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Abstract

For most of us, creative processes are those which can produce outcomes that are capable of being judged as creative. The outcome-centric recognition of creativity has heavily downplayed the process-perspective of creativity in organizations. Influenced significantly by individual and social subjectivities, creative processes are difficult to enquire on the basis of positivist approaches presently dominating creativity research. Use of narrative methodology in creativity research is proposed as a strategy for not just handling the subjectivities but also for making meaning from them as well as from participants' emotions. Antenarratives can help to enrich the narrated storyline, and personal narratives of the researcher allows to tie back the subjectivities through co-created meanings. The article aspires to invigorate attention towards the foundations of creativity research that has offered little scope for research paradigms that are beyond the objective-positivist tradition. Consequently, it urges the research community to seek suitable methodologies like the narrative which promises to explore the process-perspective of creativity and enlarge our organizational understanding of creativity.

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For most of us, creative processes are those which can produce outcomes that are capable of being judged as creative. The outcome-centric recognition of creativity has heavily downplayed the process-perspective of creativity in organizations. Influenced significantly by individual and social subjectivities, creative processes are difficult to enquire on the basis of positivist approaches presently dominating creativity research. Use of narrative methodology in creativity research is proposed as a strategy for not just handling the subjectivities but also for making meaning from them as well as from participants' emotions. Antenarratives can help to enrich the narrated storyline, and personal narratives of the researcher allows to tie back the subjectivities through co-created meanings. The article aspires to invigorate attention towards the foundations of creativity research that has offered little scope for research paradigms that are beyond the objective-positivist tradition. Consequently, it urges the research community to seek suitable methodologies like the narrative which promises to explore the process-perspective of creativity and enlarge our organizational understanding of creativity. Keywords: Creativity, Creative Process, Self and Subjectivity, Narrative, Antenarrative, Co-Creation

The topic of creativity has always been the subject matter of interest for organizational scholars. Today creativity at work has emerged as an organizational competency required by firms to seamlessly operate across multiple products and service domains with operational ingenuity (Tuori & Vilen, 2011; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). Creative industry, in particular, has attracted a lot of research interest in the past few decades as the strategic importance of this sector has increased in idea based economies where knowledge-based industries have immensely propelled (Matheson, 2006). The creative industry, often characterized by firms involved in advertising, architecture, art and crafts market, industrial design, fashion design, media services, software, the performing arts, publishing, film, music, and television, is seen not only as a driver of economic growth but also as encompassing social and cultural development (Parkman, Holloway, & Sebastiao, 2012). A creative workplace is one that supports people working on their creative endeavors (Martens, 2011). Employees in the creative industry identify themselves as "creative" without feeling the need to be defined in a disciplinary or more professional term (Matheson, 2006).

There are numerous conceptions of creativity at work with most of them calling it the "process, outcomes, and products of attempts to develop and introduce new and improved ways of doing things" (Anderson, Potočnik, & Zhou, 2014). However, irrespective of the definition we choose, it is critically important to note that creativity is not limited to the so-called creative workplaces only, rather it is an all-pervasive phenomenon. Although contested whether creativity is a personal or social phenomenon, both the views acknowledge that "creative capacity is an essential property of normative human cognition" (Mayer, 1999, p. 450). In other words, "creativity is part of what makes us human" (Sawyer, 2012, p. 3). But it is a sad fact that having a "space" that can empower one's creativity is often seen as a privilege in most of the workplaces. Organizations have to realize that providing autonomy to employees for

fostering their creativity is not only for improving employee performance as it is often contrasted with imperatives to intensify work (Boxall & Macky, 2014; Gallie, 2007, p. 212) but allowing an individual to realize his/her creative potential is gesturing to recognize his/her dignity at work (Hodson, 2001). It is quite pertinent that individual initiatives and organizational reinforcements needed to develop creative potential are by far missing in many organizations (Phelan, 2001) mainly due to our impoverished understanding of creativity at work. Firstly, it is the lack of consensus in understanding creativity theoretically. Secondly, it is about dealing with the problem empirically that reigns despite a growing body of research in this area (see review by Piórkowska, 2016). Empirical challenges in studying the creative process have led to a stage where researchers find little that has practical significance (Dubina, 2005; Anderson et al., 2014). The dominant use of psychometrics in assessing individual and group creativity has inadvertently rendered creativity as an "object" held by those judged as creative. We often tend to overlook the fact that creativity is both about the process as well as the outcome, and without truly embracing the process-perspective of understanding creativity, we cannot envision creativity as essential to human existence. Apparently, a deeper understanding of creativity needs to thrive in the modern business arena and researchers should contribute to both, the theory and the practice of understanding the creative process.

Foundations of Creativity Research

Suitability of the methodological framework, guided by its ontological and epistemological roots, is crucial for any social inquiry (Crotty, 1998). Westmarland (2001) argued that knowledge has been traditionally measured by how objective it is deemed to be, and in the belief that if the reliability, objectivity, and validity "rules" are followed, "the truth" will be discovered; "rules" portray the overly specific methodologies and the rigid assumptions. Apparently, a functionalist inquiry assumes that "the truth" is out there, thereby validating its premises that factify the social world to be composed of relatively concrete empirical artifacts and relationships that one can identify, study and measure (Taylor & Callahan, 2005). In such a paradigm, if the research fails to obey the "rules," it is dismissed on methodological grounds and declared "untrue." In contrast, the interpretive paradigm achieves a combination of subjectivity and order, and thereby relevant to studies where sense-making or meaning making is the epistemology for a subjective ontological reality (Burrell & Morgan, 1979/2005). The researcher's position becomes critically important as reflexivity ensures a situated perspective in the study, acting to self-critique undue inclinations and developing empathy with the participants' voice (Hatch, 1996). Understanding creativity is a social inquiry where sense-making and researcher reflexivity are primordial (Taylor & Callahan, 2005).

An objective ontology and positivist epistemology precede the overwhelming number of quantitatively inclined creativity studies (Long, 2014; Piórkowska, 2016). Since Guilford's (1950) presidential address to the American Psychological Association, creativity, earlier considered a mystic and God gifted trait to artists and scientists, changed to become a cognitive activity demonstrated by all. It was a breakthrough turn in psychology, but the dominance of psychometric dimension in psychological studies underscored the view of creativity as a normative process that could be objectively measured and analyzed (D'Cruz, 2008). Today, most of the research in creativity is quantitative in which psychometrics and experiments are frequently used methods to collect data, and correlational techniques employed for analysis (Long, 2014). Surprisingly, most of the qualitative studies too, in the form of case studies and mixed-methods are epistemologically positivist in their outlook (Long, 2014; Piórkowska, 2016). However, scholars like Csikszentmihalyi (1999, 2014) refute the traditional psychological stand that tries to convince that creativity is an intrapsychic process, and also contradict the methodologies that assume creative processes as concretely deterministic. The

interpretive school argues that the objective nature of creativity judgments estranges the creative process from its inherently subjective nature. Studies that pay little heed to self and process subjectivities identify creative individuals and then compare them with a suitable comparison group (Katz & Giacommelli, 1982), and thus the focus remains on judging creative processes on the basis of outputs they produce (Drazin, Glynn, & Kazanjian, 1999). Zhou (1998) comments that most of the methodologies employed to decide whether an idea is creative or not, are to the extent the output seems creative, and the underlying mental processes of producing the creative idea stands neglected.

Qualitative Research on Creativity

Almost 18 years ago, Mayer (1999) identified psychometric, experimental and biographic as the "big three approaches" (p. 452) to creativity research with the first two being typically quantitative and dominantly used. Fifteen years later, Long (2014) found that much had not changed as quantitative studies largely outnumbered qualitative studies undertaken in the form of case studies and mixed methods, though classifying case studies and mixed methods within creativity research as "qualitative" could be normative at best. Firstly, the case study methodology examines those individuals whose identity as creative is unquestionable. Secondly, the emphasis is on the examination of episodes that have already been proven creative. Apparently, the researcher proceeds on fixed rails. In a way, this constricts the horizon of opportunities that needs to be explored and understood about the creative process. Although qualitative research in itself is a broad nomenclature, such researches seek illumination, understanding, and exploration compared to the causal determination, prediction, and generalization of findings which are more important in quantitative research (Hoepfl, 1997). Thus, prefixing the object of inquiry as something "out there," which the researcher is interested in fetching and then analyzing it with benchmarked tools is primarily "quantitative." On the other hand, where the researcher intends to make "meaning," which cannot be made without immersing oneself into the site or with the participants where or with whom the phenomenon-of-interest is taking place, could qualify as a qualitative inquiry (Krauss, 2005). However, Chenail (2011) asserts that qualitative research has not limited itself to its traditional tune and has diversified; newer methods are being designed and used such as confirmatory studies. Contextual approaches to creativity, to a large extent, could be called qualitative as they try to understand creativity within its context (Mayer, 1999). Within contextual approaches, Csikszentmihalyi (1999) calls for a systems model of creativity that includes culture, society, and the individual. Organizational creativity reverberates with a similar notion and situates the person within the creative work environment shaped by the national culture, external environment, organizational culture, organizational structures, organizational climate, and physical space, to foresee how the creative process unfolds (Puccio & Cabra, 2010). Within qualitative research, however, scholars have started diverging methodologically by using techniques like phenomenology (Trotman, 2008), visual techniques (Hall & Mitchell, 2008), and self-study approaches (Reilly, 2008) to study creativity.

The Process-Perspective of Creativity

For understanding the creative process, one is to evaluate (a) creative outputs, products or responses that are novel, appropriate, useful, correct, or valuable responses to the tasks at hand, and (b) the creative process that is heuristic rather than algorithmic (Amabile, 1983). In this regard, Khandwalla (2004) stated that creativity is neither just the production of creative outputs nor just the mental process that links unrelated ideas emerging from imagination or ideation; rather, creative process involves the interplay of exploratory processes and solutions

that are new and appropriate to the context. Thus, creative processes are complex phenomena that encompass both the process and outcome (D'Cruz, 2008; Drazin et al., 1999). As such, there is a need to appreciate that creative processes hold as much importance as creative outputs, and both are inextricably linked.

Creativity is theorized as a multilevel process at the individual level, organizational level (the emerging structure of who engages and when they engage), and work or project level (the creative engagement among different occupational subcultures which leads to the emergence of a negotiated order; Drazin et al., 1999). Creative action happens within the influence of multiple domains like markets, institutions, organizations, and groups, bringing variations which the stakeholders like work-unit members, socialized organizational actors, functional specialists, and consumers, can identify (Ford, 1996). Thus, social and individual creative processes intertwine wherein the social influences the individual, while the individual alters the social (Perry-Smith, 2006). The creative process at the individual level can be conceived to be the interplay of three recursive stages, namely, (a) preparation or generative, (b) incubation and insight, and (c) verification and/or elaboration (D'Cruz, 2008; Mangal, 2002; Wallas, 1926). In the preparation or generative phase, the individual confronts the problem situation and consciously sets forth to collect and examine facts and materials relevant to the problem (Mangal, 2002). Two processes, namely "problem redefinition" and "ideation," emerge in this situation and carry on for some time before the redefinition process provides the opportunity to look at the problem from a different viewpoint, and the ideation process generates alternatives by incorporating imagination and/or associational thinking (D'Cruz, 2008). The majority of creativity research has remained focused at this stage only, and thus fallen short to understand the creative process in its entirety. To do so, the next stage, that is, incubation and insight must be adequately enquired. Beyond the problem redefinition and ideation, there is often a deliberate or voluntary turning away from the problem which leads to the beginning of the second stage (Mangal, 2002). There is blockage of awareness and movement restriction towards the potential solution despite extensive problem redefinition and ideation (D'Cruz, 2008). The eruption of insight or illumination breaks this impasse or incubation and allows the next stage to set in (Smith & Dodds, 1999). In the next stage, the information obtained from the verification of creative outcome feeds back to the ideation and problem redefinition processes of the first stage, thereby making the creative process recursive and iterative in nature (D'Cruz, 2008). The process-perspective of creativity undertakes individual-level processes, but experimental approaches hardly takes cognizance of the complexity involved in these processes which needs to be inevitably handled for understanding creativity. We recognize that these processes are not limited to cognitive level because they take place in the effect of the context or the "social" intertwining the individual. In other words, creative processes are highly *subjective*, both due to individual and social subjectivities. We will explain further what it means by saying that creative processes are subjective.

Subjective Nature of the Processes Involved in Creativity

Weedon (1997) explained that any sense making activity is "perhaps the most crucial site of political struggle over meaning, given it involves a personal, psychic and emotional investment on the part of the individual" (p. 76). The cognitive experience attached to sense-making activity, which Billett (2010) explains as a conceptual, procedural and dispositional premise that directs individuals' intentionality, focus, and intensity when engaging with the physical and social environment beyond them, is subjective in nature. Subjectivities arising due to process dependencies and individual drives needs to be handled while understanding the heuristic process of producing creative outputs (Katz & Giacommelli, 1982). The salience of subjectivity is its central role in the personal process of construing, constructing and responding

to what individuals encounter in the world beyond them (Billett, 2010). In practice more than theory, subjectivist approaches to understanding creativity are dismissed as they carry the negative connotation of being ontologically variegated and epistemologically uncertain and impermanent (Dunston, 2012). The inclination towards objectivism, however, cannot deny that in the course of generating creative outputs, the individual's self and subjectivity engage with that of the intervening environment, resulting in processes that are highly subjective in nature (Goswami, 1999; Katz & Giacommelli, 1982; Khandwalla, 2004). Csikszentmihalyi (2014) puts it succinctly that before asking what creativity is, we need to know "where is creativity?" Studying creativity by isolating individuals from social institutions and cultural domains is erroneous since creative change needs to be understood in its context. In other words, creative processes are subjectively dependent on the individual in context, and deductive approaches involving reductionist evaluations are less equipped to take into consideration the individual and social subjectivities influencing the creative process (Rousseau, 1985). In a similar vein, Goswami (1999) asserted that individual subjectivities define the inner creativity as against outer creativity that needs to be studied with regard to its context.

We have clarified that subjectivities arise both due to individual and social elements, and are a characteristic feature of any creative process. Apparently, while trying to understand creative processes, we need suitable methodologies that can handle subjectivity as part of the inquiry process. To develop the account of subjectivity further, we prefer to delve into the philosophical background of self and subjectivity, and from there meander towards the methodology that is equipped to handle such inquiries.

Philosophical Background of Self and Subjectivity

"Human beings, perhaps alone among the creatures of the world, have the capacity to reflect upon and evaluate their thoughts, feelings, and actions" and "this capacity – for self-reflective activity, or, broadly speaking, subjectivity – is the essence of philosophy" (Atkins, 2005, p. 1). Søren Kierkegaard's (1813-1855) philosophical works, and especially his seminal work entitled "Concluding Unscientific Postscript to the Philosophical Fragments" published in the year 1846, argued that "truth is subjectivity," as he commented that every human endeavor to uncover the truth is about decisions, and all decisions would inevitably confront subjectivity (Hannay, 2009, p. 107). As elicited by Atkins (2005, p. 2), the historical development of ideas on subjectivity as well as the diversity of views within different intellectual movements led to divisions or often called as the "schools of thought." Descartes regarded subjectivity as the direct expression of God, and consequently, his is a philosophy oriented to questions about the truth of perception, which manifested in his extensive studies of natural philosophy (Schwyzer, 1997). Beauvoir, by contrast, regarded subjectivity as the expression of the human body enmeshed in a social matrix, and so her philosophy is oriented to questions about the ontology of interpersonal relations (intersubjectivity) and the interrelation of biology and politics (Godway, 2007).

Contemporary ideas concerning self and subjectivity stem from Descartes' description of the human situation concerning both natural philosophy and rationalism (Atkins, 2005, p. 2). His characterization of the human subject regarding the mutual exclusivity of matter and thought was expressive of his twin commitments: science and religion. Consequently, the history of philosophy of subjectivity is also the history of negotiation of these twin concerns (Dorter, 1973). Kant's critique of Descartes' conception gave rise to two opposing philosophical pathways. One line of thought emphasized on the objective conditions of understanding, which led eventually to analytical philosophy of language and philosophy of mind. The other line of thought emphasized the subjective nature of understanding, which resulted in developing phenomenology (Schwyzer, 1997). One of the accounts of self and

subjectivity is that of Paul Ricoeur's account of narrative identity (Atkins, 2005, p. 225), wherein he refuses reductionism while accommodating the sciences, and attempts to construct an exchange between biology, history, and ethics through the medium of literary and philosophical resources. It is relevant to focus more on contemporary philosophy for the reason of it being applicable in the current contexts.

Ricoeur's Narrative Theory

Ricoeur's philosophical focus was on the hermeneutics of self, from which he developed his narrative theory. The human embodiment endows us with a "double allegiance": on one side, due to our bodily existence, we are bound by the laws of the natural world, while on the other, we also hinge onto the phenomenal world of freedom that helps us to break away from the natural laws through our action (Atkins, 2005; Reagan & Stewart, 1978). This duality in our existence obeys both the objectivity and the subjectivity of what we confront and make sense of in life. The dual orders of time, that is, cosmological or objective time, and phenomenological or subjective time (Ricoeur, 1980, 2014), structures our life events. Taking birth, growing old and dying belong to the cosmological time, whereas, our actions, which also have the sense of beginning, middle and end, or stages through which they pass, belongs to the phenomenological time (Atkins, 2005). Since we constantly experience this duality, problems arise when we try to equate the two, as then we tend to lose clarity in their overlap (Reagan & Stewart, 1978). Since the term "subjectivity" has been used in different ways across disciplinary divides, such as in the use of related conceptions such as identity, this paper understands subjectivity to comprise of conscious and non-conscious conceptions, dispositions and procedures that constitute individuals' cognitive experience (Valsiner & van der Veer, 2000). In other words, subjectivity represents individuals' ways of engaging with and making sense of what they experience through their lived experiences (Billett, 2010), for which the Ricoeurian narrative is helpful as it allows attaining clarity in the "double allegiance" (Ricoeur, 1980, 2014).

Narrative Approaches for Understanding Creative Processes

The challenge for any researcher is to choose the most appropriate research methodology depending on numerous factors, one of them being the social context of the research. In other words, there should be a fit for purpose between the problem and the method. Narratives are "stories, excuses, myths, reasons for doing and not doing" and is "transmitted culturally and constrained by the individual's level of mastery and by his/her conglomerate of prosthetic devices, colleagues, and mentors" (Bruner, 1991). Organizational scholars have immensely used narrative methodologies in understanding specific event/action, or chain of chronologically connected events/actions (Czarniawska, 2004). However, using narrative methodology in research is also about challenging the boundaries to the acceptability of a broad base of narrative approaches within the wider research community, and concerning particular situations, narrative techniques require the researcher to establish clear justifications for its usage (Bold, 2011). Bruner (1991) asserted that human mind cannot express its nascent powers without the enablement of the symbolic systems of culture, some of which relate to the shared domains of skill and social beliefs specific to that culture, and these domains organize narratively. Sikes and Gale (2006; as cited in Bold, 2011, p. 13) suggest that there has been a narrative "turn" within the social sciences associated with postmodernism. However, the essential requirement is that researchers must scrutinize the conditions under which they validate their research (Bleakley, 2004, as cited in Bold, 2011, p. 13). A narrative cannot completely ensure that this scrutiny will take place, but it allows the researcher to develop an

awareness of his/her position in the research (Bold, 2011). Carrying out narrative research requires researcher's reflexivity as it brings the personal dimension into the research. It presents a challenge to conventional ideas of science which favors professional distance and objectivity over engagement and subjectivity (Finlay, 2003).

The principles of narrative methodology have found limited application in organizational studies of creativity. Most of the studies like Albert and Kormos (2011) have attempted to explore the effect of creativity on distinctly measurable constructs like performance. The effort to understand the creative process through a narrative approach is largely missing. From the learning perspective, studies on creativity explored that in early childhood, children's narratives demonstrated the link between their affective, imaginative, rational, and abstract thinking (Wright, 2010). In another study, narrative based inquiry helped to infer that individuals' understanding of creativity traces back to their interactions with parents and teachers (Hill, 2013). These studies highlight the fact that understanding creativity is subject to both individual and social subjectivities.

Narrative approaches to understand creative processes are primarily qualitative. Human beings are inherently narrators who express themselves through narration involving ambiguity of truth, metaphoric nature of language, time and space dependent interpretation of their own lives, and the historical and sociocultural constraints against which they convey information. This view questions the scientific basis of ascertaining truth based on objectivity and validity of information that is collected rather than understood (Sandelowski, 1991). Narrative approaches to creativity research embrace the multiplicity in participants' stories and allow their subjectivities to colour the researcher's interpretation. At the same time, the inquiry process does not restrict to few cycles as qualitative researchers agree that conducting qualitative research is bound to encounter decision choices that make the process recursive and reflexive (Chenail, 2011). Narratives about creativity are not only about the so-called creative stuff, as the researcher intends to explore rather than confirm. The researcher guides the participant but in no way restricts the stories and narrations to sound creative. Narrative approach suits well to creativity research because of every story, no matter how unique, belongs to people who own them through deep emotional investments. While narrating their stories, the participants piece together fragments from their working lives to add sense to their stories and thus provide scope to widen the researcher's interpretation of the creative process. In other words, narrative approaches taken to understand creative processes are "a way to generate knowledge that disrupts old certainties and allows us to glimpse something of the complexities of human lives, selves, and endeavours" (Andrews, Sclater, Squire, & Tamboukou, 2004). Therefore, the principles of narrative analysis can apply to the context of creativity depending firstly on the researcher's intention to explore, reflect and analyse the narratives so that they can bring out the participants' subjectivities in the form of meaning which can further inform researcher's understanding of the creative process. The researcher should also be dextrous to capture participants' emotions giving them equal importance as compared to the perceptibly "hard" facts because emotions significantly delineates the story and also influences the creative process.

Meaning Making from Subjectivities

The subjective nature of social research cannot be denied mainly because every social inquiry involves individuals – be it the participant/s or the researcher/s, and subjectivities exist in their identities, they have subjectivities, and they make subjectivities (Letherby, Scott, & Williams, 2012). Eliminating the scope of the interplay between different subjectivities is equivalent to marginalizing the study and turning away from exploration. However, classifying a study as "only objective" or "only subjective" makes no meaning at all, as noted in the

Ricoeurian perspective. Since creative processes are highly subjective in nature, particularly due to the second stage of the creative process, the analysis of narratives is capable of pulling out meaning from the individual and social subjectivities trapped in narratives (Bold, 2011). Senge (1990) talks about "creative tension," a form of a gap that exists between reality and action to achieve a vision. Simply put, the act of creating is never free of constraints that shape and modify the process. Without constraints, there is no creativity. The constraints are mostly social, although they can be the outcome of cultural factors or individual dispositions as well. These social and self-subjectivities cannot be filtered out from the understanding one develops about the creative process as doing so would mean the exclusion of self from creativity (Billett, 2010). Narrative analysis can not only explore how people frame, remember, and report their experiences, but also illuminate about the individual lives and the broader social processes (Andrews et al., 2004). As people are unique in their creative pursuits (Gruber, 1988), unless the researcher accommodates the participants' subjectivities in the inquiry process, he/she cannot grasp the true picture of the creative process. Practically due to overreliance on creative outcomes as the deciders of whether the process is creative or not, we fail to recognize the process-perspective of creativity. Secondly, it impacts our perceptions of say, who, where or what is creative rather than inquiring how creativity takes place. For instance, Silvia et al. (2008) in their study although acknowledged that individuals are unique in their creativity, but due to their ontological and epistemological myopia preferred to assess the respondents' creativity based on tests comprising of divergent thinking tasks. We argue that if creative processes are subjective, we can at best understand the process by which something called "creative" gets produced. But deciding who or what is "creative" on the basis of outcomes subjected to standard evaluations, not only the process of creating such outcomes are ignored, we also end up with a deficient conception of creativity. It is thus essential for understanding creative processes that we do not neglect the process subjectivities for pursuing uniformity and generalizability. The interpretation of narratives can not only comprehend the real (objective) meanings, but also enrich them by unveiling the meanings that are embedded in the social and individual subjectivities (Ratner, 2002).

Emotion in Context

Research says that emotions have a central role in creative thinking (for example Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005; Lofy, 1998; Lubart & Getz, 1997; Radford, 2004). The association between creativity and emotion manifests in the commitment, great excitement upon realizing the creative outcome, personal tastes and preferences, irrational defenses, and so on. Creative processes employ emotions due to the direct role of inspiration in the second stage of the creative process (Thrash & Elliot, 2004; Wallas, 1926). The task motivation behind a creative performance depends on a) initial level of intrinsic motivation b) presence or absence of salient extrinsic constraints in the social environment, and c) individual ability to cognitively minimize extrinsic constraints (Amabile, 1983). One can also explain these factors through the tripartite conceptualization of inspiration, that is, (a) transcendence – inspiration orients one toward something that is better or more important than one's usual concerns; one sees better possibilities; (b) evocation - inspiration is evoked and unwilled; one does not feel directly responsible for becoming inspired; and (c) motivation - inspiration involves motivation to express or manifest that which is newly apprehended; given the positive valence of this aim, inspiration is an appetitive motivational state (Thrash & Elliot, 2003). In sum, the linkage of inspiration with emotion clarifies the role of emotion in creativity. One of the theoretical premises of narrative research is the assertion that human experience has a crucial narrative dimension. According to Rossiter (2002), narratives stimulate our empathetic orientation, providing a basis for both cognitive and emotional responses to the experiences and worldviews

of other people. Emotions are inextricably linked with meaning, and drawing a clear line of distinction between meaning and emotion is pointless, as they form two sides of human experience (Kleres, 2010).

The Antenarrative

The first-hand information collected from research participants could appear to be relevant as well as irrelevant for developing the narrative. There is a high probability that while writing the narrative, the researcher will add some intermediary story-like information relevant to the context for joining the original collection of disjoint information. These intermediary story-like information or connectors, though helpful in weaving the narrative, may distract the original mood or theme of the study, rendering a partial if not a total diversion from the problem (Boje, 2008). To address this issue, Boje (2001, p. 1) talks about "antenarrative," and calls it "the fragmented, non-linear, incoherent, collective, unplotted and pre-narrative speculation, a bet." An antenarrative approach is suitable for handling the unconstructed, improper and fragmented nature of organizational stories and storytelling that a researcher will generally find in organizations (Barge, 2004). Antenarratives could appear pre, mid or post narrative, and is called upon to capture the details that could have been left in the patterned flow of participants' narration (Boje, 2001, 2008). The primary and incomplete information, personal opinions, biases, and so on, that makes a pre, mid or post appearance in the narrative helps to refine and align the narrative especially for problems that concern sense making (Snowden, 2011). As the antenarrative is added to the narrative, it opens up a room for speculation imperative for a sense-making activity (Boje, 2008). A speculation is often preferred where there exists no prior legacy and helps to refine the search. Thus, an antenarrative serves the purpose of accepting the non-linear, chaotic, random information and the researcher transforms these into a narrative with a patterned storyline. As our interest lies in the process-perspective of creativity, we foresee the dynamic nature of such processes explained by their subjective nature, as well as their temporal and liminal dependence (Perry-Smith & Shalley, 2003). Antenarratives are not limited by the "grammar" of narrative approaches (Matthews, 2011) and thus provides the scope to collect the time and space dependent information that enriches the total narrative. Since creative processes cannot be delineated either temporally or spatially in an organization, antenarratives are crucial to anchor the context as well the individual within that context and provide direction, depth, and flavour to the meaning attained from the subjectivities. Antenarratives, thus, become the pre, mid, or post story that explores the participant's soul while the researcher is trying to get an insight into the participants' subjectively constituted creative processes (Grant, 2011).

How Personal Narratives Can Help?

As storytelling is a relational activity, a link is established between the narrator and the listener on the grounds of empathy (Kohler-Riessman, 2000), however, surfacing that link is always not that easy. Since creative action brings variation in fields (Ford, 1996), understanding the creative process is a "problem of understanding human agency as simultaneously individual and social" and by analyzing personal narratives, the researcher moves closer to the narrator's self and subjectivity (Maynes, Pierce, & Laslett, 2012). At the intra-individual level, the three stages of individual creative process clarify that it involves concurrent processes, that is, thoughts, logics, mental simulations – at the cognitive level; inspiration, emotion – at the affective level; and operational dexterity at the action level. These processes operate within organizational and extra-organizational constraints, and self-subjectivities further complicate the creative process. However, despite this structuring,

investigating creative process is difficult due to the lack of methodologies that allow for *co-creating meanings*. A narrative methodology, and specifically personal narratives are helpful in this regard as the narrator (participant) and the listener (researcher) co-create meanings through personal narratives (Gaydos, 2005). After adequately soaking in the participants' narratives, the researcher becomes the subject (Ellis & Bochner, 2000), and narrates his or her experience gained from talking to the participants, observing them, and collecting antenarratives from the participants and others. The personal narrative, written in first-person, then becomes a useful source to co-construct meanings with the participants' narratives. Without personal narratives of the researcher, there will be no tying back of interpretations gained from submerging oneself into the subjectivities of the participants. Looked this way, personal narratives of the researcher help to keep the subjectivities alive while also drawing an essence from them.

Limitations

Validation issues in narrative research have mostly pointed towards two directions. One is regarding the validity of the collected evidence and second is the validity of the offered interpretation (Polkinghorne, 2007). Both these areas can pose limitations to the approach discussed in this paper. Firstly, since the researcher chooses the site or participants that are off the beaten path, it is a challenge to establish the study's rationale. Researchers should give extra attention to develop their argument of why they have chosen the site and the participants, which in the case of narrative techniques acts as an argumentative way of establishing validity. Secondly, the research report should present the personal narrative of the researcher as well as adequate instances that substantiate the participants' subjectivities, together anticipating and responding to the questions which readers might have about the acceptability of the study. However, it is easier said than done because in practice, open ended approaches to research are difficult to carry out. The researcher may find it tricky to grasp the individual and social subjectivities of participants from their stories due to researcher's own biases that can also lead to misinterpretation and ignorance. As the researcher progresses through the study, he/she may unveil newer forms of subjectivities which may even contradict the previous ones, and the researcher may never get rid of the feeling to start afresh. Further, due to the complexity of language, culture, and society, researcher's interpretation is often put to question. The participants could even disagree to the personal narrative of the researcher. However, despite these limitations, narrative approaches to creativity research can illuminate and explore the ways by which individual and social subjectivities influence the creative process, indeed to extents which others cannot.

Summary

The exploration of creativity has been a puzzling journey for researchers and practitioners alike. It is imperative for both these communities to realize that understanding creativity is something more than just the objective evaluations of creative outputs. Most of the present day theories do not address the process-perspective of creativity and methodologies are less equipped to handle the individual and social subjectivities of the creative process. The ontology and epistemology of any social inquiry are crucial for choosing the right methodology, and this paper highlights that the positivism dominant in creativity research which is outcome-centric cannot develop methodologies helpful in conducting empirical studies with a process-perspective of creativity. Understanding creativity, and its autonomous nature concerning change, decision response, and complexity makes it a distinctively different process than other organizational processes. Creative processes are subjective, both due to

social and individual subjectivities, and the creative process is an abstraction of multilevel processes occurring at the individual, group and organizational levels, while also actions that bring changes in multiple domains. These processes and actions are interrelated and recursively feed into each other, and therefore cannot be judged neatly through psychometric evaluations and experiments. Claiming that creative processes are strictly individual level phenomena and thereby adopting experimental methodologies that try to ascertain an operational uniformity, is also erroneous. Qualitative inquiries of creativity, thus, have to inevitably handle subjectivity as part of the research problem. By revisiting Paul Ricoeur's philosophy on self and subjectivity, we have argued that narrative approaches are apt in dealing with the individual and social subjectivities inherent in the creative process. The principles of narrative methodology clarify why narratives should be the preferred choice in understanding the creative process and how can antenarratives help to enrich the narrations. Personal narratives of the researcher are extremely helpful as they can allow to tie back the participants' subjectivities into the final narrative through co-created meanings. Although narrative approaches to creativity research are not bereft of limitations, the perceptible benefits of this approach should inspire researchers to look beyond the obvious.

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