

Comparative Study of Critical Thinking Skills of Bachelor and Master Critical Care Nursing Students

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Background: Promoting critical thinking skills is an essential outcome of graduate and postgraduate nursing education.

Objectives: This study aims to compare critical thinking skills of bachelor nursing students (BS) and master critical care nursing students (MSc) in the academic years of 2014–2015.

Materials and Methods: This cross-sectional study was conducted on 79 BS nursing students and 44 MSc critical care nursing students in three universities of medical sciences including Semnan, Tehran, and Kashan. The California Critical Thinking Test, Form B, was used for data collection. ANOVA, Mann-Whitney, and Kruskal-Wallis were also used for statistical analyses.

Results: The mean scores of BS and MS nursing students were 11.14 ± 3.01 and 10.05 ± 3.33 , respectively, which were not significantly different. The mean scores of three universities students were estimated as 9.84 ± 3.13 , 9.66 ± 3.32 , 11.79 ± 2.92 for Semnan, Tehran, and Kashan Universities of Medical Sciences, respectively, and the total mean score was calculated as 10.46 ± 3.24 . The scores of critical thinking domains based on university showed that Kashan University students gained higher scores in interference, and deductive and inductive reasoning domains in comparison with other universities.

Discussion: The level of critical thinking in BS students was higher. The overall level of critical thinking skill was low for nursing students. The authors suggest that appropriate and effective methods should be considered to create and improve critical thinking in nursing education.

Keywords: critical thinking, nursing students, education, nursing