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CREATIVITY AS PRACTICE: PERSPECTIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR RESEARCH ON MANAGEMENT

Criatividade como prática: Perspectivas e desafios para a pesquisa em administração

Creatividad como práctica: Perspectivas y desafíos para la investigación en Administración

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ABSTRACT

Creativity is a precursor to innovation in contemporary organizations, economies and societies. However, we still lack an integrated and updated knowledge about academic production on creativity, due to the dispersion of existing approaches and the deviation with the epistemology of practice. The research goal is to map and integrate the academic production on organizational creativity, proposing their conceptual renewal from the epistemology of practice. The research method is based on survey and analysis of national and international academic productions on organizational creativity and epistemology of practice. The results consist in a set of categories of the creativity conceptions that allows an integration of research on management research and a structured proposal for renewing the conceptualization of creativity from the epistemology of practice. The results contribute to the advancement of creativity research in elaboration of an integrated set of conceptions of organizational creativity and articulation of creativity with the perspective of practice, expanding the understanding of the concept and proposing a conceptual and theoretical path for renewing and feeding future research.

Keywords: creativity, practice, epistemology of practice, management, organizational studies.

RESUMO

A criatividade é precursora de inovação nas organizações, economias e sociedades contemporâneas. Entretanto, é necessário o conhecimento integrado e atualizado sobre a produção acadêmica, devido à dispersão de enfoques existentes e ao desengajamento com a epistemologia da prática. O objetivo desta pesquisa consiste em mapear e integrar a produção acadêmica sobre criatividade organizacional, propondo sua renovação conceitual com base na epistemologia da prática. O método é baseado em levantamento e análise da produção acadêmica nacional e internacional sobre criatividade organizacional e epistemologia da prática. Os resultados consistem em um conjunto de categorias de concepções da criatividade que permite integrar as pesquisas em Administração e uma proposta estruturada de renovação conceitual a partir da epistemologia da prática. Os resultados contribuem para o avanço da pesquisa em criatividade com a elaboração de um conjunto integrado de concepções sobre a criatividade organizacional e a articulação da criatividade com a perspectiva da prática, ampliando a compreensão do conceito e propondo um caminho conceitual-teórico para renovar e alimentar pesquisas futuras.

Palavras-chave: criatividade, prática, epistemologia da prática, administração, estudos organizacionais.

RESUMEN

La creatividad es precursora de innovación en las organizaciones, economías y sociedades contemporáneas. Pero aún necesitamos un conocimiento integrado y actualizado sobre la producción académica, debido a la dispersión de los enfoques existentes y la desvinculación con la epistemología de la práctica. El objetivo de esta investigación es mapear e integrar la producción académica sobre creatividad organizacional, proponiendo su renovación conceptual desde la epistemología de la práctica. El método de investigación se basa en el relevamiento y análisis de la producción académica nacional e internacional sobre creatividad organizacional y epistemología de la práctica. Los resultados consisten en un conjunto de categorías de las concepciones de la creatividad que permite la integración de la investigación en la Administración y una propuesta estructurada de renovación conceptual desde la epistemología de la práctica. Los resultados contribuyen al avance de la investigación mediante la elaboración de un conjunto integrado de concepciones de la creatividad organizacional y articulación de la creatividad con la perspectiva de la práctica, lo que amplía la comprensión del concepto y propone un camino teórico-conceptual para renovar y alimentar futuras investigaciones.

Palabras clave: creatividad; práctica; epistemología de la práctica; administración, estudios organizacionales.

INTRODUCTION

Creativity is a topic that raises growing and multiple interests in different fields of knowledge (Coldevin, Carlsen, Clegg, Pitsis, & Antonacopoulou, 2019; Coutu, 2008; Muzzio, 2019; Rickards, Runco, & Moger, 2009). Considered a core competence of the 21st century, as it expresses human potential in different contexts, creativity is essential for innovation, entrepreneurship, creative leadership, and the economic and sustainable development of organizations and societies (Nakano & Wechsler, 2018; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [Unesco], 2015). Within an ecosystem of artistic and creative sectors (such as design, fashion, audiovisual production, games, films, and series), creativity is a vital and driving force for the socioeconomic development of contemporary societies guided by the creative and cultural economy (Bandeira & Costa, 2015; Bendassoli, Wood, Kirshbaum, & Cunha, 2009; Hartley, Wen, & Li, 2015; Muzzio, 2019; Townley, Roscoe, & Searle, 2019).

In the field of management, research on creativity has intensified in the last two decades. Initially, research focused on creativity based on the characteristics of inventive individuals, the influence of the work environment, and the interactions between individual, group, and organization (Amabile, 2017; Bruno-Faria, Veiga, & Macedo, 2008; Slavich & Svejenova, 2016; Styhre, 2006). Advocating creative leadership, organizational innovation, and the ability to formulate new solutions to both preexisting and emerging problems, some studies address creativity via skills, resources, and management of motivation to innovate (Bruno-Faria et al., 2008; Coldevin et al., 2019; Edmonson, 2012). Several studies address creativity as an individual, cognitive, personality, and environmental issue (Amabile, 2017; Mainemelis, Epitropaki, & Kark, 2019; Muzzio, 2019; Slavich & Svejenova, 2016; Sparadi & Nakano, 2015; Styhre, 2006).

Within a variety of themes and approaches, research on creativity does not focus on a single homogeneous definition. For some authors, creativity refers to the creation of ideas to be judged in a sociocultural environment according to their usefulness and originality (Amabile, 1996; George, 2007). For other research, creativity involves the interaction between motivation, intentions, and the ability to transform received sensory information into original interpretations in a given context (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). In some studies, creativity is conceived as a disruptive potential (Styhre, 2006) or as a process that results in the emergence of a new product (goods or services), accepted as useful, satisfactory or valuable (Alencar, 1995; Amabile, 2017). There are several definitions of creativity within the scope of research on Management, and few studies have proposed to reflect on this conceptual variety seeking an integrated vision.

Furthermore, one theoretical-epistemological renovation has not fully reached the field of research on creativity in management: practice-based studies (PBS). In organizational studies (OS), the so-called “practice turn” gains strength by favoring situated and active action. Practice-based theorizing is based on the definition of practice as “knowable collective performance” and on a theorizing activity as practice situated within a collectivity that socially sustains it (Gherardi & Strati, 2014). We propose this practice as a theoretical, ontological, and epistemological lens for enabling us to understand organizational phenomena as a dynamic and carried out in current and

daily actions. Based on this perspective, we seek to better understand the mutually constitutive ways that shapes agency, but also produces, reinforces, and changes its structural conditions (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011). PBS allow for the formation of socially constructed knowledge based on the social immersion of organizational practices and the action between subjects and objects (Yanow, 2001). PBS stand out in OS due to the need to renew the understanding of social and organizational phenomena and interactions, assuming their inherent pluralities (Nicolini, 2012; Schatzki, 2001) as subjective, tacit, and aesthetic aspects (Bispo, 2015; Gherardi, 2019; Gherardi & Nicolini, 2000).

Developing a conception of creativity as practice enables the articulation of creativity with practice, contributing to better respond to the organizational need for constant adaptation, collaboration, innovation, and reinvention. This is an approach that helps to renew both the research activity and the practice of Management, impacting educational and professional improvement. Managers, leaders, and entrepreneurs are expected to be able to collectively practice creativity in the search and implementation of effective and innovative solutions to diverse problems, conflict resolution, and collaborative teamwork (Edmonson, 2012; Mainemelis et al., 2019; Sawyer, 2007). The alignment between creativity and PBS can contribute toward this.

Despite the potential contribution of PBS toward advancing research on creativity, we lack research relating organizational creativity to PBS (Coldevin et al., 2019; Garcia-Lorenzo, Donnelly, Sell-Trujillo, & Imas, 2018; Hjorth, 2018; Hjorth, Strati, Dodd, & Weik, 2018). Therefore, we faced two important gaps in research on creativity in Management (a) a broad, diverse, and integrated understanding of academic production; and (b) theoretical updating and renewal of research based on PBS.

This research aims to map and to integrate the academic production on organizational creativity to propose its conceptual renewal based on the epistemology of practice. Our methodology is based on theoretical research of a qualitative nature. We conducted a systematic review of the existing academic productions in the fields of research on organizational creativity and PBS. Our search was made by cross-referencing the following descriptors in English and Portuguese: creativity, creative, Management, organization, and practice. The databases consulted were: Academy of Management, Amazon, Emerald, JSTOR, Library of Congress, CAPES Periodicals, Routledge, Sage Publication Journals, SCIELO, and SPELL. From the first stage of selection (consistent and coherent productions dealing with creativity in Management) and the analysis of this material, we mapped its references, aiming to identify other relevant productions. The result was a set of articles, books, book chapters, theses, and dissertations.

The analysis of academic production made it possible to identify, to highlight, and to characterize contemporary conceptions of creativity. In the first section of this study, our analysis highlights the centrality of process logic and enables the categorization of four conceptions of creativity: processes of engagement, sharing, and social and discursive interactions. In the following section, we mobilize the academic production on PBS to develop a conceptual-theoretical path that (a) broadens the understanding of creativity and (b) guides and renews future research on creativity in management. In the set of results, our contribution to the

advancement of research on creativity in management occurs, at least, in two ways. Firstly, this study provides an up-to-date and integrated understanding of the academic production on organizational creativity. Secondly, we propose an articulation of research on creativity with PBS.

CREATIVITY AS A PROCESS: CONTEMPORARY CONCEPTIONS IN MANAGEMENT

In the analyzed research, contemporary conceptions are developed around the idea of process. Although we find a variety of contemporary conceptions of creativity in the academic production on Management, creativity as a process is the point of convergence among all of them. Before diving into these concepts, let us understand their production context.

Traditionally, the concept of creativity in research on management is guided by the focus on the individual at the center of creative activity. Originating from Psychology in the 1950s, creativity would arise from unconscious impulses (Guilford, 1950; Runco & Sakamoto, 1999) and develop itself as a thinking skill, a product of creative thinking or personal qualities (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Sternberg, 1999). In the following decade, the four Ps (person, process, product, and environmental pressure) began to be covered by research investigating the characteristics of creative people, creative processes, and the effect of the environment on successful creations (Choi, Glaveanu, & Kaufman, 2020). From the 1970s onward, research began to focus on the situational aspects that permeate the acquisition of creativity as a skill, detailing the constitutive stages of learning, such as cognition, retention, and memory. In the 1980s, a sociocultural approach (of eminently collective and shared social constructions) emerged. In these studies, creativity is conceived as connected and heterogeneous practices that shape daily work and whose creation practices are influenced by context (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018).

From the 2000s onward, research continues to define creativity as based on social and sharing aspects in an ever-changing dynamic (Choi et al., 2020; Glaveanu, 2014), considering the social connections of a creative individual. Thus, contemporary conceptions of creativity contemplate greater diversity and complexity, encompassing arts, socio-historical views, group interactions, knowledge, and emotions (Glaveanu, 2010a, 2014, 2017; Mainemelis, 2010). With the advent of sociocultural contribution, the 4-Ps creative model is transformed into the 5-A framework. Thus, research talks about actors (instead of persons), actions (instead of processes), artifacts (instead of products), access (rather than environmental pressure), and an audience (e.g., target audiences) made up of both those who provide guidance and feedback and those who interact with the final product (Choi et al., 2020).

Contemporary conceptions of creativity consider that creativity occurs in a process and at different levels, from the cognitive to the interactional process. These are conceptions that bring together the involvement of individuals in their creative work processes, social interactions, search for new solutions, and in the characteristics demanded at different stages of the creative process (George, 2007; Slavich & Svejenova, 2016; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). This is a process that occurs

in everyday life and includes relations of performance and interpretation. Thus, creativity is perceived as a continuous and interdependent generating process between subjects and their sociocultural context via the adaptive and fluid nature of everyday practices in organizational processes (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018; Hjorth et al., 2018).

In contemporary conceptions of creativity, many studies highlight the environment as a central element to explain favorable conditions for the creativity process. For example, mentioning conditions such as support in managerial practices, supervision, assignment of challenging tasks, job characteristics, integration of diverse profiles, adequate project management, a collaborative environment, acceptance of failures, unbureaucratic structures, provision of adequate resources, and availability of time and personnel (Coutu, 2008; Shalley, Zou, & Oldham, 2004; Slavich & Svejnova, 2016; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). The contextual characteristics of the creative process refer to managerial practices aimed at team development (Amabile, 1999). Among these teams, traits and behaviors associated with dominant cultural groups are no longer considered generalizable, resulting in a broadening of focus from an elitist or culturally dominant perspective toward a greater diversity of cultural, ethnic, and social class groups (Sawyer, 2017).

On the other hand, research indicates unfavorable aspects for the creativity process: assignment of inadequate work, change or lack of clear definition of objectives, false or impossible deadlines, and lack of verbal and direct incentives for creative efforts (Amabile, 1999). Research also mentions barriers of a perceptual, cultural, emotional (Alencar, 1995), environmental, intellectual, expressive (Jones, 1993), and strategic nature in addition to issues of value and self-image (Rickards & Jones, 1991). Other obstacles to the creative process in organizations are related to behavioral traits, such as fear of making mistakes, taking risks, exposing ideas, and insecurity or feelings of inferiority (Edmonson, 2012). These behaviors originate from a repressive education which would reflect social values and assumptions by emphasizing incompetence and incapacity instead of potential (Alencar, 1995, 2007).

In short, the interpretation of creativity as a process understands that creativity occurs in stages. Procedural logic provides a language and concepts to describe a world in formation in which creation is seen as immanent to organization (Hjorth et al., 2018). Focusing on creativity as a process makes it possible to understand how the environment supports practices that encourage new actions and forms of organization (Garcia-Lorenzo et al., 2018). It is a concept that is concerned with understanding how new ideas are generated along a temporal continuum, with the mobilization of structures and processes both social and organizational.

Creativity as a process refers to both an attribute and a process which develop themselves at individual and social levels (Masi, 2003; Pinheiro, 2009). The creative process is described as a way of explaining and describing how something innovative is created (Alencar, Fleith, & Bruno-Faria, 2010; Spadari & Nakano, 2015). This process is based on two concepts: (a) traditional learning, such as the formation of new learners, in which the process of learning to perform a task is easily observable (Collins et al., 1990); and (b) cognitive learning, which occurs in the classroom and where thinking is deliberately stimulated by the teacher (Collins, 2007; Collins et al., 1990; Lins & Miyata, 2008).

The creative process arises from the attempt and need to relate fantasy and concreteness as the two factors that generate human creativity (Masi, 2003). Rational resources are considered propellers of the creative process which enable the creation of creative synapses and new concepts. Also called the work on ideas, this process of development and legitimation is not limited to particular stages, as it takes place in practices of continuous generation, connection, communication, evaluation, and remodeling (Coldevin et al., 2019).

In managing the creative process, internal processes are interconnected: processes-outcomes, individuals-collectives, and temporary-permanent units of creativity (Slavich & Svejenova, 2016). Indeed, the creative process does not occur in a linear, organized or systematic way, its development can be influenced by the environment, and challenges can appear at each stage of its course and to the cognitive action of the creator (Goleman, Kaufman, & Ray, 1992; Mainemelis, 2010). Research seeks to broaden the understanding of creative action as a process that begins at a point (an initial problem) to include its definition, context, and the subsequent joint evaluation of the creative solutions that are proposed throughout the process (Lombardo & Kvålshaugen, 2014). Thus, the actors involved in the process produce creative solutions that are incorporated into the initial solution.

The analysis of academic production on organizational creativity allows us to highlight at least four major contemporary conceptual axes of creativity as a process: (a) engagement, (b) sharing, (c) social interaction, and (d) discursive. The concept of engagement emphasizes the individual and psychological dimensions of the creative process, whereas the concept of sharing advances in the inclusion of concerns with relational and cultural issues of the creative process. In the conception of social interaction, contexts and social systems are decisive for understanding the creative process, whereas the discursive conception expands the understanding of this process by focusing on its political and identitary dimension.

Engagement process

Based on perspective of engagement, creativity is linked to a process of individual and/or collective commitment. At the individual level, engagement refers to a positive, rewarding, work-related state of mind characterized by dedication and self-efficacy (Slavich & Svejenova, 2016). For example, Drazin, Glynn, and Kazanjian (1999) define creativity as a process of involving an individual in a creative task, or even a process in which the individual engages—behaviorally, cognitively, and emotionally—in producing results. Creativity, therefore, reflects the individual's choice to engage in creative processes and seek new ideas.

While individuals can commit, dedicating all their skills to creative processes, they can also choose the minimum engagement, proposing simple solutions that may not be particularly new, called by Ford (1996) as habitual action. These engagement and disengagement processes can vary over time, ebb and flow over the day. For Csikszentmihalyi (1997), creativity is intrinsically related to states of motivation in which elements such as interpersonal support and organizational culture

help to contribute to states of engagement and flow. The flow or creative process experience is characterized as the moment or sequence that requires a certain degree of emotional sensitivity to capture the inherent characteristics of knowledge in action (Chia, 2003; Csikszentmihalyi, 1997). It is a state of optimized experience that is a precondition for full involvement in a task. Being in the flow helps to deal with the unpredictability of creative efforts or “out-of-the-box connections,” making it possible to achieve high standard commitment and creativity.

Sharing process

The conception of creativity as a shared process understands that distributed or shared creativity is an activity that occurs in an eminently relational, collective, and interactional way between groups (Bureau & Komporozos-Athanasiou, 2016; Mainemelis, Kark, & Epitropaki, 2015). The social, material, and temporal dimensions of creativity are considered, as well as the interconnection of cognitive, cultural, and social processes. This turn stems from the recent disassociation of forms of creativity associated or restricted to the upper, academic or art classes (Sawyer, 2017) toward the assumption of collective forms of creativity arising from the working classes or creative individuals who lacked access to higher education. Sharing creativity, therefore, is as likely to occur among the most diverse professionals in organizations as it is in their highest levels and chairs.

Among the harmful factors to the climate conducive to the process of sharing ideas are: (a) lack of attention or skill; (b) deliberate violation of agreed rules; and (c) insecurity and adoption of inadequate processes. Some strategies help to curb the harmful factors to creativity: (a) the proper diagnosis of challenges or goals; (b) the initial design of shares; (c) decision-making (experimental and effective); and (d) permanent reflection on the results and progress obtained throughout the process (Edmonson, 2012). These strategies promote a psychologically safe and favorable environment for learning, expressing, and admitting failures (West & Sacramento, 2012).

The relationships of sharing creativity in a given community vary according to the nature of the interaction between individuals. Creativity is possible according to the existence of material and psychological conditions suitable for its development (Vygotsky, 1991). The development of creativity is then externally focused on the mental activity of each individual, extending through the external means of action and communication (Glaveanu, 2014, 2019). Thus, creativity is not a static “object” (personal or product characteristics), but rather the dynamic and evolving quality of relationships developed collectively within a shared cultural environment.

In research on creative leadership, practices favoring the achievement of creative results stand out: encouraging expression and sharing between teams, materializing the creative vision on the part of the leader, and integrating heterogeneous creative contributions (Mainemelis et al., 2019; Muzzio, 2019; Raelin, 2018). On the other hand, when considering the implications of multi-contextual structures of creative leadership, three critical contextual issues must be addressed: unclear definitions, lack of subtle theories, and low contextual sensitivity (Mainemelis et al., 2019). Indeed, the leader’s role in managing shared creativity encompasses both instrumental competences of reflection, goal setting, and monitoring, as well as the ability to encourage people

aiming at making organizations more creative and consequently more competitive (Muzzio, 2019). As an empirical result, through creative leadership, the ability to restore and to leverage relational resources, such as trust, commitment, and resilience (Dovey, Burdon, & Simpson, 2017) is obtained by the successful combination of the reach of individual and collective goals.

Regarding the processes and dynamics that influence the creative process as a team, brainstorming emerges as a prevalent resource to identify the ways in which diversity and different types of conflict can affect the group (Kurtzberg & Amabile, 2001; Sawyer, 2007, 2017). The constituent stages of the creative process involve the generation, development, finalization or closing, and evaluation of an idea (Nemiro, 2002). In this process, leaders need to deal with conflicts, types of personality, interdependence of resources and rewards, temporal scarcity, and complex systems of cooperation (Kurtzberg & Amabile, 2001; Sawyer & DeZutter, 2009; Shalley & Perry-Smith, 2008). Conflicts, losses or inefficiencies can occur in teams; however, losses tend to be greater the larger the groups are (Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Hargadon & Bechky, 2006), amplifying the challenges inherent to these creative processes. One of these challenges is called “groupthink,” characterized by the absence of manifest disagreement in groups, in the sense of challenging pre-established ideas and decisions (Kurtzberg & Amabile, 2001).

Social interaction process

For many studies, creativity is a systemic process in which social interaction is fundamental (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Glaveanu et al., 2019). When thinking, in an interconnected way, how context explains the ideas produced via this conception, creativity is understood as a human process constituted in specific social contexts, therefore inseparable from the sociocultural context in which individuals are inserted (Choi et al., 2020; Momo & Martínez, 2017; Spadari & Nakano, 2015). This conception differs from others due to its interdisciplinarity and focus on social systems composed of groups of people in cultural contexts.

In the transition from the emphasis on individual action to the social dimension, the unit of analysis moves from cognitive processing and end-products to the logic behind collective practice (Bourdieu, 1990). Comparatively, focusing on individuals and disregarding the environment that surrounds them (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997) suggests the need for a change of focus, emphasizing that individuals are part of a social system of mutual influences and information. This systemic theory encompasses social, cultural, and personal factors to explain the process of sharing creativity.

Research that, until then, focused on personality traits of creative individuals started to relate creative learning to the construction of meaning, as it is formed by the interconnection of different individual practices, and, therefore, a cognitive and social activity (Amabile, 1996; Choi et al. al., 2020; Maitlis, Vogus, & Lawrence, 2013; Stierand, 2015). Thus, knowledge and the construction of meaning are interactive processes of learning in action between recognized norms, values, and practices on the one hand, and new knowledge and creative ideas on the

other (Gherardi & Perrotta, 2013; Maitlis et al., 2013; Yanow, 2001). The synergistic work of people with divergent and complementary profiles, or interdisciplinary teams (Masi, 2003; Pinheiro, 2009; Tang, 2020) is indicated to collectively build the creative practice, potentially producing broader and richer results.

Discursive process

There is still little emphasis on the association between creativity and issues of discourse, power, and identity. Consequently, few studies are dedicated to understanding creativity as a discursively constructed phenomenon and process. The discursive dimension of organizational creativity examines elements such as subject positions and power relations produced in discourses about creativity. Emphasizing the ways in which discourse is practiced in creative production processes, discourse reveals how a construction of subjectivities can be staged in the formal and informal hierarchies of organizations (Tuori & Vilén, 2011). The focus is on the discursive practices of creativity and their effects on the subjectivities of the involved actors. These representations are significant to shape the ways in which people define themselves, are defined by others, attribute meaning to work, and position themselves in power relations and institutional status (Tuori & Vilén, 2011).

The discourse on creativity is constituted through discursive practices in which the object and certain subjects are identified and articulated in organizations (Prichard, 2002). Discourse is closely linked to power relations, thus, individuals are constructed in power relations governed by discourses (Tuori & Vilén, 2011). Adopting a discursive approach to creativity allows scholar to explore how the process of paving power relations and hierarchies goes beyond formal organizational structures. This approach helps to illuminate negative and political aspects of creative processes and uncover the existence of “hidden” hierarchies (Tuori & Vilén, 2011).

CRIATIVITY AS PRACTICE: A PERSPECTIVE OF RENEWAL FOR MANAGEMENT RESEARCH

The perspective of practice enables us to go beyond the traditional understanding of creativity as a purely mental action. Practice can expand the understanding of creativity by articulating the multiple aspects (e.g., human, material, aesthetic, emotional, and ethical) involved in the daily lives of people and organizations (Bispo, 2015; Gherardi, 2019; Raelin, 2007). Methodologically, practice-based research presupposes a thorough engagement with practice as it happens (zooming in). However, it is also necessary to move to a broader focus (zooming out) and seek the links of a particular practice in relation to other practices (Nicolini, 2012). By establishing the connections of the here-now practice with other practices, which persist in time and space and form a texture of dependencies and references, it is possible to expand our ability to understand organizational

dynamics in what is perennial, creative, and transitory (Gherardi, 2019; Pimentel & Nogueira, 2018; Santos & Alcadipani, 2015).

The articulation of PBS with research on creativity helps us to open new paths and integrate contemporary conceptions of creativity. Thus, the invitation is to focus on the experienced practice of creativity, aiming at greater dialogue and mobilization between elements—human or not, such as knowledge, materialities, and discourses (Gherardi, 2016, 2019; Raelin, 2007). Despite being relatively recent, the contribution of PBS to OS is significant, as it focuses on practice as a system of activities in which knowledge is associated with practices and considers the social aspects of learning instead of purely cognitive action (Bishop, 2015; Gherardi, 2019; Nicolini, 2012; Raelin, 2007).

Epistemologically, PBS enable the adoption of social practices as a reference to better understand how organizations are formed, their intrinsic relationships, and their underlying organizational phenomena. It is a post-humanist perspective, which implies emphasizing the sociomaterial aspects that involve a practice and are collectively organized (Bispo, 2015; Bouty & Drucker-Goudart, 2018; Gherardi, 2019; Pimentel & Nogueira, 2018). So, how to conceive creativity as a practice? To stimulate future research, we propose to link PBS to studies on organizational creativity from four perspectives: (a) creativity as activity and achievement; (b) creativity as a routinely performed corporeity; (c) creativity as speech practice; and (d) creativity as a collective action based on knowledge. In PBS, Gherardi (2019) proposes the foundation of these strands. These aspects are not intended to circumscribe or limit the complexity of issues or the plurality of possibilities PBS offer. They seek to offer researchers on organizational creativity an initial path which facilitates the process of conceptual integration and regeneration. These strands, then, can help to structure a first contact with theories of practice to provoke new research on organizational creativity. However, they do not intend to offer a single path to researchers, as each strand (or their combination) may, for example, become a rich path for future research.

Creativity as activity and achievement (situated action, knowledge in practice)

The contemporary conception of creativity as a sharing process supports the strand of creativity as activity and achievement. In this aspect, the “know-how,” in a situated activity, in relation to the accomplishment of something demands the shared mobilization of its agents, external means of action, and communication (Gherardi, 2019; Glaveanu, 2014; Mainemelis, 2016; Schatzki, 2001). The creative process develops itself in practice in a progressive, collaborative, and non-linear way.

Legitimation at the end of the creative process involves the construction of ideas, (re) placing them in the macro-scenario and considering the identity of the main social actors to then mobilize other people in different degrees of co-creation, unifying collectively enhanced imaginations (Coldevin et al., 2019). The practice of creating new ideas, activities, or projects

requires a procedural and collective reinvention, as practice requires continuity between learning, making mistakes, testing, knowing, knowing how to do, and employing.

As creativity plays a vital role in attributing meaning to human existence (Csikszentmihalyi, 1997; Masi, 2003), its realization articulates creation with concretization. Associated with the process of creating unusual ways to deal with the same situations, creative practice implies combining different elements (human, sociomaterial, tacit, and observable) to arrive at a different solution or final result. The concept of developing creative processes (Masi, 2003; Spadari & Nakano, 2015) is associated with the concept of organizational practice (Gherardi, 2019), as both constitute a way of ordering the flow of situated relationships, knowledge, and actions. The principle of ordering creative processes is unstable and non-linear. Like practice, creativity occurs within a flow of construction, with constant openness to new creations and recreations of existing practices (Amabile, 2007; Coutu, 2008; Gherardi, 2019; Jones, 1993). This flow is favored by maintaining an environment of attention and stimulation in relation to tacit, aesthetic, sensitive, and emotional issues. This is illustrated by *haute cuisine* chefs, in how, in their creative processes, they transform aesthetic stimuli into a creative identity of their own through their sensitivity and aesthetic knowledge, thus attributing meaning to these stimuli (Stierand, Mainemelis, & Dorfler, 2019).

Creativity as embodiment routinely acted (performance)

Contemporary conceptions of shared creativity and social interaction underlie the aspect of creativity as a routinely performed corporeality. Although these conceptions do not explicitly deal with issues of the body, they indicate that creative activity occurs in a relational, collective, and interactional way between groups. Moreover, the social, material, and temporal dimensions of creativity are also considered, as well as the interconnection of cognitive, cultural, and social processes (Bureau & Komporozos-Athanasiou, 2016; Mainemelis et al., 2015). “Doings” and “sayings” incorporated into practices correspond to routine actions, including bodily ones. The body in PBS composes a collective that must be analyzed in the context in which individuals are inserted (Gherardi, 2019; Nicolini, 2012; Schatzki, 2001), although we have found no research that correlates it with the contemporary concepts of creativity. Acting creatively requires adequate time, initiative, a sense of opportunity, improvisation, flexibility, nonconformity, extroversion, persistence, self-confidence, autonomy, and attraction to challenges and complexities (Amabile 1999, 2017; Pinheiro, 2009). Therefore, acting creatively in practice requires the bodily mobilization and expression of this repertoire together with other material elements present in organizational realities, such as microphones, amplifiers, furniture, and living spaces.

The proposals by Bouty and Drucker-Goudart (2018) are enlightening and illustrative when they investigate managerial performance in relation to coordination in a racing sailboat. In addition to the commander’s speech and daily actions, the coordination and combination of these mechanisms with the rhythm, the way of handling objects such as the helm and oar,

and the captain's temporal involvement in the continuous flow of activities were perceived as essential elements for collective team actions. To creatively act in a managerial way is, therefore, to corporeally act in practice.

Creativity as speech practice (institutional discourses and histories)

The contemporary conception of creativity as a discursive process supports the interpretation of creativity as a practice of speech. Since talking about creativity in its discursive conception is a practice in which the object and certain subjects are identified and articulated in organizations (Prichard, 2002), speech in an organizational context refers to an observable phenomenon, i.e., the adequate use of technical vocabulary. However, there are narrative elements of special importance that are not verbally expressed or even encouraged to be expressed. Such elements hold the potential for building subjectivities and establishing formal and informal hierarchies in organizations (Tuori & Vilén, 2011), such as sharing information in informal conversations, hesitation, voice intonation (when manifested), and even silence regarding the expression of ideas considered to be absurd – ideas that die before manifesting themselves. The psychological function of self-preservation leads to silence when one is unsure of the placement or adequacy of a response or new idea. Indeed, creative practice requires resolving the fear of making mistakes and exposing oneself so as to make it possible to share and mature the network of actors and emerging ideas, connecting creative inspirations in a shared way.

PBS promote narrative methods that focus on different realities, such as storytelling or life stories in people's daily lives (Gherardi, 2019; Nicolini, 2012). In practice, the development of the creative process requires everyday narratives, such as dialogues in informal spaces and their subjective and non-verbal elements, such as postures, intonations, feelings, and construction of meaning and emotions (Gherardi, 2019; Nicolini, 2012; Ochs & Capps, 2001). Expressing the creation of new ideas and practices reverberates the meaning attributed by the individual in a given context, forming a mesh of multiple interconnected creative actions, which Schatzki (2001) calls practical intelligibility. This, when verbalized, goes from an individual sense to the collective construction of creativity.

Creativity as collective practice based on knowledge

This aspect of creativity as a practice is not linked to any contemporary conception of creativity as a process. It is an aspect in which practicing and proposing any activity requires individual and collective work. Learning how to do it is a previous step (Gherardi, 2019; Raelin, 2007). So, acting creatively requires a continuum between acquisition of knowledge, creative proposition, and subsequent practice as a way of testing, refuting or realizing. In other words, an uninterrupted cycle. Although still related to an individual gift or talent, creativity is related to the ability of having a repertoire and mobilizing it to find innovative ideas or solutions—like connecting dots. It is the exercise of connecting these dots in a way that is yet unused which mobilizes

repertoire and the ability to make such connections. For this, the acquisition of knowledge and expansion of this repertoire is essential, because the more numerous the points, the greater the possible connections.

As individual repertoires differ greatly in terms of experiences and backgrounds, the formation of creative teams benefits from a diverse composition of professionals from different areas, backgrounds, and psychological traits (Masi, 2003; Pinheiro, 2009; Sawyer, 2017; Tang, 2020). Moreover, tacit knowledge contemplates important points of reflection, such as emotion, and aesthetic simplicity and harmony. These reflection points act as sources to animate a creative idea (Stierand et al., 2019).

The phenomenon of formative practice claims that performance occurs during the creation of new ways of doing, combining elements such as sensitive knowledge, sharing ideas, materialities, and repetition before and after realization (Gherardi & Perrotta, 2013). The acquisition of knowledge in practice has the fundamental role of composing the previous repertoire, since learning, knowledge, and experience are antecedents of creative achievement by connecting information, skills or previous experiences (Kurtzberg & Amabile, 2001). The construction of knowledge and the accumulation of personal and professional experiences—successful or not—are carried out by social actors in situations and interactions that can either occur face-to-face or be mediated by information and communication technologies, formally or informally, individually or collectively, whether the individual immediately or later becomes aware of the acquisition, and the ability to transfer or to apply that knowledge. Considering that the expression of creativity permeates each of these situated processes, the acquisition and processing of applied knowledge occurs permanently in a procedural and continuous way, in parallel and complementarily to the creative practice undertaken in the dynamics between the collective and the individual.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The multiple conceptions of creativity as a process can be thought of as contribution vectors to integrate the construction of a renewed conception of organizational creativity as practice. Understanding these conceptions and the perspective of renewal creates possibilities for future research on organizational creativity, which we will address below as three challenges.

The first challenge is theoretical-epistemological. The mapping conducted in the first section of this study sought to systematize traditional conceptions, the fields of knowledge that originated and fostered research over time in management, and the categorization of contemporary theoretical perspectives. This mapping helps researchers to situate themselves on the current state of the field and to prospect its conceptual renewal. This review shows how research attaches itself to individual aspects of the creative process, the products resulting from innovations, and the environment (Alencar et al., 2010; Spadari & Nakano, 2015) to the detriment of social aspects that favor procedural logic, learning, and the understanding of

creative practice in the field of OS (George, 2007; Mainemelis et al., 2015; Slavich & Svejnova, 2016). Although some conceptions dialogue with PBS (creativity as a process of engagement, sharing, and social interaction and discourse), future researchers are invited to consider with greater precision, reflection, and robustness the epistemological turn that practice theories provide. This epistemological aspect needs to be fully addressed in future research if the intention is to genuinely consolidate the approximation of PBS in relation to studies on organizational creativity.

The second challenge is methodological. Empirical research will enhance the understanding of organizational creativity as a practice. Empirical research imposes the challenge of the methodological approach to be mobilized. When adopting the perspective of practice in the study of creativity, researchers will need to expand their ability to describe, reflect, represent, and understand organizational practices and their social subtleties, such as power, agency, and learning. Qualitative approaches—especially those based on practice (Gherardi, 2019)—, help in this direction due to their prerogative to explore, induce, and interpret how creativity is practiced in different contexts and organizational dynamics.

The third challenge is educational. The conception of organizational creativity as a practice should not be included in management education concerns. The challenge is to think about the teaching of creativity from teaching pedagogies that truly allow the knowledge of creativity to develop based on a practical conception. Regarding the training of administrators working in a complex society, characterized by multiple challenges (Araújo & Davel, 2018; Bendassoli et al., 2009), creativity represents an essential skill, necessary for decision-making, problem solving, conflicts, innovation, and regeneration of organizational practices.

Altogether, the results of this study allow us to better understand research on organizational creativity and to glimpse perspectives for developing future research. Thus, we hope to have contributed so that researchers and managers can better face the challenge of rethinking and regenerating organizational and educational environments that activate the full potential creativity emanates in practice.

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AUHTOR'S CONTRIBUTION

Pérola Cavalcante Dourado and Eduardo Paes Barreto Davel worked on the conceptualization and theoretical-methodological approach. The theoretical review was conducted by Pérola Cavalcante Dourado. Data collection was coordinated by Pérola Cavalcante Dourado and Eduardo Paes Barreto Davel. Data analysis included Pérola Cavalcante Dourado and Eduardo Paes Barreto Davel. Pérola Cavalcante Dourado and Eduardo Paes Barreto Davel worked together in the writing and final revision of the manuscript.