ABSTRACT

RESEARCH PAPER: Evidence of Critical Thinking from Reflective Writing

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Critical thinking is essential for nursing practice but test results of critical thinking have been inconsistent. It has been established that reflection is linked to critical thinking and is a teaching strategy to foster critical thinking. However, a valid and reliable tool is needed to measure reflective writing (Kennison 2006). The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Critical Thinking Scale (CTS) (Kennison, 2006) as a measure of reflective writing and to establish reliability and validity of the tool. This is a replication of Kennison’s (2006) study. The conceptual framework is the definition of critical thinking in nursing (Kennison & Messelwitz, 2002). The study includes a convenience sample of all graduating senior baccalaureate students enrolled in clinical courses at a Midwestern college. All of the students who are about to graduate will be asked to complete written descriptions of their thoughts, feelings, and happenings about a significant practice experience. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test (CCTST) will measure cognitive skills. Findings of this study will provide information for nursing faculty that can be used to evaluate critical thinking skills of students.