

# Investigating Changing In Social Studies Textbooks of Public Review (Basic Fourth and Fifth) Based on the Emphasis on Critical Thinking Skills Facione in the Last Three Decades

Parinaz Aghababaeian<sup>1</sup>, Shams Aldin Hashemi Moghaddam<sup>1</sup>, Faezeh Nateghi<sup>1</sup> & Alireza Faghihi<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Educational Sciences, Arak Branch, Islamic Azad University, Arak, Iran

Correspondence: Shams Aldin Hashemi Moghaddam, Department of Educational Sciences, Arak Branch, Islamic Azad University, Arak, Iran

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## Abstract

This study investigated the changes in public school social studies textbooks in general period of Iran (fourth and fifth grades) based on the emphasis on Facione critical thinking skills in the past three decades. In this study, content analysis of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to evaluate changes in textbook. For this purpose, the unit of analysis was sentence.

Due to the limited population that includes all social studies textbooks from the years 1984-1985 to 2014-2015 of fourth and fifth grades (a total of 9 books) sampling and sample of the population selected for the study had not been made. The data gathering instruments were self-made content analysis checklist based on Facione elements and validity was determined by experts of education science. As well as the reliability of the instrument was calculated by the Ali Delaware formula showed 85% agreement coefficient.

Overall, findings indicate that the social studies books in fourth and fifth grades of primary school, in terms of attention to other critical thinking skills were written in the last three decades is very weak. 90 new books written especially given the changes in the national curriculum document and document fundamental change was not anticipated and expected. Meanwhile fifth grade social studies book in terms of attention to other critical thinking skills (0%) compared to the fourth grade social studies books had poorer conditions.

**Keyword:** general period, Facione, textbook, social studies, critical thinking skills

## 1. Introduction

Thinking is inevitable application of human. Our behavior and life style depends on our way of thinking. Man can decorate thought to excellence. An argument developed increasingly in thinking in education is that thinking is inherent in the process of human growth and explains the importance of this very same point that we're not just animal's thinker, but also to take a human to nurture special talents.

Mind training is a part of education, because this is part of human being. According to this view, the main task of education is teaching critical, creative and efficient thinking to children. (Fisher, 2007)

Great teachers focus on thinking in education and consider the growing power of thought as main purpose of the training institutes. (Shariatmadari, 2004)

Thinking is started when the man facing with unknown question, issue or opportunity. Thinking is infrastructure of education and on shared of science and philosophy. (Soleimanpoor, 2005)

Thought also has different ways, one of them is "critical thinking". Lipman knows critical thinking as an artfully and accountability thinking that facilitates the judgment; because emphasizes the criteria, is self-correcting and sensitive to issue (Lipman, 1988). Elder definition is also "critical thinking is the ability to accept responsibility for the consequences of one's own thinking (Elder, 1994). Norris says: "Critical thinking means decide to accept or reject a belief". (Norris, 1989)

Critical thinking is focused judgment as well as thoughtful thoughts and known beliefs and will be helpful determined that this decision in response to one's own views and experiences, arguments and comments. (Ernst, 2006)

Education in modern times is very difficult and complicated. Education not only is responsible to convey past cultural heritage, but also the development of thought, culture and education is the realization of human reality duties and realization of human reality only through education will not be informed, in fact, education is consciously set of measures through training programs, provides opportunities to children and young people to grow in their innate talents from potentiality to actuality in. (Shokoohi, 1989)

One of the measures through training programs can help students pass the critical thinking skills.

One of the people who have this special effort, Peter Facione inventor of one of the most critical thinking tests i.e. test California. (CCTST) Facione, critical thinkers to meet the six cognitive skills and he remembers it as the core critical thinking skills.

Facione critical thinking skills are as follows:

- 1) **Interpretation:** Perception wide variety of experiences, situations, data, events, judgments, customs, beliefs and rules, but in general it can be said to understand the process of interpretation and expression. Interpretation of three skills that are sub-categories, decoding concepts and clarify the meanings
- 2) **Analysis:** identification of evolving relations between the real and objective comments, questions, ideas, comments or other forms of expression is that of a rule. These may include two sub-skills test ideas, identify and analyze the arguments.
- 3) **Assessment:** Diagnosis credibility.
- 4) **Inference:** identify and protect elements that are needed to draw reasonable conclusions. In other words, identify relevant information in a story and extract the results that matter - in any way be - are floating forms cannot be explained. Secondary skills are understood to investigate and search for evidence, guessing variables and drawing conclusions
- 5) **Explanation:** The ability to provide a convincing and logical arguments result in an individual. This ability enables the person to have an overview of the big picture. In other words, a person his reasons in a systematic and credible evidence and implications for states. Skill explanations include only three states results, proven methods and presenting arguments.
- 6) **Self-regulation:** The most important cognitive skills. This skill allows one to which his cognitive activities with the help revised and it can improve your thinking. Self-regulation consists of two sub-skills self-assessment and self-correction. (Facione, 2011)

Teaching critical thinking education is only through the simplistic and undisputed acceptance issues deliberation and free choice is easy and the human ability to understand the issues increases. (Tofangdar, 2008) Achieving the educational objectives of education through curricula and resources takes place and textbook references one of the most important is student learning in the educational system. In our country, educational activities realized within the framework of the textbook.

In all countries for each subject in each grade is a textbook authored and distributed among schools, teachers focus their activities on the basis of a textbook, exam and evaluation is mainly limited to textbook content. Hence the device has a very important role of education in the educational system and textbooks for educational purposes are of great importance in the realization of, all stakeholders are the focus of education (Yarmohammadian, 2009).

So textbook should be based on the objectives of education and in accordance with modern methods, in order to improve the quality of student growth in all aspects fortunate to be developed and compiled. In drawing up the content of textbooks, attention to the principles and criteria of content, such as fitness for purpose, needs and interests of the learner, scientific progress, their application in real life, providing a variety of learning opportunities and ... is necessary (Nikbakhsh, 2009).

Textbook or content-focused education, in particular education system that is driven and written by education, activities and educational experiences students by the teacher and will be organized around the need for analysis of scientific investigation. This analysis helps stakeholders and author of textbooks during the preparation or selection textbook adopt a wise decision.

The kind of analysis to decision-makers, curriculum planners, textbook authors, content analysis is very useful and necessary. This type of analysis helps concepts, principles, attitudes, beliefs and all components have been proposed, in the form of practical science books were examined compared with targets and evaluating the curriculum. (Yarmohammadian, 2009)

Including the content of textbooks in addressing the critical thinking skills. Hence it can be said, raising different ways of thinking, critical thinking, in particular, is one of the fundamental objectives of education. Critical thinking skills, as well as other intellectual skills are growing.

Education is one of the most important ways to foster critical thinking and school center of education and textbooks are considered the most important means of education, often through their education goals achievable. Hence textbooks, if properly developed, could play an important role in teaching critical thinking. (Tofangdar, 2008)

One of the major textbook references and sources of learning of students in each educational system and in Iran, one of the most important roles in the curriculum of the education system plays. In other words, in Iran educational activities carried out within the framework of the textbook and most activities and educational experiences of students and teachers will be organized around. (Arizi & Abedi, 2003)

Because of great importance in determining the content of textbooks and educational policy, the focus of attention of all educators and grow. The importance of textbooks in the educational systems focus, such as Iran that almost all the educational factors determined based on the content and runs, more than other types of education systems. So too is the importance of spending time specialists in analyzing textbooks can help to solve many current problems in education. (Arambraster & Anderson.1993)

Textbooks do not only perform formal education, but also an important influence on children's perception of society. (Hines & Paulson, 2006) Living in today's complex society needs people who are able to rely on their own thinking on issues surrounding overcome and in a framework and clear vision, to collect the necessary information about their lives and their combinations and with a good judge, evaluate them and avoid impossible tasks.

In fact, people to deal with life issues and decisions require skill and competencies critical thinking are essential (Lipman, 1988).

In general, the necessity and importance of critical thinking can be noted as follows:

- 1) Critical thinking is one of the basic dimensions of human existence and fostering the growth of man.
- 2) Critical thinking rationally consistent with human characteristics such as curiosity and progress-seeking.
- 3) Application of learning or learning based on learner activity done.
- 4) From the main objectives of education and training (Hashemiannejad, 2009).

Each successful training system needs to employ the knowledge in actual status of life to solve problems which people face it. If, educators don't learn the topics are not able to solve the problems.

Growth and development intellectual skills, especially critical thinking skills of learners, always in the educational system is a complex issue, but nowadays has taken a critical position in relation to the severity of the disability specialists trained in critical thinking learners are concerned. (Hosseinirad & Alamdari, 2012)

Unfortunately, despite the emphasis and attention to the problem of thinking on military targets educational and claims managers, operators and education administrators, in practice, to encourage students to think and especially the use of critical thinking and motivation will not exist. Teachers are also statements that imply accepting the premise that critical thinking paves the way for more and better education, always with the facts and create ways to remove passive environment disciplinary curriculum areas to protect the information.

They have forgotten this point that maintains content and accumulation of information related to the student's mind and unrelated to real life wasting costs, features and capabilities of the people. For a dynamic and enthusiastic generation would have to judge the practices and thinking about his life and teach others. (Shabaani, 2008)

Ghasemian (2010) in a study entitled "Survey of critical thinking in primary school curricula" with content analysis method and content analysis done by using the log, shows that the objectives of the proposed curriculum in teacher's guide has been given to the expected level of critical thinking and the content of textbooks have been paying the slightest attention to the components of critical thinking. Well as the emotional gamut in content and less attention has been paid teacher's guide. Critical thinking curriculum elements are discussed in the following order: Teacher's Guide (39.45) purposes (33.33) and content (31.8).

Hove (2011) has done study entitled "The development of critical thinking skills in the classroom of high school". The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effect of critical thinking strategy has been the students' thinking skills. The results show that the performance Students who have been critical thinking strategies better

than students who have not been trained. Kettler (2014) study entitled “Evaluation of the students’ skills in critical thinking” is done.

In this study, two groups of students, one of them gifted education program and other trained with regular training program were compared with each other. The findings show that significant differences exist between the two groups critical thinking skills. Kettler suggests that in order to foster critical thinking, we need to follow a special curriculum.

One of the ways to achieve and develop critical thinking skills in learners, develop appropriate curriculum in the educational system. In a sense, critical thinking can be implicit analysis framework minds conversion process to convert the information into a concrete framework, experience and skills acquired through training opportunities and learning curriculum and lessons learned in that sense. (Hosseinirad & Alamdari, 2012)

Due to these issues, one of the fundamental objectives and proposed changes in the National Curriculum Document (about 7 field of education and learning Humanities and Social Studies) Fundamental Development of Education in the document outlining agreed that 2012 has come into force, delivering the highest levels of critical thinking of students’ thinking.

So, now that the number of first and second elementary school textbooks in order to achieve the objectives outlined in the National Curriculum Document modified, examine the content of these books to determine their consistency with the objectives of the document is required for that need not be proven;

However, in the present study due to the expression of critical thinking skills of students in the next life, and how to develop content and deliver it from textbooks to students, to examine changes in public school textbooks of social studies (basic fourth and fifth) based on the emphasis on critical thinking skills Facione views in the last three decades.

## 2. Research Method

In this research method is quantitative and qualitative content analysis. According to the research, the content analysis method which is typical descriptive research methods were used in this study. Content analysis is a method of research in this way, the researcher outlines the expression “little”, “orderly” and “objective” content “clear message” (Berelson, 1985). The analysis method used in this study is both qualitative and quantitative;

Qualitative is that reading every single sentence of text to identify this issue that this leads students towards critical thinking skills (analysis units were sentence.) and then specify the number of sentences in this respect in each class and finally with the help of abundance and status of social science books in connection with the emphasis on critical thinking skills is described.

Accordingly, the fourth basic social studies textbooks content analysis (6 books) and fifth (3 books) included a total of nine books, at the fourth grade in school (1984-1985-1986-1987-1994-1995-2003-2004-2012-2013-2013-2014), in the fifth grade in the academic year (1985-1986,1996-1997,2008-2009) Over a period of thirty-year-old Czech, content analysis using critical thinking skills based on 6 Facione views that were raised:

- 1) Interpretation
- 2) Analysis
- 3) Assessment
- 4) Inference
- 5) Explanation
- 6) Self-regulation

The validity of the instrument was approved using the opinions of experts in this field. Also Ali Delaware (1383) formula was used to calculate the reliability. For this purpose, content analysis checklist is a Master Certified curriculum was available to the researcher simultaneously and parallel with, the books to be coded. Result of this process showed 85% agreement factor.

After collecting the information, the information was placed on the tables and finally summarized and it was concluded.

## 3. Research Findings

Social studies textbooks of fourth and fifth in terms of the application of critical thinking skills were evaluated. In the first sentence of each book along with the frequency that corresponds to each of the skills were revealed. Then, percentage relative to the total percentage of overall skills was assessed, and once again the entire sentence

textbooks were measured.

Table 1. Basic courses of social studies textbooks content analysis (fourth grade) based on interpretation skills

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	4	Social studies in 2003
115	4	Social studies in 1391
728	35	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	43
	89.85%	Frequency over the whole skill
	2.77%	Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

Table 2. Basic courses of social studies textbooks content analysis (fourth grade) based on analysis skills

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	-	Social studies in 2003
115	1	Social studies in 1391
728	3	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	4
	8.33%	Frequency over the whole skill
	0.25%	Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

Table 3. Analysis of the content of public school textbooks for social studies (fourth grade) based on assessment skills

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	-	Social studies in 2003
115	-	Social studies in 1391
728	1	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	1
	2.08%	Frequency over the whole skill
	0.06%	Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

Table 4. Basic courses of social studies textbooks content analysis (fourth grade) based on inference skills

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	-	Social studies in 2003
115	-	Social studies in 1391
728	-	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	-
	0%	Frequency over the whole skill
	0%	Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

Table 5. Analysis of the content of public school textbooks for social studies (fourth grade) on the basis of skills to explain

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	-	Social studies in 2003
115	-	Social studies in 1391
728	-	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	Frequency
0%		Frequency over the whole skill
0%		Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

Table 6. General of Iran's social studies textbooks content analysis (fourth grade) on the basis of self-regulation skills

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 6
219	-	Social studies in 1984
227	-	Social studies in 1986
142	-	Social studies in 1994
119	-	Social studies in 2003
115	-	Social studies in 1391
728	-	Social studies in 2014
1550	All the sentences textbooks	Frequency
0%		Frequency over the whole skill
0%		Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

As the data contained in the Tables 1, 2, 3 obtained from fourth grade social studies textbooks content analysis based on the emphasis on interpretation skills, analysis and evaluation shows that kind of sentences books of critical thinking skills were emphasized; (A total of 48 including) 89.85% related to interpretation the skills that the number of 2.77% of the total sentences fourth grade social studies textbooks, 8.33% on analysis skills that the number 0.25% of total fourth grade social studies textbooks sentences and 2.08% related to assessment the skills that the number of 0.06% of total sentences textbooks fourth grade social studies (including a total of 1550) is included.

Also data from Table 4, 5, and 6 indicates that the content of textbooks fourth grade social studies in terms of the emphasis on other skills is 0%.

Table 7. The analysis of the content of textbooks for Social Studies Basic Course (fifth grade) on the basis of skills (interpretation, analysis, assessment, inference, explanation and self-regulation)

Total sentences of every single book	Frequency	The number of books checked 3
295	-	Social studies in 1984
194	-	Social studies in 1996
163	-	Social studies in 2008
652	All the sentences textbooks	Frequency
0%		Frequency over the whole skill
0%		Percentage of the total than whole sentences textbooks fourth grade

As the data listed in Table 7 obtained from the fifth grade social studies textbooks content analysis based on the emphasis on skills, interpreting, analyzing, assessment, infer, explain and self-regulation, show of all the sentences books that were somehow emphasizing critical thinking skills, (Including total 0) 0% of this skill that so many other textbooks 0% of the total sentences of fifth grade social studies (including 652 in total) is included.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

Basic social studies books of fourth and fifth grades in the general course of the school year (2014-2015), was amended in 2014-2015 a new approach to textbook and curriculum in accordance with the national document delivery document fundamental, which since 2012 has been executed, compiled and codified. In this book student learning passive mode and active mode. However, limited academic theoretical issues raised in relation to different aspects of critical thinking.

By examining the trend changes, fourth and fifth grade textbooks (in the 90s) As mentioned above, these changes compared to the previous books in decades (60, 70, 80) in regard to different aspects of critical thinking have been very few and minor.

A case in point in the present study, fourth grade social studies book in 2014-2015 that in terms of pay attention to different aspects of critical thinking (they are given the basic skills of critical thinking) such as interpretation skills with Frequency 35 cases, including analysis skills with a frequency of 3 and assessment skills with a frequency of 1 out of 728 writing of this book. By the same token attention to other levels of critical thinking skills (e.g., inference, explanation and self-regulation) in this book was 0%.

Also, writing of social studies book of fifth grade in (2014-2015) and social studies book in 2008-2009 is same in terms of pay attention to other critical thinking skills is 0%. In this regard, our results with the results are consistent to Ghasemian (2010) Titled investigation into the status of critical thinking in primary school curricula as well as the results Kettler (2014) Titled review in the students' critical thinking skills.

Results of present study of all the studies mentioned above indicate lack attention from policy makers and textbook authors to discuss critical thinking skills.

In fact, the new social studies books written (fourth and fifth grade) in the 90 books of fifth grade to fourth grade book written weakest in terms of attention is devoted to critical thinking skills.

However, in general the study of these books can be said, social studies books of fourth and fifth grades have been changed in the last decade in textual content, in terms of the changes is an emphasis on critical thinking skills, therefore, these changes are not very significant, but also very little and in whole it can be said that in this area, unfortunately, the books were written very weak.

#### 5. Recommendations

- 1) It is suggested to provide opportunities for participation and critical thinking skills in the classroom away from the haste with rethinking the design process and goals of the elementary school curriculum, based on the given objectives in all three learning domains (cognitive, affective and psychomotor) learning and according to results of previous research has shown less interest in skills.
- 2) Social studies books which have recently been developed in the '90s should be revised by planners and authors of textbooks in primary schools especially Social Sciences groups.
- 3) Holding in-service training courses for experts and teachers regularly, in order to provide knowledge and positive attitude towards different aspects of critical thinking and motivate them to use these skills into practice in the classroom
- 4) Designing educational package and software, especially for critical thinking skills of teachers, experts and students and present it to teachers and students to supplement the textbook content
- 5) Given that the pattern of right thinking, rational judgment and wise of elementary school students is being formed and stabilized, this lack of attention to critical thinking suggests a balanced and comprehensive system of elementary schools, in connection with the issue of creating a comprehensive rigorous critical thinking skills in students' performance is not good, so it is essential to planners and designers of elementary school textbooks to have proper attention to this issue based on the current and future needs of society to provide high-level critical thinking skills, especially skills such as thinking (understanding, explaining and self-regulation).

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