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# UNCOVERING CRITICAL THINKING DISPOSITIONS THROUGH REFLECTIVE JOURNALING: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF MALAYSIAN UNDERGRADUATES

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**Abstract** Background and Purpose: This study examines how reflective journaling can enhance critical thinking skills among undergraduate students enrolled in an Educational Testing and Assessment course. It explores students' reflective experiences through qualitative analysis, focusing on how structured journaling supports the development of critical thinking dispositions. Methodology: A qualitative research design was employed involving 45 undergraduate students who completed reflective journals at three intervals throughout the semester. Each journal entry responded to guided questions related to specific course topics. In total, 135 reflective journals were analysed using thematic analysis to identify recurring patterns, themes, and indicators of critical thinking dispositions. Findings: The analysis revealed seven critical thinking dispositions reflected in students' writing: cognitive maturity, analyticity, self-confidence, systematicity, open-mindedness, truth-seeking, and inquisitiveness. Students demonstrated increasingly meaningful and analytical reflections across the three journaling cycles, indicating deeper engagement with course concepts and enhanced metacognitive awareness. Contribution: This study highlights reflective journaling as an effective assessment strategy for fostering critical thinking in higher education. The identified themes provide insight into how reflective practices shape students' cognitive development and reveal their underlying dispositions. The study also acknowledges limitations and proposes directions for future research to further examine the role of reflective journaling across diverse educational contexts.

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