

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS AMONG POST-GRADUATE STUDENTS ACROSS
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by

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Abstract

The primary objective of this study was to investigate the post-graduate students' critical thinking skill. Then, critical thinking disposition of post-graduate students was explored. In addition, to examine their brain dominance was of next interest. Moreover, the strong predictors of critical thinking skill were investigated. Design of this study was cross sectional in nature. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in this study. This study was conducted at Yangon Institute of Education (YIOE) and Sagaing Institute of Education (SIOE), Myanmar. The total of 326 post-graduate students from YIOE and SIOE participated in this study. Critical Thinking Skill Test, Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CTDI) and Brain Dominance Test (BDT) were used as the research instruments. Critical Thinking Skills Test consists of 21 items and five sub-scales such as evaluation, explanation, analysis, inference and interpretation. The CTDI is composed of 72 items. It consists of seven sub-scales such as Inquisitiveness, Open-mindedness, Systematicity, Analyticity, Truth-seeking, Critical Thinking Self-confidence, and Cognitive Maturity. Each sub-scale was coded by using a six-point likert type scale, with 1= strongly disagree to 6= strongly agree. The BDT is composed of 50 items. Alpha reliability for CTST, CTDI and BDT revealed at 0.64, 0.88 and 0.86 respectively. In this study, 72.6 % of post-graduate students were found to be disposed positive on overall scale of CTDI. On the other hand, only 27.4 % of post-graduate students were ambivalently disposed towards critical thinking. Majority of students have high disposition towards critical thinking. Gender related difference revealed on truth-seeking sub-scale. Looking across the seven sub-scales, percentages of positive endorsement on critical thinking self-confidence, open-mindedness, and cognitive maturity sub-scales were less than other four sub-scales. Concerning the brain dominance, 27.9% of post-graduate students were whole brain thinkers, whereas 65.6 % were left-brain thinkers, and the rest 6.4% were right-brain thinkers. The results also showed that the majority of post-graduate students who disposed positively towards critical thinking were left brain thinkers. Concerning the critical thinking, 25.8% were found to be advanced skilled thinkers, 46.9% were skilled thinkers, and the rest 27.3% can be classified as unskilled thinkers. Regarding the five sub-scales, the mean score of analysis skill was lower than other skills. Across disciplinary difference on critical thinking skill was found to be on interpretation skill. Similar result was found between types of trainee. Moreover, differences in level of education were found on overall test as well as interpretation sub-scale. However, gender related difference was not found to be on overall test as well as five

sub-scales of CTST. According to the backward multiple regression analysis result, brain dominance was the best predictor of critical thinking disposition. Moreover, strong predictors of critical thinking skill were analyticity, cognitive maturity, inquisitiveness and level of education. In line with the empirical results, a model of critical thinking skill was developed.