

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Critical Thinking Skills on Job Performance among Neonatal Nurses: A Cross-Sectional Study

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Abstract : Introduction: Critical thinking skills are crucial for nurses, particularly those working in neonatal care, where quick and informed decision-making is essential. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of critical thinking skills on job performance among neonatal nurses. Methods: A cross-sectional study was conducted with 450 neonatal nurses from a hospital in Mashhad. Participants were assessed using the Critical Thinking Questionnaire (CThQ) to measure their critical thinking abilities across various subscales, including Analyzing, Evaluating, Creating, Remembering, Understanding, and Applying. Additionally, a custom Job Performance Checklist completed by supervising nurses, was used to evaluate job performance across several dimensions. Data were collected and analyzed using SPSS V.23. Correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between critical thinking skills and job performance. Results: The mean age of the nurses was 33.46 ± 14.2 years, with 79.15% being female. The nurses demonstrated high proficiency in critical thinking, with notable scores in the Creating (23.98 ± 4.8), Applying (17.35 ± 3.2), and Evaluating (16.67 ± 3.4) subscales. The results indicate a significant positive correlation between several critical thinking subscales and job performance. The Creating subscale exhibited the strongest correlation ($R = 0.79, p < 0.001$), followed by Overall CThQ ($R = 0.68, p = 0.039$) and Evaluating ($R = 0.67, p = 0.041$). Analyzing ($R = 0.45, p = 0.013$) and Understanding ($R = 0.41, p = 0.015$) also showed significant correlations with job performance. Remembering ($R = 0.29, p = 0.061$) and Applying ($R = 0.43, p = 0.057$) were not significantly correlated with job performance. Conclusion: The findings indicate that critical thinking skills, especially in creating and evaluating, are strongly associated with job performance in neonatal nurses. Enhancing these skills through targeted training programs could improve job performance, particularly in decision-making and time management. This study underscores the importance of critical thinking in neonatal care and its impact on nursing efficacy and patient outcomes.

Keywords : critical thinking, job performance, neonatal nurses, healthcare quality

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