

# CRITICAL THINKING AND SOCIAL REFLECTION OF HIGHER SECONDARY STUDENTS

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## Abstract

This study has tried to find out the level Critical thinking and Social Reflection of higher secondary students. The investigator adopted survey method for the study. Two hundred and fifty (250) higher secondary students of Cuddalore district were selected as sample for this study. Critical Thinking Assessment Scale (CTAS) and Social Reflection Assessment Scale (SRAS) were used for the study. The results showed that there is a significant relationship between Critical thinking and Social Reflection of higher secondary students.

**Key words:** Critical Thinking, Social Reflection and Higher Secondary Students.

## Introduction

Education is the creation of a sound mind in a sound body. It is a conducive process which develops the student's individuality in all its aspects - physical, mental, emotional and social. With this all-round development, the student possesses a responsible, dynamic, resourceful, strong and good moral character. The complete development of the students should be the primary aim of education, particularly of higher education which, in turn, defines the career and life of an individual. National progress is directly dependent on the quality of higher education given in universities, colleges and similar institutions. Providing relevant and quality higher education is a lifetime opportunity given to individuals.

## Thinking

Thinking is a cognitive ability. Reasoning, critical thinking and problem-solving are some of the characteristics which distinguish human beings from other living species. Thinking is a problem-solving process in which people use ideas or symbols in place of overt activity.

## Critical thinking

Critical thinking may be distinguished from general or ordinary thinking in many ways. Its real value lies in its quality of being most skilful and responsible thinking that facilitates good decision. It definitely sets some criteria for its own procedural advancement and is self-correcting and sensitive to the contemporary issues and circumstances. It proves to be the backbone and reliable support for carrying out the process of problem-solving. Critical thinking is a rational response to questions that cannot be answered definitively and for which all the relevant information may not be easily available. It is defined here as an investigation whose purpose is to explore a situation, phenomenon, question or problem to arrive at a hypothesis or conclusion about it that integrates all available information and that can therefore be convincingly justified.

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## **Social Reflection**

Social reflection refers to a theory related to idealism. Social reflection supports the concept that a government, an organization, a corporation or an individual must act in the best interests of society as well as of its own. Social reflection is the obligation that citizens have towards their community to help ensure a safe and moral environment. Social reflection includes the importance of community service and other beneficial duties. Social reflection is an ethical ideology and an entity, be it an organization or individual; it has an obligation to act to benefit society at large. Social reflection is a duty every individual or organization has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystem. As such, social reflection means sustaining the equilibrium between the two. It pertains not only to business organizations but also to everyone whose actions impact the environment. This responsibility can be passive, by not engaging in socially harmful acts, or active, by performing activities that directly advance social goals.

## **Review of Related Literature**

Honeyman and Catherine (2015) did a study on Social Reflection and Community Development: 'Lessons from the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial in Honduras'. This study extended understanding of the connections between education, social capital, and development through a mixed-methods case study of the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial (SAT), an innovative secondary-level education system. The quantitative dimension of the research used survey measures of social reflection to compare 93 Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial students to 88 other students in conventional Honduran schools, with samples based on the naturally occurring (non-random) presence of one of these two different educational programs in each of nine nearby Honduran communities.

Preliminary findings suggested that students in the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial program held a greater sense of social reflection than their peers in conventional schools. Statements of students about their own educational experiences were analysed in order to identify some of the characteristics of the Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial program that may have led to this difference. The Sistema de Aprendizaje Tutorial approach to develop social reflection was contrasted to human rights focused approach.

Schmid and Christine (2008) conducted a study on the value of 'Social Reflection' as a Motivating Factor for Adolescents' Readiness to Participate in Different Types of Political Actions, and Its Socialization in Parent and Peer Contexts'. Based on a sample of tetrads (N=839), including 16 year-old adolescents, their mothers, fathers, and same sex friends, it was analysed in which way the value of social reflection is related to adolescents' readiness for different types of political participation. The results showed that social reflection was positively linked to readiness for participation in legal protest actions. No relationships with readiness for participation in federal elections or with readiness for participation in illegal protest actions occurred, but a negative relationship with readiness for participation in political violent actions was found. In a second step,

the socialization of the value, social reflection among the parents and peer context was the focus. Value similarities between adolescents, their parents and friends, as well as other contextual factors were considered. Multiple regression analyses revealed differential effects for male and female adolescents. Regarding male adolescents, authoritative parenting and political discussions with parents were positively linked to social reflection. On the flip side, peer-group membership had a negative impact. With regard to female adolescents, significant value similarities with their parents, especially with their mothers, occurred. Value similarities with their friends were found in both gender groups, but appeared to be higher in the female group. Also, in both gender groups, a positive parent-child relationship quality was linked to higher social reflection. In total, the findings showed that parents as well as peer contextual factors were contributing to the value acquisition of adolescents.

Kendrick et al. (2007) did a study on Social Reflection in Advertising: A Marketing Communications Student Perspective'. Although advertising has played a key role in bringing Corporate Social Reflection (CSR) to the public agenda on behalf of agency clients, little effort has been made to define what social reflection means in advertising. A national survey of 1,045 advertising and marketing communications students from 176 colleges and universities were asked to write their own definitions of corporate social reflection. The responses of a majority of students fell within Carroll's corporate social reflection categories, with the heaviest emphasis on ethical and legal responsibilities, a lighter emphasis on economic reflection and the lightest emphasis on discretionary reflection. Students exhibited "message myopia" in that they largely focused their comments on the creation of advertisements and to the exclusion of environmentalism: client, vendor, and employee relations; diversity or community involvement. Implications for educators of advertising and marketing communications are discussed in terms of how their efforts could help shape the advertising business/society relationship of the future.

### **Need for the Study**

In the development of a country, education plays a vital role that not only develops knowledge and skills but also inculcates values, trains the instincts, and fosters the right attitudes and habits among students. It contributes to national development through dissemination of specialized knowledge and skills. Modern societies cannot achieve their aim of economic growth and high cultural standards without making use of the talent of their citizens. Schools are engaged in shaping the future of a nation. School education is the foundation upon which the edifice of the whole educational system rests. The family set-up and schools play a vital role in the critical thinking and social reflections among higher secondary students. The questions what should be taught and how it should be taught are immediately connected because better thinking can create social changes. Higher secondary students are the social pillars and are younger generation to think and create a new idea for developing society. From the family problems they learn the social move for the changes in

society. Most of the learners critically think and can so change social evils. There are many factors affecting study habits. The investigator, however, has chosen critical thinking and its relationship with social reflection.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the level of critical thinking of higher secondary students.
2. To find out the level of social reflection of higher secondary students.
3. To find out the significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
4. To find out the significant difference between nuclear and joint-family higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
5. To find out the significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
6. To find out the significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their social reflection.
7. To find out the significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their social reflection.
8. To find out the significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their social reflection.
9. To find out the correlation between critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

1. The level of critical thinking of higher secondary students is moderate.
2. The level of social reflection of higher secondary students is moderate.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
4. There is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
5. There is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their critical thinking.
6. There is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their social reflection.
7. There is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their social reflection.
8. There is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their social reflection.
9. There is no significant relationship between critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students.

## Method

The investigator used survey method for data collection which is very common in educational research. Survey method of investigation attempts to describe and interpret what exists at present in the form of conditions, practices, processes, trends effects, attitudes and beliefs. It is concerned with the phenomena that are typical of be normal conditions.

## Sample

The investigator used simple random sampling technique. 425 higher secondary students were taken for this investigation. The investigator collected the data from higher secondary schools in Cuddalore district. They were selected randomly from each school.

## Tools

In this present study, the investigator has used two tools to measure the relationship of critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students.

- Critical Thinking Assessment Scale (CTAS) developed by Esther Ponnamal and Thanavathi (2017).
- Social Reflection Assessment Scale (SRAS) developed by Esther Ponnamal and Thanavathi (2017).

## Procedure

Critical thinking assessment scale consisted of 21 items. This tool is a five point Likert type scale. The weight for answers ranges from 5 (Strongly Agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). The theoretical range of score is from 21 to 105 with the higher score indicating the high critical thinking person.

Social reflection assessment scale consisted of 39 items. This tool, again, is a five point Likert type scale. The weight for answers ranges from 5 (Strongly Agree), 4 (Agree), 3(Neutral), 2 (Disagree) to 1 (Strongly Disagree). The theoretical range of score is from 39 to 195 with the higher score indicating the high social reflection person.

## Analysis and Interpretation of Data

### *Hypothesis - 1*

The level of Critical Thinking of higher secondary students is moderate.

**Table 1. Level of Critical Thinking of Higher Secondary Students**

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Level
Critical Thinking	250	53.23	26.5	Moderate

(Low: Below 40; Moderate: Between 40 and 60; High: Above 60)

From the Table above, the calculated Mean and S.D. values of the entire sample are found to be 53.23 and 26.5. The calculated mean value of the entire sample is between 40 and 60 percentile. Hence it is inferred that higher secondary students have only a moderate level of critical thinking.

**Hypothesis - 2**

The level of Social Reflection of higher secondary students is moderate

**Table 2. Level of Social Reflection of Higher Secondary Students**

Variable	N	Mean	S.D.	Level
Social Reflection	250	95.52	47.15	Moderate

(Low:Below 60; Moderate: Between 60 and 120; High: Above 120)

From the Table above, the calculated Mean and S.D. values of the entire sample are found to be 95.52 and 47.15. The calculated mean value of the entire sample is between 60 and 120 percentile. Hence it is inferred that higher secondary students have only a moderate level of social reflection.

**Hypothesis - 3**

There is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

**Table 3. Critical Thinking of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	't' value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Male	94	51.98	25.5	0.57	Not Significant
Female	156	53.98	27.2		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

**Hypothesis - 4**

There is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

**Table 4. Critical Thinking of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Type of Family**

Type of Family	N	Mean	S.D.	't' value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Nuclear Family	175	53.82	26.85	0.54	Not Significant
Joint Family	75	51.84	26.03		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

**Hypothesis - 5**

There is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

**Table 5. Critical Thinking of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Locale**

Locale	N	Mean	S.D.	t' Value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Rural	67	52.5	26.34	0.24	Not Significant
Urban	183	53.4	26.72		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their critical thinking.

***Hypothesis - 6***

There is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their social reflection.

**Table 6. Social Reflection of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Gender**

Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	't' value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Male	94	99.43	49.02	1.019	Not Significant
Female	156	93.16	45.98		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between male and female higher secondary students in their social reflection.

***Hypothesis - 7***

There is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their social reflection.

**Table 7. Social Reflection of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Type of Family**

Type of Family	N	Mean	S.D.	't' value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Nuclear Family	175	94.89	44.32	0.32	Not Significant
Joint Family	75	96.98	53.47		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between nuclear and joint family higher secondary students in their social reflection.

***Hypothesis - 8***

There is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their social reflection.

**Table 8. Social Reflection of Higher Secondary Students with respect to Locale**

Locale	N	Mean	S.D.	t' Value	Level of Significant at 0.05
Rural	67	98.43	52.42	0.59	Not Significant
Urban	183	94.45	45.17		

From the Table above it is inferred that there is no significant difference between rural and urban higher secondary students in their social reflection.

### **Hypothesis - 9**

There is no significant relationship between critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students.

**Table 9. Relationships between Critical Thinking and Social Reflection of Higher Secondary Students**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>N</b>	<b><math>\gamma</math> Value</b>	<b>Level of Significant</b>
Critical Thinking	250	0.38	Significant
Social Reflection			

It is evident from the Table above that the computed correlation coefficient ' $\gamma$ ' value is 0.38. It is significant at 0.05 level. Hence it is inferred that there is significant in relationship between critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students.

### **Conclusion**

In this study the investigator has focused on critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students. To make the study meaningful, valuable and reliable for the society, the investigator has added depth and suitable explanation about the variables such as critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students. The finding reveals that there is relationship between critical thinking and social reflection of higher secondary students. From the discussion above one could understand the importance and influence of critical thinking on social reflection of higher secondary students.

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