

**The effect of nursing internship training  
program on the critical thinking dispositions of  
nurse interns**

**Thesis**

Submitted for partial fulfillment of the requirements of  
the Master Degree in Nursing Sciences  
(Nursing administration)

By

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Ain-Shams University  
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## ABSTRACT

Nursing internship training should enhance nurse interns' critical thinking. This study aim was to study the effect of nursing internship training program on the critical thinking dispositions of nurse interns. The study was conducted at Ain-shams University Hospitals on a convenience sample of 140 nurse interns using a pre-post evaluation design. A self-administered questionnaire sheet comprising the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory (CCTDI) was used to collect data. The fieldwork was in December 2012 and July 2013. The study findings revealed that these nurse interns have generally high scores of critical thinking disposition at the start of the program, with males having better maturity scores. By multivariate analysis, the internship program is the only significant positive predictor of the improvement in nurse interns' critical thinking disposition. In conclusion, the internship program has a significant positive impact on nurse interns' critical thinking disposition. It is recommended that the nurse internship programs should give more emphasis on enhancing the critical thinking disposition of the nurse interns, especially the domains of inquisitiveness and self-confidence. Further research is needed in this area as intervention studies to assess the effectiveness of different approaches in enhancing nurse interns' critical thinking disposition.

**Keywords:** Critical Thinking Disposition, Nurse interns, Internship program

## **INTRODUCTION**

Critical thinking is not a new concept. “Throughout nearly 300 years of policymaking in the United States, educators have promoted eight broad goals of schooling: basic academic skills, critical thinking and problem solving, social skills and work ethics, citizenship, physical health, emotional health, the arts and literature, and preparation for skilled employment” (*Rothstein et al, 2007*).

Critical thinking is one of the important elements of scientific thinking. It is an active and organized mental process. There are five basic characteristics of critical thinking. The first one is that critical thinking requires to be active; the second one is that critical thinking requires to be independent; the third is that critical thinking requires to be open-mindedness to new ideas; the fourth is that critical thinking requires to consider the proofs and reasons advocating the thinking; the last one is that critical thinking requires the organization (*Ozden, 2003; Azar, 2010*).

Critical thinking skills are vital to well-educated individuals and acquiring this ability should be one of the most

### ***Introduction & Aim of the study***

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important goals in one's life. The critical thinking skills enable people to evaluate, compare, analyze, critique, and synthesize information. Those who possess critical thinking skills know that knowledge is not a collection of facts, but rather an ongoing process of examining information, evaluating that information, and adding it to their understanding of the world. Moreover, by using critical thinking one can enjoy benefits throughout life. Experience dictates that critical thinking is essential to both effective learning and productive living (*Sayed, 2007*). Hence, critical thinking is the heart of education reform movement in the United States (*Bell, 2002*).

Any conceptualization of critical thinking that focuses exclusively on cognitive skills is incomplete. A more comprehensive view of critical thinking must include the acknowledgment of a characterological component referred to as a disposition to make, attitudes, values, and inclinations are dimensions of personality that influence human behavior (*Giancarlo & Facione, 2001*). Critical thinking disposition is likely to increase the possibility of using critical thinking skills as well as the possibility of using them in a morally desirable manner (*Kokai, 2000*).

### ***Introduction & Aim of the study***

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According to ***Facione (2000)***, critical thinking disposition is a “consistent internal motivation to act toward or respond to persons, events, or circumstances in habitual, yet potentially malleable way.” Moreover, it is the tendency to use ones critical thinking skill, and it does not directly address one’s actual degree of skill (***Taha, 2004***). Additionally, the disposition toward critical thinking, as a dimension of personality, refer to likelihood that one will approach problem framing or problem solving by using reasoning. Therefore, disposition is "the attitudinal basis for the internal motivation to think critically" (***Facione, 2006***); it is thus an essential prerequisite for critical thinking.

Nursing internship training is a system of instruction and experience coordinated within an academic setting and leading to acquisition of the knowledge, skills, and attributes essential to the practice of professional nursing at a specified degree level baccalaureate (***Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Degree Nursing Programs, 2009***). In nursing practice and education, the internship year is the most critical period in the professional life of a graduate. It is the first contact with the profession. Hence, it alleviates the stress and anxiety, which result from the inability of new graduate to transfer nursing theories into practice (***Kuiper, 2004***).

## **Significance of the study**

Nurses in clinical practice continually make judgment and decisions based on the assessment and diagnosis of patient needs. In nursing practice, it is valuable for nurses to use their critical thinking skills in a variety of ways. Hence, this study intends to study the effect of nursing internship training program on the critical thinking dispositions of nurse interns through:1-assessing critical thinking dispositions of nurse interns at the beginning and after internship year2

Comparing between the two pre /post internship prpgram assessment .

## **AIM OF THE STUDY**

This study aim was to study the effect of nursing internship training program on the critical thinking dispositions of nurse interns through:

1. Assessing critical thinking dispositions of nurse interns at the beginning and after the internship year;
2. Comparing between the two pre/post internship program assessments.

### **Research question**

What is the effect of nursing internship training program on critical thinking dispositions among nurse interns?

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **CRITICAL THINKING**

#### **ROOTS OF CRITICAL THINKING**

The intellectual roots of critical thinking are as ancient as its etymology, traceable, ultimately, to the teaching practice and vision of Socrates 2,500 years ago who discovered by a method of probing questioning that people could not rationally justify their confident claims to knowledge. Confused meanings, inadequate evidence, or self-contradictory beliefs often lurked beneath smooth but largely empty rhetoric. Socrates established the fact that one cannot depend upon those in "authority" to have sound knowledge and insight. He demonstrated that persons might have power and high position and yet be deeply confused and irrational. He established the importance of asking deep questions that probe profoundly into thinking before accepting ideas as worthy of belief (*Paul et al., 1997*).

The literature on critical thinking has roots in two primary academic disciplines: philosophy and psychology (*Lewis and Smith, 1993*). Very early, *Sternberg (1986)* has