

Critical Pedagogy

Reflective paper

Title: Rethinking The Purpose of Education as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator in Pakistan

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## Critical Pedagogy

### Abstract

Title: Rethinking the Purpose of Education as a 21<sup>st</sup> century Educator in Pakistan

We are often in this delusion of knowing and doing everything right. But this always hit us hard when someone asks a certain question and that too something very common but when we try to find the answer of it, we are lost!

The idea of '*Rethinking the Purpose of Education as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator*' emerged the same way. As an educator, it is usually a perception that what and how we are doing as an educator, is right. But during our class discussions of Critical Pedagogy, there were several questions and ideas that made me think and question several things.

The list is long! Like:

- What is the purpose of education?
- What is the purpose of education in Pakistan?
- Why am I teaching? Who am I teaching?
- What is the objective of teaching?
- How I teach and why?
- Who is this education for?
- Why do we need schools?
- What do I offer to my students?
- Why do we need schools?
- Do we really need schools for education?
- What is knowledge and how do we gain it?
- Do we need schools or formal setups to be educated?
- What we learn as an educator, do we apply them?
- How does culture influence learning styles in education?

I believe that asking questions will help me find the answer of '*The Purpose of Education*' and if not then at least they will unfold a lot of confusion that are born.

For the detailed understanding of the subject archival studies, observations, personal experiences and interviews will be used as research methods for the paper. Also local literature will also be used like '*Rethinking Education in Pakistan: Perceptions, Practices, and Possibilities*' by Dr. Shahid Siddiquie to understand the local context of the education.

## Rethinking the Purpose of Education as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator in Pakistan

We are often in this delusion of knowing and doing everything right. But this always hit us hard when someone asks a certain question and that too something very common but when we try to find the answer of it, we are lost!

The idea of *'Rethinking the Purpose of Education as a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator'* emerged the same way. As an educator, it is usually a perception that what and how we are doing as an educator, is right. But during our class discussions of Critical Pedagogy, there were several questions and ideas that made me think and question several things.

The list is long! Like:

What is the purpose of education? What is the purpose of education in Pakistan? Why am I teaching? Who am I teaching? What is the objective of teaching? How I teach and why? Who is this education for? Why do we need schools? What do I offer to my students? Why do we need schools? Do we really need schools for education? What is knowledge and how do we gain it? Do we need schools or formal setups to be educated? What we learn as an educator, do we apply them? How does culture influence learning styles in education? And so on and so forth!

Firstly, to understand the purpose of education we need to look at the definition of Education. As per one of the definitions in dictionary education is:

*"The process of teaching or learning, especially in a school or college, or the knowledge you get from this."<sup>1</sup>*

This is the most common definition of education that we find almost everywhere on internet which is mainly talking about the education that people get in schools or colleges.

On the other hand, in one of the articles by Mark K. Smith where he quoted John Dewey stated that:

*"Education, as we understand it here, is a process of inviting truth and possibility, of encouraging and giving time to discovery. It is, as John Dewey (1916) put it, a social process – 'a process of living and not a preparation for future living'. In this view educators look to act with people rather on them."<sup>2</sup>*

This definition is focusing on the larger of context of the education where it is not only focusing on the education getting from text book but rather talking about the overall understanding of education, it is a process of living.

In the same article the writer gave another definition in the start with the title of *'A definition for starters'* stated that:

*"Education is the wise, hopeful and respectful cultivation of learning undertaken in the belief that all should have the chance to share in life."<sup>3</sup>*

So, basically education offers learning not only on individual level but also on societal, communal and cultural level. This also indicates that purpose of education is bigger than what we think or understand commonly.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/education>

<sup>2</sup> Smith, M. K. (2015, 2020). What is education? A definition and discussion. The encyclopedia of pedagogy and informal education.

<sup>3</sup> Smith, M. K. (2015, 2020). What is education? A definition and discussion. The encyclopedia of pedagogy and informal education.

*"There are many different points of view on this topic," says Jonathan Cohen, cofounder and president of the National School Climate Center. "I think that my view, and most people's view, is that the purpose of education is to support children in developing the skills, the knowledge, and the dispositions that will allow them to be responsible, contributing members of their community—their democratically-informed community. Meaning, to be a good friend, to be a good mate, to be able to work, and to contribute to the well-being of the community."<sup>4</sup>*

The purpose of education here sums it up pretty well where it is not only talking about gaining knowledge but also education helps a person being a better human who can also contribute to the society.

The question here arises that who is giving such education or who is shaping up these humans? And the answer is an Educator.

The educators carry a huge responsibility on their shoulder in shaping up the kids for future and for society. They leave a great impact on their students. A good educator understands the Pedagogy, where he/ she incorporates the teaching methodologies as per the need of their students. And when we talk about needs of the students than what would be the process of it.

Integration of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills is one of the most important and effective factors of teaching that will help a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator understand the needs of his/ her students. 21<sup>st</sup> century skills includes Critical Thinking, Creativity, Collaboration and Communication. These are also commonly known as 4 C's.

By incorporating these skills a teacher can easily devise and implement the bigger idea or rationale of his/ her teaching.

Critical thinking is the most important aspect for somebody to have. It is a tool by which one can overcome the issues and replaces them with productivity. It will assist them to make better sense of understanding for themselves when they don't have an instructor around them.

Creativity similarly is as significant as Critical Thinking. This gives ability to see ideas from an alternate perspective, which gives rise to progress.

Collaboration implies getting students to cooperate, accomplish the understanding, and get the best possible outcomes from taking care of an issue by collaborating with each other. It is indeed the most difficult idea to collaborate in the four C's. But when it's ached, it can do wonders. The key component of Collaboration is eagerness. All members must be eager to combine pieces of their own thoughts and receive others to get results.

Lastly, that is the key component out of 4 is Communication that bring these characteristics together. Importance of successful communication is undoubtedly one of the most misjudged abilities. Without understanding of proper Communication, students will not be able to achieve much in their careers.

These skills might sound simple but it needs a good planning, execution and then implementation in the classroom. Also before implementing these 4 C's it is needless to say that an educator must carry these attributes.

*"According to Kant, the duty of educators, give a free direction for people's natural tendency what is left over, having to provide humanity deserving of an ideal. According to him, educator could reconcile a person's own freedom with nation's forcing and pressure (Yayla, 2005; 77)."<sup>5</sup>*

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<sup>4</sup> Slaon, M. Willona (2012). What is the Purpose of Education. ASCD Education Update.

<sup>5</sup> Bayrak, Y. (2015). Kant's View on Education. Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 174, 2713-2715.

This sums up pretty well the role of an educator in someone's life. An educator can make or break their students' life so the role also becomes very critical. And for that matter Listening Pedagogy can help an educator understand how kids think and how the two of them doubt and build up a relationship with the real world. Listening to students helps build their confidence and achieve success in life. It can also help them built the understanding of life. By practicing listening as an educator it will help him/ her impart such attributes in his/ her students to students because listening is essential for every living being.

Listening will upgrade their capacity to utilize the other language expressions. Encouraging listening permits students to follow bearings, get desires, and understand oral correspondence. As youngsters improve as audience members, they figure out how to utilize similar systems to improve their order of the other language expressions.

So, now at this point we need to understand the role of the schools as well. Why do we need schools or do we even need schools to educate someone. And the answer is no! Because after going through the understanding and purpose of education or role of an educator it clearly shows that for giving education, educator needs learners and learner needs educator.

Undeniably, a school can help gather 30 students at a time but that still cannot guarantee 'Education'. Here we also see the greater understanding of informal education. In recent years, the understanding of informal education is also increasing day by day.

Informal Education can happen outside of an well ordered educational plan. It works through discussion, and the investigation and increase of experience.

By understanding the purpose of education, teaching and what skills to impart in students, our role as a 21<sup>st</sup> century educators become more crucial especially in Pakistan where there are issues like socio-economic class system, racism, ethnic issues, cultural issues, religious issues and so on and so forth and that too on every level from state to education to households.

Needless to say it is quite evident in education system, where private schools have advantage over public school and cater certain class only and that class is privileged only to have 'quality education'. On the other hand lack of policy making and implementation, inadequate budgets, poor examination system, low selection criteria for teachers, out dated curricula and so on and so forth.

Where there are endless drawbacks in the entire education system then how possible it is to implement 21<sup>st</sup> century skills? How a teacher who herself lacks basic understanding of teaching how one can expect her to understanding Listening Pedagogy?

Quality education has become privilege indeed and if we Re-think about the purpose of Education in Pakistani context then the situation seems quite hopeless. The issue needs to be resolved on state level. Public schools should have educated and quality teachers so the 'Education for All' can also be implemented.

For quality education like it is stated above teachers are the integral part. They need to have Professional development should be priority as Dr. Shahid Siddique rightly pointed out:

*"Just knowing is not enough, but doing plays a crucial part in one's professional development."<sup>6</sup>*

This indeed is the most important thing as we have been talking about the Role of a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Educator in shaping the student but sadly the system fails to give quality teachers to students.

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<sup>6</sup> Siddique. Shahid. Dr. (2010), Rethinking Education in Pakistan: Perceptions, Practices, and Possibilities

Currently working closely with government school teachers of interior Sindh, it is so sad to see the level of the teachers who are unable to even write Urdu are teaching Urdu as a main subject and some is with the other subjects.

These teachers who cannot even read and write their mother tongue properly, how we can expect them to have constructivist approach in the class room or to implement informal ways of teaching or apply listening pedagogy, or go through blooms taxonomy or implement 21<sup>st</sup> century skills or emergent curriculum. This shows the ill education system and selection criteria.

Now the question is who to blame?

*"What the best and wisest parent wants for his child, that must we want for all the children of the community. Anything less is unlovely, and left unchecked, destroys our democracy."*

*– John Dewey*

# Critical Pedagogy

## CourseOutline

COURSE TITLE: Club Period

DURATION: 1 Academic Year

GRADE: Middle School

COURSE INSTRUCTOR: Anam Shakil

### 1. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course outline is an amalgamation of all the subjects integrated with experiential learning. The duration of the course is for one academic year, 1 hour 20 minutes every week specifically targeted for Middle school.

Through this course students will be able to learn from the surroundings, build concepts, community building, collaboration, problem solving and self-exploration. Their attention will be drawn towards the greater sustainability of environment, climate change, encouraging sustainable social, economic and environmental practices worldwide.

Teachers from other courses will also be collaborating as it is an integrated period where they will provide pupils with wide variety of opportunities that will enhance their co-learning capabilities. Also the course is designed on the idea of Emergent Curriculum, where the interests of children is the integral part.

### 2. PHILOSOPHY

The learning philosophy during the course will be based on:

- **Reggio Emilia**

The Reggio Emilia approach is an educational philosophy focused on preschool and primary education. It is a pedagogy described as student-centered and constructivist that uses self-directed, experiential learning in relationship-driven environments. The program is based on the principles of respect, responsibility, and community through exploration and discovery through a self-guided curriculum.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Reggio Emilia Approach. Wikipedia. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio\\_Emilia\\_approach](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reggio_Emilia_approach)

### 3. COURSE OBJECTIVES

**At the end of this course the students will be able to:**

- Learn from the environment as well as experiential Learning
- Do research and collect data on their own.
- Build critical thinking.
- Have a will to collaborate, share new ideas, teach and learn from peers.
- Build healthy relationships between peers and students.
- Do problem solving.
- Introduce the idea of community building as a whole/ collectively.
- Do logical thinking and self-expression.

### 4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through this lesson students will be able to develop the understanding of:

- Experiential learning
- Thinking through material
- Thinking with skills
- Creative thinking
- Social and economic responsibility and awareness
- Problem solving

### 5. LEARNING & TEACHING ACTIVITIES

**Methods:**

Question answers, Class Discussions, Field Work, Field Visits, Visuals, Multimedia, Videos/ Documentaries will be used during the lessons. Students will be encouraged to ask questions of any level as per their understanding.

**Strategies:**

Following are the strategies which will be used during the lesson unit:

- Visualization
- Backward Planning.
- Student Centered.
- Student led.
- Inquiry-based Instructions.



## 6. ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

Journaling and Presentation will be used for assessment.

<b>MARKING RUBRICS</b>	<b>Excellent</b>	<b>Proficient</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Poor</b>
<b>Reflections:</b> to be able to integrate learning and analyze issues into real world experiences with critical thinking	To be able to efficiently reflect upon the knowledge and concepts acquire by critical thinking by using multiple perspectives	To be able to reflect upon the knowledge on a satisfactory level.	To be able to reflect upon the knowledge on a very basic level.	To be able to acquire very little or no knowledge without using any perspective.
<b>Presentation:</b> to be able organize and articulate the ideas	Well focused, insightful and prescised writing with detailed perspectives	Clear and organized writing with great understanding of thoughts	Lack of ideas and focus of writing and perspectives	No understanding of ideas and lack offocus on writing and organizing the thoughts.
<b>Completeness:</b> Ability to incorporate the developmental learning process while journaling	Clear and concrete stated steps and connections between journal and developmental learning process	Clear understanding and connections between journal and developmental learning process	Weak connections between journal and developmental learning process	No connections between journal and developmental learning process