their thinking and in their approach to problems and dilemmas" (International Baccalaureate Organisation [IBO], 2009, p. 24). We can see a difference in approaches to creativity as the Curriculum Development Council places its focus on arts and the IBO focuses on problem-solving.

Cultural differences are also expected to play a part in the results as Bunnell (2014) stated that international school teachers are mainly from Western backgrounds. Tam et al. (2014) argued that the conceptions of creativity differ between Hong Kong Chinese and Western conceptions. They also concluded that instruments used to measure students' creativity do not reflect Chinese conceptions of creativity and future studies should shift to a sociocultural perspective (Tam et al., 2014). While Cheung and Mok (2013) conducted a similar study on Hong Kong early childhood teachers' conceptions of creativity, it focused on only local Hong Kong teachers. The results showed that Hong Kong teachers emphasise cognitive ability when discussing creativity which Cheung and Mok (2013) believe is connected to the Chinese culture and the importance of

academic success. Therefore, this thesis is focused on interviewing both local and international school teachers to see if there will be any differences in their perceptions of teaching creativity.

It is important to analyse the teachers' perspectives as Burton's (2010) study concluded that teachers exchange and construct their ideas on how to teach creativity with each other. Also, Hui et al. (2015) stated that in previous studies about teacher perceptions of creative education, teachers are able to recognise the importance of creativity but were not confident in fostering creativity in the classroom. While they may acknowledge the significance of teaching creativity, it would be beneficial to further question why teachers feel inadequate in their creative teaching.

As previously stated, there is no single definition for the concept of creativity and can be interpreted in various ways (Ata-Akturk, & Sevimli-Celik, 2020). Therefore, it is essential to ask teachers what their definition of creativity is and to observe if there is a difference between the two educational systems and analyse why there may be a contrast.

Due to the two divergent focuses on creativity, the activities proposed by the teachers may differ as well. The local curriculum emphasizes activities where students can create, present and appreciate the arts (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). Whereas, the IBO (2009) believes creativity is a personal attribute that should be developed. Richardson and Mishra (2018) stated that creativity becomes discouraged due to a lack of time, space and curriculum constraints leading to creativity becoming an art class instead of a transdisciplinary practice where it should belong in all aspects of learning.

Kindergarten teachers struggle to find a balance between promoting creative learning experiences and ensuring that the activity develops content knowledge, and is child-centered, active and play-based (Eckhoff, 2011). Cheung and Leung (2014) conducted a survey on local preschool teachers'

perceptions of their creative personalities. The results have shown that more than 70% of the participants reported that they believe they were not creative teachers. This shows the lack of confidence in their own creativity which Cheung and Leung (2014) concluded may be the reason why local Hong Kong preschool settings are focused more on teacher-directed activities. Cheung et al. (2019) revealed in their study that local Hong Kong teachers may not be sufficiently equipped with a strong understanding of creativity as the participants reported that they struggled to implement child-centered creative activities. As there are several challenges that have been raised in various studies, it is notable to ask about the limitations the teachers encounter in their teaching.

To frame question four, Cheung (2010) discovered that teachers identified that it was an important factor to have support and guidance when planning and implementing creative activities. For local schools, Lau et al. (2022) stated that while the Hong Kong education system has shifted from a centralised system to a centralised-decentralised system, the Education Bureau still plays a dominant role in forming policies and imposing strict measures on school accountability resulting in an increase in teachers' workload. Over 60% of local teachers have also reported in a survey in 2021 conducted by the Hong Kong Professional Teachers' Union that they felt that the senior management team were inattentive to communicating with the teachers (Lau et al., 2022). In terms of international schools, the International Baccalaureate promotes neoliberal educational policies including the decentralisation of the education system and school-based management (Resnik, 2012). Instead of the senior management team being the sole decision maker, some responsibilities are shifted and shared among the teachers as they adopt the role of being a specific learning area coordinator. The school structure may play an influential role in the level of support the teachers receive when teaching creativity. While limited research could be found on kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong, studies on Hong Kong primary teachers such as Chan and Yuen's (2014) study

shows that there are curriculum constraints on teaching creativity and often outweigh the teacher's desire in teaching creativity in their own way. While the curriculum may emphasise the importance of creativity by listing it as one of the nine generic skills, teachers reported difficulty in teaching creativity in the classroom (Chan, & Yuen, 2014).

Due to the research gap in the comparison of local and international kindergartens in Hong Kong in terms of teaching creativity, this research was conducted to fill in the gap and provided the opportunity to interview both local and international kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong which can offer an in-depth exploration of teaching creativity. While there is literature about Hong Kong local kindergartens and topics related to teaching creativity, there is minimal research on international kindergartens in Hong Kong let alone focusing on teaching creativity in such kindergartens. As both educational systems coexist in one city, I decided to investigate the similarities and differences between the two school systems.

Research Questions

The research questions aim to gauge the teachers' definitions and understanding of creativity and the methods in which they try to instil creative qualities in their teaching. As these two factors are within the teachers' control, this research can compare the two groups' responses in a relatively straightforward manner. The fourth question assesses the external influence of teaching creativity. It can be hypothesized that if a certain school provides ample support to a teacher's creative activity, the school has a strong affinity for teaching creativity within its curriculum. However, if the school provides minimal support for creativity, it can be implied that

the school either does not have enough resources to teach creativity or does not view creativity as a priority.

The following are the main questions posed for the research:

1. How do teachers define creativity? Is there a difference between local and international kindergartens?

2. What typical activities are done in class to teach creativity?

3. What type of limitations do teachers encounter when teaching creativity?

4. What type of support does the teacher(s) receive from their respective schools to teach creativity?

3. Methodology

Participants

The researcher interviewed five teachers from local schools and six teachers from international schools, with a maximum of two teachers from any one particular school to widen the sample pool. The local teachers are from different local schools in various parts of Hong Kong. The international teachers were selected from the English School Foundation (ESF) organization as they are the largest international school organization in Hong Kong and having previous contact with the teachers, it was easier for me to approach and interview the ESF teachers for data collection. The names of the specific schools for both local and international schools will not be

mentioned as the participants gave their consent to participate in the interview on the basis of anonymity.

Research Design

The research is qualitative in nature and was conducted in the form of a semi-structured individual interview. The interview questions mainly focus on the research questions and are open-ended so participants can answer with ample details. The researcher may have added follow-up questions to clarify answers or retrieve further details from teachers. To ensure the participants have a full understanding of the study, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and presented the interview questions beforehand if the participants would like to withdraw from the study or request for further clarification.

The interview questions:

1. What is your definition of creativity?

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

6. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

The researcher took on the role of the interviewer and explained the purpose of the interview. The researcher reflected back the interviewees' answers so they can confirm, deny or elaborate on their answers (Chrzanowska, 2002, p. 112). The researcher remained impartial in evaluating the teacher's responses. Interviewees from local kindergartens were also given the option to request for the interview to be conducted in Chinese if they were more comfortable with speaking in their mother tongue, but the interviewee pool ended up being able to express their thoughts on creativity coherently in English. Throughout the exercise, the researcher as an interviewer played the role of a learner and ensured probing and clarifying answers are conducted throughout the interview process to receive more details.

The individual interviews, done over the course of a maximum of 30 minutes via Zoom, e-mail, or in person in compliance with COVID-19 social distancing restrictions, were recorded and the key points were transcribed. Some interviews were done through e-mail discourse as some teachers were unable to attend a live interview. However, the interview was semi-structured as there was a general set of questions but the interviewer was able to pursue more in-depth information or understanding of the meaning of what the interviewee said.

The research used a recorder to record the interviewees' answers. The recordings and transcriptions were placed in a secure device. The data was analysed through inductive and in vivo coding methods and was presented in the forms of bar charts and verbatim quotations. The researcher implemented the coding process to break down the text data into smaller units as there are a large amount of text data due to the selected qualitative method of gathering data. The codes were structured into categories to note the emergence of patterns so the researcher can detect the main common themes from each school system. This is done through the use of inductive coding which is to extract broad themes that appear from the raw data through repeated examination and

comparison (Chandra, & Shang, 2019). This allowed the researcher to identify similar information without bringing their own preconceptions and bias into the analysis. The in vivo coding method is used to place emphasis on the actual spoken words of the participants especially when the focus is to highlight their specific culture or micro culture (Manning, 2017). This also ensures the confirmability of the research as other people should be able to come up with the same conclusion when examining the same data and limits possible bias influencing the analysis. The researcher must be reflexive and ensure the interpretation of the data is evidence-based.

4. Findings

This section covers the data collected from the respondents via interviews, with key themes being extracted utilizing the inductive and in vivo coding methods. The themes gathered are analyzed based on three wide areas: the definition of creativity, the teaching practice of creativity, and the environment for teaching creativity.

4.1 Definition of creativity

The following question was asked at the beginning of the interview to frame each interviewee's understanding of creativity:

1. What is your definition of creativity?

For this question, the local teachers mainly expressed the themes of "New creations" and "Special ideas", while the international teachers expressed the themes of "Freedom", "Original", "Unique",

and "Self-Expression". Based on the answers, it seems that both groups of teachers share the view

that creativity results in unique ideas and is also a form of self-expression (see fig. 1). However, it

is notable that teachers from the international school pool used the keyword "freedom" about four

times more frequently than the respondents from the local schools. The international teachers also

placed a larger emphasis on "self-expression and a form of communication", going as far as to say

that creativity is "children's unique response to all that they see, hear, feel and have experienced"

(see appendix 12) and "artistic expression" (see appendix 8), in contrast to the local teachers that

view creative ideas as a "solution and method to a problem" (see appendix 3) and "ideas that the

children think by themselves with no model answers" (see appendix 2).

The answer to the first question underlines that for local teachers, creativity serves as a means to

a practical end whereas, for international teachers, it can be inferred that creativity does not need

to lead to a practical result. However, the gap between the two groups' responses is not significant,

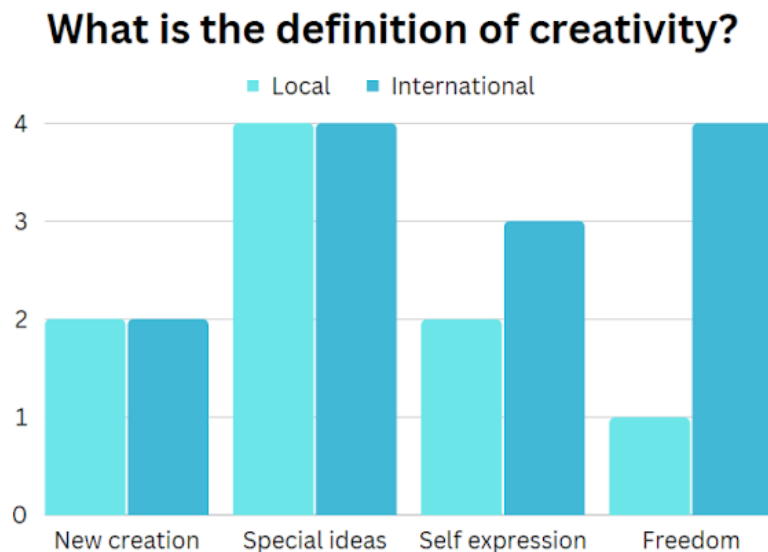although this may explain the rift between the two groups in further questions.

Figure 1: What is the definition of creativity?

4.2 Teaching practice of creativity

The following questions were asked to teachers to have a better understanding on how they foster creativity within their students in the classroom and beyond.

2.   What does teaching creativity mean to you?

The answers between the two groups differ more in the second question compared with the first question. While themes such as "free/open" and "self-expression" repeat themselves, the local teachers seem to echo the theme of the ability to "stimulate" creativity a lot more while the international teachers put an emphasis on how "creativity cannot be taught".

According to some local teachers' responses, there are various ways to stimulate creativity, such as by asking open-ended questions, fostering a curious attitude and encouraging them to ask questions. The teachers also mentioned having an open space and creating a non-judgemental environment for students to explore ideas in a nurturing and safe classroom.

International teachers highlighted that in the process of allowing children to explore creativity, there can be scenarios where different children express their own artistic representations. As such, it is important to accommodate the various expressions of creativity while also facilitating the different ideas and ensuring that each student feels respected in their creative exercises.

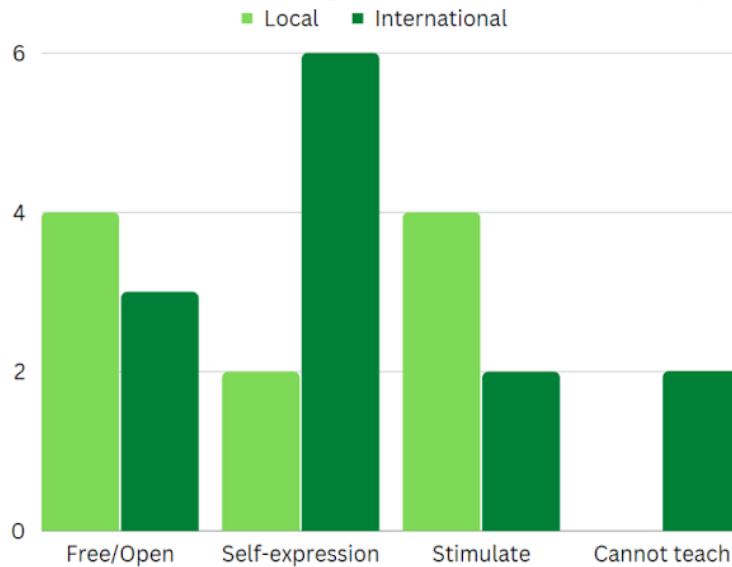## What does teaching creativity mean to you?

Figure 2: What does teaching creativity mean to you?

3.   What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

Although the teachers seem to have different answers to how they teach creativity, the activities

they mention converge for this question.

Both groups mentioned the use of different methods to teach creativity, such as using music, dance,

and visual arts, and incorporating different craft materials (such as blocks and water) into their

classroom. Some of the local teachers' responses mentioned that kids are given time to "create art

pieces by using different materials such as fallen leaves and branches" (see appendix 2). The

children are also given free time to choose which creative activity they want to engage in, such as

reading picture books or doing crafts. International teachers similarly will play different songs for

children to dance to, or even provide them with paper and pen and just prompt them with a theme

to write to. The teachers will also be alongside the children in the process of creativity, being

intentional in giving them various vocabularies to allow them to identify the various new materials they engage with for the very first time.

Through analysing the key themes, the only difference that is presented is that international teachers mentioned the word "play" in their answers. Half of the international kindergarten teachers mentioned "play", whereas the keyword was absent in the local teachers' responses. International teachers used the word "play" in the contexts of: "A play-based environment", "As much open-ended play as possible", and "A range of activities... such as role play" (see appendices 7, 10, and 12).

4.3 Environment for teaching creativity

This question was asked to the two groups of teachers to gain an understanding on what degree of support they receive in teaching creativity in their classroom.

4.   What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

The answers from the two teacher groups diverge drastically for this question, with local teachers hailing time as the major limitation and international teachers mentioning parents as a hindrance.

All local teachers mentioned that time is a major limitation for teaching creativity, both in terms of time in planning the activities and also time for students themselves to conduct the creative activities. One respondent mentioned that local schools often have packed timetables and assessments, so it is a challenge for students to explore and create something at their own pace. Another respondent mentioned that while doing creative activities, children and teachers are under

time pressure to finish their creative activity, which cuts short their exploration time to observe, think, process, and also to form their thinking. In addition, local school timetables tend to be structured and rigid, which leaves no room for time flexibility for creative activities that may unexpectedly need more time.

Half of the international teacher respondents named parents as a major hindrance to teaching creativity. Educating a child requires support from both the school and the family, and the international teachers explained that the rigidness of the family - telling kids what they can and cannot do - often impedes the children's creativity. As children tend to absorb everything at the ages of 3 to 5, telling them that a horse has to be black or brown and not blue, for example, sets a limitation in their creativity, one respondent said. Another respondent said that the children that come to their classroom are sometimes raised to be extremely obedient to their parents, so when teachers give them some time to do free play, the children are instead waiting for instructions or to be provided materials or toys to play with.

5.   What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

This last question to participants examines the environment that they work in to see the extent of support they receive from their colleagues as well as the school management.

Quite interestingly, the two groups receive support from different sources. Perhaps contrary to what may be expected based on previous answers, local teachers are provided with more freedom to plan out creative activities. Meanwhile, international teachers receive more support from colleagues than from management.

Local teachers tend to receive more support in terms of planning their materials in the way of having more freedom in planning their lessons. Some respondents mentioned that they are given the autonomy to choose and purchase instruments or materials to support their lesson plans. Another respondent mentioned that being able to design teaching plans with a large degree of freedom supports their creative thinking as well.

International school teachers cited that there is more structure to their creativity lessons, with more management-level figures present in coordinating such classroom activities. Arts curriculum coordinators exist to make purchases on behalf of teachers, one respondent said. Other respondents said that they often share ideas with their colleagues in order to learn which activities allow children to be more creative. A few respondents also mentioned that senior management such as the principal and vice principal tend to be more involved and verbalize their support for creative activities.

Both groups of teachers receive support in terms of resources, indicating that it may not be a major challenge for teaching creativity. This finding is consistent with the answers to the previous question where materials are a minor limitation to teaching creativity.
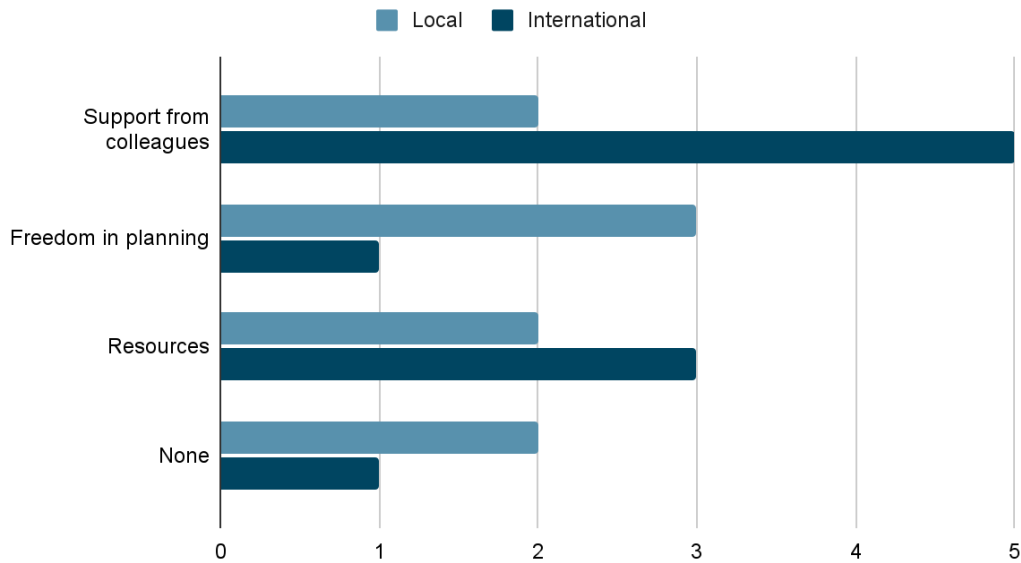
Figure 3: What support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

5. Discussion

The aim of the study is to compare the local and international kindergarten teachers' perspectives on teaching creativity to students in Hong Kong aged 3 to 5 and analyse if there is a difference in teaching creativity between the two education systems. The differences can be seen in three distinct aspects: teacher- and student-centered views of teaching creativity; issues in the microsystem and macrosystem respectively; and the school structure leading to the type of support they receive.

21

5.1 Perspective: Teacher-centered and student-centered

The results coincide with Cheung and Mok's (2013) study on local Hong Kong teachers focusing on cognitive ability in relation to creativity. With the majority of local teachers believing they can stimulate creativity, this shows that teaching creativity is more teacher-centered as they are in control of how creativity fosters in the classroom. Whereas all international teachers stressed self-expression in their answers which can be defined as an inherent ability (Stamatis, 2013). Self-expression also shifts the learning towards student-centered as the teachers are taking on the role of observing and self-expression can only appear when the child feels comfortable to express their inner thoughts and feelings (Collard, & Looney, 2014).

The difference in perspective can also be linked to the curriculums as the local curriculum emphasises the end product such as creating art (Curriculum Development Council, 2017) while the IBO (2009) curriculum believes creativity is a personal attribute. This coincides with the definition of creativity as most local teachers' answers were identical to the curriculum whereas most international teachers answered with self-expression which can be defined as a personal value. This shows that the curriculum may be a factor in shaping teachers' perspectives which corresponds with the study of Davis et al. (2016) stating that curriculum can shape teachers' characteristics.

It is interesting to note that local teachers did not mention any lack of confidence in teaching creativity but one international teacher believed she was not a creative person leading to not being confident in teaching creativity in the classroom. Cheung and Leung's (2014) survey showed that more than 70% of local preschool teachers believe they were not creative teachers and this mindset might have resulted in a struggle to implement child-centered creative activities. This is also

evident in the international teacher's answer as they followed up with having to learn "different ways and different strategies" (see appendix 11) to foster creativity.

However, while Cheung et al. (2019) stated that a lack of strong understanding of creativity may be the reason why teachers struggle to implement child-centered creative activities, this is shown not to be the case as the local and international teachers both have a similar understanding and activities implemented in the classroom from their answers in questions one to three. On the other hand, the activities should be further questioned in future studies as play is not mentioned in any of the local teachers' answers which Eckhoff (2011) stated was a key way to promote creative learning. The structure of the activities should be examined in detail as the results may differ as teachers may implement activities in various ways for example teacher and student-centered. Alas, the differences become distinct and the issue in teaching child-centered creativity may appear in the limitations they encounter.

5.2 Different issues in different systems?

A significant result can be seen as all local teachers have reported a lack of time being a limitation in teaching creativity. When further questioned, local teachers reported the tight structure or curriculum limiting their ability to teach. One local teacher reported that they were "forced or chose under pressure to finish the product" (see appendix 9) which highlights the importance of the end product rather than the process in teaching creativity.

Instead of focusing on their teaching of creativity, most international teachers shifted their focus on the child's ability to express themselves in different ways even though both local and

international teachers were asked the exact same question. The majority of international teachers reported that parents limited their children's ability in learning creativity as they believe that the parents are limiting their child and the child is then "not used to being able to express themselves in different ways" (see appendix 4).

The difference in answers can be linked to Bronfenbrenner's (1979) Ecological model as the local teachers focus on the macrosystem of the child, pinpointing the school policy or curriculum limiting their teaching whereas the international teachers' issue lies in the microsystem and mesosystem of the child as they struggle with the parents and the learning the child receives at home. The Bronfenbrenner's Ecological model illustrates the possible origin of each limitation and how the limitations influence the child's environment and teaching. The ecological model also does not only apply to the child's life but the parents and teacher's ecology as well as their ecological models also plays a factor in the child's life (Keyes, 2000). The model can help illustrate the parents and teachers as a person and the complexity of an individual as both parties attempt to form a partnership with the common interest of the child (Keyes, 2000). While it may seem that the international teachers' issues are only immediate, their issues are also influenced by the outer systems and vice versa as illustrated by the ecological model.

In terms of the local teachers' limitations with time and the tight curriculum, as Richardson and Mishra (2018) stated, the lack of time and curriculum constraints discourages creativity in becoming an arts or music class as opposed to a transdisciplinary practice. The issue originates from the curriculum itself as it defines creativity as creating, presenting and appreciating the arts (Curriculum Development Council, 2017). The sole focus on arts, therefore, trickles down into the difficulties the teachers face in teaching as Bronfenbrenner's (1979) model highlights the interconnectedness between the larger contexts and the immediate settings. Due to the curriculum

constraints, the teachers struggle to plan for free exploration for creativity in their lessons even though the majority answered free/open as one of the meanings of teaching creativity.

5.3 Support: School structure

The teachers' perspectives on the support they receive are influenced by the school structure and delegation of responsibilities. The local schools that have been interviewed can arguably be defined as centralisation as the teachers have to report to the senior management team and described as having a lack of support not only from the school itself but mentioned for the whole local educational system to be re-evaluated. This matches with Chan and Yuen's (2014) study on primary school teachers as they reported that the curriculum limits the teaching of creativity and even often outweighs the teacher's desire to teach creativity in a different way. The local school also has to report to the Hong Kong Education Bureau and report to the Government who has a degree of control over the school education (Pang, 2008).

Most international school teachers reported receiving support not only from the senior management team but their colleagues as well. One teacher reported one of their colleagues being an arts curriculum coordinator as one of their main sources of support (see appendix 11). This structure can be argued as decentralisation as the responsibilities are distributed among the workforce and the senior management team is regarded on the same level as their colleagues. The results are consistent with Resnik's (2012) study as the answers match with the International Baccalaureate's educational policy on decentralising the education system and school-based management.

The results are consistent with Pang's (2008) study of local schools struggling with the flexibility of the educational system due to the government's control. The local schools in Hong Kong are reported to be generally centralised due to the government's early effort in controlling the education sector (Tang, & Bray, 2000). In addition, the international schools matched with Tang and Bray's (2000) study about decentralised school management system being deployed in schools that were either specialized or different from the local institutions. This is further evident in the schools targeted for this research as the international schools are all from one private educational organization that follows its own separate international curriculum and the local schools follow the local Hong Kong Kindergarten Curriculum guide.

6. Conclusion

To conclude, the methods in which creativity is being taught to kindergarten students in Hong Kong diverge between local schools and international schools, with each experiencing its own set of challenges. Local school teachers interviewed for this research believe that they can stimulate creativity, exhibiting a teacher-centered view, while international school teachers rely on students' inherent ability to self-express to showcase creativity, indicating a student-centered view. When it comes to the barriers in teaching creativity, all local school teachers interviewed reported the lack of time being a major challenge, which is a reflection of the limitation in the local school system beyond teaching creativity, whereas international school teachers cited the students' parents as the major pain point, indicating that the children's experiences at home transcend into the classroom. Lastly, the ways in which teachers educate students on creativity can be linked to the school structures that differ between the local schools and international schools. In local

schools, teachers are given more freedom from the senior management team to plan out creative

activities, albeit confined within the parameters of the Hong Kong Kindergarten Curriculum guide,

while international teachers receive more support from colleagues and management but not from

interacting with parents.

6. 1 Recommendations

Local schools can consider embedding free play into their curriculum as the teachers

reported the lack of time as one of the biggest challenges in teaching creativity in the classroom.

Russ (1998) has mentioned the importance of play in creative problem-solving and specifically

suggests pretend play. Local schools may add a role-play area in the classroom for children who

have completed the required activity or are waiting for their turn. However, Russ (1998) also stated

that play should be implemented not only in schools but also in homes which both local and

international schools need to inform the parents of.

The senior management team in the international schools should prioritise supporting teachers in

communicating the importance of creativity to the parents so the teachers can teach creativity in

their classrooms without the parents interfering as this is one of the issues the teachers have

reported in the interviews. Since teachers have reported having a good rapport with their colleagues

and receiving support in teaching creativity, the senior management team can also extend their

support in the communication with the parents by possibly sending out letters or hosting

workshops to emphasise the importance of creativity not only in schools but also at homes. The

benefits of the support from the senior management team can be seen in the international schools

as none of the teachers stated any issues with planning and implementing creative activities

27

aligning with Cheung's (2010) study of teachers reporting support as being one of the most important factors for preparing and teaching such activities.

In terms of the international schools, they can consider adopting a similar inventory management style as the local schools by adding a variety of materials instead of reusing the same supply. One international teacher reported that they are unable to "go out of the box" (see appendix 12) due to the lack of resources. Dere (2019) suggested using natural materials to positively foster creativity in children in early childhood settings. This also limits schools from reusing the same materials and it can be accessible and low in cost by collecting the materials from the outdoors instead of buying costly non-natural materials.

6. 2 Limitations

The study was limited by the respondent pool, as only a few teachers were willing to spare time for the interview given their seemingly heavy workload. The international school teachers were also selected from the same organization which may not represent the other international schools in Hong Kong. The number of local teachers is also limited and their answers may not represent the teachers' viewpoints accurately due to possible language barriers and misunderstanding of the questions as the interviews were conducted in English only and English is not most of the local participants' first language. Due to the small respondent pool, the analysis does not represent the whole body of international and local teachers respectively and should not be generalised to all the teachers in Hong Kong.

The study was also limited by current COVID-19 social distancing measures, as interviews were conducted over various methods such as Zoom and email exchanges depending on the participant which may have affected the consistency of the results. This may affect the results due to the choice of words participants use during the interview as there may be a variable between text and verbal answers.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Transcript – Local teacher A

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

To think out of the box, not being restricted and create something new.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

I try to inspire and encourage children to freely express themselves in different forms.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

Music and arts activities, can be taught in diverse ways and encourage children to use different forms to express themselves e.g. movements, painting and handcrafts.

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

Time limitation especially in local kindergartens, that is the packed timetable and assessment so teachers are stressed to catch up with their learning progress and cannot provide adequate time for children to explore and create something at their own pace.

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

Kindergartens provide freedom for teachers to design lesson plans, art and non-structured materials such as papers with different textures and blocks so children can create and express themselves.

6. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

Creativity has to be developed in a positive and encouraging environment so it's important for teachers to perceive their students as competent and independent individuals.

Appendix 2: Transcript – Local teacher B

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

Ideas that think by yourself with no model answers even though how unrealistic they are.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

Using different ways and methods to stimulate children's creativity. For example, using open-ended questions instead of close-ended questions, allow children to be curious and ask questions I never think of.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

Creating some art pieces by using different materials such as using -leaves and branches to create different things.

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

Children need time to observe, think, process, and form their thinking. It takes time but there is always not enough time for teachers to teach each subject in the local kindergarten.

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

The school allows me to design teaching plans with large freedom. They support my creative teaching if it works.

6. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

No, thank you.

Appendix 3: Transcript – Local teacher C

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

Creativity refers to the ability to make and think of something new or innovative, whether a new solution and method to a problem.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

Teaching creativity is important for me as I think it motivates children to learn. Besides, I believe creativity is an essential skill of the future. Therefore, I think as a kindergarten teacher, it is essential to teach creativity at school.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

Our school provides free time for children to play. During that period of time, children are allowed to choose what they play. For example, do some crafts, play blocks and read picture books in the reading corner etc. They can make use of their creativity during that period of time and teachers won't interfere a lot unless there are safety issues occur.

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

Time and space limitation. As the curriculum design is very tight and I can't provide sufficient time for children to have some creative activity. Besides, the classroom size also limits my plan for teaching creativity.

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

My school provides adequate freedom for me to design my teaching plans. For instance, I can design many activities that can stimulate creativity for children according to their needs and interest.

6. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

I think stimulating children's creativity is essential. However, there are many limitations like the insufficient space and time. Therefore, I think the Hong Kong government should provide more supports for schools.

Appendix 4: Transcript – Local teacher D

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

Creativity means how we express and deliver our thoughts or ideas in our own special way.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

Teaching creativity means how I can stimulate children in exerting their potential in expressing their ideas from learning different artistic products or not limiting/banning their ideas. I would say respect children's ideas and allow them to express themselves freely are the crucial elements in teaching creativity.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

Music and physical activities, eg. Let them feel the music and move along freely with the music, ask children to move like animals with music

Art activities, eg. mixing colours, mainly

Allow children to use different loosen materials, eg, big wooden blocks, big soft mattress to play with each other, water is also a good medium for children to express creativity

The use of interesting storybooks to extend extra activities could also enable children to exert creativity beyond books/ original ending of the book

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

Time constraint set by the school (rush time and cannot fully allow children to enjoy the activities or express their own ideas in their preferred way, usually they are forced or chose under pressure just to finish the product rather than they make the product of their free will or by their own choice)

Limited materials

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

No

6. Is there anything else that you would like to add?

HKKG or general academic field lack focus in "teaching creativity", teachers tend to focus on academic or physical development, students are lack creativity due to traditional teaching style, eg. Standardised answer

Appendix 5: Local teacher E
This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

E 00:01
My definition of creativity is to allow the individual to explore what their thoughts and ideas are through different various means of their interests and what they feel is most appropriate for the individual's desire and expressing oneself.

00:20
What does teaching creativity mean?

E 00:24
I think it's about letting someone being able to have the chance for the children to really have the open space and non judgmental, environment that allows the person to be themselves and really explore the ideas in a very nurturing and safe environment.

00:53
What type of activities do you teach in the classroom?

E 00:56
for creativity, with local schools, it's actually quite limited, because it's on a very tight schedule, everything's like 20 minute allocation for phonics. And we go into small groups, which is an hour and each in the hour is like 10 minutes per group with 10 children. And then we have like time for like, Chinese circle time, English circle time. So the schedule is very, very packed. So there's not really room and space for the teacher, all the students explore their ideas or creativity. Everything in the school is very set and structured. We do have units, but we have the most creativity that we have, or that is that freedom expression is to music. But even that we don't really have instruments is a song that matches to the book, and then to the unit. So it's always set every year. So sometimes if children are more interested in like, for example, like Christmas, some children were interested in Jingle Bells, we weren't able to explore that. And at the end of the unit, we do have to actually assess them and give them points. And they're graded. Whereas like creativity should be more open ended. I don't and that's more subjective and objective than rather than being assessed with them. And even when we do music, it is very literacy based, it's more to make sure that they are knowing the words of the song rather than like, Are they listening to the sounds? Are they listening to the rhythm, and they listen to the beat, or if they're able to change it. And then as like cake three in the local school, at the end of the year, we have graduation, which the children is proof us perform and upside, it looks like it's grad. It's a lot of creativity and imagination, but it's very teacher led, all the costume design, all the storyline, even the songs. And the lyrics. And the stage props are all done by the teachers, from the outside looks like it's a grand production because even like for our Christmas, each student will actually be given a CD with children singing Christmas songs. But again, it's very controlled by the teachers is very designed by the teachers. What song goes on, what's the lyrics, what and the composing of the music and also the selection of the children who will go to sing

00:59
What types of support did you receive from the school to teach creativity?

E 03:36
Nothing, I feel like it was just more workload or they were just there was more of an expectation and the standard than the teacher. And not even the teacher, but the principal and the management that needs to fulfill and it becomes like a very competitive environment. And it also becomes a bit like, toxic because there's also like comparison, like which campus did well which campus didn't do well, we were a school of about six schools and now they've expanded to eight school. So between all of them, like even like a musical production, we have to divide the storyline into eight parts to fit that every school has one, which isn't really creativity, it sometimes feels like it's more force for like for the musical graduation. I mean, like, Well, my principal would nice enough, she does promote creativity. So sometimes she does go out and buy like musical instruments or like she does encourage us to like, do the beats and the rhythm, but it feels like it's more pressure on top of all the workload that we have and all the expectations and standards we need to fulfill to make management or even like the stakeholders like parents happy. So it's very much like touch and go even if we do something like that. exploring their creativity.

05:03
What limitations do you encounter? When teaching creativity?

E 05:07
In that school, I think it was time. Time was the biggest limitation because if we have, because in order to, for creativity to happen, I think it needs time. And I think it also needs a lot of trials. And especially for children, like I feel like they need to play with the idea of explore a little more, and then play with it again, until they also feel confident in themselves. And I think with the structure of the local school is very rigid, it's very structure. It was also like very one after the next event. And it's like, oh, you only have 10 minutes to practice your interview, or you only have two minutes to make your first impression for like Primary School mock interview, like those time restriction, even if we do small groups, we have 10 minutes per group, but in that group, we have 10 children. So then that means I'm only giving my attention to each child one minute, and that doesn't allow first and nurture the care or the time for them to be themselves. I feel like because I have k three and I see the children's since from pre nursery onto k three, I do feel the children are becoming a bit robotic. The way they answer is very, there's no it's almost said they're drowned, trained to give you the right answer, and the one and only correct answer. And in actual fact, like I've actually seen more children in k three, where they have this very strong perfectionism. And it makes and then they will in return, there's a lot of more social emotional problems or like their coping mechanism, out of that perfection, needs more fine tuning and needs more support. From my experience, so that means creativity and that freedom of expression is quite limited in local schools environment.

07:19
Thank you, is there anything else you'd like to add?

E 07:23
That may be the Hong Kong local system should try to reform and reevaluate their education. Because for kindergarten, it's a very top down approach, because there's limited spaces and local university, it causes a bottleneck or actually a trickle-down effect from secondary and primary and to the kindergarten where they feel like they need to strive and I did work and one of the top kindergarten so all most of our children goes to band one schools, or that's what parents are striving for. And it's like it is a lot of pressure on the children and I don't I feel like the education system in Hong Kong should evaluate and examine the social emotional well-being of these children because for some of them and k three wishes five years old, if they're having very, very strong or very weak coping mechanism that makes it like, is this working for children like where outcomes going and the it's an even for kindergarten is a wise approach where it's very much teacher led, like I think ultimately we want people to grow up in a community and a society that can think for themselves.

Appendix 6: International teacher A

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

Creativity is giving the students an opportunity to express themselves through creating their own work.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to you?

I think it's important to give them the freedom and an opportunity to express themselves through creativity.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

I would always provide an art table for students to draw or create their own work of art. I will use different forms such as paint, playdough or music for them to have various outlets. For example, I will play different songs for them to dance to and to express their feelings.

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

I have to also focus on developing their other skills and ensure they have a holistic development and since the children at our school have the freedom, they may not be comfortable or interested in the arts and crafts activity table and I would have to encourage them to be balanced and try various activities.

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

The school is great at providing resources and my colleagues and I would discuss on what activities are effective in allowing children to be creative.

6. **Is there anything else that you would like to add?**

Nope, that's all. I think it's important that schools focus on developing or giving children to express their creativity.

Appendix 7: International school teacher B

This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

Wed, Jan 04, 2023 4:55PM • 4:45

Interviewer 00:00
What is your definition of creativity?

B 00:03
Creativity is a process for me. And it's not indefinite, there's no indefinite outcome to it. No prescribed outcome and it can be found anywhere, are a lot of a lot of fields and areas, it's just the mental process of creating, not necessarily creating but finding solutions or doing anything which is out of the box and not a regular way of thinking.

Interviewer 00:36
And what does teaching creativity mean to you?

B 00:40
I am not sure if you can teach creativity, but you can certainly provide an environment to encourage to enhance and nurture creativity. It's self expression, self initiated process, can be encouraged can be facilitated. I don't think so we can teach creativity.

Interviewer 01:05
Awesome, and what kind of activities they do in the classroom to teach creativity.

B 01:11
It's a play based environment, we do encourage inquiry based and there's a lot of open ended resources. So it's just providing the environment, creating environment, and of course, modeling for earlier as you probably have to model, which doesn't mean they have to copy the same ideas, but just giving them ideas and giving them material, creating the environment and facilitate the process. Being with them in the process, talking through giving ideas giving vocabulary, is what do you do at school?

Interviewer 01:51
Thank you, and what kind of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity.

B 01:58
It's, it's a very supportive environment, they do encourage and this is, in fact, the core of our program, played based, inquiry based where there is huge scope, and in fact, huge focus on creativity, and that guns into the environment, and it's just not limited to the students, we are expected. Or we have we have been provided the platform that even teachers have to be creative in designing the lessons. So it's, it's, it's across the board, like from management to students. And

it runs in the philosophy of the school. So they are very supportive of the idea. And in fact, it's encouraged. Creativity is encouraged at every step. Even for example, we were running school with so many COVID restrictions, we never thought we could be creative in doing that creative in teaching online. So it's just process, as I said, and it's run across the board.

Interviewer 03:04
And what kind of limitations do you have in teaching creativity?

B 03:13
I think sometimes it's also, as we know, children are it's a partnership, right? So it's parents and teachers and school to do the teaching community learning, teaching and learning community. So sometimes it can be that the children are not encouraged as much as at home. So they don't have the process they have been trained to the we are not consistent in our approach at home we've been asked to follow and not given enough freedom or agency to thing, which is different at schools. It's a bit confusing for the child where when you ask them to just make a choice and be free, which we are they are not trained. In fact, they've been told to just listen to what has been what has been said so and of course in this times, they were not allowed to use a lot of sensory material or any open ended resources or too much of play was provided at home for many families. So that inconsistency sometimes it becomes challenging, I would not say limitations, but it becomes challenging to address. That that's one thing that comes along.

Interviewer 04:30
Okay. And last question. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

B 04:33
No, I think Yeah. Yeah. As I said, it's a process more than a product and I think that should be the focus.

Appendix 8: International school teacher C

This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

Thu, Jan 26, 2023 4:15PM • 2:21

Interviewer 00:00
What is your definition of creativity?

C 00:03
Creativity? I think just something as using your own ideas being original, being unique and your thinking and your representation of, you know, artistic expression.

Interviewer 00:19
And what does teaching creativity mean to you?

C 00:24
It's, it's nice because you get to teach other children what it means to be creative and using their own artistic expression. And everyone has their own individual ideas. So it's nice to see different perspectives with children and their own artistic representations coming out.

Interviewer 00:41
And what type of activities do you teach in the classroom?

C 00:45
For creativity? Yes. So it would be something maybe writing arts arts could be something where, you know, they just get a paper and pen and you give them a theme. And then everything could be different based on their own artistic expression. Also, writing if you're teaching older children, they'll be able to write their own, you know, ideas, whatever ideas they have, and they'll make it individual and unique,

Interviewer 01:10
and what type of limitations they encounter when teaching creativity in the classroom.

C 01:15
I think there's not many limitations when you teach creativity, but it could be something maybe if the school have limitations on like, materials, maybe or, you know, things like that, but I think right now, you know, if you go to a good school that have different materials, our supplies where children can really, you know, expand their horizon and just try different ways to be creative. I think, maybe a limitation could be messy and hygiene, a lot of teachers are worried about cleanliness. So if you took that out, you're gonna have like your own, you know, dream school, gym class for art, just anything, all materials there where children can go and access independently that would be like the perfect world for artistic expression.

45

Interviewer 01:57

And what type of support do you receive from the school

C 02:00

for creativity? You know, you have your senior management, your vice principal will help you. Your principal helps you you have your EAS to support you. The children are supporting each other and their expression. So you have all of that.

Interviewer 02:15

Is there anything else you'd like to add? No, thank you. A lot.

Appendix 9: International school teacher D

This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

Interviewer 00:00
So what does what is your definition of creativity?

D 00:04
Creativity is using imagination and, you know, being, you know, inventive and there's no boundaries no limit.

Interviewer 00:14
What does teaching creativity mean to you?

D 00:17
Yeah, just like what I started with a definition, I think just giving the children basically the freedom of to be able to express themselves in different ways. And just making sure that you know, your respect their individual, like ideas and expression,

Interviewer 00:31
and what type of activities do you teach in the classroom for creativity?

D 00:35
 I think I'm giving them a wide range of ways to express themselves by giving them different kinds of resources. So there are differentiations, and making sure that you know, they all have equal opportunity to express themselves,

Interviewer 00:48
and what type of limitations to encounter in school when teaching creativity.

D 00:53
I think every child has comes from a different background from families, maybe they're not used to, you know, being so creative, and they're not used to, you know, being able to express themselves in different ways. So sometimes, you know, the families might, you know, they're used to doing worksheets, they're used to doing same things every day, and they're not really able to express themselves in their own ideas. And I think that's sometimes going to be a limitation.

Interviewer 01:16
And what type of support do you receive from your school and teaching creativity?

D 01:21
I think we're quite lucky in our school that we get lots of different types of resources. So in that way, I think we make sure that there are children who has different interests, and they're able to

be creative and show their creativeness with different kinds of resources and different kinds of toys and they're able to express in different ways.

Interviewer 01:42
Is there anything else you'd like to add?

D 01:47
No.

Appendix 10: International school teacher E

This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

Interviewer 00:00
What is your definition of creativity?

E 00:03
something original?

Interviewer 00:05
And what does teaching creativity mean to you?

E 00:08
To allow children's to beat children to be original in their play and the things that they do?

Interviewer 00:14
And what type of activities do you do in the classroom to foster creativity?

E 00:18
As much open ended play as possible?

Interviewer 00:22
Do you have any examples?

E 00:26
We will put the resources in the classroom allow and allow the children to inquire and use their agency as much as possible.

Interviewer 00:32
And what type of limitations do you encounter in the classroom on teaching creativity?

E 00:38
The limitations come from come from ideas, preconceived ideas that the children have, they often come from parents, the parents will explain will give them limitations, things that the children can and can't do. And quite often, it comes from society as well. So for example, children will be taught certain things, for example, that a horse has to be black or brown, a horse cannot be blue.

Interviewer 01:06
And what type of support do you receive from the school and teaching creativity?

E 01:11

None whatsoever.

Interviewer 01:13
And is there anything else you'd like to add?

E 01:16
No, thank you.

Appendix 11: International school teacher F

This interview was conducted via Zoom and transcribed using otter.ai.

Interviewer 00:00
What is your definition of creativity?

F 00:07
My definition of creativity is open, you know, visual. Kind of it's it's very individualized and unique as well. And I think a word that really sticks out to me is free. Really creativity, you know, is free, it's freedom. There's no right or wrong. Yeah.

Interviewer 00:38
And what does teaching creativity means to you?

F 00:43
Teaching Creativity to me is allowing children you know, the freedom to express themselves? You know, in a very open way, open environment, using different types of resources media. And I think, yeah, the main thing is, you know, it's a, it's a freedom of expression, it's how you express yourself. It's, you know, perspective. Yeah, I think it's all kind of wrapped up into one.

Interviewer 01:19
And what type of activities do you teach in the classroom for creativity?

F 01:27
Well, lots of open ended, learning engagements for the children using a variety of resources, some kind of provocations as well to kind of inspire children to be creative. But, you know, again, it's just giving the freedom and that choice and that kind of agency to, you know, you know, express themselves and be creative, so,

Interviewer 01:53
and what type of limitations to counter when you teach creativity?

F 01:57
I think. I mean, personally, for myself, I'm not a creative person. So I'll just put that out there. So I find that kind of challenging myself as a teacher of how do I provide opportunities for children or, you know, what kind of provocations Should I put out that will kind of inspire children to to be creative in different aspects of, you know, the curriculum. So I think for me is kind of learning a bit more of different ways and different strategies that I could kind of use that will kind of foster creativeness creativeness sorry, not creativity, what could be creativity and creativeness? And young children. And yeah.

Interviewer 02:43

And what type of support do you receive from your school to teach creativity?

F 02:48
Well, we have a arts curriculum coordinator, who is there to, you know, give us kind of any suggestions can also help us order resources, whether it's books or you know, any type of media really related to the arts curriculum. And you know, yeah, we just we got a support team at school and you know, we've got resources that we can always order from.

Interviewer 03:24
And is there anything else you would like to add? No, thank you.

Appendix 12: International school teacher G

This interview was conducted via email.

1. What is your definition of creativity?

It's the freedom of self-expression and a form of communication. It's children's unique response to all that they see, hear, feel and have experienced.

2. What does teaching creativity mean to me?

I don't think that you can teach creativity. Everyone is creative in their own way because its innate within humans to do so. Communication is a form of creativity, so is non-verbal communication, small world activities, drawing, writing, the list is endless. What children choose to do is creative in itself. Despite this, as a teacher it's about creating, facilitating and providing an enabling inclusive environment where young children can express themselves in numerous ways, whether that's through physical art, role play, construction etc. The key is that children feel comfortable enough to do so.

3. What types of activities do you do in class to teach creativity?

I provide a range of activities, physical art such as painting, drawing, colouring, writing, whiteboard use, chalkboard use. I also plan for construction based activities, role play, and small world.

4. What kind of limitations do you encounter when you plan for teaching creativity?

Not being able to go as out of the box as I'd like to due to restrictions on finances within my setting to purchase resources that would enhance and support creativity.

5. What type of support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

I receive full verbal support from each member of staff including the principal regarding my thoughts and actions on creativity and how I enable this in my classroom.

6. Is there anything else you would like to add?

No, thank you.

Appendix 13: Information Sheet

INFORMATION SHEET

Comparison of local and international school teachers' perspectives on teaching creativity in Hong Kong kindergarten classrooms

You are invited to participate in a project supervised by Dr. Lam Chi Ming and conducted by Jin Young Hwang, who are staff / students of the Department of International Education in The Education University of Hong Kong.

The introduction of the research
The purpose of the study is to compare the perspectives and methods in which local and international schools teach creativity to kindergarten students in Hong Kong aged 3 to 5 and analyse if there is a difference in teaching creativity between the two education systems.

The local school teachers were chosen through the researcher's experience in the selected school or their professors' connections. The international school teachers will be selected from the English School Foundation (ESF) organization as they are the largest international school organization in Hong Kong.

The methodology of the research
There will be eight participants in total.
The researcher aims to interview two teachers from two local schools and two international schools. The participants may have been contacted due to their previous working relationship with the researcher or the Early Childhood Education professors in Education University of Hong Kong.

The individual interviews, done over the course of 30 minutes via Zoom, or in-person if COVID-19 social distancing restrictions allow, will be recorded and the key points will be transcribed. The interview will be semi-structured as there is a general set of questions but the interviewer can pursue more in-depth information or understanding of the meaning of what the interviewee says. The interviews will be conducted sometime between December 2022 to January 2023.

The potential risks of the research
Your participation in the project is voluntary. You have every right to withdraw from the study at any time without negative consequences. All information related to you will remain confidential, and will be identifiable by codes known only to the researcher.

Describe how results will be potentially disseminated
Real names will not be used in the research to protect the participants' identities. The researcher will break down the answers to key words to observe if there is a pattern among all the participants' answers. The results of the key words and patterns will be written in the thesis.

If you would like to obtain more information about this study, please contact Jin Young Hwang at telephone number   or their supervisor Dr. Lam Chi Ming at telephone number

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research study, please do not hesitate to contact the Human Research Ethics Committee by email at hrec@eduhk.hk or by mail to Research and Development Office, The Education University of Hong Kong.

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study.

Jin Young Hwang
Principal Investigator

Appendix 14: Consent Form

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG
Department of International Education

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Comparison of local and international school teachers' perspectives on teaching creativity in Hong Kong kindergarten classrooms

I _____ hereby consent to participate in the captioned research supervised by Dr. Lam Chi Ming and conducted by Jin Young Hwang, who are staff / students of Department of International Education in The Education University of Hong Kong.

I understand that information obtained from this research may be used in future research and may be published. However, my right to privacy will be retained, i.e., my personal details will not be revealed.

The procedure as set out in the **attached** information sheet has been fully explained. I understand the benefits and risks involved. My participation in the project is voluntary.

I acknowledge that I have the right to question any part of the procedure and can withdraw at any time without negative consequences.

Name of participant   _____

Signature of participant   _____

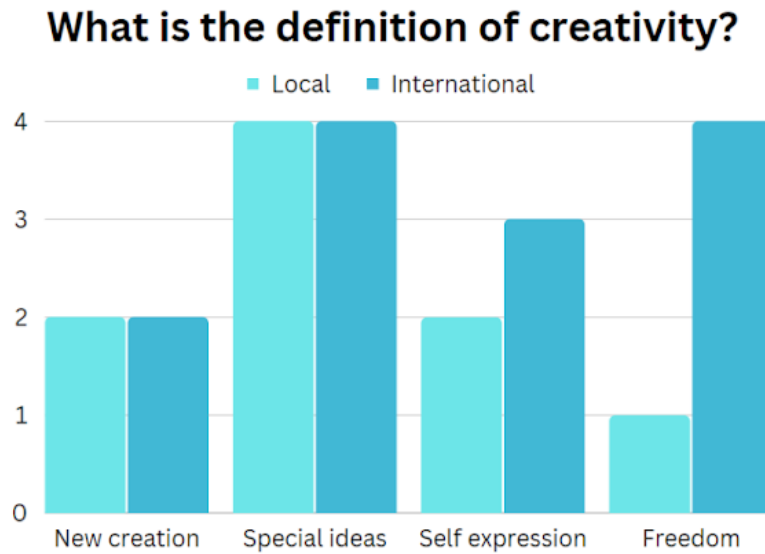Date   _____

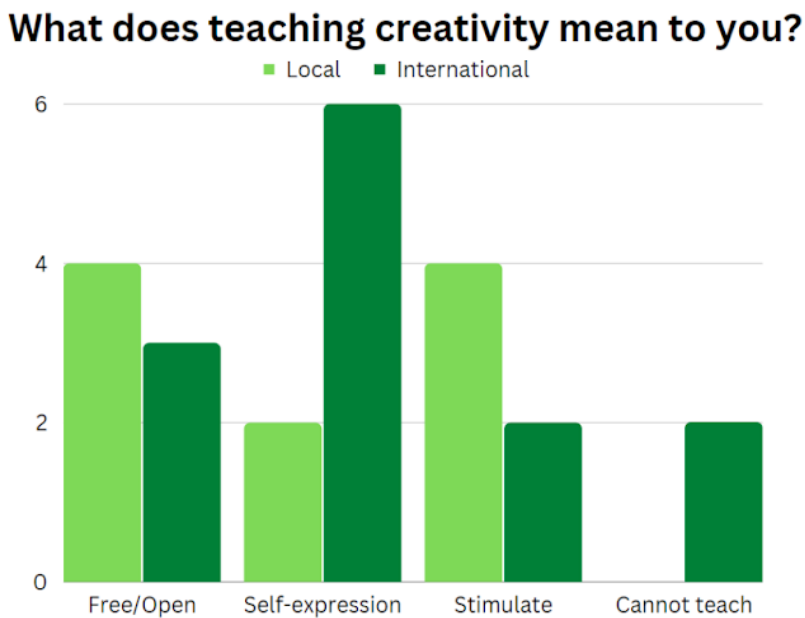**Appendix 15: Figures 1 – 3**

What is the definition of creativity?

Figure 1: What is the definition of creativity?

What does teaching creativity mean to you?

Figure 2: What does teaching creativity mean to you?

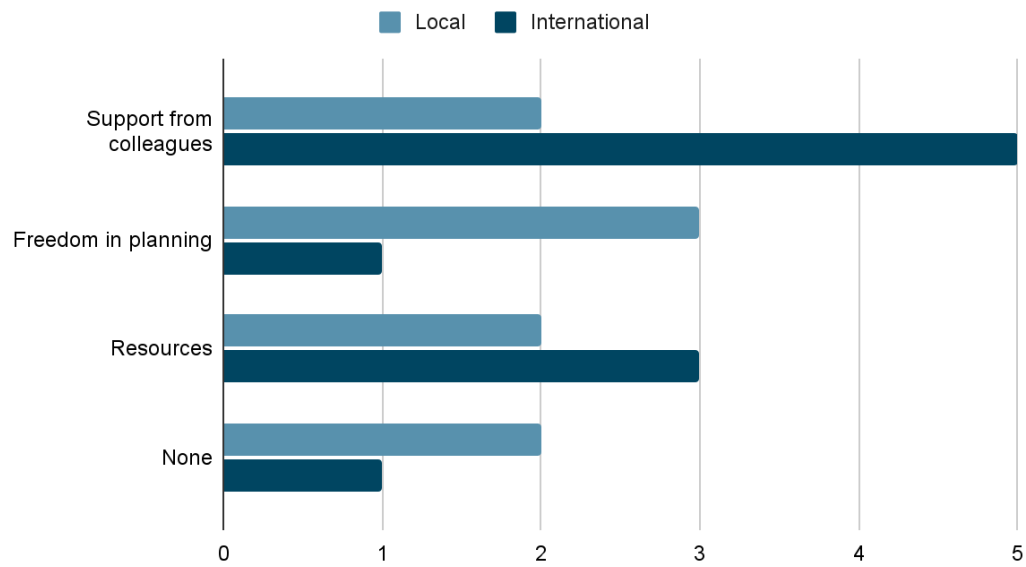## What support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?

Figure 3: What support do you receive from the school to teach creativity?