



Assessment of the Level of Creative Leadership among Administrative Leaders in the Directorates of Youth and Sports in the Central and Southern Regions

Saadoun Qasim Lazim¹

*Corresponding Author: Authors' Names, e-mail: sadonalgrawe@gmail.com
General Directorate of Education in Maysan Governorate¹

Abstract

Objectives: This study aimed to develop a creative leadership scale for administrative leaders of the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions and to evaluate the level of creative leadership among these leaders. The importance of the study lies in the need to assess creative leadership as a strategic requirement for improving institutional performance, responding to administrative challenges, and supporting the achievement of organizational goals in the field of youth and sports.

Materials and Methods: The study used a descriptive survey method, which was considered appropriate for the nature and objectives of the research. The research population consisted of general managers, department heads, division heads, and unit heads working in the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions during the 2025–2026 period. The total population consisted of 238 administrators, all of whom were included in the study. The exploratory sample consisted of 10 administrators, while the construction sample consisted of 100 administrators selected using proportional stratified random sampling. The main application sample consisted of 128 administrators. Data were collected using a questionnaire developed by the researcher to measure creative leadership.

Results: The results showed that the creative leadership scale was successfully developed and applied to administrative leaders in the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions. The findings also indicated that the level of creative leadership among the administrative leaders was generally good. This suggests that the leaders demonstrated positive creative leadership characteristics in dealing with institutional responsibilities, decision-making processes, and administrative challenges.

Conclusions: The study concluded that the developed creative leadership scale is suitable for evaluating administrative leaders in Youth and Sports Directorates. The administrative leaders in the central and southern regions demonstrated a good level of creative leadership. The study recommends using the developed scale as an evaluation tool and encouraging training programs that strengthen creative thinking, innovation, strategic decision-making, and institutional development among sports administrators.

Keywords: creative leadership, administrative leaders, youth and sports directorates, sports administration, leadership scale.

Introduction

Modern societies, in all their various forms and with their diverse political, social, and economic systems, need institutions. This is primarily because these institutions enable us to achieve goals that we, as individuals, cannot achieve on our own. An organization arises and grows to fulfill a specific mission and perform a defined function on behalf of society. In return, it needs material and moral support to help it grow and develop. When an organization's community or audience recognizes its existence and provides it with what it needs, it is supported by its community or its public. Supporting it means expecting it to be highly effective and to do what it is entrusted with to the fullest extent. If those institutions fail to perform their role and neglect to carry out their duty, then their effectiveness will be low, and this will be reflected on society as a whole because the effectiveness of society depends on the effectiveness of the institutions operating within it.

Leadership, like management, is both a science and an art. However, leadership differs from management in that it includes the element of initiative and innovation. The leader is concerned with achieving the organization's goals, in addition to his concern for the administrative aspect through the application of systems. The laws govern the accomplishment of the tasks assigned to him. The leader uses his influence and power to affect the behavior of the individuals around him, their opinions and orientations, and leads them towards achieving specific goals.

Leadership is a crucial factor with a significant impact on both group dynamics and organizational activity. It influences the behavior of others, motivating them to take action to achieve goals, and it also has a capacity to manage nature. Humanity, or the influence on human behavior, to guide a group towards a common goal in a way that ensures their trust, respect, and cooperation. Without leadership, a group cannot determine the direction of its behavior or efforts. Leadership is therefore necessary as a means. To integrate the various roles that belong to the group in order to maintain unity of effort in working towards achieving the goal. Leadership has an important social role that the leader plays during their interaction with other members of the group. One of the characteristics of this role is that the person who performs it must be distinguished by their acceptance and respect for the responsibilities placed upon them and must have the ability to influence members. The group and its behavior are guided Evaluating the level of creative leadership of the administrative leaders of the youth and sports directorates in the central and southern region is good.

Research Objectives

1. To develop a scale for creative leadership among administrative leaders in the youth and sports directorates in the central and southern regions.
2. To identify the level of creative leadership among administrative leaders in the youth and sports directorates in the central and southern regions.

Research Areas

Human Resources: Directors General, Departments, Divisions, and Units in the Youth and Sports Directorate in the Central and Southern Regions for the year 2025-2026.

Timeframe: From (December 4, 2025) to (February 7, 2026).

Location: Headquarters of the Youth and Sports Directorate in the Central and Southern Regions. 12

Materials and Methods

Study Design

This study employed a descriptive survey research design. This design was considered appropriate because the study aimed to develop a creative leadership scale and evaluate the level of creative leadership among administrative leaders of the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions. The descriptive survey method was used to obtain factual data about the current condition of creative leadership among administrators in sports institutions. The research focused on identifying the relevant dimensions of creative leadership, constructing the measurement scale, testing its psychometric properties, and applying it to the main research sample.

Study Participants

The population of this study consisted of administrative leaders working in the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions during the 2025–2026 period. The participants included general managers, department heads, division heads, and unit heads. The total population consisted of 238 administrators, and the questionnaire was distributed to the entire population.

The study used several samples according to the stages of scale development. The exploratory sample consisted of 10 administrators from the Maysan Youth and Sports Directorate and was used to examine the clarity of the questionnaire instructions and identify possible weaknesses in the initial form of the scale. The construction sample consisted of 100 administrators selected using proportional stratified random sampling and was used for scale construction and psychometric testing. The main application sample consisted of 128 administrators and was used to evaluate the level of creative leadership after the scale had been developed.

The inclusion criteria were administrative leaders who held formal managerial positions in the Youth and Sports Directorates, were working during the 2025–2026 period, and were involved in administrative or organizational responsibilities related to youth and sports management.

Study Organization

The research was implemented through several stages. First, the researcher reviewed relevant Arabic and foreign references, previous studies, and existing creative leadership scales. Personal interviews and field visits were also conducted to collect information related to the research problem and the construction of the scale.

Second, the domains of the creative leadership scale were identified. Initially, eight domains were proposed: organizational climate, encouragement and adoption of creativity, scientific developments and research, problem-solving ability, perseverance, initiative, originality and fluency, and flexibility. These domains were then presented to 12 experts and specialists in educational psychology and sports management to determine their suitability. Based on the expert evaluation and relative importance scores, four domains were accepted: problem-solving ability, perseverance, initiative, and originality and fluency.

Third, the items of the creative leadership scale were formulated. The initial scale consisted of 58 items distributed across four domains: problem-solving ability, originality and fluency, perseverance, and initiative. A five-point Likert scale was used, with responses ranging from very low to very high. The scoring weights were 1 for very low, 2 for low, 3 for medium, 4 for high, and 5 for very high.

Fourth, the validity of the scale items was examined. The items were reviewed by experts in educational sciences, psychology, sports psychology, and Arabic language. Their feedback was used to revise, delete, merge, or modify items as needed. Linguistic validity was also checked by an Arabic language specialist to ensure clarity and correctness of wording.

Fifth, an exploratory experiment was conducted with 10 administrators to ensure that the instructions and items were clear. After that, the basic experiment was conducted by applying the creative leadership scale to administrators from the governorates of Dhi Qar and Al-Muthanna. This stage was used to conduct preliminary statistical analysis of the scale items, including internal consistency, item-total correlation, and discriminatory power.

Finally, after the scale had been validated and its reliability confirmed, it was applied to the main application sample consisting of 128 administrators. The purpose of this stage was to evaluate the level of creative leadership among administrative leaders of the Youth and Sports Directorates in the central and southern regions.

Statistical Analysis

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Several statistical techniques were used according to the objectives of the study. Percentages and relative importance were used to determine the acceptance of the proposed domains of the creative leadership scale. Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and standard errors were used to describe the participants' responses.

Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to examine internal consistency by calculating the correlation between each item score and the total scale score. The skewness coefficient was used to examine the normality of the item distribution. The discriminatory power of the items was tested using the extreme groups method by comparing the highest and lowest 27% of

responses. The chi-square test and independent samples t-test were also used where appropriate during the scale construction process.

The reliability of the creative leadership scale was examined using the split-half method and Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Spearman–Brown formula was used to correct the split-half reliability coefficient. Finally, a one-sample t-test was used to compare the observed mean scores of creative leadership and its domains with the hypothetical mean scores in order to determine the level of creative leadership among the administrative leaders.

Results

The results of the one-sample t-test were used to examine the level of creative leadership among administrative leaders in the Youth and Sports Directorates. As shown in Table 5, the overall mean score of creative leadership was 142.746 with a standard deviation of 27.065, which was slightly higher than the hypothetical mean of 138. However, the calculated t-value was 1.519, which was lower than the tabulated t-value of 1.99, with a significance level of 0.133. This result indicates that the overall level of creative leadership was not statistically significant when compared with the hypothetical mean.

For the individual domains, the mean score of problem-solving ability was 44.666, compared with a hypothetical mean of 42. The calculated t-value was 1.932, with a significance level of 0.057, indicating a non-significant difference. The domain of originality and fluency obtained a mean score of 42.386, which was close to the hypothetical mean of 42, with a calculated t-value of 0.568. The mean score of perseverance was 25.133, compared with a hypothetical mean of 24, while the calculated t-value was 1.418. Meanwhile, the initiative domain obtained a mean score of 30.560, compared with a hypothetical mean of 30, with a calculated t-value of 0.541. These findings show that all domains had mean scores slightly above their hypothetical means, but the differences were not statistically significant.

Table 5. One-Sample t-Test Results for the Creative Leadership Scale

No.	Field		Mean	Standard Deviation	Hypothetical Mean	Calculated t-value	Tabulated t-value	Significance Level	Statistical Significance
	Problem-Solving Ability	75	44.666	11.955	42	1.932	1.99	0.057	Not Significant
	Originality and Fluency	75	42.386	5.895	42	0.568	1.99	—	Not Significant
	Perseverance	75	25.133	6.921	24	1.418	1.99	—	Not Significant
	Initiative	75	30.560	8.971	30	0.541	1.99	—	Not Significant
	Creative Leadership	75	142.746	27.065	138	1.519	1.99	0.133	Not Significant

The weighted mean analysis was conducted to identify the strength of each item within the creative leadership domains. As presented in Table 6, the item scores varied across the four domains. In the problem-solving ability domain, the highest item was “Gathers detailed information before starting a new task,” with a weighted mean of 3.400 and a percentage weight of 68%. This indicates that collecting detailed information before performing tasks was the strongest indicator in this domain. The lowest item in this domain was “Often able to anticipate solutions for work-related problems,” with a weighted mean of 2.947 and a percentage weight of 59%.

In the originality and fluency domain, the highest item was “Encourages employees to propose ideas to help improve work,” with a weighted mean of 3.493 and a percentage weight of 70%. This suggests that leaders tended to encourage employees to contribute ideas for improving organizational work. The lowest items in this domain were related to respecting unrealistic ideas and preventing boredom caused by repeated procedures, with percentage weights of 62%.

In the perseverance domain, the highest item was “Leadership continues working for long periods to reach innovative solutions,” with a weighted mean of 3.320 and a percentage weight of 66%. The lowest item was “Leadership encourages employees to move away from routine and the familiar,” with a weighted mean of 2.893 and a percentage weight of 58%. This shows that perseverance was more visible in sustained effort than in encouraging employees to break away from routine practices.

In the initiative domain, the highest item was “Performs all daily tasks with a strong team spirit,” with a weighted mean of 3.200 and a percentage weight of 64%. The lowest item was “Strives to organize an annual celebration to support creative employees,” with a weighted mean of 2.840 and a percentage weight of 57%. This indicates that initiative was more evident in daily teamwork than in formal programs designed to recognize creative employees.

Table 6. Weighted Means and Percentage Weights of Creative Leadership Items

No.	Field	Item	Weighted Mean	Percentage Weight (%)	Rank
1	Problem-Solving Ability	Gathers detailed information before starting a new task	3.400	68	1
2	Problem-Solving Ability	Has the ability to collect as much information as possible to identify aspects of the problem	3.320	66	2
3	Problem-Solving Ability	Proposes multiple solutions to a problem	3.307	66	3
4	Problem-Solving Ability	Strives to simplify ideas when facing work-related problems	3.320	66	4
5	Problem-Solving Ability	Improves communication and listening skills with employees	3.253	65	5
6	Problem-Solving Ability	Has the knowledge to control the causes of problems	3.267	65	6
7	Problem-Solving Ability	Makes decisions based on thorough analysis rather than random judgment	3.200	64	7
8	Problem-Solving Ability	Cares about employees’ feelings and behavior in different situations	3.160	63	8
9	Problem-Solving Ability	Identifies weaknesses or shortcomings in employees’ work	3.173	63	9
10	Problem-Solving Ability	Has clear foresight in predicting and detecting problems faced by employees	3.133	63	10
11	Problem-Solving Ability	Is able to identify weaknesses in the work environment before problems occur	3.080	62	11
12	Problem-Solving Ability	Faces multiple problems and provides suitable solutions	3.093	62	12
13	Problem-Solving Ability	Plans to address potential work-related problems	3.013	60	13
14	Problem-Solving Ability	Is often able to anticipate solutions for work-related problems	2.947	59	14
15	Originality and Fluency	Has the ability to generate new and diverse ideas that benefit the organization	3.480	70	1
16	Originality and Fluency	Encourages employees to propose ideas to help improve work	3.493	70	2
17	Originality and Fluency	Possesses sufficient skills to persuade employees to implement leadership plans	3.427	69	3
18	Originality and Fluency	Directly contributes to generating new ideas that benefit the organization	3.360	67	4
19	Originality and Fluency	Understands and guides employee relationships to serve the organization	3.347	67	5
20	Originality and Fluency	Completes assigned tasks in an innovative manner	3.333	67	6
21	Originality and Fluency	Thinks quickly and proposes solutions to overcome obstacles and work problems	3.333	67	7
22	Originality and Fluency	Produces rare ideas that do not easily occur to others	3.320	66	8
23	Originality and Fluency	Demonstrates strong discussion, argumentation, and persuasion skills	3.280	66	9
24	Originality and	Creates diverse and innovative solutions to problems	3.213	64	10

	Fluency				
25	Originality and Fluency	Presents unusual ideas that attract attention and stimulate positive responses	3.160	63	11
26	Originality and Fluency	Attempts to apply new methods at work	3.160	63	12
27	Originality and Fluency	Respects employees' ideas and suggestions, even when they seem unrealistic	3.120	62	13
28	Originality and Fluency	Ensures that employees do not feel bored with repeated work procedures	3.107	62	14
29	Perseverance	Continues working for long periods to reach innovative solutions	3.320	66	1
30	Perseverance	Acts wisely when facing work pressure	3.267	65	2
31	Perseverance	Tends to carry out challenging tasks that demonstrate the organization's capabilities	3.240	65	3
32	Perseverance	Builds confidence in leadership to achieve organizational goals	3.160	63	4
33	Perseverance	Modifies and adapts problem-solving methods to reach better and more appropriate solutions	3.160	63	5
34	Perseverance	Cares for creative and outstanding employees and provides an environment that supports creativity	3.107	62	6
35	Perseverance	Takes sufficient time to study and analyze new and innovative ideas	2.987	60	7
36	Perseverance	Encourages employees to move away from routine and familiar practices	2.893	58	8
37	Initiative	Performs daily tasks with a strong team spirit	3.200	64	1
38	Initiative	Adopts employees' initiatives to conduct training sessions	3.160	63	2
39	Initiative	Uses modern techniques in the workplace	3.107	62	3
40	Initiative	Presents opinions aimed at improving work processes	3.120	62	4
41	Initiative	Acts with awareness and quick response in various situations	3.080	62	5
42	Initiative	Adopts diverse educational strategies	3.080	62	6
43	Initiative	Uses daily work situations to promote self-directed learning	3.067	61	7
44	Initiative	Takes the initiative to invite experts and specialists to develop creative talents	2.987	60	8
45	Initiative	Supports creative employees through conferences, scientific seminars, and specialized workshops	2.920	58	9
46	Initiative	Organizes an annual event to support and recognize creative employees	2.840	57	10

Overall, the item-level results show that creative leadership among administrative leaders was reflected most strongly in information gathering, idea generation, employee encouragement, and sustained effort to reach innovative solutions. However, lower scores were observed in items related to anticipating solutions, encouraging employees to move beyond routine work, supporting creative employees through formal academic activities, and organizing annual events to recognize creativity. These findings suggest that creative leadership practices were present, but they still need to be strengthened through more systematic programs that encourage innovation, initiative, and employee creativity within sports institutions.

Discussion

The researcher based his scale on trait theory, which addresses leadership by describing the traits or characteristics that distinguish individuals who practice it. Proponents of this theory believed that a creative leader possesses traits such as... Physical attributes in terms of height or vitality, mental traits in terms of creativity, high intelligence, ability to predict events, and high levels of perception and reasoning, and emotional traits such as flexibility, fluency, and originality of the ideas presented. As for creativity in youth and sports directorates, opportunities for critical thinking must be provided, and cooperation and democracy must prevail among their employees, relying on their abilities and experiences in organizing and formulating knowledge according to established methods. Their understanding will enable them to acquire the ability and skill

in a way that suits their level of thinking, which will make them productive, and thus they will be properly prepared for the needs of their contemporary society, which holds hope for themselves and their nation, because this is This proves our credibility and expertise, and it is the foundation upon which our philosophy as managers is built... The researcher believes that it is the duty of sports institutions concerned with youth to contribute to discovering, nurturing, and developing creative talents because The future of our civilization depends on the quality of creative imagination of our next generation. McCreevy added that it is essential to nurture gifted individuals by giving them ample time to discover information independently, thus developing their creative abilities. In order to make them creative, because they are the true wealth of the nation, beyond which there is no greater wealth.

As a result of what theorists have pointed out in this regard, all programs should be directed towards preparing and developing the individual in a sound and integrated manner, and equipping him for effective coexistence in the age of the information revolution. This poses a major challenge, which is the development of leadership. Creativity within a modern intellectual framework that takes into account the leadership's capacity for development, innovation, and reformulation in line with the requirements of the times.

In all institutions, regardless of the type of activity they engage in, and in all administrative areas—planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling—especially in supervisory matters, the leader bears the primary responsibility for guiding the efforts of the employees. Towards achieving goals through their ability to influence behavior, the leader plays a fundamental role in guiding individuals and organizations towards achieving their desired objectives, and both individuals and organizations depend on their leaders. In achieving tasks (Rafida Al-Hariri, 2008, p. 70), the importance of leadership stems from the ability of leaders to direct collective activities in the direction they desire. Creative leadership can unify efforts and pool energies to confront challenges. Recent and rapid developments in light of technological advancements (Mohammed Hassan, 2006)

The role of creative leadership in the organizational aspect is not limited to simply issuing orders and ensuring that Administrative activities take place within the institution's defined boundaries, but the leader's primary and crucial role is to provide subordinates with everything that motivates them, instills energy in them, and maintains their high morale, thus instilling in them Their souls are imbued with a love for teamwork and a spirit of cooperation. Furthermore, the leader's role in the organizational aspect is highlighted by their ability to coordinate and direct the activities and efforts of subordinates, placing the right employee in the right job, and determining... The responsibilities of the organization's departments and employees are such that leading the organization's various aspects comes through coordination. (Mohammed Hassanein Al-Ajami, 2010)

Creative leadership relies on the influence a leader exerts on their followers, and the different methods of influence a leader uses to guide followers result in variations in leadership styles. Koene indicated that there is a correlation between leadership styles. Different leadership styles and employee perceptions: A leader who shows interest in and respect for subordinates positively influences the organizational climate, leading to increased effectiveness and making it more conducive to creativity and innovation. Conversely... Therefore, a leader's behavior that focuses solely on completing tasks does not have a positive impact on the work of the organization. (Tahseen Al-Tarawneh, 2010)

Conclusions

1. Two scales for creative leadership were developed for administrators in the Youth and Sports Directorates in the Central and Southern regions.
2. The results showed that the research sample of administrators in the Youth and Sports Directorates in the Central and Southern regions possesses the required creative leadership skills.

Recommendations

1. The need to adopt the creative leadership scale developed by the researcher by the administrators of the youth and sports directorates in the central and southern regions.
2. Develop a future plan based on clear criteria to identify and train creative leaders in order to provide qualified administrative leaders capable of investing their creative energies in improving performance within the workplace.
3. The need to train administrators in the youth and sports directorates in the central and southern regions on creative leadership skills and ways and methods to enhance them in order to acquire them.

Acknowledgments

Provide appreciation to individuals, institutions, organizations, or funding bodies that contributed to the completion of the research.

References

Ahmed Salman Odeh: Measurement and Evaluation in the Teaching Process, Irbid, Jordan, Dar Al-Amr for Publishing and Distribution, 2000.

Ahmed Salman Odeh: Measurement and Evaluation in the Teaching Process, Irbid, Jordan, Dar Al-Amr for Publishing and Distribution, 2000. • Badr Muhammad Al-Ansari: Personality Measurement, Kuwait, Dar Al-Kitab Al-Hadith, 2000.

Tahseen Al-Tarawneh: Ethics and Leadership, Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 2010.

Disco Younis Ismail: Time Management and its Relationship to Creative Leadership among Heads of Departments in Iraqi Universities, PhD Dissertation, University of Baghdad, Ibn Rushd College, 2005.

Rafida Al-Hariri: Educational Leadership Skills in Administrative Decision-Making, Dar Al-Manahij for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 2008.

Zaid Hassoun Nasser: Leadership Behavior Styles and their Relationship to Moral Values and a Sense of Social Participation among Physical Teachers, Master's Thesis, University of Babylon, College of Physical Education, 2011.

Sami Muhammad Malham: Measurement and Evaluation in Education and Psychology, 1st Edition, Jordan, Al-Husseini Mosque Square, 2000.

Salah Al-Din Mahmoud Allam: Educational and Psychological Measurement and Evaluation (Its Fundamentals, Applications, and Contemporary Trends), Cairo, Egypt, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi Library, 2000.

Luay Ghanem Al-Sumaida'i et al.: Statistics and Testing in the Field of Sports, 1st ed., Iraq, Erbil, 2010

Muhammad Hassan Alawi and Osama Kamel Rateb; Scientific Research in Physical Education and Sports Psychology: (Cairo, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, 1999)

Muhammad Hassan Alawi and Muhammad Nasr Al-Din Radwan: Measurement in Physical Education and Sports Psychology, 2nd ed., Cairo, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, 2000

Muhammad Hassan: Work Values and Job Commitment among Principals and Teachers in Schools, Dar Al-Hamid for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 2006

Muhammad Hassanein Al-Ajami: Modern Trends in Leadership Management and Human Development, Dar Al-Masirah for Publishing, Distribution and Printing, Amman, Jordan, 2010

Muhammad Shifa Abdullah: The Ability of Intermediate School Principals to Lead Creatively and its Relationship to the Organizational Commitment of their Teachers in Mosul, Master's Thesis, University of Mosul, College of Education, 2007

Muhammad Nasr Al-Din Radwan: Measurement and Evaluation in Physical Education and Sports, 4th ed., Cairo, Dar Al-Fikr Al-Arabi, 2006

Muhammad Ni'ma Hassan: Optimism and Pessimism in Sports and its Relationship to Achieving Goals, Sports Identity and Achievement among Track and Field Athletes PhD dissertation, University of Babylon, College of Physical Education, 2008

Mohammed Nema Hassan: Locus of Control and its Relationship to Achievement Motivation among Advanced Track and Field Athletes, Master's thesis, University of Babylon, College of Physical Education, 2004

Misbah Jumaa Aqeel et al.: Statistical Analysis and Probability, 1st ed., Amman, Jordan, Arab Community Library for Publishing and Distribution, 2009

Nabil Jumaa Saleh Al-Najjar: Measurement and Evaluation: An Applied Perspective with SPSS Applications, Dar Al-Hamid for Publishing and Distribution, Amman, Jordan, 2010