

Public Abstract

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Title:THE RELATIONSHIP AND PREDICTIVE POWER OF CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS SCORES TO NATABOC CERTIFICATION EXAMINATION FOR ATHLETIC TRAINING PERFORMANCE SCORES

The purpose of this non-experimental descriptive study was to examine the relationship and predictive power of critical thinking skills scores to National Athletic Trainers' Association Board of Certification examination for athletic training (CE) performance scores. The California Critical Thinking Skills Test form 2000 (CCTST-2000) was used as the measure of critical thinking skills to determine if differences existed in athletic training certification candidate critical thinking skills when compared to passing and not passing the CE.

A high failure rate exists for first time candidates sitting for the CE. An understanding of how critical thinking skills affect the success rate for passing the CE is lacking. Although professionals understand that critical thinking skills are important, there have been no studies performed to determine the relationship between critical thinking skills and candidate scores on the CE. Therefore, it was important to investigate the relationship between critical thinking skills and scores on the CE to inform and better prepare athletic training education program directors, faculty, and students to address the challenge of passing the CE.

Data were analyzed and Cronbach's Alpha revealed the reliability of the CCTST-2000 with a satisfactory level of internal consistency. Independent t testing determined that those candidates passing the CE had higher overall critical thinking skills and higher scores in the subscale areas of inference and deductive reasoning. It was determined by Pearson Correlation that several correlations existed. Multiple stepwise regression showed written and practical section scores increased when deductive reasoning scores increased while written simulation scores increased when inference scores increased. Finally, discriminant analysis predicted success in passing the CE by having higher inference subscale scores and lower inductive reasoning scores. Conversely, lower inference subscale scores and higher inductive reasoning scores predicted not passing the CE.

Implications of this study are for athletic training educators to examine program curriculum and consider using techniques that improve critical thinking skills of athletic training students. Special attention should be made to the development in the area of inference and deductive reasoning. Improvements in critical thinking skills of students should improve scores on the CE.