

# Children must be able to think, Not What to Think

## 1- Introduction

Thesis Statement: Critical thinking plays a significant role in innovation and creativity therefore, it must be enhanced so that children could be able to solve their problems independently.

## 2- Reflecting on the Role of education in developing critical thinking

## 3- Inculcation of thinking at individual and family level:

a. Creates freedom of thoughts

b. Boosts the confidence in children.

c. Improves decision making ability

d. Instigates lifelong learning

e. Promotes effective communication

## 4- Manifestation of critical thinking at societal and career level.

a. Leads to positive social change

b. Source of innovation

c. Improves an organization's ranking

d. Flow of independent ideas in society

e. Source of participation in democratic process by questioning misinformation

These are not manifestations

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## 5- Scope of Critical Thinking Fostered by Education at broader levels:

a. Fosters social harmony and integration.

b. Embraces diversity and avoids sectarianism

c. Multiperspective approach will be applied in different sectors.

d. A bright future of state

e. Roadmap for future scientists and innovators.

## 6- Conclusion

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Paragraphs of Checked Outline.  
Point 4 and 5 and their sub-paragraphs

It is important to acknowledge the fact that scope of critical thinking is not limited to individual himself, but to society as well. A child can be the source of motivation for his fellows. Similarly, when these critical thinkers grow up they become source of innovation and inspiration for the society. Out of these people, some transform into leaders, businessmen, scientists and other professions, and become source of light for others. K.K. Aziz provides best explanation of this argument in his book "Making of Pakistan". He explained the "Idea of Trinity" which was established as a result of critical

thinking of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan. The critical analysis of Sir Syed enlightened the Muslims of sub-continent under roof of unity. Hence, the scope of critical thinking is limitless and can influence the society positively.

One of the important benefits of inculcating critical thinking is development of positive social change in the society. The children who have retained strategic vision stood against the tyrant and unethical values. This creates a positive social change in the society where other children get curious for their rights and responsibilities. The autobiography of Malala Yousafzai cowritten with Christina Lamb named "I am Malala" explained the struggles of 15 year old girl. Malala was shot in head when she was working on improving female education. She took part in combatting gender inequality by thinking critically and in fighting to change the world for better. By fostering strategic thinking, one can bring positive change in society.

Additionally, the door of innovation opens only through the key of strategic thinking. Thinking out of the box improves the imaginative power of children which leads to unique discoveries. Generally, whenever something innovative is introduced, it

is product of creative minds. Charles Babbage invented computer at the age of 30 - father of first mechanical computer. His idea of programming became the foundation for today's complex computers. If Babbage had not thought of something unreal, there would have no innovation in the field of information technology. Even the innovation of robots fostered from the work of Babbage. Eventually, it is critical thinking which leads to different innovations and discoveries.

Furthermore, an institution which helps in developing critical thinking through educational strategies creates its reputation nationally and globally. In the contemporary era of artificial intelligence, parents usually prefer reputable institutions who have maintained their honour in STEM activities. Critical thinking not only helps an individual but makes concerned institutions recognize nationally and globally. For instance, Pakistan's first 5G lab was developed at NUST university, Islamabad in December 2022. Apart from this, university has also maintained its reputation in innovations. Hence, development of strategic thinking is not only beneficial for an individual but also for his institution in which he is either enrolled or employed. Moreover, thinking from all perspectives is source of

flow of independent ideas in a society. Children from different background with creative minds share their perspectives with each other, results in cognitive stream. There will be multiple viable solution to a single problem due to intellectual glow of idea. Concept of "divergent thinking" provides a best example of this argument which refers critical thinking as a process to generate variety of ideas. In case of an open-ended question or a problem, children will be able to identify the best applicable solution to a given problem. It encourages creativity and exploration of multiple perspectives. Thinking creatively helps in generating different idea for a specific issue or aspect.

One of the significant advantage of fostering critical thinking is that it ensures democracy by questioning misinformation from political leadership. As strategic thinkers have developed another eye to foresee and analyse the situation. Moreover, they are aware of different social and political rights which enables them to question inequality and oppression. After the War of Mutiny in 1857, Muslims in the subcontinent were oppressed due to anti-Muslim narrative from Hindus and Britishers. To revive spirit of nationalism in Muslims and to unite Muslims, Allama Iqbal - a critical thinker wrote a

poem "Watniyat" in his book *Baq' E Dara*. His critical thinking helped in writing Muslims to fight for their cause hence, critical thinking helps in ensuring democracy as well.

In addition to significance of strategic thinking at societal level, other broader levels are also improved. It is a general saying that drop by drop makes a river. This goes well in this case, where critical thinkers fostered by education take part in solving issues at national and international level. It ensures that everyone in the society enjoys same rights as by others. Furthermore, such individuals develop patience and respect to hear and analyse one's approach. This argument explains well that scope of critical thinking is not limited to individual and society but to state and global world if fostered properly.

At national level, critical thinking fosters social harmony and integration. Strategic thinkers are well aware of the fact that social harmony is essential for stability and welfare of the state. Many well-known political leaders in the history were focused in ensuring social harmony. Muhammad Ali Jinnah - a critical thinker - on his famous address of 11<sup>th</sup> August 1947 said that

you are free to go to mosques or temples; you may belong to any religion or caste or caste - that has nothing to do with the business of state. His critical thoughts about discrimination led him towards creation of Pakistan with unity of different ethnic groups. So, critical vision ensures social harmony for the stability of state.

Secondly, education plays an important role in accepting diversity and avoid sectarianism by fostering critical thinking. Such thinking understands the impacts of solidarity by accepting the diverse groups. Moreover, this thinking also recognizes the negative effects of sectarianism in a state. For a democratic and stabilized state, ensuring respect and acceptance for diversity is crucial which is developed through strategic thinking. Ibn-e-Khuldoon's Theory of Asabiyyah portrays a very good picture of this statement. Ibn-e-Khuldoon said that stronger the Asabiyyah among residents of state, stronger will be state. It is important to acknowledge that this Asabiyyah develops when there exist a sense of respect for each other. Thus, education fosters critical thinking which develops acceptance and avoids divisions within the society.

Thirdly, critical thinking enhance multiperspective approach which can be applied at regional and global



levels to resolve a conflict. Using multiperspective approach, different solutions to solve a specific issue are highlighted and then most desirable is chosen. In the past, many critical thinkers used their ability in achieving their goals. One such example in this context is personality of Muhammad Ali Jinnah - ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity. In his 14 points, he put such conditions against Hindus, which were undesirable for the Hindus. He wanted to protect rights of Muslims where they were a minority. To achieve this, he used demand for Pakistan as a strategic move. Jinnah's multiperspective approach helped Muslims of subcontinent in getting an independent country.

Fourthly, critical thinking as sole purpose of education will lead state to a bright future. Problems and conflicts are inevitable, but what really matters is ability to resolve them.

Critical thinking has this power to highlight the issues and to analyze them deeply.

One can understand it from the history, that critical thinking plays an important role into bright future of states. For instance, French philosopher J.J. Rousseau once said that man is born free but everywhere he is in chains. He wanted to raise awareness about oppressed farmers and tyrant feudal lords to change the state into a better and equitable state.

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His slogan became reason for French Revolution thus, better future of state is influenced by critical thinking.

Furthermore, innovative state is a home to scientists and pioneers. Critical thinking fostered by education influences & unique discoveries. As a child grew up, his mental ability also enhance with the passage of time and they become curious to find answers of ongoing issues. During sudden breakout of a disease, only innovative scientists will be able to find treatment of disease. For instance, when Covid-19 broke out in 2019, thousands of people lost their lives however, billions of people were saved due to early development of Covid vaccines like Pfizer etc. Therefore, on the global and regional level, critical thinking improves innovation and thereby increasing the number of scientists and pioneers.