

# Critical Thinking Across the Curriculum

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## Abstract

The Critical thinking is that form of thinking about any subject, content, or problem in which the thinker advances the quality of his or her thinking by expertly analyzing, assessing, and reconstructing it. This study consists of the importance of critical thinking across the curriculum in the current scenario. The implementation critical thinking across the curriculum is challenging, areas of prospective application involving securing considerable agreement on the nature of critical thinking, degree of need for a separate course, and the coordination, it includes leadership, a glossary, proper selection of courses for incorporation, avoidance of duplication and gaps, acquiring required subject matter, and assessment of the total effort, the teaching methods used, and decrease or increase in retention of subject matter.

Keywords: Critical thinking, Curriculum

## Introduction to Critical Thinking

The critical thinking is self-directed, self-disciplined, self-monitored, and self-corrective thinking. It presupposes assent to rigorous standards of fineness and attentive command of their usage. It also involves the effective communication and problem-solving abilities, as well as a commitment to overcome our native egocentrism and sociocentrism.

### **A well-cultivated critical thinker:**

- **A well-cultivated** thinker raises fundamental questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely
- **A well-cultivated** thinker gathers and assesses related information, using the abstract ideas to interpret it effectively for the future.

- **A well-cultivated** thinker comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards
- **A well-cultivated** thinker thinks open mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, as needs be, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences
- **A well-cultivated** thinker communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems.

### 1. Analytical

The part of critical thinking is the capability to cautiously examine something, whether it is a problem, a set of data, or a text. Person with analytical skills can examine information, and then identifies what it means, and what it represents.

- Asking thoughtful questions
- Data analysis
- Information seeking
- Interpretation
- Judgment
- Questioning evidence
- Recognizing differences and similarities
- Skepticism

### 2. Communication

Frequently, we will require sharing the conclusions with our employers or with a group of colleagues. We might also need to engage in critical thinking with a group. In this case, we will need to work with others and communicate effectively to figure out solutions to complex problems.

- Asking important questions
- Assessment
- Collaboration
- Explanation

- Expressing opinions and ideas
- Interpersonal
- Presentation
- Teamwork
- Verbal communication
- Written communication

### **3. Creativity**

Critical thinking often involves some level of creativity. We might need to spot patterns in the information we are looking at or come up with a solution that no one else has thought of before. All of this involves a creative eye.

- Cognitive flexibility
- Conceptualization
- Curiosity
- Imagination
- Making abstract connections
- Making inferences
- Predicting
- Synthesizing
- Visionary

### **4. Open Minded**

To think critically, we need to be able to put aside any assumptions or judgments and merely analyze the information we receive. We need to be objective, evaluating ideas without bias.

- Embracing different cultural perspectives
- Fair
- Humble
- Inclusive
- Objective
- Observation

- Reflection

## **5. Problem Solving**

The solving of the problem is another vital critical thinking ability that involves analyzing a problem, generating and implementing an explanation, and assessing the accomplishment of the plan. Employees need to be able to come up with practical solutions.

- Applying standards
- Attention to detail
- Clarification
- Collaboration
- Decision making
- Evaluation
- Grounded
- Identifying patterns
- Innovative
- Logical reasoning

## **Introduction of Curriculum**

The curriculum is defined as planned, focused, progressive, and organized process in order to make constructive improvements in the educational system. Every time there are changes or developments happening around the globe, which affects the higher education curriculum. There is a requirement to bring up to date them in order to address the society's wants.

To exemplify this contention, let us trace back a bit of history. During the ancient times, people taught their kids facts and skills in order to survive by catching fish or hunting animals for foodstuff. They had no formal education system during that time, but their children learned and acquired the knowledge and skills for survival. Therefore, at that time, they already had a curriculum which other educators call as, the saber-tooth curriculum. These sorts of curriculum refers to a type of curriculum that existed during the ancient times in which the purpose of teaching was for survival.

## **Conceptual Vision on Critical thinking across the curriculum**

When the effects of discoveries and inventions became inevitable, ancient people's way of life had changed for the betterment. As a outcome, education became formal and curriculum growth evolved as organized, planned, purposeful and progressive, even.

In higher education, competing demands of responsibility and innovation in the face of globalization, technology, and budget cuts cause us to think how best to arrange learners who will learn for a lifetime. We compete that a shift in our understanding of curriculum design to accommodate learner centeredness offers the framework for preparing graduates for a lifetime of learning.

This essay provides a broad vision for a higher education program incorporating critical thinking across the curriculum, using a rigorous detailed conception of critical thinking. The final third utilizes subject-matter matters to reinforce general critical thinking dispositions and abilities, teach samples of subject matter, and introduce a subject-specific critical thinking. The teaching approaches employed in the program are involved and based on the principle, "We learn what we use." Both summative and formative assessments are employed as appropriate. Coordination and support are extensive. Objections and concerns are discussed, and alternatives, including possible transitions, are considered. The extended review of research supports moving towards the critical thinking across curriculum.

If we have to maintain high level of higher education then it needs constant revision. And the most urgent need for this amendment is to continue to think about it, such continuous efforts inspire us to walk according to today's era. If we talk about critical thinking, then it shows us a way to better understand our curriculum and meet the requirements of the proposed amendments.

### **Conclusion of the Study**

We cannot always make the strategy of creating a future of students with the same curriculum, it has been researched for the solution of the problem that critical thinking is necessary for our curriculum, our focus in Higher Education is the overall development of the student It should be done so that he is ready to work with every kind of technology and environment.

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## **Pragmatic Strategies for Improvement in Education**

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### **Abstract**

Education system of India is highly criticized due to limitations; it is imperative to reform education system of India. As education in India has always been a major concern for the government since independence. It is the education system of the country that provides strategic edge for growth and development. In this highly competitive world; education is the most powerful tool for success. This study is to acknowledge the present limitations of and providing some strategies for Improvement in education system.

***Key words: Education system of India, Quality of Education, Strategies for Improvement.***

## **Introduction**

Education plays a vital role in economic and social development of a country, better education leads to formation of better policies and better quality of decisions at the time of crisis. The world is evolving at the speed of light in almost every area there is rapid growth of information technology in every segment including education. It is important to understand that educational policies should be multidimensional and flexible. Development of education system is a continuous process not an intermittent process.

India has formidable history of education. Initially education began with teaching of traditional elements such as Indian religions, Indian Mathematics and Indian Logics under the supervision of gurus. Initially education was open to all, as time progressed; the education was imparted on the basis of caste. Later on education became ingrained with the establishment of the Islamic empires in the Indian subcontinent in the middle Ages while the coming of the Europeans later brought western education to colonial India. Education system of India has been evolving since then due to several factors like demographic changes, political changes and conflict of beliefs.

Since Independence of India it was not easy to proliferate and maintain the standard quality of education. Even bigger challenge was to banish caste based education system and nourish the historically disadvantaged castes and tribes and provide them with equal right of education. There shall be the appropriate access of education to every person in India.

Thereafter the Indian government sponsored a variety of policies to address the problems of illiteracy in both rural and urban India. MaulanaAbulKalam Azad, India's first Minister of Education, envisaged strong central government control over education throughout the country, with a uniform educational system. The Union government established the University Education Commission (1948–1949), the Secondary Education Commission (1952–1953), university Grants Commission and the Kothari Commission (1964–66) to develop proposals to modernize India's education system.

Moreover, India has best quality brains and strong mathematical minds as Indian engineers are offered prestigious work profiles all around world. Furthermore India is at the zenith when it comes to earnings by Indians in foreign countries.

India has been blessed with many legendary educational leaders like Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and many others who have shaped the country in many ways. After Independence, India had many challenges to deal with and one of the major challenge was education. Due to severe changes in nation's government authorities; formulation of standard education policy for a newly formed government was difficult. Even bigger challenge was to provide education open for all uniformly, without any caste based education system. Thereafter reservation policy is introduced for fighting the caste based education system.

### **Objective of this study**

This study strives to render pragmatic strategies for improving education.

### **Research Methodology**

Present research paper is mainly based on the secondary data. These data are collected from various websites, journals, and newspaper articles. The study is explanatory and conceptual in nature.

### **Limitations of the present Education Structure**

**Government vs. Private:** Education in India is provided by public sector and private sector, there have always been some factors like cost of education, facilities, infrastructure and reservations etc. distinguish them which effects neutrality of education system rather it creates a dual tier education system.

**Alter ego of schools – Coaching Centre:** A new dual education system has emerged due to unfurling of innumerable coaching centers. By its very definition coaching means extra teaching of a subject. There has been a tremendous growth of private coaching center in India from the past few years which reflects that the dependency of students on coaching classes has been escalated. Even survey revealed that many of the best teachers of reputed schools and colleges have left their jobs and taken up private coaching due to significant rise in income. Theoretically,



schools and colleges are nonprofit organizations but this has become one of the most profitable ventures.

**Lack of awareness:**Mr. Pope says, very truly, "A little knowledge is a dangerous thing". Lack of awareness is a common cause in students which misleads them and put them in rat race. Students are unable to make proper career choices due to lack of awareness and ineffective self-awareness.

**Parental Pressure:** In this competitive era, Parents have lots of expectations from their children which cause anxiety, depression, suicidal tendency and lack of confidence in them. Students are enforced with the career choices made by their parents. Every person has their unique mixture of qualities which are left to be evaluated and promoted. This is one of the rising causes of lack of interest among people in their work.

**Rat race:** As discussed earlier there has been a lack of awareness among students which leads them to make wrong choices for their career. This is one of the biggest failures of our education system that it does not provide a proper counseling which allows them to make better career choices after self-evaluation of oneself. Due to lack of self-awareness students are blindly following a rat race.

**Pedagogy:**It refers more broadly to the theory and practice of education, and how this influences the growth of learners. Also a major setback for Indian education system is that the methods adapted by Indian teachers are still archaic. The methods of teaching should evolve with time and need they should follow the three rules of learning i.e. learn – unlearn – relearn. Students get most of their knowledge, directions and skills from their teachers. There should be a proper evaluation of teachers and their work.

**Lack of Control over students:**Since privatization, the education industry is multimillion dollar industry and a profitable industry. All types of marketing strategies are adapted for promotion of colleges and schools. Due to mass admissions, Vigilance required to individual student becomes ineffective or out of control.

### **Some Strategies for Improvement in Education**

**Student Teacher Relationship:** The student teacher relationship should be redefined; the teacher should promote interactive sessions for better learning. The teacher must evaluate the performance of each student in the class and modify its teaching methods accordingly. Rather than focusing on ‘one to many’ conversation, the teacher should prefer ‘one to one’ conversation to know the student better. The teachers must not criticize students in front of the class, which reduces their morale and self-confidence rather the same shall be dealt differently by providing special classes or post class sessions. The student must feel comfortable while sharing his thoughts, his doubts with the teachers. Every student is born with their own bucket of qualities.

**Envisage beyond solely science and commerce:** As discussed earlier; Lack of awareness and rat race, as the students are not aware of multifaceted career choices they fall for the choices made by their friends, family and many others. Proper guidance shall be given to the students from time to time.

**Educate parents:**For better implementation of educational policies it must be understood that parents plays a very influential role in children’s life as they have their own expectations. The education system should consider role of parents and some specific responsibility should be assigned to parents. Moreover classes/seminars/sessions should be held specifically to educate parents. They should be aware about the performances, hobbies, qualities and weaknesses of their children based on the evaluation report of each student. It should be understood that proper symmetry should be formed between formal education and parental needs.

**Information Technology in Education:**To keep pace with the rapidly changing world introduction of information technology in education is must. There should be a proper blend of technology in the area of education.

**Extra-Curricular Activities:**An equal importance shall be given to the extracurricular activities. Major benefits of participating inextracurricular activities are higher self-confidence, better leadership skills, high activity levels, reduced stressand decrease in absenteeism. At early stages it is comparatively easy to place skills in students and increase their morale.

**Blending of theories from different regions:**

It should introduce some theories which are progressively working in other countries or regions.

One of the best education system in the world – Finland – do not bind the students in the web of tests it only take one standardized test during their primary and secondary schooling which is called national matriculation examination.

According Education minister of Singapore Mr. Ong Ye Kung, “Learning is not a competition,” the ministry of education is planning a series of changes aimed at discouraging comparisons between student performance and encourage individuals to concentrate on their own learning development.

**Contemporary customization of education system:** Indian teachers should not be bigot rather they should endeavor changes and optimize accordingly. The students should be savour the internships at a rudimentary level. More focused to be given on projects which further leads to research work, reading of multiple books rather than confining only to a single course book. Facsimile to guest lectures in the premier business schools, teachings to students should also be provided by people in ordinary profession viz. businessmen, doctors, astronauts, painters, musicians and others.

**Educate Teachers:** it should be kept in mind that teachers should be evaluated and trained periodically; the teachers have a moral responsibility towards society. The world is changing rapidly and to keep up with the change the knowledge, methods and practices should be redesigned with the same pace. As we know “The change is the only permanent thing in this world”. Hence the teachers must educate themselves frequently and keep a chase with the rapidly changing world.

**Early recognition of prodigy:** Prodigy is usually focus areas of mathematics, music, athletics and chess. Students should not be abstained from multiple activities which lead to obscuring of prodigy. Student should be promoted to participate in various activities to experiment his skills without being wary of the results. Also it should be noted that for better identification of prodigy there should effective symmetry between the teachers and the parents – both should be the keen observer.

**Imbibing soft skills in demeanor:**In this modern world, where social media has takeover the social interactions and people are more likely to communicate digitally rather than verbally. There is dire need of soft skill training which includes skills like leadership skills, critical thinking, listening skills, teamwork, teambuilding and many others. The soft skills provide the strategic edge to success. It is comparatively easy to place the soft skills in students at rudimentary level than enforcing them in a stringent manner.

**Student Report:** A thorough evaluation of every student should be conducted based various attributes viz. personality, emotional quotient, empathy, weaknesses, strengths, hobbies and many other qualitative aspects. Apart from only reports of academics which involves only a few confined subjects. These reports are only possible when the students are scrupulously observed. The same should be discussed with the parents periodically.

**Control:** Last but not the least, it is highly imperative to put some controls over educational institutions by not only scrutinizing but also ameliorate the system. The quality of education should not be compromised what so ever.

## **Conclusion**

Based on the study it is clearly apparent that there is a need for change and change is the need, to keep the pace with the rapidly transforming world it is important to adapt exuberantly. Initiatives should be taken to introduce information technology in education. Visuals are the stronger memories and hence visualization of theories should be adapted instead of rote learning that can help students to learn and memorize who are comparatively weak in academics.

To help the students in choosing the better career choices for one self it is important to enlighten them with effective counseling. It is imperative to involve parents in this process for effective guidance. Every child is born with their own bucket of qualities and hence the same should be nourished and encouraged. Every student should be observed vigilantly in order to bring the best out of him. There must be thorough evaluation of every student individually for early recognition of prodigy and analysis of strengths and weaknesses. There is a need for moderation in teaching methods and practices. Frequent workshops, seminars and learning sessions should be conducted for educating teachers. The plausibility and feasibility of the above mentioned strategies are to be taking forward accordingly. Give a fish to a man and you feed him for one day, teach him how to

catch fish and you feed him for lifetime. Education is quintessential for life without which the universe is an obscure entity.

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