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Role of modern strategies towards nurturing creative thinking in teaching -learning process

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Abstract

In the 21st century, much attention has been devoted to modern strategies /systems within the field of education. There is a dire need to increase such strategies like Students' creative thinking capacities through instruction and practice for the betterment of the nation. Much attention is given to such form of thinking in educational institutions as creative thinking is the cause of rapid change that leads to the development of the nation. With movement to what is often referred to as 'the information age' the ability to be a creative thinker is considered an important element of life success. Creative or innovative thinking is the kind of thinking that leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives and whole new ways of understanding and conceiving of things. Creative thinking help to maintain students' motivation and passion for in-depth learning. Encouraging students to keep on generating new ideas fosters their creative-thinking abilities. This paper highlights the different strategies in terms of teachers and students, parents working with children, or people trying to develop their own creative thinking in the field of education.

Keywords: Modern strategies, Creative thinking, Educational institutions, etc

Introduction

M Creative thinking has been flagged as essential 21st century skills. Creative thinking has been an important issue in the field of education. Much attention has been devoted to modern strategies /systems to enhance the creative thinking of the students within the field of education. Creative thinking is considered to be an immeasurable, natural ability. Creative thinking is considered as one of the most desirable skill among the students of secondary and higher education. Creative thinking and its output is quite comprehensive and wide in the field of education.

The International Centre for Studies in Creativity says, "Creative thinking is an effective resource that resides in all people and within all organizations. Our more than thirty years of research has conclusively demonstrated that creative thinking can be nurtured and enhanced through the use of deliberate techniques and strategies." Creative thinking is necessary for the production of new and novel ideas. Creative thinking involves students in learning to generate and apply new ideas in specific contexts, seeing existing situations in a new way, identifying alternative explanations and seeing or making new links that generate a positive outcome. This includes combining parts to form something original, shifting and refining ideas to discover possibilities, constructing theories and objects, and acting on intuition.

Meaning of creative thinking

Creative thinking, as the name suggests, is associated with one's ability to create or construct something new, novel or unusual. Creative or innovative thinking is the kind of thinking that leads to new insights, novel approaches, fresh perspectives, and whole new ways of understanding and conceiving of things. Creative thinking helps to maintain students' motivation and passion for in-depth learning. Thinking creatively is a state of mind that enables an individual to approach tasks, problems, and situations with openness to alternatives. Creative thinking involves the skills of flexibility, originality, fluency, elaboration, brainstorming, modification, imagery, associative thinking, attribute listing, metaphorical thinking and forced relationships. Creative thinking in all its dimensions involves divergent thinking instead of the routine and fixed type of convergent thinking. It is not restricted by any pre-established rules.

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The aim of creative thinking is to stimulate curiosity and promote divergence. Creative thinking is defined by various psychologists in different manner as under:

According to famous psychologist Skinner (1968) “Creative thinking means the predictions and inferences for the individual are new, original, ingenious, and unusual. The creative thinker is one who explores new areas and makes new observations, new predictions and new inferences.”

Another famous psychologist and scholar Levin (1978) views that creative thinking as a special form of thinking, a way of viewing the world and interacting with it in a manner different from that of the general population. It is the ability to discover new solutions to problems or to produce new ideas, inventions or works of art.

Importance of creative thinking in education

We live in a world that is changing faster than ever before and facing challenges that are unprecedented. These sorts of challenges require innovative ideas and approaches. Such innovative ideas and approaches are brought by creative talents. With movement to what is often referred to as ‘the information age’ the ability to be a creative thinker is considered an important element of life success. Gough (1991) said, “Perhaps most importantly in today’s information age, thinking skills are viewed as crucial for educated persons to cope with a rapidly changing world. Many educators believe that specific knowledge will not be as important to tomorrow’s workers and citizens as the ability to learn and make sense of new information”. Educational institutions need people who can be innovative, who can think differently. In a nutshell; education has three main roles i.e. Economic, Cultural and Individual. When these roles are examined through the lens of creative thinking then it becomes difficult to separate them. In the field of economy, Business leaders constantly promote the desire to hire creative, innovate employees who can work in teams and communicate well. In culture, we need people with innovative ideas as the world is becoming more connected, complicated and challenging. Finding ways to live together is becoming more interdependent and dynamic. Focussing on creativity in education means that students have opportunities to develop the key skills of collaboration. Without these skills, cultural education becomes more difficult to achieve. From the individual side, education is also about helping people find their own course in life. It is about helping them find what has value and meaning for them. Everyone has talents, inspirations and skills and education should allow these to flourish. One most important attitude i.e. creative thinking is to be developed among the students for making connections and developing relationships. Researches proved that understanding, identifying, and nurturing creative potential is relevant in education and therefore should be taken into account when developing education programs, strategies, and policies to achieve quality education for all children.

Modern strategies for enhancing creative thinking in the field of education

Various strategies have been designed for the development of creative thinking among the students in the educational institutions. Some are described as under:

1. **Brainstorming:** It is one of the most important methods that may help the young children to think

creatively. Regardless of subject, have students think about what they’ll be doing, learning, or reading—before actually starting each activity. For instance; Ask a lot questions, like “What do you think this topic will be about?” Or “Tell me three things you think you will be learning in this lesson about unity in diversity?” Give students every opportunity so that they will become creative thinkers and solve every problem easily.

2. **Classify and Categorize:** This method also plays an important role in enhancing creative thinking among students. It can be done by giving students a variety of things and ask them to identify each thing and then sort these things into different categories. This activity helps every student to think divergently and help to create something new and innovative.
3. **Compare and Contrast:** Comparing and contrasting is one of the another important method in encouraging the students to think divergently, for instance; Ask the students to compare the shape and colour of an apple with another fruit. Compare and contrast the shape of square with the shape of rectangle.
4. **Make Connections:** Making connections is the important method in encouraging the student’s creative thinking. It can be done by asking students to make connections with a real-life situation and identify patterns.
5. **Provide Group Opportunities:** Students think creatively; only when they are getting group opportunities to the students. Grouping is the perfect way to get the students think creatively. When students are working together in groups, they get exposed to the thought processes with their peers. This is the only route to get exposed to the new thoughts and ideas and also learn how to understand how other people think. When this skill is introduced to the very beginning of the educational process, only then the students are capable of having complex thoughts and become better problem solvers when presented with difficulty. Various researches also proved that creative thinking is the most important skill that is required in educational settings.
6. **Incubation:** It is the method in making the students creative thinkers. It is the process in which an individual work on a problem for a while but don’t solve it, and then stop, when he returns back to the problem he may be able to solve it because between attempts, he may learn new information, or discover a key insight, that help him to solve the problem the next time. Incubation Model of Teaching (Torrance & Safter, 1990) involves three stages: (1) Before the lesson: heightening anticipation to create the desire for learning, engaging students’ attention, stimulating curiosity and imagination and enhancing intrinsic motivation. (2) During the lesson: the purpose is to deepen expectations. New expectations are created among the students that provide an incentive to go deeper into what is being taught. (3) After the lesson: strategies to keep the creative and the learning

processes going, even years after the lesson is over. The purpose of the Incubation Model of Teaching, as envisioned by Torrance, is to provide teachers the tools necessary to go beyond simply good practice and become great teachers who are capable to inspire, arouse and motivate students and keep them thinking.

7. **Organise “Just-Imagine” Games:** Such types of games are organised in the educational settings that permit students to take off on flights of imagination that help them to retrieve information from memory, compare and contrast ideas, and make connections between disparate bits of information. For instance, let the students to imagine them as national leader and will get the path of creative thinking conjuring.
8. **Modelling Creativity or Role Model:** Modelling Creativity or Role Model is the most powerful way to develop creative thinking among the students. Students must memorize such persons whose thoughts and actions served as a role model. Serving as a role model for creative behaviour is essential to engage the students and colleagues in creative behaviour. Students watch their role models and develop creative potentials that already existed in them.
9. **Defining and Redefining Problems:** Creative potentials can be promoted by encouraging the students to define and redefine problems and projects. When the students choose their own topics for paper presentations, choose their own ways of solving problems, only then the creative potentials are developed among the students. Sometimes the students have chosen a project by mistake and learning to recognize a mistake is an important part of creativity.
10. **Encouraging Idea Generation:** Another important way for promoting creative thinking among the learners is to encourage idea generation. Generating ideas must be done in such environment that is relatively free of criticism. Learners must identify and develop their most unique ideas into high-quality projects. The main aim of education is to generate numerous unique ideas that enhance the creative-thinking ability of the students that is essential for the success and progress of the nation.

Recommendations

1. Creative thinking can be increased by the use of interdisciplinary learning. Such lessons are being taught to the students that contain multiple subjects so that the students may become familiar with the concepts of linking various different concepts. Students working in teams having different talents, interests and thinking styles leads to innovative ideas.
2. Motivation and interest among students are increased by integrating games and play into education and opening doors for creative thinking.
3. Wide range of thinking abilities, including creative thinking can be encouraged by Increasing the usage of problem and project based learning and help in linking the education with real-life situation.
4. Students are encouraged to take risks in assignments so that they can enhance their creative thinking.

5. An important step to increase the creative thinking among the students can be done by assigning varied assessment tasks.

Conclusion

Creative thinking has been an important issue in the field of education. In the 21st century world is changing at a rapid speed and facing challenges that are unprecedented. Thus there is a dire need to understand, identify, and nurture the creative potential in the field of education so that the students are able to solve the academic and personal problems and challenges and find innovative solutions and alternatives and develop better tools and resources for success in a fast-changing world. Creative thinking not only enhances our ability to adapt to our environment and circumstances but also allows us to transform those environment and circumstances. Various research studies showed that fifty-seven percent of professionals believed creativity would be important to their career while they were in college, compared to the 78% who believe it is important to their career now. Seventy-two percent say they were more focused on course subject material when they were in school than on creative thinking. Among education majors, 75% viewed creative thinking as important to their career while they were in college and 48% say it currently has a place in their career. The main goal of education is to teach and nurture future scientists, artists, engineers, entrepreneurs that can be brought by nurturing the creative potential. Creative thinking is the only skill that lays the foundation for art, science, philosophy, and technology. For the betterment of the nation, productive human beings are required in every sphere whether it in economic, cultural and individual that can bring through creative potential. Different educational programs, strategies and policies are to be developed to achieve quality education for all children. In a nutshell, education at all levels has the main responsibility to nurture the creative potential among the students for the progress of the nation.

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