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Fedorova Anastasia

# The connection between Creativity and Behavior in Destructive Organizational Conflict

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Khachaturova Milana
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# GENERAL DESCRIPTION

In psychology the problem of creativity is developed throughout the XX century. Research in this field is diverse and devoted to examining the relationship between creativity and cognitive abilities, the creation of psychometric instruments for measuring creativity, the study of the phenomenology of the vital activity of a creative person, and many other aspects.

In addition, personal creativity is often studied among factors such as: cognitive style (Amabile, 1996; Guilford, 1959; Sternberg, Lubart, 1996; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2002; Lyubart, 2009), autonomy (Creswell et al., 2013; McCrae, 1987; Waples, Friedrich, 2011), thinking speed (Benedek et al., 2013; DeCaro, Wieth, Beilock, 2007; Eschleman et al., 2014; Ohly, Fritz 2010; Squalli, Wilson, 2014); sensitivity (Albrechts, 2005; Knight, 2014; Goclowska, Crisp, Labuschagne, 2013; Mann, Cadman, 2014; Liu et al., 2012; Rios et al., 2014), stress tolerance (Binnewies, Sonnetag, 2009; Byron, Hazanki, Nazarian, 2010; Gutnick et al., 2012; Smith, Paquette, 2010), emotional state (Henderson, 2004; Isen, Daubman, 1984; Kaufmann, Vosburg, 1997; Leung et al., 2014; Vosburg, 1998; Lusin 2011).

In addition, in a number of studies, creativity is associated with impulsivity, autonomy, individualism and high self-esteem (Creswell et al., 2013; Waples, Friedrich, 2011).

Despite the diversity of research, the problem of creativity in psychology is still far from a rigorous scientific description. Most often creativity refers to the ability of creating products characterized by novelty, relevance to context, adapted to the needs or requirements of society (Amabile, 1996). Another important characteristic of personal creativity is the promotion of one's ideas in society (Bogoyavlenskaya, 2002). It is also important to note the various forms of creativity. For example, R.Sternberg identifies 8 levels of creative expression that vary from light  optimization and averaging the opposites to the invention of a fundamentally new product (Sternberg, 2010).

V.D.Shadrikov also notes that although the result of creative thinking is realized, its mechanisms are unconscious. He shows that true creative activity becomes available

due to the unification of consciousness and the subconscious through spirituality, which ultimately allows one to come to super-intellectual activity (Shadrikov, 2019, p.157).

D.A.Leontiev distinguishes various types of creativity and creative solutions to difficult situations or dilemmas, for example, in the scientific or social spheres and "life-creating" as a general strategy of the individual. He also singles out a creative solution to the problem as the elimination of the initial contradiction between the parties in the conflict (Leontiev, 2004).

Thus, it becomes obvious that the concept of creativity is quite multifaceted and it is difficult to give it an unambiguous interpretation.

There are a large number of approaches to the creativity study: psychometric, psychophysiological, cognitive-emotional, personal, economical, attributive and systemic (Yagolkovsky, 2007).

From the point of view of the psychometric approach, one of the ways to define creativity is the concept of *divergent thinking*, proposed in the middle of the 20th century by J.Guilford (Guilford, 1950). It examines a number of properties of a creative personality: the breadth of thinking, flexibility as the ability to consider different and even opposite decisions, as well as the originality of these decisions. Therefore, from the point of view of J.Guilford, creativity is a combination of these properties and any person for whom they are expressed is recognized as creative. Thus, the approach of J.Guilford allows to measure personal creativity using psychometric procedures.

In the humanistic tradition, within the framework of the personal approach, creativity is associated with *self-actualization* and is defined as some kind of spontaneous and natural behavior, which presupposes the activity of the individual and sufficient motivation to complete what has begun. From this point of view, creativity is a part of human nature and an important aspect of one's life. Consequently, all people are creative, and its degree is expressed in a wide variety of forms and contexts (Rogers, 1980; Maslow, 2016).

This paper will focus on the personal and psychometric approaches, as they provide a comprehensive qualitative and quantitative measurement of the features of the creativity phenomenon. Creativity, thus, is considered as a combination

of its two parameters - as **a component of self-actualization and divergent thinking ability**.

In the modern world, the studies of personal creativity are extremely **relevant** and have important practical significance. For example, in organizations, the widespread use of digital technology frees employees from routine operations and shifts their focus towards finding solutions to various professional non-algorithmic problems. In this context, creativity plays an important role in the employees' adaptation to environmental challenges and is associated with the choice of coping strategy with difficult situations.

The lack of time, the uncertainty of the distribution of responsibility, excessive organizational stress lead to inevitable conflicts between employees (Bodrov, 2006; Bolotova, 2007), in the resolution of which personal creativity plays an important role. This makes the study of the relationship of employees' creativity and conflict behavior especially relevant. Understanding the characteristics of the behavior of a creative person in an organization is important when solving the problem of managing creative employees and carrying out organizational consulting.

Researchers trace the connection between creativity and conflict behavior in terms of the emergence and intensity of conflicts, ones' readiness to resolve conflict situations, its choice of conflict resolution tools and coping strategies (Wallach, Kogan, 1965; Shcherbakova, 2005). However, a comprehensive study of these aspects was never conducted.

The study of the relationship of conflict behavior and creativity is mainly devoted to the peculiarities of managing a creative team (DeClerq, Rahman, 2017; Forbes, Domm, 2004; Lee, Choi, Kim, 2018;Troyer, Youngreen, 2009), the dynamics of conflict in a creative team depending on type of tasks and project status (Chen, 2006; Farh, Lee, Farh, 2010; Miron-Spektor, Gino, Argote, 2011), characteristics of creative teams and managers (Kurtzberg, Mueller, 2005; Kim, Choi, Park, 2012; Raim, 2017; Chen, 2006).

In addition, part of the research is devoted to studying the effectiveness of teams in interpersonal conflicts and ambiguous environmental conditions, while they do not

raise the issue of the manifestation of the characteristics and properties of a creative person in a conflict (Janssen, Giebels, 2013; Santos, Uitdewilligen, Passos, 2015).

The most common causes of conflict in organizations are conflicts of roles, values, or interests. Also, there should be noted destructive conflicts, characterized by negative impact on the efficiency of work and interaction of employees, that makes a constructive solution to the situation impossible. Such conflicts, for example, arise in situations of psychological pressure, while the root cause can go into the background (Bazarov, Malinovsky, 1996). A destructive conflict, due to the inherent crisis, limits the achievement of the goals of the organization and rapidly reduces its resources. E.Tartakovsky analyzes values of different culture and profession groups (Tartakovsky, 2014, 2016). For example, he points out that social workers demonstrate such values as benevolence and universalism that leads to less conflict behavior.

According to N.V.Grishina, any conflict in its development goes through several stages: the emergence of an objective conflict situation, the opponents awareness of the situation as a conflict one, the opposition of the parties and the development of the situation, as well as its further resolution (Grishina, 2009). In such conditions, the role of personal creativity in the emergence and resolution of a conflict situation is especially important.

For example, studies conducted on a sample of school-age children have shown a link between high levels of creativity and conflicting behavior. It is noted that independence, aggressiveness, extraversion and attention-seeking are characteristic of a highly creative person. The researchers also noted the level of intelligence as an intermediate variable that determines the degree of child's conflict behavior (Voskoboinikov, 1996; Guskova, 2001; Zherdeva, 2005; Maksimova, 2006). However, no such studies were conducted on the adult sample.

Some aspects of the relationship of creativity and conflict behavior are investigated in the framework of organizational theory. For example, M.Chen notes a high level of ability to resolve conflicts among creative leaders (Chen, 2006). Other studies reflect a greater inclination of the creative employee to engage in conflicts, which is mediated by

the type of thinking, the scope of work and a number of other factors (Janssen, Giebels, 2013; Farh, Lee, Farh, 2010; Forbes, Domm, 2004).

Due to the negative impact of conflict situations on the personal well-being, coping behavior and the choice of the most adaptive and effective coping strategies play an especially important role.

Studies in coping behavior are mainly devoted to the types of coping strategies used by an individual in various difficult situations (Amirkhan, 1999; Heim, 1988; Kraai, 2010; Lazarus, 1988; Skinner, 1995; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2009; Antsyferova, 1994; Wild, 2003; Kryukova, 2000; Leonova, 2004; Nartova-Bochaver, 1997). R.Lazarus considers the coping process through the prism of a cognitive assessment of a complex situation to determine ways of coping with it, which differ in the degree of effectiveness (Lazarus, 1999). A number of researchers that studied the relationship of creativity and coping showed highly creative persons' adaptability to emerging issues, as well as emphasized the fact that creative employees often resort to a proactive and social coping (DeCaro, Wieth, Beilock, 2007; Falat, 2000; Riolli, Savicki, 2010). However, research on the role of creativity in coping with conflict situations is extremely small numbered, which creates additional relevance of this study.

Given the above, the main **research question** is to study the role of employees' creativity in the origin, course and resolution of destructive organizational conflicts.

The **problem** is to study the role of personal creativity in the emergence and resolution of conflict situations, as the theoretical review on the relationship of creativity and employees' conflict behavior showed a number of contradictions.

1. The first contradiction is connected to the research of the inclination of creative employees to engage in conflict situations at the first and second stages of conflict development. On the one hand, creative employees are distinguished by individualism, sensitivity and autonomy, which may affect their more frequent involvement in conflict situations. In addition, their inherent divergent thinking can push them not only on various ways of solving problems, but also on completing the situation, adding extra elements to it, which leads to the transition of the pre-conflict situation into a conflict one. In addition, the focus on the problem, detachment and individualism are understood as aspects of

creativity and self-actualization. These qualities can allow an employee to be more easily involved in a conflict due to the independence of judgment and interest in what is happening (Creswell et al., 2013; Guilford, 1950; Waples, Friedrich, 2011; Guskova, 2001; Maslow, 2016). On the other hand, the same qualities, on the contrary, contribute to a more rapid and effective resolution of conflict situations. For example, with the help of divergent thinking an employee can more easily understand the point of view of ones' opponent, and the properties of detachment, and concentration on a problem associated with the process of self-actualization allow one to approach the search for an optimal and constructive interaction strategy in a situation (Zhou, 2009; McCrae, 1987; Maslow, 2016).

2. The second theoretical contradiction is the difference of views of researchers on the effectiveness of the work of creative employees in the context of conflict interaction at the stage of conflict resolution. On the one hand, creative employees demonstrate greater productivity in conflict situations and more often resort to choosing effective conflict resolution strategies, including using social coping in difficult situations (Declerq, Rahman, 2017; Chen, Chang, 2015; Farh, Lee, Farh, 2010; Miron-Spektor, Gino, Argote, 2011; Troyer, Youngreen, 2009). On the other hand, the adverse effects of conflict and stressful situations on the well-being and efficiency of creative employees are noted (Janssen, Giebels, 2013; Kurtzberg, Mueller, 2005; Santos, Uitdewilligen, Passos, 2015; Bogoyavlenskaya, 2002).

Based on the data from the studies, one can assume a high propensity for conflict interaction among a creative employee. However, based on the definition of divergent thinking as the ability to generate a large number of problem solutions and the idea of self-actualization as an individual's orientation towards freedom and creativity, one can also put forward a hypothesis about the ability of a creative employee to find optimal ways out of the emerging conflict situation and use effective behavioral and cognitive coping strategies them. In addition, the activity and independence of the creative personality, postulated in the above studies, also substantiate the hypothesis about the active role of the employee at the stages of the conflict emergence and resolution.

Thus, the following research **hypotheses** were put forward:

1. There is a relationship between the level of creativity and the frequency of destructive conflict emergence in the dyad of employees: the higher creativity level, the more often the employee is involved in a conflict situation.

2. There is a relationship between the level of creativity and the number of attempts to resolve a destructive conflict made by an employee: the higher creativity level, the more attempts an employee makes to get out of a conflict situation.

3. There are differences in the choice of coping strategies of employees with high and low levels of creativity: employees with low levels of creativity use a strategy of avoidance, while employees with high levels of creativity tend to choose a strategy of confrontation.

The **aim** is to study the relationship of creativity and the behavior in destructive organizational conflict.

In accordance with the goal and hypotheses, the following **tasks** were set:

1. To systematize the data accumulated on the problem of studying creativity.

2. To study the researches on the relationship of creativity and conflict behavior.

3. To identify the relationship between the level of employees creativity and the frequency of conflict situations.

4. Determine the connection between the employee's creativity level and amount of attempts that are made to resolve a conflict.

5. Identify the relationship between the level of employees creativity and the choice of coping strategies in a situation of destructive conflict.

The **theoretical and methodological basis** of the study was: approaches to the study of creative thinking (T.Amabile, T.Lubart, R.Sternberg, D.B.Bogoyavlenskaya), the concept of creativity as divergent thinking (J.Guilford, E.Torrance), the concept of creativity as a component of self-actualization (A.Maslow), features of conflict behavior (A.Y.Antsupov, N.V.Grishina, E.P.Ilyin), model of conflict behavior of K.Thomas-R.Kilmann, the concept of coping strategies of R.Lazarus and S.Falkman.

**Methods** used in the study:

1. "Verbal creativity test" by J.Guilford (Guilford, 1950; Shumakova et al., 1991).

2. The "Creativity" scale of the "Self-Actualization Test" (SAT) by A.Maslow (Maslow, 2016; Aleshina et al., 1984).

3. "Ways of coping" by R. Lazarus (Lazarus, 1981; Kryukova, 2007).

4. "Personal aggressiveness and conflict" by E.P.Ilyin (Ilyin, 2000; Dermanova, 2002).

In addition, a quasi-experimental study was carried out, involving the creation of a conflict situation between two employees. During the induction of conflict behavior, the case proposed in the assessment procedures of a Russian company was used. Case suggested working together to solve four proposed questions in the dyads. One of the participants in the dyad was a previously instructed assistant of the experimenter, whose task was to provoke the subject to a conflict during the task solution by denying the answers offered to the subject.

Observations of the case solving were recorded by the experimenter's assistant and the experimenter himself by three indicators: the fact of a conflict emergency, the number of attempts made by the subject to resolve the conflict and the main strategy of behavior in the conflict by K.Thomas (Thomas, Kilmann, 1974).

The following **programs** were used for statistical processing of the data obtained: Jasp 0.8.5.1, G * power 3.1.9.3, R Studio 1.1.423, SPSS 21.0 (power analysis, descriptive statistics and contingency tables, reliability analysis, linear and logistic regression, correlation analysis, chi-square, $U$ Mann-Whitney, $r$ Spearman).

The **empirical base** of the study was made up of employees of large Russian organizations (7 companies with more than five thousand employees - banks, pharmaceutical and IT companies) in Moscow.

The first stage of the research was the questioning of respondents using all the methods described above. 1500 people took part in this stage.

To the second stage of the study - a quasi-experiment using a case - were invited respondents who completed the questionnaires completely and without errors. The total sample of the study consisted of subjects who participated in the case solving (n = 687, 358 men and 329 women, the maximum age was 69 years, the minimum age was 20 years, the average age was 36 years, and the standard deviation was 9.37).

To analyze the data on the level of creativity, we selected the subjects included in the upper and lower 30% of the sample based on the aggregate results of A.Maslow and J.Guilford's methods.

The **scientific novelty** of the research is that:

1. For the first time, the study of creativity as a complex phenomenon, simultaneously understood as divergent thinking and a component of self-actualization, is substantiated theoretically and empirically in the connection with conflict behavior.

2. The connection of creativity to the behavior in a destructive organizational conflict is described both in terms of using survey methods and observing modeled behavior. The results of the study revealed differences in the self-reported and real behavior of an employee in a destructive conflict.

3. For the first time, the level of creativity served as a predictor of the frequency of destructive organizational conflict and the number of attempts to resolve it.

The **theoretical significance** is that research:

1. Contributed to the understanding of the characteristics of the creative employees behavior in a destructive conflict, which allows to give a quantitative and qualitative description of the facts of conflict situations and the behavior strategies chosen by the employee in them.

2. The obtained results show that creativity, represented by divergent thinking in conjunction with the component of self-actualization of the individual, may be a predictor of the conflict behavior of employees in organizations.

3. The results of the study allowed to establish that highly creative employees are more often involved in conflict situations, however, at the same time they make more attempts to solve it constructively.

The **practical significance** of the research results is that:

1. The main results of the study can be used in the practice of making organizational decisions, creating and managing teams. In addition, this set of techniques can be used in the areas of staff recruitment, assessment, business consulting and other events.

2. The data of the conducted research can form the basis for developing practical recommendations for employees and heads of organizations to improve the efficiency of

managing creative workers, building business processes, improving interpersonal relations between employees, as well as conducting a number of psychological trainings.

3. The data obtained in the study allow forecasting the occurrence of a conflict situation between employees, as well as the probability and effectiveness of its resolution by applying machine learning procedures to the organization's existing database. In addition, based on it, it is possible to determine the basic strategies of an employee's behavior in a destructive conflict.

4. On the basis of the results obtained, a course of lectures in the field of general and organizational psychology can be created, examining the phenomenon of creativity, as well as ways to manage creative projects.

**Thesis to be defended:**

1. The behavior in a destructive organizational conflict has particular specificity. The observed behavior does not reflect a connection with conflict questionnaire methods. However, it is possible to predict the occurrence of a destructive conflict in an organization based on the values of the employee's divergent thinking score.

2. Highly creative employees are more often involved in a situation of destructive organizational conflict. However, they have higher number of attempts to resolve the conflict compared to low-creative employees. In a conflict situation, irascibility and intolerance are characteristic of highly creative employees. Employees with low levels of creativity are more likely to be vindictive.

3. The choice of employee behavior strategies in a destructive conflict is related to the level of creativity. Highly creative employees tend to choose strategies of rivalry, cooperation and compromise. In addition, they also resort to coping strategies of taking responsibility, making decisions and distancing. Employees with low levels of creativity use a strategy of avoidance, as well as coping strategies of positive reassessment, confrontation, and self-control.

There are 4 **publications** on the topic of research in scientific journals included in Scopus and the "white list" of HSE journals.

The **structure** of the thesis: this work consists of an introduction, one theoretical chapter and one empirical, conclusions by chapter, conclusion, list of references (205

titles, of which 124 are in foreign languages) and 2 appendices. The main text of the thesis is presented on 169 pages (with appendices - 183). The results of theoretical and empirical analysis are presented in 22 tables (with appendices - in 25 tables and 2 figures).

# CONTENTS OF THESIS

**<u>The introduction</u>** presents the relevance, goals, hypotheses and objectives of the study, describes the methods used, the theoretical and methodological basis and empirical base of the study, reveals the scientific novelty, theoretical and practical significance of the work, outlines the main thesis for the defense, gives a brief description of the structure of the work.

**<u>The first chapter "The role of creativity in the emergence and resolution of conflict situations"</u>** presents a theoretical overview of the main approaches to the study of the phenomena of creativity and conflict behavior, as well as their connection.

**<u>The first paragraph</u>** presents the main approaches to the study of personal creativity. Despite the large number of studies of various aspects and manifestations of the phenomenon of creativity, we can note the absence of its common definition. By the majority of modern researchers, creativity refers to the ability to create a product that is notable for its novelty, its relevance to context (Amabile, 1996), as well as the ability to promote its ideas in society (Bogoyavlenskaya, 2002).

This section also analyzes the paradigms of the study of creativity. Historically, the predecessor of the experimental studies of creativity is the study of mental processes in the Würzburg School of Psychology. The introduction of systematic experimental introspection by O.Külpe (Külpe, 2008) provided detailed descriptions of subjective experience in the process of mental activity and showed the presence in the consciousness of non-sensory images, the dependence of thinking on the installation, the presence of the determining tendency and the unfolding of the thinking process as changing search operations. Directly research of creativity was not included in the experimental program of the Würzburg school, but this allowed to accumulate a sufficient empirical basis for further research of high-level mental processes within the framework of other paradigms.

S.R.Yagolkovsky considered the level classification of studies of creativity, including psychometric, psychophysiological, cognitive-emotional, personal, economial, attributive and systemic approaches (Yagolkovsky, 2007).

It can be concluded that creativity is a complex phenomenon involving all levels and systems of the individual. The most promising strategy for the study of creativity is a combination of approaches with a strong conceptual and methodological study and borrowing advanced measurement procedures from approaches with a strong empirical model and a weak level of conceptualization.

Such a combination of aspects of creativity and limitations determines the following composition of methods for studying it: the most effective tool for measuring creativity is J.Guilford's method of measuring divergent thinking, and the SAT's Creativity scale was chosen for studying the personality component.

**In the second paragraph**, situational and personal factors of creativity are considered. Personal factors associated with creativity distinguish personality traits, cognitive features, motivation, emotional states and more. Situational factors are represented by a lack of time, stressful effects, peculiarities of interpersonal communications in an organization, and conflict interaction.

**The third paragraph** discusses the causes, functions and ways of resolving conflict situations. N.V.Grishina defines conflict as a collision due to the contradictory goals, attitudes or behavior of the participants (Grishina, 2004).

The course of any conflict has its own dynamics. It can be divided into three major stages - pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict stages (Zaitsev, 2001). Traditionally, the following factors are considered to be the causes of conflicts in an organization: objective, personal, organizational and social. Vertical conflicts are the most frequent subject of research, as the most intense and probable, as well as influencing the overall perception of an organization (Bodrov, 2006).

Conflict functions are usually divided into constructive and destructive, but at the moment there are no precise criteria for distinguishing these blocks (Antsupov, Shipilov, 2004). As a rule, to evaluate these parameters, they resort to the study of percolation and methods of resolving a conflict situation. So, if the parties attempted to resolve the conflict using cooperation strategies, the conflict is considered constructive. The manifestations of the conflict destructiveness include a negative impact on the participants' mood, an increase in the level of stress and psychosomatic diseases.

**The fourth paragraph** presents the main studies on the relationship of creativity and conflict behavior.

Researchers consider various environmental conditions affecting creativity (Meshkova, 2015), the relationship of organizational conditions with creativity (Chen, 2006; Farh, Lee, 2010; Marques Santos, Uitdewilligen, 2015; Troyer, Youngreen, 2009; Yong, Sauer, Mannix, 2014), the relationship of creativity and aggressiveness of school-age children (Wallach, Kogan, 1965; Guskova, 2001; Shcherbakova, 2005).

The main conclusions about the relationship of conflict behavior and creativity were made by researchers on samples of school-age children.

M.M.Zherdeva has identified a number of internal and external factors that impede creative processes (Zherdeva, 2005). The absence of like-minded people and support from the reference group, rejection by close and significant people stand out among the outside. Thus, conflicts with significant people are inhibitors of creativity.

Studies conducted on school-age children, however, demonstrate a non-linear relationship between creativity and conflict. In this case, it is also necessary to consider the level of intelligence (Wallach, Kogan, 1965). Children with high levels of creativity and intelligence were characterized by independence, aggressiveness, self-confidence, extraversion, and attention grabbing. E.V.Scherbakova shows the importance of intelligence variable in finding the connection between creativity and conflict (Shcherbakova, 2005). Among with a high ability to learn, creativity is positively associated with autonomy, conflict, meaningfulness of life and self-criticism.

Moreover, S.V.Maksimova also points out that highly creative children with an advanced level of development often turn out to be lagging behind in school and have conflicts with the environment due to the need to hide their abilities and not stand out (Maximova, 2006). E.A.Guskova confirms similar results, pointing out that creative teenagers are much more likely to show aggressive behavior than non-creative ones (Guskova, 2001).

In addition, there is a large amount of research into the relationship between creativity and conflict behavior in organizations, focusing on the employees' personality traits and emotional behavior. The works of researchers are also devoted to management

decisions of employees. The data obtained showed that highly creative entrepreneurs, on average, have a more positive emotional background, as well as they cope with emerging conflicts more easily and effectively (Chen, Chang, 2015). Other studies emphasize the motivating role of conflict of tasks, which increases the level of creativity, because it does not create direct confrontation among employees, but it activates and mobilizes their resources (Miron-Spektor et al., 2011).

The most significant in the context of this work are studies of the relationship of creativity and conflict in the organizational environment. They can be divided into works that address management problems in conflict, task conflicts and interpersonal conflicts. Studies indicate a decrease in employee productivity when a conflict arises in solving a creative task (Janssen, Giebels, 2013). Thus, in the considered researches, the harmful influence of conflict interactions on the creative person is noted, however its ability to more effectively resolve them is emphasized. This gives grounds to formulate a research question and hypothesis for empirical research.

The main research question of this work is related to the study of the role of creativity of employees in the origin, course and resolution of destructive organizational conflicts.

The large number of relationships of personal characteristics and creativity, the role of creativity in the conflict behavior of adolescents, environmental features in modern organizations and the challenges they face give grounds to put forward the first hypothesis that there is a relationship between creativity and the frequency of organizational conflict.

Studies of the behavior of creative employees and teams in conflict situations reflect their greater activity in difficult situations. Combined with the theory of divergent thinking, which notes the ability to generate a large number of solutions to a problem, one can suggest that in a conflict situation a creative employee will act more actively and make more attempts to resolve conflict, rather than less creative. This provision formed the basis of the second hypothesis of the study.

**The fifth paragraph** of the work is devoted to the problem of personal coping strategies. In view of the increase in stressors and interaction crises in modern organizations, the study of coping behavior is of particular relevance. Coping behavior is

understood as the ability to overcome a problem situation (Vodopyanova, 2009). Coping is designed to provide psychological adaptation of the individual to changing conditions or a difficult situation and, from this point of view, each strategy can have a different adaptive value that contributes to resolving the situation.

Coping is also explored in the context of a person's potential (Leontiev, 2011). From this point of view, coping is a combination of personal factors that ensure effective self-regulation. D.A.Leontiev determines the main types of coping behavior depending on the type of creativity (Leontiev, 1990). He identifies four main strategies of behavior in a conflict situation, and among them - a creative solution as the elimination of the initial contradiction.

Some studies are devoted to the search for the connection between creativity and coping behavior of an individual. So, in the work of M.Falat, a hypothesis about the relationship between creativity and coping was tested (Falat, 2000). The results of the study showed that creative students used significantly more active strategies in overcoming frustrating situations, while non-creative students gave more abstinent and aggressive responses. Another study focuses on finding sources of stress for a creative person (Vasasova, 2011). The author analyzed the differences in the perception of stress among high and low creative respondents. It turned out that less creative respondents experience more stress from friendly and family relationships than creative individuals. Also, a creative person experiences more stress from health problems than a less creative one.

Such studies suggest that creativity is related to how a person builds interaction with society and difficult situations. Thus, it is possible to put forward a third hypothesis of research that a creative person can quite effectively cope with a conflict situation due to its activity and the possibility of generating new actions to cope with the situation.

**The second chapter, "An Empirical Study of the Relationship between Creativity and Conflict Behavior of Employees of Russian Organizations,"** outlines the scheme for conducting the research, describes the methods used and presents the results obtained.

**In the first paragraph**, "Objectives, tasks and hypotheses of research", the purpose, objectives, hypotheses, methods, stages and procedure of the study are formulated, and its empirical base is described.

The study was conducted in several stages:

1. Conducting a survey of the main sample for all research methods (respondents - n = 687, methods - 7).

2. Quasi-experimental research with the participants of the previous stage, which includes the solution of the business case in the dyads. The respondent was not familiar with his partner, who was a previously instructed assistant of the experimenter, whose task was to provoke the subject to a conflict during the solution of the task by denying the suggested answers. This conflict served a destructive function, since the instruction given to the experimenter's assistant directed his behavior toward denying any suggestions of the subject and did not allow solving the arisen contradictions in a constructive way. Analysis of the behavior of respondents in these conditions allowed to supplement the data of self-reporting methods with observation of real behavior. The results of the stage were further analyzed using statistical methods.

3. Conduct a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the data obtained in the study.

The empirical base of the study consisted of middle managers of large companies (with more than five thousand employees) in Moscow (n = 687, 358 men and 329 women, the maximum age is 69 years, the minimum age is 20 years, the average age is 36 years, standard deviation - 9.37).

The following programs were used for statistical data processing: Jasp 0.8.5.1, G * power 3.1.9.3, R Studio 1.1.423 - psycho and corrplot packages, SPSS 21.0.

**In the second paragraph**, "The procedure and methods of research" describes the methods used. Methods used: verbal creativity test "Unusual use" by J.Guilford, "Creativity" scale of self-actualization test (SAT), "Personal aggressiveness and conflict" technique by E.P.Ilyin, "Managing methods" technique by R.Lazarus and S. Folkman.

After filling in the battery of methods, respondents were invited to solve a business case to clarify the data obtained by observing the actual behavior. Each of them was informed that the decision of the case will be paired with an employee unfamiliar to him.

One of the participants was a previously instructed assistant to the experimenter, whose task was to provoke the subject to a conflict during the execution of a task by denying the answers offered to them. Observation allows you to consider and quantify three parameters:

• the fact of the occurrence or absence of a conflict;

• number of attempts made by the respondent to resolve the conflict;

• the main strategy chosen by the respondent for resolving a conflict situation. To describe the behavior of the respondent in a conflict situation, a two-dimensional K. Thomas-R. Kilmann model was used, considering interpersonal interaction in two dimensions - cooperation and assertiveness (Thomas, Kilmann, 1974).

To test the hypotheses put forward, a quasi-experimental study was conducted, a description and discussion of the results of which will be presented in paragraph 3 (description and discussion of the first hypothesis of the study), paragraph 4 (second hypothesis) and paragraph 5 (third hypothesis).

**In the third paragraph** "Description and discussion of the results of the study of the relationship between the creativity level and the frequency of occurrence of destructive conflict in the dyad of employees" presents a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the first hypothesis of the study.

This paragraph also contains the calculations of reliability-consistency common for the whole study, descriptive statistics, checking the distribution of the results obtained for normality, and others.

As the first hypothesis of the study, it was suggested that there is a relationship between the level of creativity and the frequency of destructive conflict in the dyad of employees. This section presents: the use of the $\chi^2$ criterion and logistic regression to find the relationship between the level of creativity and the fact of conflict. Next, we consider the relationship between the real behavior of subjects in a conflict situation and the types of conflict behavior according to the E.P.Ilyin questionnaire, and subsequently the relationship between the level of creativity and the type of conflict behavior on this questionnaire was tested. The paragraph ended with a block of qualitative - thematic analysis devoted to the stage of destructive conflict in the staff dyad.

To analyze the connection between the level of creativity and the fact of conflict, a sample of 687 respondents selected the top and bottom 30% who scored maximum and minimum points for two tests of creativity at the same time. Verification of the first hypothesis was carried out using the criterion $\chi^2$. The results obtained reflect the tendency of subjects with a high level of creativity to conflict behavior ($\chi^2$: $\chi^2 = 49.49$; $p < 0.001$; $df = 2$). Therefore, subjects with high and low levels of creativity statistically differ in the frequency of involvement in destructive conflict situations. Employees with a high level of creativity as a whole were twice as likely to have a low creative inclination to conflict in response to incorrect behavior of a partner.

The study also allowed the use of logistic regression to predict the occurrence of conflict on the values of the divergent thinking index on the total sample of 687 people. It was possible to establish that the variability of the fact of the occurrence of a conflict is due to the variability of the level of divergent thinking by 12%.

The results obtained can be interpreted as follows. According to the systematic approach to the study of creative processes, the creativity of the individual is deeply connected with the motivational and value level. Thus, it is important for an employee to prove himself, to demonstrate the result of his work.

Conflict of interest is one of the most common types of conflict in organizations (Grishina, 2009). The motivation of an employee to successfully complete an assessment in an organization gives rise to the first prerequisite for a conflict: an employee needs to prove himself, to prove himself better than his partner. At the same time, the situation of a destructive conflict creates an impossible framework for this: an appeal to the leadership can be perceived as unprofessional, and the partner is not ready for interaction. Under these conditions, involvement in a conflict situation may seem the only solution.

However, it should be noted that there are significant differences in the behavior of employees with high and low levels of creativity. More frequent involvement of highly creative employees in conflict behavior can be interpreted through the characteristics of sensitivity and neuroticism inherent in the creative personality. On the one hand, employee sensitivity makes him demonstrate a more intense emotional reaction (McCrae, 1987). Neuroticism, on the other hand, causes reactions of irritability and emotional

instability, contributing to the development of a conflict situation. On the other hand, employees with low creativity are characterized by stability of emotional reactions, which may play an important role in conflict interaction.

The results obtained in the course of the analysis correlate with studies of past years conducted on a teenage sample (Guskova, 2001, Zherdeva, 2005). Conflict behavior was considered by the authors as self-defense, which is also true for the conditions of the current study. Therefore, we can talk about the confirmation of the previously obtained results of the study and within the framework of the organizational environment.

The results of the study allow us to resolve the first theoretical contradiction by concluding that employees with a high level of creativity (according to the methods of J.Guilford and A.Maslow) are more often involved in destructive conflict situations.

As the results of the study showed, divergent thinking is associated with the fact of conflict. It represents the ability to consider the situation from different points of view, under a variety of angles (Guilford, 1950). And traditionally in theoretical and practical research this parameter is associated with creativity, because it allows you to measure the productivity of the creative process quantitatively. The most relevant divergent thinking can be in brainstorming tasks that involve the generation of a large number of ideas without any criticism or selection in a certain amount of time (Osborn, 1963). However, the results obtained during the study indicate that a high level of divergent thinking allows not only to generate a large number of creative ideas, but can also extend to other areas of a person's life. In a situation where an employee clashes with an objective cause of conflict — the solution of an important task for a future career together with a partner who threatens this career, divergent thinking can manifest itself by completing the elements of the situation.

Thus, the first hypothesis of the study on the relationship between the level of creativity and the frequency of involvement in a destructive conflict finds its test in the conclusion that employees with a high level of creativity are more often involved in conflict situations.

To understand the peculiarities of the actions of a creative employee in a conflict, an additional correlation analysis was conducted of the relationship between the

parameters of creativity and the types of conflict behavior obtained in the course of the analysis of the personalized aggression and conflictness questionnaire of E.P.Ilyin. Due to the abnormal distribution of the "Creativity" variable in the self-actualization test, the analysis was carried out using the Spearman coefficient with the Bonferroni-Holm correction on a sample of 687 people. Both methods of measuring creativity showed significant relationships with a number of variables. A significant negative connection between creativity and vengefulness is noted. A weak positive relationship is found with intransigence. A strong positive relationship is noted with irascibility and intolerance (p <0.001).

To further verify the results on the relationship of creativity and conflict behavior of employees, a regression analysis was performed. Used linear regression, the analysis was carried out by the method of step-by-step selection. The variables used in the analysis showed a normal distribution, therefore, parametric methods are possible. The indicators of the "Personal aggression and conflict" questionnaire were used as dependent variables, the level of divergent thinking as a parameter of creativity was used as an independent variable. The "Creativity" indicator of CAT was not included in this calculation due to the abnormal distribution of this variable. It was possible to establish that the variability of variable temper, revenge and intolerance is due to the variability of variable divergent thinking by 41-55%.

To find differences in the ongoing attempts to resolve the conflict by employees with different levels of creativity, as before, from the sample of 687 respondents were selected the top and bottom 30% who scored maximum and minimum points for two tests of creativity at the same time. An analysis of the connection between the level of creativity and the indicators of the "Personal aggressiveness and conflict" methodology by E.P.Ilyin using the Mann-Whitney test showed that there are significant differences in a number of types of conflict behavior. Irascibility and intolerance are characteristic of the group with a high level of creativity. A group with a low level of creativity is characterized by vindictiveness (p <0.001).

Irascibility is positively associated with creativity, that is, it is peculiar to a group of employees with a high level of creativity. Researchers also noted an increased tendency

to engage in conflict situations (Wallach, Kogan, 1965). From the point of view of a systemic and personal approach to creativity, one can also note the distrustfulness of a creative person to social reactions due to the frequent inconsistency of creative products with social expectations.

Vengefulness is negatively associated with creativity, that is, peculiar to a group with a low level of creativity. Vengefulness is manifested in the reluctance to let go of old grievances, a willingness to respond to attacks from others, the absence of a desire to actively resolve the conflict and a reluctance to compromise. Probably, the strategy of vindictiveness may not be used by such a person because of the ability to let go of the insult or situation after its resolution. The process of self-actualization presupposes certain moral and ethical peculiarities and the achievement of self-actualization, which also contradicts the strategy of using conflict for retaliation.

According to the results of the study, intolerance is positively associated with high levels of creativity. This phenomenon refers to an emotional reaction to the intrusion of others into the work process and any persistent attempts to influence the result of the work. The severity of intolerance can be justified through autonomy, individualism, autonomy, and non-conformism of a creative personality, which does not consider itself in close relationship with society and seeks to protect itself from its influence. From the point of view of a systematic approach, the creative person is immersed in a streaming state, which is characterized by full involvement in the work process. Thus, the comments of others can not only deduce from this state, but also affect the result of the activity.

As prospects for further research, we can highlight the possibility of conducting an experiment to search for the causal nature of these relationships. Qualitative analysis of the behavior of subjects in situations of conflict allowed to detect significant differences in the behavior of employees. For a qualitative study of employee behavior, a thematic analysis method was applied (Busygina, 2016). This section considers the peculiarities of behavior of employees with high (157 people) and low (103 people) levels of creativity at the dating stage - at the beginning of work on solving a case study.

After a short greeting, low-creative subjects almost immediately took up the decision of the case. In addition, the topic of clarifying information that was not directly

presented in the case was manifested in their behavior. Employees with high creativity perceived the case as a holistic situation and thought out the missing details themselves. This distinction, on the one hand, seems reasonable due to the greater development of divergent thinking among highly creative employees. So, having encountered a situation in which there are many unknowns, they added the missing details to a complete image. In the observation, it was found that the low-experiential subjects looked at the situation much more broadly, considering the various options for action and questioning parts of the case. In this case, an employee with a high level of creativity demonstrated a typical thinking strategy of "satisfaction" (Kaufman, Vosburg, 1997): having obtained a certain general picture and the first satisfactory result, his creative search ends and the task is considered to be successfully completed. This strategy is also often used by creative employees in brainstorming, when at subsequent stages it turns out that most of the generated creative solutions are impossible to use in practice. Perhaps this strategy could also affect his conflict behavior: experiencing helplessness in a destructive conflict gave rise to the first idea of the need for action, which immediately found its application without further deliberation.

The second topic is related to the stage of acquaintance and the beginning of the decision of the case by partners. Employees with a high level of creativity devoted the first few minutes to acquaintance with the second participants. In addition, they often omit minor comments in the course of the case. At the same time, after the greetings, the low-creative subjects were taken directly for the decision of the case and no further comment was allowed. It can be assumed that the level of creativity may be associated with shifting attention. Some studies, at the same time, point out the link between divergent thinking and increased attention span (DeCaro et al., 2007). Consequently, highly creative employees are able to hold several tasks simultaneously, for example, communication with a partner and solving a problem.

Similar results overlap with studies that noted the prevalence of social coping among the creative personality (Vasanova, 2011). However, in more detail the strategies of coping behavior of employees will be discussed further in the context of testing the third hypothesis of the study.

**In the fourth paragraph** "Description and discussion of the results of the study of the relationship between the level of creativity and the number of attempts to resolve destructive conflict undertaken by an employee" presents a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the second hypothesis of the study.

A statistical analysis was carried out using the Mann-Whitney U criterion aimed at finding significant differences between the number of attempts at conflict resolution by staff with high and low levels of creativity. For this analysis, the top and bottom 30% were selected from a sample of 687 respondents who scored maximum and minimum points for two tests of creativity at the same time (157 and 103 people, respectively). Analysis of the relationship between the level of creativity and the number of attempts to resolve the conflict showed significant differences in the number of attempts made by employees with high and low levels of creativity (U = 4443.5, p≤0.001). A group of subjects with a high level of creativity tends to make more attempts. For example, 22% of employees with a high level of creativity made 8-9 attempts to resolve the conflict. At the same time, the maximum number of attempts made in the group with a low level of creativity was equal to 7. This number of attempts was used by 6% of employees (table 1).

**Table 1. Number of attempts made to resolve destructive conflict by employees with high and low levels of creativity**

| Number of conflict solving attempts | Creativity Level | |
|---|---|---|
| | High Level (pers./%) | Low Level (pers./%) |
| 1 | 13 / 8% | 16 / 16% |
| 2 | 10 / 6% | 17 / 17% |
| 3 | 26 / 17% | 29 / 28% |
| 4 | 15 / 10% | 20 / 19% |
| 5 | 17 / 11% | 7 / 7% |

| 6 | 14 / 9% | 8 / 8% |
|---|---------|--------|
| 7 | 26 / 17% | 6 / 6% |
| 8 | 29 / 18% | 0 / 0% |
| 9 | 7 / 4% | 0 / 0% |

The study also allowed the use of linear regression to find the relationship between the number of attempts to resolve the conflict and the index of divergent thinking on the total sample of 687 people. The parametric method is applicable in view of the normal distribution of the variables used. The model obtained in the course of the analysis reflects the link between divergent thinking and the number of attempts made to resolve a conflict situation. The effect of multicollinearity is not observed and the model is acceptable for further interpretation. Single-factor analysis of variance showed that there are no patterns in the distribution of residuals and predicted values ($p \leq 0.01$), which indicates the applicability of linear regression. $R^2 = 0.116$ with $p < 0.001$.

The results of the study revealed that there are significant differences in the number of attempts at conflict resolution by staff with high and low levels of creativity.

The results obtained can be explained as follows. A creative employee is characterized by high speed of thinking and self-confidence (Creswell et al., 2013; Waples, Friedrich, 2011). And creative entrepreneurs, according to research, have shown themselves to be more active and constructive in terms of problem solving (Chen, 2006). The creative individual thus seeks to achieve the goal thanks to the developed divergent thinking, at the same time realizing the need for a constructive relationship with society as the main consumer of the results of his work (Maslow, 2016). At the personal level, creative individuals have a need to create a new product, according to the theory of M.Csikszentmihalyi (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Thus, the creative person is aware of his ability to create new ideas and ways of working, but for further development they need to promote the product in society. Accordingly, it develops the desire and ability to overcome problems and conflict situations.

Studies of past years also point to a tendency toward conflict behavior in a creative person as a manifestation of self-defense (Guseva, 2001; Maksimova, 2006). However, being in the organizational environment and expressing the motivation to pass the assessment with the best result can guide the employee involved in the conflict to find more ways to resolve it.

In addition, the approach to the study of creativity as a divergent thinking allows us to interpret the resulting connection with a large number of ways to solve a conflict situation as a manifestation of its properties. As was shown in the previous paragraph, the level of divergent thinking is also associated with the frequency of involvement in conflict situations. At the same time, a qualitative interpretation of the respondent's behavior, as shown by the results of the thematic analysis given in the previous paragraph, revealed that employees with high creativity think out a number of details of the task and situation without resorting to outside help and evaluation. It can be assumed that the relationship with the number of attempts to resolve the conflict is of a similar nature and is associated with the manifestation of divergent thinking in the organizational sphere, and not exclusively in solving problems.

Thus, the study made it possible to confirm the second hypothesis about the connection between the level of creativity and the large number of attempts to resolve the conflict undertaken by the employee. The theoretical contradiction put forward earlier is resolved thanks to the understanding that despite the greater frequency of involvement of creative personality in conflict situations, they do not carry a destructive basis due to its active position and readiness to offer a large number of ways of reconciliation.

Further qualitative analysis will allow us to consider ways to solve the difficult problem presented by the business case, employees with high and low levels of creativity. This section examines the behavior of employees with a high (157 people) and low (103 people) level of creativity at the stage of solving a case, while the main attention was paid to strategies for solving tasks by participants and their proposals. For a qualitative study of case decisions, a thematic analysis method was applied (Busygina, 2016).

The first task was to propose a communication strategy with the public regarding the problem situation discussed in the case. Low-creative subjects, relying on the existing

knowledge and experience in resolving such situations in real life, offered fairly similar ideas concentrated in the field of law and the financial sector. Test subjects with a high level of creativity probably saw a problem of a much larger scale, since they offered very unethical solutions related to hiding the truth about bribes, if such happened. Thus, you can see several main topics in the solution of this task. Firstly, it is based on existing knowledge and step-by-step consideration of the problem, and, secondly, it is an orientation towards the law in solving it.

The second task involved the compilation of key messages sent to the audience. Subjects with a low level of creativity resorted to the use of a convergent style of thinking, examining the details of the case set out and trying to draw on their past experience and knowledge. This point should be particularly emphasized: employees with low levels of creativity often referred to their own experience or legislation, while highly creative participants put forward only general suggestions and noted that they were unable to solve the task qualitatively due to lack of experience.

The third task was devoted to creating a work plan for the members of the response team for the next 7 days. Employees with a low level of creativity considered various options for the development of events and offered quite clear instructions. Low creative subjects tried a comprehensive approach to the problem being solved. They described the plan step by step and in sufficient detail. Highly creative employees in the solution of this assignment adhered to fairly general answers. On the example of this task, it can be noted that the subjects with low levels of creativity tried to show their abilities by examining the maximum amount of detail (in other words, by demonstrating convergent thinking according to J.Guilford), while employees with high creativity observed the general course of the situation, suggesting unusual solutions (which corresponds to a divergent solution).

The fourth task offered the subjects to plan the resources needed to solve the problem. Employees with a low level of creativity, as a rule, simply listed everything that they had previously tried to talk about in an action strategy. These responses were quick, sketchy, were brief, and at the same time were very detailed. Employees with a high level of creativity, clearly not very interested in the fourth task, offered very general ideas. In

particular, the need for funding, presentations, arrangements, etc. (more than 70 people did this). In this case, it is necessary to note the factor of motivation as the most important in creative processes. In this case, the "satisfaction" strategy (Kaufman, Vosburg, 1997) is triggered and the generation of new solutions stops when the first optimal solution is found.

In addition, it is also necessary to consider the cases of the comments of the subjects on the case as a whole. For example, many representatives of a group with a low level of creativity talked about the irrelevance of what is happening and the need to close the company after the publication of such news. Almost all comments were emotionally-colored, of negative tonality. Many of the subjects in this group noted the ethical issues associated with the problem under consideration and expressed condemnation of the company's leaders. At the same time, highly creative employees were mainly focused on saving the company's reputation. They offered a variety of solutions for leveling the effect of Victor's statements (68 people did so). Thus, we can note the topic of ethical methods for solving a case among a group of low-creative employees and a variety of ways to conceal the company's secret actions among employees with a high level of creativity.

While the answers of highly creative subjects are indeed more original in their ideas and formulations than the answers of subjects with a low level of creativity, it should be noted that there are certain tasks that employees with a high level of creativity do worse. For example, this creation of plans and distribution of resources. Divergent thinking, which allows them to invent ways to promote ideas, coping with the law, ways to resolve the conflict, in these cases were not applicable and unsuitable. It can be assumed that this is due to a lack of interest in the task, switching attention or other personal characteristics that manifest themselves in a particular environment.

**In the fifth paragraph** "Description and discussion of the results of the study of differences in the choice of coping strategies among employees with high and low levels of creativity" a quantitative and qualitative analysis of the third hypothesis of the study is presented.

This section presents the results of the analysis of differences in the choice of coping strategies using the $\chi^2$ criterion, as well as in the choice of coping strategies using

the Mann-Whitney criterion, the Spearman correlation coefficient and linear regression. At the end of the paragraph, a block of qualitative analysis of the coping behavior of subjects with high and low levels of creativity was presented.

For further analysis of the relationship between the level of creativity and the observed parameter of the chosen strategy of behavior in the conflict according to the model of K. Thomas, a sample of 687 respondents selected the top and bottom 30% who scored maximums and minimums for two tests of creativity simultaneously (157 and 103 people, respectively).

The analysis was performed using the $\chi^2$ criterion. Two variables were used: the chosen strategy and membership in a high or low group in terms of creativity. The result of applying the criterion $\chi^2$: $\chi^2 = 45.75$; p <0.001; df = 4.

The results showed a low level of creativity primarily with a strategy of avoidance, while a high level of creativity is associated with a rivalry strategy, as well as with strategies for cooperation and compromise. In studies of past years, there has been an activity and desire to train a creative person, which can affect the absence of a avoidance strategy (Hirst, Knippenberg, 2009). The avoidance strategy can be used by low-potential individuals due to the lack of strong motivation to promote ideas in society and, in fact, the most creative product.

The results of the qualitative analysis given at the end of this section will illustrate the choice of these strategies by employees. It can be noted that the avoidance strategy used by low-performing employees was manifested in ignoring the conflicting partner and independent work on the case. The choice of this strategy can be explained with the help of the lack of motivation for conflict interaction, unwillingness to promote your ideas and defend your own point of view. On the other hand, the opposite behavior can be noted in employees with a high level of creativity. Thus, in most cases, they resorted to the strategy of rivalry, engaging in open conflict with a partner, asking the managers to replace him or to defend the prepared assignment alone. A little less often, they resorted to strategies of compromise and cooperation, trying to agree with a partner that they would complete the task on their own and for him, if he tried to stop criticizing them. Past research has noted the use of social coping as a highly creative person (Vasanova, 2011).

However, in this case, it can also be noted that this relationship can be interpreted "modulo". Social coping shown by staff in the current study was not always aimed at productive interaction, but also at confrontation.

Consequently, the hypothesis about the presence of significant differences in the choice of strategies of coping behavior by employees with high and low levels of creativity is partially confirmed. It can be concluded that employees with a high level of creativity prefer social interaction strategies, namely rivalry, cooperation and compromise, while employees with a low level of creativity use a avoidance strategy.

An analysis of differences was also made in the choice of coping strategies according to the method of R. Lazarus and S. Falkman by employees with high and low levels of creativity.

For further analysis, from the sample of 687 respondents, the upper and lower 30% were selected, as before, who scored maximums and minimums for two tests of creativity at the same time (157 and 103 people).

Analysis using the Mann-Whitney test also showed the presence of significant differences in the choice of a number of coping strategies (with $p < 0.001$). A group with a high level of creativity is characterized by a decision-making strategy, acceptance of responsibility and distancing. A group with a low level of creativity is characterized by a strategy of self-control, confrontation, and positive reappraisal.

For additional testing of the hypothesis about the connection between creativity and coping strategies, linear regression was used. The analysis was carried out by the method of step by step selection. The parametric method is applicable in view of the normal distribution of the variables used. The indicators of the "Methods of coping behavior" questionnaire were used as dependent variables, the level of divergent thinking as a parameter of creativity was used as an independent variable.

It was possible to establish that the variability of the variables "search for social support", "distancing", "positive reappraisal", "decision making" and "acceptance of responsibility" is due to the variability of the variable divergent thinking 34-52%.

So, the statistical analysis carried out in this section showed that there are significant differences in the choice of a number of coping strategies. A group with a high

level of creativity is characterized by a decision-making strategy, acceptance of responsibility and distancing. A group with a low level of creativity is characterized by a strategy of self-control, confrontation, and positive reappraisal.

Decision making strategy can be related to creativity due to the indicator of divergent thinking, which is the ability to create a large number of original ideas. This strategy, similarly, consists in searching and considering possible solutions to a conflict situation. Accordingly, divergent thinking allows an employee to look at a difficult situation from an unexpected angle and come up with an extraordinary solution to the task.

Another strategy, taking responsibility, is the willingness of the individual to take responsibility for the consequences of his actions, especially if they entailed a number of difficulties. Such a strategy can be provided by a high level of creativity as self-actualization, which considers creative processes in the aspect of personal development, self-perception and openness to new experience (Maslow, 2016).

The strategy of distancing allows the individual to escape from emotional stress for a rational resolution of the situation. The qualities of autonomy and individualism indicate the need of the individual to search for an independent solution to the problem (Mirowsky, Ross, 2007). In such conditions, the rejection of the emotional component, which is inevitably present in most conflict situations, may be necessary to avoid overloading the body.

According to the results of the study, employees with low levels of creativity more often resort to using strategies of self-control, positive reassessment and confrontation. During the case study, highly creative employees were more often involved in conflict situations and more often resorted to the use of confrontation strategies, as was shown earlier in this paragraph and as also confirmed in other studies (Sternberg, Lubart, 1996). This contradiction is resolved with the operationalization of these concepts. Confrontation as a coping strategy according to R. Lazarus is a non-adaptive behavior due to the reaction of negative emotions without purposeful activity to solve the problem. On the other hand, the confrontation observed by experts during the decision of the case, is manifested not as a response, but as an attempt to promote only their point of view.

The coping strategy of self-control is manifested in the containment of any active actions and emotions for a preliminary analysis of the situation. An illustration of the use of this strategy by employees with low levels of creativity can be their way of solving the proposed business case. So, they tried to study all the details of the situation, clarify the missing elements and then describe the plan of action as comprehensively as possible and based on existing knowledge.

The strategy of positive revaluation is to rethink the conflict situation in terms of opportunities for personal growth. Despite the relevance of this strategy in the framework of personal development, active actions to resolve the problem are not taken.

Consequently, the hypothesis about the presence of significant differences in the choice of strategies of coping behavior by employees with high and low levels of creativity is only partially confirmed. Based on the concept of K. Thomas, it can be revealed that employees with a high level of creativity often use a rivalry strategy (30%), and employees with a low level use a avoidance strategy (46%). Thus, part of the hypothesis about the use of avoidance strategies by low-level employees is confirmed. However, the tendency of highly creative employees to the strategy of confrontation stated in the hypothesis according to R. Lazarus was not revealed. In addition, it can also be noted that employees with a high level of creativity are characterized by coping strategies for making decisions, taking responsibility and distancing, and with a low level - confrontation and positive reappraisal.

The following thematic analysis of the behavior of subjects during the study will illustrate the choice of these strategies.

It can be noted that the strategies characteristic of highly creative subjects can be combined with the themes of activity and detachment of the subject of activity, while the strategies of low-test subjects focus on the topic of passive emotional response. So, it was the participants with a low level of creativity who paid more attention to the unethical behavior of the company represented in the case and gave negative comments about its activities. However, they tried not to enter into contact with the conflicting partner on the decision of the case. Thus, they demonstrated emotional reactions to the content of activities, but were prone to avoidance strategies in relation to the partner and the real

situation. On the other hand, employees with a high level of creativity tried to establish a productive interaction with a partner, joking, asking questions. However, faced with his criticism, they were prone to a strategy of rivalry and began to promote their own decision or demonstrate rejection of the partner. In addition, the study also expands the results obtained by researchers on the use of social coping by creative employees (Vasanova, 2011). So, on the one hand, they showed great social activity during the decision of the case. However, when faced with a conflict situation, this social activity was not aimed at normalizing relations, but at getting rid of communication with a partner.

The results obtained allow us to see a greater variety of patterns of behavior among employees with a high level of creativity. Basically, all of them were aimed at social interaction with a partner through cooperation or compromise, but at the same time, most of the participants, falling for emotional statements, appealed for help to the curators or managers to protect the presentation independently and demonstrating this rivalry strategy. It can be assumed that the developed divergent thinking allowed employees with high creativity to devote time not only to solving the case, but also finding the optimal way to resolve a conflict situation, applying more strategies.

**In the Conclusion** of the dissertation the main conclusions confirming the achievement of the tasks set are summarized and formulated.

1. Creativity is a complex phenomenon involving all levels and personality systems, starting with the motivational-emotional and ending with the cognitive sphere. For the most accurate study of this phenomenon, it is necessary to use both quantitative and qualitative methods for collecting and processing data. In this regard, the ways of studying creativity can be its comprehensive consideration as a component of self-actualization and divergent thinking. These parameters showed a reliable connection and can be used together.

2. 2The observed behavior of an employee of an organization in a destructive conflict is particularly specific and has not shown any connection with survey methods of studying conflict.

3. The fact that an employee is inclined to a destructive conflict in an organization is associated with his level of creativity. Highly creative employees were twice as likely as low-creative ones to engage in a destructive conflict situation.

4. There are significant differences in the number of attempts made by employees to resolve a destructive conflict in an organization depending on the level of creativity. Highly creative employees are prone to more attempts to get out of destructive conflict. In addition, in conflict they are characterized by such types of behavior as irascibility and intolerance. Employees with a low level of creativity are less likely to engage in destructive conflicts in organizations, make fewer attempts to resolve them, and in a conflict situation they use such type of behavior as vindictiveness.

5. There are differences in the choice of behavioral strategies in destructive conflict by employees with high and low levels of creativity. Avoidance strategies are often resorted to by low-associate employees. Highly creative employees are inclined towards strategies of rivalry, cooperation and compromise.

6. The choice of coping strategies in a destructive conflict in an organization is also related to the level of creativity: employees with a high level of creativity often resort to a strategy of distancing, making decisions and accepting responsibility, and with a low level - to a positive reassessment and confrontation.

7. The results of the qualitative analysis in the form of a thematic analysis also led to a number of conclusions about the topics used in business case decisions by staff with high and low levels of creativity. The first is the topic of ethics. Employees with a high level of creativity often offer solutions to the situation described in the case that go beyond the law, while employees with a low level of creativity, on the contrary, express a negative attitude to the situation described because of the unethicality of the incident.

8. Another topic is to clarify the details described in the business case of the situation. Employees with a low level of creativity often try to clarify the missing information in the task. Business case solutions they offer as detailed as possible based on existing knowledge and experience. Employees with a high level of creativity

complete the construction of unknown elements of the situation on their own, perceiving the task given to them as initially integral and not requiring clarification. Despite the originality of the proposed answers, they differed in superficial consideration of the situation and the lack of alternative solutions.

9. The third topic is acquaintance and interaction with a partner. At the beginning of work on a task, staff with a high level of creativity devote more time to getting to know each other and often use humor in communication and proposed solutions. In addition, in response to the incorrect behavior of a partner, they often use a strategy of rivalry, resorting to a complaint against him and the help of a manager. While low-productivity employees are immersed directly in the process of solving a task, not devoting much time to getting acquainted. They are calm in communication, do not respond to the conflict behavior of the partner and give negative comments only to the unethical situation described in the case.

**<u>As limitations of the study</u>**, it is possible to note the difficulties in using the self-reporting method presented by the questionnaires of E.P.Ilyin and R.Lazarus. As it was shown in the work, a weak connection of the scales with real conflict behavior was noted. Thus, we can talk about the advantage of expert assessments over the forms of questionnaires in a situation of conflict interaction. In addition, it is worth noting the limitations of the sample associated with the professional experience of respondents. Despite the representativeness and validity of the selection of the empirical base, the respondents were employed in managerial positions and had at least one completed higher education. Changes made to the selection of respondents may affect the results obtained.

**<u>Among the prospects for further research are the following areas:</u>**

1. Conducting experimental studies on the relationship and the impact of creativity on the conflict behavior of the individual.

2. Clarification of the age specificity of the relationship between creativity and the conflict behavior of the individual.

3. The study of the relationship of creativity and conflict behavior not only in the organizational environment, but also in other areas, such as family life.

4. Creation of trainings and methodological materials on the development of effective coping behavior in conditions of conflict interaction of creative teams.

On the basis of the results obtained in the study, practical recommendations for managers and employees of organizations on the management of creative employees can be developed.

**List of Publications**

1.	Fedorova A.A., Communication of creativity, values and conflict behavior //Psychology. Journal of Higher School of Economics. 2019. Т. 16. № 1. С. 191-205

2.	Fedorova A.A., The Interrelation of Employees' Creativity Level and Conflict Behavior // Organizational Psychology. 2018. Т. 8. № 2. С. 119-157

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