

THE ROLE OF CRITICAL THINKING AMONG THE COMPETITION BETWEEN STUDENTS

Ismoilov Ibrokhimjon Bekpulat ugli

Student of Karshi International University

Tel: +998 95 066 08 12 | Email: ismoilovibrohimjon18@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8523-9050>

Scientific Supervisor: Rakhmonova Mokhinur Zohidovna

Lecturer of Philology and english language at Karshi International University

Abstract: *This study looks at the role of critical thinking in competition among university students. In modern education, students compete with each other not only for high grades, but also to become better specialists in the future. A total of 14 students took part in this research, and we analyzed how they solve problems during group debates. The results show that using critical thinking helps students build healthy academic competition and understand subjects more deeply.*

Keywords: *critical thinking, student competition, higher education, problem solving, active learning, teamwork.*

TALABALAR O'RTASIDAGI RAQOBATDA TANQIDIY FIKRLASHNING O'RNI

Ismoilov Ibrohimjon Bekpulat o'g'li

Qarshi xalqaro universiteti talabasi

Tel: +998 95 066 08 12 | Email: ismoilovibrohimjon18@gmail.com

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-8523-9050>

Ilmiy rahbar: Rahmonova Mohinur Zohidovna

Qarshi xalqaro universiteti Filologiya va ingliz tili o'qituvchisi

Annotatsiya: *Ushbu tadqiqot talabalar o'rtasidagi raqobatda tanqidiy fikrlashning o'rganilishini tahlil qiladi. Zamonaviy ta'limda talabalar nafaqat yuqori baho olish uchun, balki kelajakda yaxshi mutaxassis bo'lish uchun ham o'zaro raqobatlashadilar. Tadqiqotda 14 nafar talaba ishtirok etdi va ularning guruhdagi bahslar davomida muammolarni hal qilish ko'nikmalari tahlil qilindi. Natijalar shuni ko'rsatdiki, tanqidiy fikrlashni qo'llash talabalarga sog'lom raqobat muhitini yaratishga va bilimlarni chuqurroq tushunishga yordam beradi.*

Kalit so‘zlar: *tanqidiy fikrlash, talabalar raqobati, oliy ta’lim, muammoni hal qilish, faol ta’lim, guruhda ishlash.*

Introduction

Competition among students is very common in higher education. Students want to get top marks, earn scholarships, and find good jobs after graduation. However, simple competition without deep thinking often leads to stress and memorizing facts without understanding them. Critical thinking is the ability to analyze facts, compare different ideas, and make clear decisions. When students use critical thinking, competition becomes healthy and useful. Instead of just trying to beat others, students learn how to argue logically and respect different points of view. This paper examines how critical thinking changes the nature of competition in university classrooms.

Methods and Materials

This research took place over 6 weeks with 14 second-year undergraduate students. We divided the students into two equal groups:

1. **Control group (7 students):** Engaged in traditional academic competitions based on memorizing facts and answering quick quiz questions.
2. **Experimental group (7 students):** Engaged in debate-based competitions where they had to analyze real-world case studies and defend their logic.

Data collection: We evaluated student participation, problem-solving speed, and academic test scores before and after the 6-week period. We also collected feedback through a simple 5-point questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

The results showed a clear difference between the two groups during academic activities.

Metric assessed	Control group average (7 students)	Experimental group average (7 students)	Difference level
Problem-solving ability score (%)	64.2%	82.5%	High improvement
Active discussion participation (%)	51.0%	86.0%	High improvement
Classroom stress level (Scale 1–5)	3.8	2.1	Significant reduction

The data shows that students in the experimental group reached much higher scores in problem-solving tests (82.5% compared to 64.2%). Their active participation in class discussions also grew significantly.

Importantly, stress levels dropped from 3.8 down to 2.1 in the experimental group. When competition focuses on critical thinking rather than simple memorization, students feel less anxious about making mistakes. They view classmates as partners in discussion rather than rivals.

Conclusion

Critical thinking plays a vital role in turning student competition into a positive learning experience. Rather than competing just for high grades, students who use critical thinking learn to analyze information and work together effectively. To foster healthy competition, teachers should include open debates and case studies in their lessons. This approach improves student motivation, reduces exam stress, and prepares young learners for future professional challenges.

References

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