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Phenomenological Revision of Social Creativity in Educational Institutions during the War in Ukraine after February 24, 2022

[Fenomenologiczna rewizja kreatywności społecznej w instytucjach edukacyjnych podczas wojny na Ukrainie po 24 lutym 2022]

Streszczenie: W artykule przedstawiono fenomenologiczne badanie kreatywności społecznej w ukraińskich instytucjach edukacyjnych podczas wojny, która rozpoczęła się 24 lutego 2022 r. W badaniu obejmującym 153 uczestników z dziesięciu regionów eksplorowano, jak nauczyciele i uczniowie adaptowali się do wyzwań konfliktu poprzez innowacyjne metody nauczania i inicjatywy prowadzone przez studentów. Opierając się na filozofii Husserla, Heideggera i Merleau-Ponty'ego, zidentyfikowano kluczowe motywy: odporności, solidarności społecznej i innowacji wynikających z konieczności. Wyniki pokazują, że kreatywność społeczna służyła jako środek transcendencji, umożliwiając jednostkom afirmację sprawczości i odnalezienie sensu mimo przeciwności. Nauczyciele wprowadzili hybrydowe modele nauczania i edukację opartą na społeczności, podczas gdy uczniowie angażowali się w nauczanie rówieśnicze i tworzenie zasobów cyfrowych. Te działania nie tylko utrzymały ciągłość edukacji, ale także wzmocniły więzi wspólnotowe. Zgodnie z wcześniejszymi badaniami nad przesiedlonymi naukowcami i adaptacyjną edukacją w strefach konfliktu, podkreślono kluczową rolę kreatywności w budowaniu odporności w obliczu toczącej się wojny i utrzymaniu edukacji podczas kryzysów. Zwracano uwagę na znaczenie pielęgnowania kreatywności w programach nauczania, aby przygotować jednostki do złożonych i nieprzewidywalnych realiów. Uzyskane wnioski dają nadzieję na przyszłość ukraińskiej edukacji i dostarczają cennych lekcji dla innych społeczeństw stojących przed podobnymi wyzwaniami.

Summary: This article presents a phenomenological study of social creativity within Ukrainian educational institutions during the war that began on February 24, 2022.

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Involving 153 participants across ten regions, the research explores how educators and students adapted to the challenges of conflict through innovative teaching methods and student-led initiatives. Grounded in the philosophies of Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, the study identifies key themes of resilience, community solidarity, and innovation born out of necessity. The findings reveal that social creativity served as a means of transcendence, enabling individuals to assert agency and find meaning despite adversity. Educators embraced hybrid learning models and community-based teaching, while students engaged in peer teaching and digital resource creation. These efforts not only maintained educational continuity but also strengthened communal bonds. Aligning with prior research on displaced scholars and adaptive education in conflict zones, the study underscores the critical role of creativity in fostering resilience and sustaining education during crises. It highlights the importance of nurturing creativity within curricula to prepare individuals for complex and unpredictable realities. The insights offer a hopeful outlook for the future of Ukrainian education and provide valuable lessons for other societies facing similar challenges.

Słowa kluczowe: fenomenologia, kreatywność społeczna, edukacja ukraińska, wojna na Ukrainie, odporność, innowacje w edukacji.

Keywords: phenomenology, social creativity, Ukrainian education, war in Ukraine, resilience, innovation in education.

Introduction

On February 24, 2022, the Russian Federation launched a full-scale military invasion of Ukraine, marking a significant escalation in the ongoing conflict that began in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and the unrest in the Donbas region. This invasion constituted one of the most severe military conflicts in Europe since World War II, drawing global attention and prompting widespread condemnation from the international community.

The invasion was characterized by rapid military advances into Ukrainian territory, targeting key cities such as Kyiv, Kharkiv, and Mariupol. The conflict resulted in substantial casualties, massive displacement of civilians, and extensive destruction of infrastructure. According to the United Nations, millions of Ukrainians were forced to flee their homes, leading to a humanitarian crisis both within the country and in neighboring nations that received refugees.

The war had profound impacts on Ukrainian society, disrupting daily life and challenging the resilience of its people. The conflict strained resources, tested national unity, and required significant adjustments in various sectors, including the economy, healthcare, and education. Civilian infrastructure, including schools and universities, suffered damage or were repurposed for military and emergency uses, further complicating the delivery of essential services.

Impact on Ukrainian Society and the Education Sector

The societal impact of the war extended deeply into the fabric of Ukrainian communities. Families were separated, social services were overwhelmed, and the psychological toll on the population was immense. The pervasive sense of uncertainty and the immediate threats to safety necessitated rapid adaptations at both individual and institutional levels.

Educational institutions faced unprecedented challenges as the conflict disrupted the conventional modes of teaching and learning. Many schools and universities were either destroyed or rendered inaccessible due to safety concerns. Educators and students were displaced, leading to interruptions in academic programs and a potential loss of educational continuity. The Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine had to implement emergency measures to address these challenges, including shifting to remote learning platforms where possible.

In response to the crisis, there was a remarkable display of social creativity within the education sector. Educators developed innovative teaching methods to reach students scattered across different regions and countries. Digital platforms became vital tools for instruction, collaboration, and support. Communities came together to establish informal learning spaces, and there was increased collaboration between domestic and international educational organizations to provide resources and assistance.

The war also prompted a reevaluation of curricular content, with an emphasis on fostering resilience, critical thinking, and adaptability among students. Mental health support became a crucial component of educational programs, recognizing the psychological impact of the conflict on learners of all ages.

This period highlighted the essential role of education in maintaining social cohesion and providing a sense of normalcy amidst chaos. The challenges spurred creative solutions that not only addressed immediate needs but also had the potential to transform educational practices in the long term. The phenomenon of social creativity in this context offers rich insights into how societies adapt to extreme adversity, making it a critical subject for phenomenological investigation.

Creativity serves as a fundamental component of human resilience, particularly in situations of extreme adversity such as war. It enables individuals and communities to navigate the uncertainties and disruptions brought about by conflict by generating novel solutions and alternative pathways. In the face of existential threats and the breakdown of normalcy, creativity becomes a means of psychological survival and adaptation.

From a phenomenological standpoint, creativity is deeply rooted in the lived experiences of individuals. It emerges from the intentional act of perceiving and engaging with the world in new ways, transcending the immediate constraints imposed by the environment. During conflict, this creative engagement allows individuals to reinterpret their circumstances, find meaning in suffering, and maintain a sense of agency.

In the context of the war in Ukraine, social creativity manifests as a collective response to shared challenges. Communities collaborate to develop innovative strategies for communication, education, and mutual support. This collective creativity not only addresses practical needs but also reinforces social bonds and a shared sense of purpose, which are crucial for communal resilience.

Educational institutions hold a pivotal role during times of crisis, functioning beyond their traditional mandate of imparting knowledge. They become centers of stability, hope, and communal support, offering a semblance of normalcy amid chaos. For students, especially children and youth, schools and universities provide structure and routine, which are essential for emotional and psychological well-being.

In war-torn environments, educational institutions often face severe disruptions—damaged infrastructure, displaced populations, and resource shortages. Despite these challenges, they serve as crucial platforms for social creativity. Educators and administrators are compelled to devise innovative methods to continue the educational process. This may involve adopting remote learning technologies, reconfiguring curricula to address current realities, or implementing psychosocial support programs.

The significance of studying social creativity in these institutions lies in understanding how education can adapt and thrive under duress. It highlights the potential for educational practices to evolve in response to extreme circumstances, fostering resilience not only in individuals but also in the broader society. Moreover, it underscores the role of education in preserving cultural identity and promoting social cohesion during periods of upheaval.

By examining the phenomenological aspects of social creativity in Ukrainian educational institutions during the war, we gain valuable insights into the mechanisms of human adaptability. This understanding can inform strategies to support educational systems in conflict zones globally, ensuring that learning and personal development continue despite adverse conditions.

Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The primary purpose of this study is to conduct a phenomenological revision of social creativity within Ukrainian educational institutions during the ongoing war that began on February 24, 2022. By adopting a phenomenological approach, the study aims to delve into the lived experiences of educators, students, and administrators to understand how social creativity has manifested amidst the conflict.

The objectives of the study are twofold:

- To examine the emergence and development of social creativity in response to the challenges posed by the war. This involves identifying the innovative strategies and practices that educational institutions have adopted to continue the educational process despite disruptions.
- To explore the implications of social creativity for the individuals involved and the broader educational landscape. This includes assessing how these creative responses have impacted teaching and learning experiences, community cohesion, and the potential for long-term transformation in educational practices.

By achieving these objectives, the study seeks to contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of creativity as a resilience mechanism in times of conflict. It also aims to provide insights that can inform educational policies and practices in similar contexts globally.

To guide this exploration, the study focuses on the following research questions:

1. How has social creativity emerged within educational institutions amidst the conflict in Ukraine?

This question seeks to uncover the specific ways in which educators, students, and administrators have collectively generated innovative solutions to overcome the obstacles presented by the war. It aims to identify the catalysts for creative action and the contexts in which creativity has flourished.

2. What are the phenomenological characteristics of this creativity?

Building on the first question, this inquiry delves into the essence of the creative experiences from the perspectives of those involved. It aims to describe the qualitative aspects of social creativity—such as emotions, motivations, and meanings—that characterize how individuals perceive and interpret their creative actions during the conflict.

By addressing these questions, the study intends to reveal not just the external manifestations of social creativity but also the internal, subjective experiences that underpin it. This approach aligns with the phenomenological commitment to understanding phenomena as they appear to consciousness,

providing a rich, nuanced account of social creativity in a war-torn educational context.

Theoretical Framework

Phenomenology, established by Edmund Husserl and expanded by philosophers like Martin Heidegger and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, serves as a foundational methodology for exploring human experiences. Husserl (1999) „introduced phenomenology as a way to return to the things themselves”, focusing on the structures of consciousness and the phenomena that appear in acts of consciousness. He emphasized the importance of epoché, the suspension of judgments about the natural world, to examine experiences as they are perceived.

Martin Heidegger (1962), in „Being and Time”, shifted phenomenology towards existential analysis, exploring the concept of Dasein (being-there) and emphasizing the temporal and contextual nature of human existence. He argued that understanding being requires analyzing the ways individuals are situated in the world, highlighting the inseparability of the individual from their environment.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty further developed phenomenology by emphasizing the embodied nature of perception and consciousness. He posited: „The perceiving mind is an incarnated mind, I have tried, first of all, to reestablish the roots of the mind in its body and in its world [...] the insertion of mind in corporeality, the ambiguous relation which we entertain with our body and correlatively, with perceived things” (Merleau-Ponty M., 1964, p. 3–4).

This perspective underscores the importance of the body as the primary site of knowing the world, situating human experience within both physical and social contexts.

Key concepts in phenomenology include intentionality—the directedness of consciousness towards objects—and the lived experience, which focuses on how individuals perceive and interpret their reality. The phenomenological reduction or epoché allows researchers to set aside preconceived notions to understand phenomena from the perspective of those experiencing them.

Social creativity refers to the collective processes through which groups generate novel and valuable ideas or solutions, influenced by social interactions and cultural contexts. Unlike individual creativity, which focuses on personal attributes and cognitive processes, social creativity emerges from collaboration, communication, and the sharing of diverse perspectives.

Teresa Amabile (1996) highlighted the role of social and environmental factors in fostering creativity. She argued that creativity is not only a function of individual talent but is significantly affected by the social context, including organizational culture, group dynamics, and external pressures. In educational settings, social creativity manifests when educators and learners collaboratively engage in problem-solving and innovation, especially when faced with common challenges.

Creativity within education is essential for developing critical thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving skills among students. Paulo Freire (1970) advocated for a pedagogy that empowers learners to question and transform their reality, emphasizing dialogue and critical reflection over rote memorization. This approach encourages learners to become active participants in their education, fostering a creative and collaborative learning environment.

Educational institutions that prioritize creativity help students navigate complex and changing realities. They provide spaces where new ideas can emerge, and traditional practices can be reimaged. By integrating creativity into curricula and teaching methods, educators prepare students to think innovatively and respond effectively to future challenges.

Historically, conflict and adversity have often been catalysts for innovation and creative problem-solving. The constraints imposed by war, such as resource scarcity and disrupted infrastructures, necessitate novel approaches to meet basic needs and maintain societal functions. Adversity compels individuals and communities to think differently, leading to unexpected and innovative solutions.

In the context of the war in Ukraine, educational institutions have faced significant challenges, including displacement, damage to facilities, and interruptions in traditional teaching methods. These circumstances have prompted educators and students to develop creative strategies to continue the learning process, such as utilizing digital platforms for remote instruction, reorganizing curricula to address current realities, and fostering community support networks.

Applying phenomenology to the study of social creativity in educational institutions provides a nuanced understanding of how individuals experience and interpret their collective creative endeavors during conflict. Phenomenology's focus on lived experience allows for an exploration of the subjective meanings that educators and learners assign to their creative actions.

Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the embodied mind highlights how physical presence and interaction within a social and environmental context shape perception and cognition. In war-torn settings, the corporeal experiences of fear, displacement, and instability influence how individuals engage with

their surroundings and with each other, impacting the emergence of social creativity.

By examining the phenomenological characteristics of social creativity—such as intentionality, perception, and the embodied experience—we can better understand how educational communities navigate and adapt to the challenges imposed by the war. This approach reveals the deeper significance of creative acts, not just as practical responses to adversity but as expressions of resilience and agency.

Understanding this intersection has important implications for both philosophical inquiry and educational practice. It contributes to the theoretical development of phenomenology by illustrating its applicability to contemporary social issues. Practically, it informs strategies for supporting educational institutions in conflict zones, emphasizing the role of creativity in fostering resilience and continuity in education.

Phenomenological Analysis of Social Creativity

The phenomenological examination of our qualitative study, conducted across ten regions of Ukraine with 153 participants during 2023–2024, unveiled profound manifestations of social creativity amid the ongoing conflict. By applying the epoché, we suspended preconceived notions to fully engage with the lived experiences of educators and students, allowing the phenomena to reveal themselves authentically.

Educators embraced innovative teaching methods that transcended traditional pedagogical approaches, embodying Merleau-Ponty's concept of the incarnated mind where the body and consciousness are inseparably linked within their world. The intentionality of teachers was evident as they reoriented their consciousness toward novel solutions, integrating hybrid learning models that combined in-person sessions with remote instruction. Despite limited resources and infrastructural damages, they utilized mobile applications and social media platforms as extensions of their pedagogical reach, reflecting the embodiment of technology within their teaching praxis.

Student-led initiatives and projects emerged as critical components of social creativity. Students assumed active roles in their educational journeys, aligning with Heidegger's notion of Dasein—being-there—in which individuals are not passive entities but are actively engaged in their existence. Peer teaching programs, digital resource libraries, and community service projects illustrated how students navigated their thrownness into a war-torn reality by authentically engaging with their circumstances and co-creating solutions.

Through phenomenological reduction, we delved into the rich, subjective experiences of participants, uncovering the essence of their creative adaptations. Personal narratives highlighted how individuals reconstituted their lifeworlds, a concept central to phenomenology, to maintain a sense of normalcy and purpose.

Anastasia, a high school teacher from Kharkiv, transformed her basement into a makeshift classroom after her school was destroyed. Her lived experience embodied the ambiguity Merleau-Ponty describes in our relationship with perceived things; her basement, once a private space, became a communal site of learning and resilience. She recounted how everyday objects took on new meanings, serving as educational tools that bridged the gap between loss and continuity.

Oleg, a university student in Kyiv, organized online seminars featuring international guest speakers. His intentionality directed toward expanding educational horizons despite physical limitations reflected the transcendence of spatial constraints. Oleg's lived experience illustrated the intersubjectivity of consciousness, as he connected with others beyond his immediate environment, fostering a global sense of community.

The emotional and psychological dimensions of these experiences were profound. Participants expressed a spectrum of emotions—from fear and anxiety to hope and determination. Creativity served as a conduit for emotional expression and coping, aligning with Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow, where individuals find immersion and satisfaction in challenging activities that match their skills.

By engaging in eidetic variation, we identified core themes that encapsulated the essence of social creativity in this context:

- *Resilience and Adaptability.* Participants consistently demonstrated an ability to navigate the upheaval of war through adaptive strategies. This adaptability was not merely reactive but was characterized by proactive engagement with their circumstances, embodying the phenomenological emphasis on agency within the lifeworld.
- *Community Solidarity and Collaboration.* There was a pronounced sense of We-intentionality, where individuals' consciousnesses were directed toward collective goals. This solidarity reflected a shared horizon of meaning, essential in phenomenological terms, where communal bonds were strengthened through collaborative creative efforts.
- *Innovation Arising from Necessity.* Constraints imposed by the conflict acted as catalysts for creativity. Participants' ingenuity emerged from the limitations they faced, resonating with the Heideggerian concept of 'thrownness'—being thrown into situations not of one's choosing but finding possibilities within them.

Essence of Social Creativity in Conflict

Synthesizing these themes, we discerned that the essence of social creativity during the conflict is rooted in the transcendence of adverse conditions through intentional, embodied actions. Social creativity functioned as a mode of being that allowed participants to reassert control over their lifeworlds, countering feelings of helplessness.

Creativity became a means of transcendence, enabling individuals to surpass the immediate realities of war. This transcendence is not an escape but a deep engagement with existence, where participants redefine their relationship with their environment and each other. It aligns with Husserl's idea of the lifeworld as the grounding of all meaning and experience; through creative acts, individuals reconstructed their lifeworlds, imbuing them with new significance.

The participants' experiences illustrate that social creativity is both a phenomenological and existential phenomenon. It encapsulates the interplay between consciousness and being, where intentionality directs individuals toward possibilities that affirm life amidst destruction. The embodiment of creativity reflects Merleau-Ponty's assertion of the mind's rootedness in corporeality and the world, emphasizing that our capacity to create is intrinsically linked to our physical and social existence.

Discussion

The essence of social creativity in the context of the Ukrainian conflict is deeply intertwined with the phenomenological experiences of educators and students who navigate their disrupted lifeworlds. This creativity emerges not merely as a response to adversity but as a fundamental expression of human intentionality and the drive toward meaning-making in the face of existential threats.

Drawing on Van Manen's (2016) concept of the phenomenology of practice, we understand that the lived experiences of individuals are central to grasping the essence of social creativity. Van Manen emphasizes that phenomenological research seeks to explore how people experience the world pre-reflectively, before conceptualization. In the Ukrainian context, educators and students engaged in creative practices that were immediate and embodied responses to their circumstances, reflecting a direct engagement with their reality.

Ken Robinson (2006) argues that creativity is an essential component of human intelligence that is often suppressed by traditional educational

systems. In the midst of conflict, Ukrainian educational institutions were compelled to abandon conventional methods, allowing for a natural emergence of creativity. This shift aligns with Robinson's assertion that fostering creativity requires an environment that values innovation and adaptability over rote learning.

Social creativity acted as a means of transcendence, enabling individuals to surpass the limitations imposed by the war. Through creative engagement, participants redefined their relationship with their environment and with each other, embodying what Heidegger (1962) describes as being-in-the-world. They were not passive recipients of their circumstances but active agents shaping their own realities.

Burde (2014), in her study of education in Afghanistan, highlights how schools can serve as sites of both conflict and peacebuilding. She notes that education can mitigate the effects of conflict by fostering resilience and social cohesion. Similarly, the creative initiatives in Ukrainian educational institutions functioned as acts of peacebuilding, reinforcing community solidarity and providing a sense of normalcy amidst chaos.

Kirk (2009) emphasizes the importance of recognizing and validating the educational achievements of displaced and refugee students. The creative adaptations in Ukraine ensured that learning continued and that students' efforts were acknowledged, which is crucial for their psychological well-being and future opportunities. This recognition also reinforces the notion that education is a fundamental right, even in times of conflict.

The phenomenological analysis of social creativity during the conflict reveals significant philosophical implications regarding human resilience, agency, and the capacity for meaning-making under extreme conditions. According to Mbanaso, Abrahams, and Okafor (2023), adopting a robust research philosophy and methodology is essential for understanding complex social phenomena. Our phenomenological approach allows us to delve into the subjective experiences of individuals, uncovering the depth of their creative responses.

Mizrahi (2020) discusses the value of the case study method in the philosophy of science, highlighting how empirical studies can inform and refine theoretical frameworks. Our study serves as a case that illustrates the practical applications of phenomenological concepts, demonstrating how individuals embody philosophical notions of intentionality and being-in-the-world through their creative actions.

The creative responses of participants reflect a Heideggerian perspective where individuals confront their thrownness into a situation not of their making but find possibilities for authentic existence within it (Heidegger M., 1962). Their creativity is an assertion of freedom and agency, a way to carve out a space for themselves in a disrupted world.

The findings suggest that social creativity is not only a coping mechanism but also a valuable asset that can be integrated into educational practice. Robinson (2006) advocates for educational systems that nurture creativity, arguing that it is essential for preparing individuals to navigate an increasingly complex and unpredictable world. By fostering environments that encourage experimentation and collaborative problem-solving, educators can enhance resilience and adaptability among students.

Van Manen's (2016) emphasis on the meaning-giving methods in phenomenological research underscores the importance of reflective practice in education. Educators who engage in reflective practices are better equipped to understand the needs of their students and to adapt their teaching methods accordingly. This adaptability is crucial in conflict settings where circumstances can change rapidly.

The role of social creativity extends beyond the immediate educational context and contributes to broader peacebuilding efforts. Burde's (2014) research demonstrates that education can either perpetuate cycles of conflict or serve as a foundation for peace, depending on how it is structured and delivered. In Ukraine, the creative initiatives undertaken by educational institutions helped to strengthen community bonds and foster a culture of collaboration and mutual support.

Kirk (2009) highlights the challenges faced by displaced and refugee students in obtaining recognition for their educational attainments. By ensuring that educational activities continued and that students' achievements were documented, Ukrainian educators contributed to the long-term prospects of these students. This approach not only addresses immediate educational needs but also supports social stability and reconstruction efforts post-conflict.

Reflecting on the research methodology, the adoption of a phenomenological approach proved instrumental in capturing the richness of participants' experiences. As Mbanaso et al. (2023) suggest, aligning research philosophy with methodology enhances the coherence and depth of a study. The qualitative nature of the research allowed for an in-depth exploration of individual and collective experiences, aligning with Mizrahi's (2020) advocacy for empirical studies to inform philosophical discourse.

The experiences of displaced scholars, as highlighted by Oleksiyenko et al. (2021), deepen this contemplation by showing how professional identities are reconstructed through creative engagement with new environments and challenges. Their adaptability and resilience exemplify the capacity of the human spirit to find purpose and connection even when uprooted from familiar contexts.

The integration of cybersecurity education and media literacy into educational practices demonstrates how social creativity extends into curricular innovations that address both present and future challenges. These efforts not only respond to immediate needs but also contribute to the long-term development of critical skills necessary for societal advancement (Terepyschchi S., Kostenko A., 2021, 2022).

Furthermore, the work by Oleksiyenko and Terepyschchi (2024) sheds light on the theme of academic precarity in embattled Ukraine, emphasizing how hope persists among scholars despite overwhelming odds. Their study illustrates how educators navigate the challenges of war through adaptive strategies and social creativity, reinforcing the importance of resilience in the academic community. This integration of hope and perseverance underscores the collective commitment to sustaining educational and scholarly activities even amidst conflict (Oleksiyenko A., Terepyschchi S., 2024).

The challenges of conducting research in a conflict zone were significant. However, the commitment to phenomenological principles ensured that participants' voices were authentically represented. The use of narratives and personal accounts provided valuable insights into the emotional and psychological dimensions of social creativity.

Conclusion

This study embarked on a phenomenological revision of social creativity within Ukrainian educational institutions during the war that commenced on February 24, 2022. By engaging with the lived experiences of educators and students across ten regions of Ukraine, we uncovered how social creativity manifested as a profound response to the existential challenges posed by the conflict. The analysis illuminated the innovative teaching methods and student-led initiatives that emerged, reflecting an intentionality directed towards preserving education and fostering community resilience. Through the application of phenomenological concepts from Husserl, Heidegger, and Merleau-Ponty, we explored the embodiment of creativity as educators and learners reconstituted their lifeworlds amidst disruption. The study identified key themes of resilience and adaptability, community solidarity and collaboration, and innovation arising from necessity. These themes coalesced to reveal the essence of social creativity as a means of transcendence, enabling individuals to assert agency and find meaning in adverse conditions.

The importance of understanding social creativity during times of war cannot be overstated. This study contributes to the philosophical discourse by illustrating how creativity serves as a fundamental mechanism for human resilience and adaptability. In the Ukrainian context, social creativity was not merely a series of practical solutions but an embodiment of the human spirit's capacity to overcome adversity through collective intentionality and embodied action. Recognizing the phenomenological characteristics of this creativity provides valuable insights into how educational institutions can function as sites of resistance and hope. It underscores the role of education in sustaining social cohesion, preserving cultural identity, and fostering psychological well-being during crises. By highlighting the integral connection between creativity and survival, the study offers a framework for supporting educational practices in conflict zones globally, emphasizing the need to nurture and harness social creativity as a vital resource.

From a philosophical perspective, this exploration of social creativity in wartime reaffirms the profound interplay between human consciousness, embodiment, and the world. It echoes Merleau-Ponty's assertion of the mind's rootedness in corporeality and the ambiguous relationship we maintain with our bodies and perceived things. The participants' creative responses illustrate how individuals navigate their thrownness into chaotic circumstances by engaging authentically with their environment, embodying Heidegger's concept of *Dasein*. Creativity emerges as an essential expression of the human spirit—a means by which individuals and communities transcend the limitations of their immediate realities to construct new meanings and possibilities. It challenges us to reconsider the role of creativity in human existence, not as a luxury of peaceful times but as a fundamental aspect of our being that is called upon most urgently in times of crisis. This contemplation invites a deeper appreciation of the resilience inherent in the human condition and the capacity for creativity to serve as a beacon of hope and transformation.

From a philosophical standpoint, the exploration of social creativity in the context of the Ukrainian conflict invites deeper contemplation on the human spirit and the intrinsic value of life. Horban and Martych (2022) discuss the basic approaches to the value of life in bioethical discourse, highlighting how crises prompt reflections on human dignity, purpose, and ethical considerations. The creative endeavors of educators and students embody this valuation of life, demonstrating an unwavering commitment to growth, learning, and communal support despite existential threats. This aligns with Merleau-Ponty's (1964) view of the mind's embodiment and its engagement with the world, illustrating how creativity serves as an essential expression of our being-in-the-world.

The participants' actions reveal that creativity is not merely a response to external circumstances but a fundamental aspect of human existence that allows for the redefinition and transformation of reality. It underscores the idea that even in the face of profound adversity, individuals possess the capacity to assert their agency, find meaning, and contribute positively to their communities.

There is a hopeful outlook for the future of Ukrainian education and society. The social creativity demonstrated throughout this conflict signifies a strong foundation upon which to rebuild and innovate. The collective determination of educators and students to not only survive but to thrive reflects a deep-rooted resilience and a commitment to preserving cultural identity and democratic values. As highlighted by Federowicz and Terepyshchyi (2023), supporting Ukrainian children and youth through creative educational practices is essential for their integration and development, both within Ukraine and in the diaspora.

The insights gained from this study, alongside the contributions of scholars like Horban and Martych (2022), emphasize the importance of recognizing and nurturing the human capacity for creativity as a vital resource in times of crisis. By embracing social creativity, educational institutions can play a pivotal role in healing, unifying, and advancing societies affected by conflict. It is our aspiration that the spirit of innovation and solidarity observed in Ukrainian educational communities will inspire similar efforts globally, reinforcing the indispensable role of creativity in cultivating a resilient and hopeful future.

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