Teaching Strategies, School Environment, and Culture: Drivers of Creative Pedagogy in Ghanaian Schools

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ABSTRACT

Creative pedagogy in educational institutions has been the mainstay of sustainable development globally as it ensures high standard human capital with a high level of imagination and problem-solving potentials. However, there are several drivers of creative pedagogy. This exploratory study employed the embedded mixed methods design with qualitative and quantitative approaches aimed at exploring the perspectives of teachers in selected pre-tertiary institutions in Ghana on the teaching strategies, school environment, and culture as drivers of creative pedagogy, using Lin's creative pedagogy theory. The findings have shown that teaching strategies, school environment, and culture that promotes flexible and independent thinking, problem-solving and collaborative skills ensure students' creativity development. The study recommends the implementation of learner-centered teaching strategies, a flexible teaching curriculum that encourages creativity development, smaller class sizes, semi-circular seating arrangements, and an introduction of a permissive culture that allows students to think and explore outside the box in Ghanaian schools.

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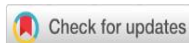
INTRODUCTION

The term creativity is applied in different facets and ways in human life. However, creativity is seen as one of the most complex human behaviors (Al-Ababneh, 2019). Some people believe that creativity is limited to people with unique abilities. Some teachers limit creativity to particular subjects (HMIE, 2006) such as Art. While the discipline in the Arts promotes creativity, the space of creativity is not only limited to the Arts but also has broader applications in every field of human endeavor (Robinson, 2001). Though it is difficult to define creativity, many authors have defined the term based on intellectual activity or production of novel ideas, processes, or products by a person or group (Dewett, 2007) as well as personality traits (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Thus, escaping from the existing perceptions and concepts to open up new ways of looking at and doing things is what epitomizes creativity. The National Advisory Committee for Creative and Cultural Education (NACCCE, 1999) in Ghana, defines creativity as an imaginative activity tailored with the aim of producing original outcomes of value. This implies that creativity requires innovation and usefulness or value, suggesting that an idea or concept may be new but cannot be defined as a creative idea if it does not work and vice versa (Beghetto, 2005). Fostering creativity in education is pivotal to achieving the overarching objective of education which is to effect positive behavioral change in learners. Creativity development in education ensures inventive thinking among learners (Kaplan, 2019) which is crucial for students' future career

development. Similarly, Shaheen (2010) asserts that the foundation of human capital is laid when students' creativity potentials are well nurtured in their years in education. This underscores the recent high interest in the discourses of creativity in education globally (Wyse & Ferrara, 2015). Thus, proponents of creativity in education have reiterated the need to ensure creativity in teaching at all levels of education (Griffiths, 2014).

Ghana like many other countries has been facing an increasing unemployment rate among the youth, especially among graduates (ISSER, 2016). This is due to the lack of tactful application of creative pedagogies in Ghanaian schools (Ntim, 2017). This is not to conclude that Ghana is dormant on creative pedagogies, yet, the problem lies in its translation in the learning objectives, teaching strategies, and learning environment (Amponsah et al., 2019). This has often been the bane staggering creativity development (Robinson, 2009), resulting in students been half-baked (Apt, 2015) preventing them from demonstrating self-esteem and confidence (Pirrto, 2011). It is not surprising that the NACCCE (1999) has tasked educational institutions to equip students with creative abilities that could help them grasp employable skills for sustainable livelihoods (Craft, 2005). This prevailing condition has contributed to a series of restructuring of the school curricula of many countries including Ghana, culminating in the development of various educational reforms in Ghana that emphasize creative pedagogy. For instance, the 2007 educational reform introduced two subjects namely creative Arts and Basic Design and Technology in both primary and junior high school curriculums respectively to foster creativity among students. In the bid to ensure creativity development among students, the environment in which students study plays an important role in fostering creativity. The creative environment consists of both the physical environment and the pedagogical environment (Cremin, 2006; Vecchi, 2010). Davies et al.(2013) define Creative learning environments as building physical and environmental spaces that facilitate creative learning. These include environmental considerations such as flexibly utilizing spaces, operating outside the school and/or classroom, "game-based" learning approach, "real world" interactions (partnership with external institutions), a degree of autonomy in learners' and non-regulatory planning (Davies et al., 2013). The physical environment in educational institutions and classrooms (Richardson & Mishra, 2018) such as the arrangement of desks and the teaching materials influences creativity development among students. Likewise, the pedagogical environment, which implies how the teacher organizes the teaching and learning activities in the classroom is a major driver of students' creativity development. This is what the NACCCE (1999) refers to as "teaching creatively and teaching creativity". The largely depends on the ability and creativity of the teacher who employs imaginative approaches to make learning more interesting and effective while developing teaching strategies that would promote creativity among students.

As highlighted earlier, there is a great dearth and decrease in the creative thinking abilities of students globally, calling for the need to revamp education with creative pedagogy (Kim, 2011). Kaplan (2019) suggests the need to encourage and evaluate creativity in education by intensifying the training of teachers in integrating creativity in developing learners and their learning environments. Amponsah et al. (2019) have suggested in their systematic review of literature on creative pedagogy in Ghana has suggested as a further area of research, an exploratory study into creative pedagogy among the stakeholders in the Ghanaian education context. Therefore, this study attempted to fill this void in creative pedagogy by exploring the perspectives of teachers who are key stakeholders in the education system. These research questions formed the basis of the study:

1. How do the teaching strategies and methods employed by teachers influence students' creativity development?
2. What are the roles of creativity in students' learning?
3. How are students' creativity abilities identified by teachers in the classroom?
4. How do the school environment and culture influence creativity development?
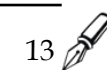
Furnishing answers to these research questions were deemed important by the researchers because it would promote creative teaching and learning in the Ghanaian schools while nurturing the 21st Ghanaian student to be a life-long, fully-baked learner, with relevant employable skills, leading to the sustainable development of human capital in the country.

Lin's Creative Pedagogy Theory
The study is pivoted in Lin's pedagogy theory. Lin (2009) opines that the promotion of creativity in schools requires the development of a pedagogical structure that is context-specific and can be used as a guide and reference point for teachers and educators. The author emphasizes three fundamental and interrelated pedagogical elements: creative teaching, teaching for creativity, and creative learning. Lin (2009) believes that creative learning has an inseparable relationship between the creative work of teachers and learners (Figure 1). The three drivers of creative pedagogy suggested by Lin largely depend on the teacher (Agbowuro et al., 2017). For creativity to thrive in the teaching and learning processes, teachers must be able to fully understand the role of creativity in students' learning and identify the creative potentials in students. They must have the capability to tactfully selecting and implementing innovative teaching strategies and methods that enhances creativity development while taking cognizance of the learning environment and culture of the school system. Thus, the theoretical bedrock of Lin's creative pedagogy correlates with the purpose of this study and welcomes the answers to the study's research questions in broadening the scope of knowledge in creative pedagogy, but from the Ghanaian context.
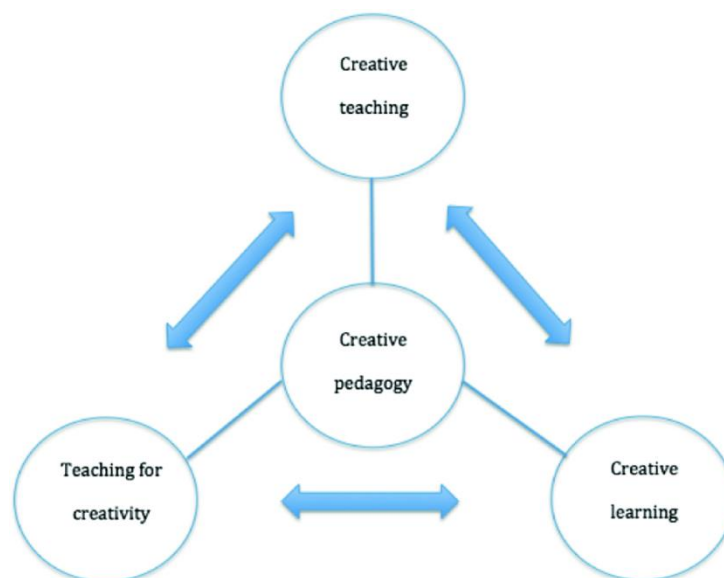

Figure 1. Lin's Creative Pedagogy Theory

(Lin, 2009)

RESEARCH METHOD
The exploratory study was conducted using the embedded mixed methods design that combines quantitative and qualitative data sets with a descriptive case study design (Aggarwal & Ranganathan, 2019). The Teachers' creativity nurturing behavior (TCNB) questionnaire developed by Sharma and Sharma (2018) was adopted for the study. The questionnaire was administered to Indian teachers (N=356). The questionnaire consists of four constructs with factor loadings averaging between .507 and .842. The four constructs were Abstraction (5 items), Inquisitiveness (3 items), Motivation (3 items), and critical thinking (4 items). The factor loadings of the items under these constructs vary between .507 and .842. The Cronbach alpha coefficient of the entire questionnaire items is 0.85. This questionnaire was further developed by adding additional four items aimed at understanding the views of teachers in Ghana on the factors (teaching style, Ghanaian culture, learner's personality, and the school environment) that
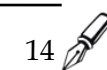
influence students' creativity development. Additionally, a structured interview guide was developed to find detailed views of the teachers on their teaching style or philosophy, how they identify creative students via personality traits, and how the school environment and culture influenced creativity development among the students.

The researchers wanted to garner the views of rural and urban teachers in Ghana on the drivers of learners' creativity to advise on how the creativity potentials of learners in Ghana could be developed. The study involved only pre-tertiary Ghanaian teachers teaching in the Junior and Senior High schools. The regions were initially selected conveniently by the researchers. Thus, three regions of Ghana, Greater Accra and Greater Kumasi (the two major regions in Ghana) as well as the Bono East Region were selected. These regions were selected because had a mixture of schools located in both urban and rural areas. A total of 286 teachers accepted to partake in the study after filling informed consent forms. These teachers were selected from 9 Senior High Schools and 3 Junior High Schools in the three regions (Table 1). However, a total of 208 teachers filled and submitted their questionnaires. Their views were inputted manually, coded, and analyzed using the SPSS. Simple descriptive statistics that employ means, standard deviations and variance, frequencies, and percentages were used for analyzing the quantitative data garnered. Thematic analysis guided the analysis of the qualitative data sets generated from the interviews and focus group discussions with the teachers.

Table 1. Schools selected and their locations

Schools	Academic Level	Region in Ghana	Urban/Rural	Number of Teachers Selected
Serwaa Nyarko S.H.S.	Senior High School	Ashanti	Urban	25
Simms S.H.S.	Senior High School	Ashanti	Urban	23
Aduman S.H.S.	Senior High School	Ashanti	Rural	20
Yaa Asantewaa S.H.S.	Senior High School	Ashanti	Urban	20
Techiman S.H.S.	Senior High School	Bono East	Urban	20
Buoyem S.H.S.	Senior High School	Bono East	Rural	10
Ekumfi Ameyaw S.H.S	Senior High School	Bono East	Rural	20
Ghanatta S.H.S.	Senior High School	Greater Accra	Urban	20
Accra Girls S.H.S.	Senior High School	Greater Accra	Urban	20
Buoyem D/A J.H.S.	Junior High School	Bono East	Rural	10
Awudome J.H.S.	Junior High School	Greater Accra	Urban	10
Kronum M/A J.H.S.	Junior High School	Ashanti	Urban	10
TOTAL	Senior High Schools N= 9 Junior High Schools N=3	Greater Accra N=3 Ashanti N=5 Bono East N=4	Urban N= 8 Rural N=4	208

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
.622	.679	19

A Cronbach's Alpha was used to test the reliability or internal consistency of the data collected using the adapted TCNB questionnaire. The results indicated a good Cronbach's Alpha of 0.622 as indicated in table 2.

Demographic Characteristics

The questionnaire was distributed to 208 teachers in Ghana. Table 3 shows that majority 67.8% of the respondents were males and 32.2% were females.

Table 3: Gender distribution of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Female	67	32.2	32.2	32.2
Valid	Male	141	67.8	67.8	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	100.0	

Table 4: Age Distribution of participants

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	21-25	4	1.9	1.9	1.9
	26-30	11	5.3	5.3	7.2
	31-35	24	11.5	11.5	18.8
	36-40	42	20.2	20.2	38.9
Valid	41-45	67	32.2	32.2	71.2
	46-50	33	15.9	15.9	87.0
	51-55	21	10.1	10.1	97.1
	56-60	6	2.9	2.9	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	100.0	

Data from table 3 shows that the majority of the teachers representing 67 (32.2%) who took part in the study were within the ages of 41–45 years and the least age group is 21-25 years representing 4 (1.9%). According to Palmiero et al. (2014) cited in Restrepo et al. (2019), creativity can decrease significantly during old age, although not before 70 years since it is during the period between 40 and 70 years of age where divergent thinking is stabilized. Even when creative productivity does not have this measure, it is recognized that during old age the overall creative performance may decrease. In this context, Meléndez et al. (2016) argue that differences may be more dependent on variables like cognitive reserve and experience openness than on age, especially in a verbal task, in people aged between 55 years and 84 years. Binnewies et al. (2008) also found that job control and support for creativity as well as age were unrelated to idea creativity. However, job control and support for creativity moderated the relationship between age and idea creativity. Age was positively related to idea creativity under high job control and negatively related to idea creativity under low job control and low support for creativity. In relation to this, table 4 suggests that the age distribution of the participants may indicate a higher level of creativity among the teachers since most of them fall in the age group of 41-45 (32.2%), 36-40 (20.2) and the least age group is 21-25 years representing 4 (1.9%).

Table 5. Experience (in number of years)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	1-5 years	13	6.3	6.3	6.3
	6-10 years	20	9.6	9.6	15.9
	11-15 years	44	21.2	21.2	37.0
	16-20 years	65	31.3	31.3	68.3
Valid	21-25 years	38	18.3	18.3	86.5
	26-30 years	20	9.6	9.6	96.2
	31-35 years	7	3.4	3.4	99.5
	36-40 years	1	.5	.5	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	100.0	

Table 5 shows that most of the teachers have worked averagely between 16 to 20 years, representing 65 (31.3%) and the least working period is 36 to 40 years representing 1 (0.5%). This result shows that the majority of the participants involved in the study had a creditably high level

of experience in teaching. This is good for the study because issues about education often require the involvement of experienced teachers as suggested by van der Want et al. (2018). Also, the result correlates with the findings of Kim (2006) that creativity in teaching is positively linked with having more experience in teaching. Likewise, Setiawan (2017) rated 8.7 years of teaching experience as high enough for teachers to elicit creativity tendencies in their teaching career. Thus, soliciting data on creative pedagogy from more experienced teachers with an average of 16-20 years of teaching experience is positive for the study's findings.

Table 6. Educational qualification

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Diploma	31	14.9	14.9	14.9
	Graduate	140	67.3	67.3	82.2
	Post Graduate	37	17.8	17.8	100.0
	Total	208	100.0	100.0	

Table 6 indicates the educational qualification of the teachers. Out of 208 teachers, the majority of them 140 representing (67.3%) are graduates and the qualification is diploma representing 31(14.9%). Setiawan (2017) noted in his study that the educational qualification of early childhood teachers in Semarang, Indonesia, positively influenced their creativity in teaching. The majority of the early childhood teachers involved in his study had Senior High School (SMA) and 2 years Diploma (D2) educational qualifications. This, he observed, decreased their level of competence in demonstrating creativity in teaching. On the other hand, the results of some studies (Fleith, 2019; Oliviera, 2012) have shown that graduate teachers with degree education qualifications demonstrate high levels of creativity in teaching. Thus, the educational qualification of our study participants being degree holders is good for generating highly rated views on creative pedagogy.

Table 7. The teaching activities employed by teachers in assisting in developing learners' creativity

Statement	N	M	Std. D
1. I probe students' ideas in order to explore their potential.	208	4.17	0.71
2. I question students on their ideas to develop their critical thinking skills.	208	4.54	0.54
3. I keep track of how students are developing their ideas.	208	4.49	0.52
4. I pay attention to every student's query.	208	4.49	0.57
5. I give students opportunities to share their ideas and thoughts	208	4.44	0.54
6. I regularly give group assignments as part of my course assessment	208	4.56	0.52
7. I expect students to cooperate with each other in group work.	208	4.48	0.55
8. I provide opportunities for students to evaluate themselves.	208	4.50	0.54
9. I motivate students to apply what was taught in different contexts.	208	4.47	0.56
10. I am open to listening to students in distress.	208	4.49	0.56
11. I counsel students who fail in their tasks to boost their morale.	208	4.43	0.53
12. I encourage students to learn from their failures.	208	4.51	0.53
13. I encourage students to learn the basics of the topic.	208	4.56	0.53
14. I emphasize learning proficiency for essential knowledge and skills.	208	4.54	0.53
15. I urge students to explore their ideas further before sharing my viewpoint.	208	4.60	0.53
16. I don't react immediately to the suggestions of the students rather give them time.	208	4.60	0.57
17. I do not force students to strictly adhere to guidelines on given tasks.	208	3.95	0.87
Total		4.46	

Table 7 shows the responses from the teachers' teaching and learning activities employed to influence students' creativity development. The responses for the first statement show that the teachers probe students' ideas in order to explore their potential later on (M = 4.17, SD = 0.17). The teachers also agree that they question students on their ideas to develop their critical thinking (M = 4.54, SD = 0.54). With regards to keeping track of how students are developing their ideas,

the response from the teachers is positive (M = 4.49, SD = 0.52). The teachers also agreed on paying attention to every student's query (M = 4.49, SD = 0.57). The overall mean (M=4.46) suggests that the teaching strategies and methods employed by teachers appear to suggest a high positive influence on the students as indicated in table 7.

There is evidence in the literature that suggests or defines a set of attitudes associated with teaching for creativity in order to develop learners' level of creativity. Davies (2006) found out that creative teaching is related to teachers who take a long-term view of the ability of the pupil, the willingness to anticipate success, and the courage at times to work intuitively. Similarly, in Reilly et al. (2011) meta-analysis of 12 Canadian cases, they found that the principles behind the educational choices of creative teachers are highly intrapersonal. Grainger et al. (2005) concluded that while all successful teachers are rewarded with creativity, teachers who teach for creativity are dependent on it to enhance their well-being and that of their pupils, the growth of creativity and originality is seen as the distinctive feature of their teaching. In the study of Davies et al. (2013), teachers' abilities, attitudes, willingness to be an example, the need to learn, a flexible teaching framework, certain types of class interaction were important to the teaching of creativity.

Teaching strategies and creative pedagogy
In this study, a structured interview guide was also used in soliciting the opinions of the teachers on the teaching strategies they have adopted in their teaching and learning activities. These are the teaching strategies adopted by the 208 teachers who were interviewed: *Discussion and participatory approaches, Exploratory and research, Demonstration, Team discussion, Peer teaching, Project-based teaching, Problem-solving, Group discussion, Narrative and assignment, Knowledge discovery methods, Student presentations, and Individual projects.*

From the findings, the most occurring teaching styles or philosophies used by the teachers in the process of teaching and learning activities are learner-centered. Similar activities that prioritize learner-centeredness such as interactive tasks have been recommended by various authors (Pangastuti & Fadhillah, 2020). This result is in line with the Global education reforms which advocate a change to inclusive pedagogies from conventional didactic methods. The UNESCO report (2006) notes that high-quality education needs skilled teachers who can use methods based on learners (learner-centered). The demand for quality education has therefore led to a proliferation of constructivist approaches and the promulgation of Learner-Centered Education (LCE) in many developing countries (Koranteng et al., 2020; Adom et al., 2016). This shows that the traditional didactic teaching method (teacher-centered) is gradually dying out. That is why educational reforms such as UNESCO have called for learner-centered teaching approaches in order to enhance the quality of education and to promote creativity in students. Thus, Dwikoranto et al. (2020) advise tutors to use every opportunity to encourage the fostering of creativity among the students. The successes of the learner-centered approaches in creativity development have been recorded in recent studies by Koranteng et al. (2020) and Antwi et al. (2019) in Ghana. This constitutes to what Pangastuti and Fadhillah (2020) refer to as proper education that leads to creativity development of students. Therefore, the adoption of teaching methods that are learner-centered by the 208 teachers involved in the study is positive and would inure to more enhanced forms of creativity development among students in Ghana. The creative drive instilled in the students would lead to innovations (Setiawan, 2020) to solve the problems of humanity.

The role of creativity in students' learning
Qualitative data was garnered to find out the role of creativity in students' learning among the 208 teachers recruited for the study. These are the brief responses to the main points that were gathered during the interviews and focus group discussions:

- *Creativity drives the world and I think education in this century without a drive to nurture that ability in learners has no value.*
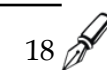
- *Creativity is the pivot around which all learning is initiated, progressed, and completed.*
- *It brings innovation to teaching and learning.*
- *Creativity helps in knowing good students.*
- *Creativity gives the learner opportunities to be a strong member of the learning environment and allows the learner to identify the challenge and make effort to develop approaches to solving the identified challenges.*
- *It develops the learner's capacity to think independently.*
- *Students get the chance to bring out their talents to assist in realizing the learning outcomes expected.*
- *It inspires students for greater achievements.*
- *It promotes a greater understanding of lessons.*
- *It opens students' eyes to different perspectives of ideas.*
- *Students get the opportunity to explore new ways of doing things.*
- *It makes learners visionaries, always looking into what has not been achieved before.*
- *Students get the chance to bring out their talents to assist in realizing the learning outcomes expected.*
- *It drives students to find new ways of approaching problems.*
- *It develops students' analytical skills.*
- *It makes learners more insightful.*

These findings reveal that 208 teachers have a deep understanding of the role of creativity in students' development. Their views resonate with Suciu (2014) who theorized that the creative individual has an immense capacity for work, good emotional management, a high tolerance rate of uncertainty in his/her activities yet demonstrates persistence in succeeding. However, in order to prioritize the role of creativity in students' learning process, teachers must believe that creativity is teachable and shapeable (Lorimer, 2018). The teachers shared a similar view that they have to nurture the creative tendencies in the students to achieve sustainable personal development.

How creative students are identified by teachers in the classroom
The views expressed by some of the teachers during the focus group discussion on how creative students can be identified reveal that they believe that students' creativity is better identified through explicit assessment criteria. These teachers shared the opinion that creativity is identified in students through assessment of their performance as well as close observation. Others asserted that students' creativity is identified through their inquisitiveness to learn. Such students, they contended, are recognized for their unique abilities in answering questions, confidence level, nature of practical works they produced, and contributions in-class activities.

Looking at this optimistically, it is clear that assessment is one of the major determinants employed by teachers in identifying students' creativity. Similar findings are noted in the study of Jackson (2006) who categorized the views of the teachers he interviewed in his study that assessment is a key criterion they use in identifying creative students. Likewise, in league with the study's findings, Beckhaus (2006) identified creative students through their demonstration of high project management skills, and self-confidence.

How the school environment and culture affect student's creativity
The school environment and culture within which the teachers and students engage in the teaching and learning activities also influenced students' creativity development. Many of the teachers, especially those in the rural regions registered their displeasure about the woefully inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of infrastructure, conventional teaching syllabi, classroom desks, and others as negatively impacting on students' creativity development. This affirms Anamuah-Mensah (2002) findings that rural schools in Ghana often lack the provision of educational infrastructure, qualified teachers, teaching and learning materials as compared to

urban schools. These are summaries of the main ideas they expressed during the interview sessions:

1. *The school environment lacks adequate teaching and learning materials and facilities (science and computer laboratories, art studios, Vocational skills workrooms) as well as a library to develop students' creativity through practical activities and individualized learning via discovery teaching methods.*

2. *The classroom sizes and students' desks are small resulting in class congestions which make it difficult in performing some teaching and learning activities that could have enhanced students' creativity such as group activities and individual in-classroom projects.*

3. *The teaching syllabus is too conventional and rigid that gives little room for students to explore their creative abilities.*

4. *Culturally, the students tend to depend solely on the capacity of the instructor which does not encourage creative thinking.*

Literature supports our findings that the school environment exerts a great influence on students' creativity development. For instance, Barbot et al. (2016) have shown that the physical and cultural environment shapes students' inclinations and desires. Also, Davies et al. (2013) systematic review shows that environmental considerations such as flexibly utilizing spaces, operating outside the school and/or classroom, "real-world' interactions (partnership with external institutions), and a degree of autonomy in learners' must be tactfully utilized to enhance creativity development of students. Unfortunately, we observed classroom congestion in some of the classrooms in especially the schools in the rural regions.

The data points to 41-50 students followed by 31-40 students in a classroom (Table 9). Preferably as suggested by Yoneyama and Murphey (2007), the maximum capacity of students to a class that shows healthy relationships between the teacher and students that promotes creativity development is 20-25. Research shows that smaller class sizes often lead to the exhibition of creative behaviors, problem-solving abilities, active class participation, and high levels of retention of the learned content (Warner & Myers, 2010). Researchers and scholars conclude that the performance of students will decrease with the increasing size of the class (Babatunde & Olanrewaju, 2014). Also, the classroom desk arrangements noted in the schools were only by rows and column seating (100%) (Table 8). Empirical studies such as the study of Marx et al. (2000) have criticized this seating arrangement as skewing academic achievement towards students at the front seats, referred to as the action zone because they have advantages of visual contact and proximity to the teacher as they are directed in perpendicular orientation toward the teacher. Sadly, those outside this zone, especially in large classes, such as those typical in Ghanaian schools are often disadvantaged. On the other hand, semi-circle (circular) seating has been recognized as the best seating in classrooms as it ensures inclusion, intimacy, and immediacy (Falout, 2014), conditions within which creativity thrives. The circular seating promotes unity among the teacher and students with powerful influences ensuing between them (Pease & Pease, 2006). Indeed, such circular seating formats offer flexibility promoting creativity, problem-solving, and collaborative activities in the classroom (Holly, 2020). Thus, the study's findings point to the fact that if more innovative ways of easing the congestion in Ghanaian schools such as minimizing class sizes to a maximum of 25 and adhering to circular seating formats are not introduced, creativity development in Ghanaian schools would be stalled.

Table 8. Desk arrangement in classrooms

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	21-30	12	5.8
	31-40	50	24.0
	41-50	84	40.4
	51-60	40	19.2
	61-70	16	7.7
	71-80	5	2.4
	81-90	1	0.5
	Total	208	100.0

Table 9. Number of students in a class(es)

		Number of Schools (Frequency)	Percent
Valid	Columns	12	100
	Circular	0	0
	Total	12	100

For creativity to thrive, students must feel capable and knowledgeable if they want to be independent individuals. The sense of task-related achievement is important to the growth of individuals. However, the cultural influence in Ghana may prevent students from asking questions that baffle their minds. Typically, children who keep probing theories and ways of thinking as spoon-fed by teachers are often labeled as disrespectful and even deviant. This, some of the teachers admitted during the interview, may stifle students' creativity development. They suggested that some teachers in Ghana, influenced by the "culture of not questioning the elderly" must be oriented to accept the 21st-century drive of education that encourages students to take charge of the teaching and learning process contrary to the traditional Ghanaian culture that discourages students from taking a divergent path in thought as a sign of disrespect towards the elderly.

The teachers also opined that the teaching syllabi in Ghana is too conventional and does not encourage innovative thinking. Papaleontiou-Louca et al. (2014) have equally noted how the teaching syllabi drawn for schools may cripple the development of creativity, as it drives the teaching and learning activities to be carried out in the classrooms. This is not to say that the teaching syllabi in Ghana are absent with creative pedagogy. However, more innovative means of achieving creativity in the learning objectives and teaching strategies must be implemented. Amponsah et al. (2019) encourage the use of action-driven and innovative-driven learning objectives that incites students to think and act beyond the box. Students are often intrinsically imaginative in their abilities (Oliver et al., 2006). As such, all external drivers of the teaching and learning activities, including the teaching syllabi, must nurture and enhance the intrinsic creativity drivers of students.

CONCLUSION

This exploratory study has revealed interesting findings of the teaching strategies, school environment, and culture as drivers of the creative pedagogy in Ghanaian schools. The study has found that teaching strategies that are learner-centered such as team or group discussion, problem-solving, project-based teaching, knowledge discovery, individual projects, students' presentations. According to the teachers, these teaching approaches encourage creativity development as they allow students the freedom to explore, imagine, and develop innovative ideas which are translated into solution-driven products and services. Thus, it can be concluded that learner-centered teaching approaches are effective in driving creative pedagogy in Ghanaian schools.

Also, the study found negative implications of the school environment in the studied schools on the development of students' creativity. The row and column desk arrangement with its action zone largely used in Ghanaian schools was seen to favor few students academically, especially

those closer in proximity to the teacher with many who are far away been disadvantaged. Analyzing the benefits of circular and semi-circular desk arrangement formats from empirical studies discussed, it can be concluded that to foster creative development in Ghanaian schools, circular desk arrangements must be adopted by Ghanaian schools. Likewise, class sizes must be reduced to a maximum of 25 students per class at the pre-tertiary levels where classrooms are often overcrowded as a result of large class sizes that do not augur well for creativity development. The Ministry of Education through the heads of the various educational institutions in Ghana must ensure that the layout of classroom desks is arranged in circular or semi-circular orientation. Also, the Ministry of education must see to it that classrooms in Ghanaian schools are not congested. This may call for more infrastructural developments in some schools. This investment is worthwhile as it would lead to more creative products from the schools, fully-baked to take charge of sustainable development in the country.

Moreover, the study found out that the traditional Ghanaian culture that silences the young when the elderly is speaking must be abandoned by teachers as it stifles creativity development. Rather, a permissive culture that encourages students' outspokenness and exploration of ideas outside the box must be promoted among teachers in Ghanaian schools. Workshops must be organized at district levels by the Ministry of education to orient teachers on the need to eschew this unproductive cultural practice in Ghanaian schools as they stifle students' creativity development.

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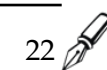
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