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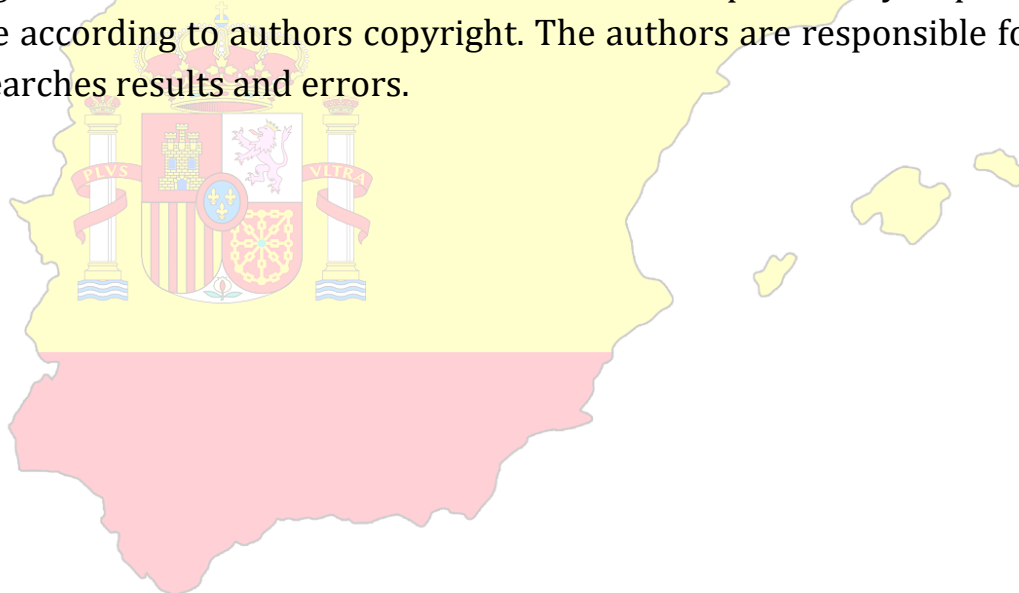


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The interrelation between education and critical thinking: a psychological portrait of the modern student.

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Abstract. This article analyzes the role of the educational process in developing critical thinking among modern students. From a psychological perspective, it examines the cognitive, emotional, and social aspects of a student's critical thinking ability. Critical thinking is evaluated as both a core component and an outcome of education, emphasizing its importance in modern pedagogy through scientific evidence and practical insights.

Keywords: education, critical thinking, personality, student, psychological portrait, reflection, independent thinking, modern education.

Introduction

Today, the main goal of education is to form an intellectually mature, socially active, and critically thinking individual. Worldwide, critical thinking is regarded as one of the most important indicators of human capital. According to R. Paul and L. Elder (2008), "Critical thinking is the ability of an individual to reason logically, justify opinions, solve problems, and make conscious decisions."

In Uzbekistan's education system, the concept of critical thinking competence has been introduced in recent years, and its development within the educational process has become a national priority (Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PQ-4884, November 6, 2020). Therefore, it is of great significance to analyze the interconnection between education and critical thinking from a scientific and psychological standpoint.

1. Theoretical basis of the interrelation between education and critical thinking.

Education is a systematic process aimed at forming an individual's moral, intellectual, and social qualities. Critical thinking appears as both the goal and the tool of this process. During education, the student not only acquires knowledge but also analyzes, compares, and integrates it with personal experience. As psychologist A. V. Brushlinsky emphasized, "Thinking is a form of human activity directed through education." Hence, critical thinking represents the higher stage of educational influence. Teachers and educators, by fostering intellectual independence, help students develop analytical and evaluative skills.

2. The psychological portrait of the modern student

A modern student lives in an era of abundant information and rapid digital transformation. Such a student tends to express personal opinions freely yet needs strong analytical and evaluative competencies.

Psychologically, a critically thinking student is characterized by:

Cognitive qualities – logical reasoning, evidence-based analysis, and multi-dimensional problem solving;

Emotional qualities – emotional regulation, self-awareness, and reflective evaluation;

Social qualities – effective communication, constructive debate, and defense of reasoned viewpoints.

A 2022-study conducted at Tashkent State Pedagogical University found that 71% of students believe that activities such as debates, case studies, and reflective writing significantly improved their independent thinking skills.

3. Factors developing critical thinking through education

Critical thinking develops effectively when education meets the following pedagogical conditions:

Reflective methods – helping students answer questions like “Who am I?” or “Why do I think this way?”;

Problem-based learning – fostering decision-making and analytical competence;

Dialogic education – promoting equality, mutual respect, and constructive dialogue between teacher and student;

Digital pedagogy – using interactive tools such as Mentimeter, Padlet, and Edmodo to enhance analytical engagement.

4. Reflection and Critical Thinking

Reflection — the ability to analyze one’s own thoughts and actions — is a central component of critical thinking. Through reflective education, students reconsider their opinions, values, and choices. This process nurtures a responsible, conscious, and socially active personality.

Conclusion.

Education and critical thinking are mutually interconnected processes. Education cultivates critical thought, while critical thinking strengthens the capacity of an educated individual to make reasoned and ethical decisions. The psychological portrait of a modern student is characterized by independent thinking, self-awareness, reflection, and social engagement. Therefore, fostering critical thinking should remain a pedagogical priority in higher education.

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