

## REFLECTIVE THINKING: AN INSIGHT

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### ABSTRACT

*Thinking about oneself and people around is a deliberate process that one should develop to sharpen the imagination skills. It not only helps one to develop an insight but also aids in nurturing qualities like kindness, sympathy, brotherhood, emotional independence, develop scientific attitude, identifying and changing the environment and impart courage to respond to new challenges. This is only possible if one takes out time for oneself and develop a habit of pondering about the instances occurred at a regular interval.*

*Reflective thinking is a part of critical thinking where a person analyses and make judgment about what has happened in the past. Learning is nothing but an adjustment to self for new experiences or ideas. It can be considered as a process to make an individual ready for the adapting in the future in case of complex problems.*

*In this study, the term reflective thinking will be identified; writer's insights about levels of reflective thinking will be discussed and the importance of reflective thinking in education will be illustrated. Besides, the issue of limited research done about reflective thinking is most of the time focused on student teachers and secondary school teachers will be pointed out. Thus, the study suggests that there is a need to investigate the insights of teachers on reflective thinking and their practice.*

**Keywords:**

### INTRODUCTION

Dewey (1933) suggests that reflective thinking is an active, persistent and careful consideration of a belief or supposed form of knowledge, of the grounds that support that knowledge and further conclusions to which that knowledge leads.

Reflective thinking and critical thinking are found to be used interchangeable at many places. The two terms are closely associated but are quite different from each other. Critical thinking can be described as a process where an individual actively and skillfully conceptualize, apply, analyze, synthesize or evaluate information gathered from experiences, reflection, reasoning, observation and communication. Critical thinking is also known as directed thinking as it emphasizes much on the desired conclusions or outcomes.

Reflective thinking, being a part of critical thinking can be defined as the process where we are making us aware about something; on analyzing we are trying for the improvements required and thus empowering ourselves. Reflective thinking help learners in identifying that what they have already learnt as per their experiences and what they need to learn by incorporating few changes. Reflective thinking is not static but a dynamic process which develops as you learn from your experiences and apply it to solve real life problems. The process of analyzing and making judgments about what has happened is called reflective thinking.

### NATURE OF REFLECTIVE THINKING

#### **Reflection is a process of deriving meaning**

- It is the process which helps the learner to move from one experience to another, from theory to practice with a better understanding of connections and relationships.
- It maintains the continuity of learning.
- It completely ensures the development of pupils and ultimately society.

#### **Reflection is a process of rigorous thinking**

Reflection is the process which has roots in scientific inquiry. Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and others.

### POINTS TO BE PONDERED UPON:

1. Identifying a moment
2. Linking of feelings during the incident.
3. Identifying the factors responsible for its occurrence.
4. Self Assessment.

5. Generating possible solutions.
6. Noting in a proper format so that it becomes easy to access when needed.
7. Applying it when the problem reoccurs.

### SIGNIFICANT ATTITUDES OF REFLECTION

1. Psychological **identification** after experiencing thoughts or feelings
2. **Receptive mind** to innovative ideas
3. **Desire** to learn anything new or different
4. **Awareness** about self
5. **Intercultural** communication skills
6. Ability to **suppress restlessness**
7. Ability to **take risks/act/experiment**
8. Active pursuing of **feedback**

### COMPONENTS OF REFLECTIVE THINKING

To think reflectively we need to –

- Experience something
- Think about what happened
- Learn from our experience

### FACTORS THAT PROMOTE REFLECTIVE LEARNING

- Students need to be given proper time for reflecting their views when responding to inquiries.
- Teachers to develop emotionally supportive environment which can encourage students to showcase their reflections.
- Students should be encouraged every time to reevaluate the conclusions drawn in the classroom.
- Every time reviewing of the learning situation in each class i.e. what is known to students, what is not yet known and what has been learned promote reflective learning.
- Explanations provided when the students explore their thoughts and share.
- Provision of less structured learning environment help students to explore, reflect and learn more on their own as guided by their thoughts and opinions.
- Encouraging peer group works and small group activities encourage students to explore and accept the opinion of others.
- Maintaining reflective diaries everyday helps students them to be aware about their thoughts, learning, strengths and weaknesses.

### IMPORTANCE OF REFLECTIVE THINKING

The world around us is changing at a very fast pace. Society is becoming more complex. Information around the world is available on a single click. The changing scenario prompt individuals to rethink, re-evaluate, switch directions and change problem solving strategies in order to survive. This is the biggest drawback of our Education system that we don't emphasize on developing thinking skills of our future citizens. As a result of that they remain incompetent to apply their knowledge and achieve the solution of their problems during lifetime. Therefore it is very important to prompt reflective thinking of students during their school and college education which help them to develop their higher order thinking skills. Reflective thinking can be very helpful in finding success in complex and unpredictable situations.

Reflective thinking helps learner to

- Relate prior understanding of the concept to new knowledge. Hence function as a bridge or connector between what is known and what is unknown.
- Identify areas for change and improvement
- Develop a questioning attitude and new perspectives
- Respond effectively to new challenges
- Apply knowledge of what they have learned and generalize
- Think in both abstract and conceptual terms

- Apply specific strategies in solving life related problems
- Understand their own thought process and learning strategies

### **VIEWS ON REFLECTIVE THINKING**

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- Being reflective can become meaningful if the understanding that is gained from reflection is used to affect change (Adam, 2002).
- Individuals must critically question their own beliefs. If the component of reflection is not a part of the questioning, beliefs may continue to be biased, or encapsulated in stereotypes, or misperceptions (Ash and Clayton, 2004).
- Dewey (1991) believed when individuals reflected upon their beliefs they either accepted them blindly or they examined, altered, and then accepted them as their own. A state of questioning can instigate reflective thinking. The questioning can become an action that investigates a suggested belief.
- Reflective practice must be incorporated with passion and foresight if critical thinking is to be obtained. Teachers must be encouraged and supported to contemplate the connection between theory and practice (Smith & Lennon, 2011)
- Allen (1998) believed that reflective thinking was developed through thoroughness of recall and experience.

### **CONCLUSION**

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- Unfortunately, self-reflection is rarely taught in school. And if students are following prescriptive lessons, there may not be much for them to reflect on. Too often students learn to wait for teachers to tell them how they're doing. They're not alone, since our standardized "test-prep" school culture now has teachers and administrators caught in an unproductive web of external evaluation.
- Teachers should encourage students to write dairies and teach them proper format to make it fruitful.
- Dairy writing will help students to become more alert and precise in describing the situation.
- Regular group discussion at school along with peers will help them to overcome the problems.
- Inculcation of moral values will be seen.
- Students will become more independent.
- Adjustment problems will be solved.

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