

Qualitative Analysis of Service Learning Reflections

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BACKGROUND

- First-year students at SIUE-SOP participated in a required service-learning event
- Students developed 30-minute presentations for elementary school children about germs and handwashing
- Pharmacy students completed a post-experience reflection paper
- Reflective writing is increasingly important to assess self-awareness¹

OBJECTIVE

Use thematic analysis to identify trends in first-year pharmacy students’ reflective writing assignment about their service learning experiences

METHODS

IRB

- Exempt status by SIUE Institutional Review Board

Themes

- Two investigators identified themes from a subsample of ten
- Constant comparison method for the remaining sample

Analysis

- Themes tracked and quantified with MAXQDA12™ software
- Evaluated sample for weight and mention of each theme

Depth

- Mutual agreement reached between two investigators
- Modified 4-point scale from non-reflection to critical reflection²

REFERENCES

1. Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education. Accreditation standards and guidelines for the professional program in pharmacy leading to the doctor of pharmacy degree. Accessed May 3, 2018

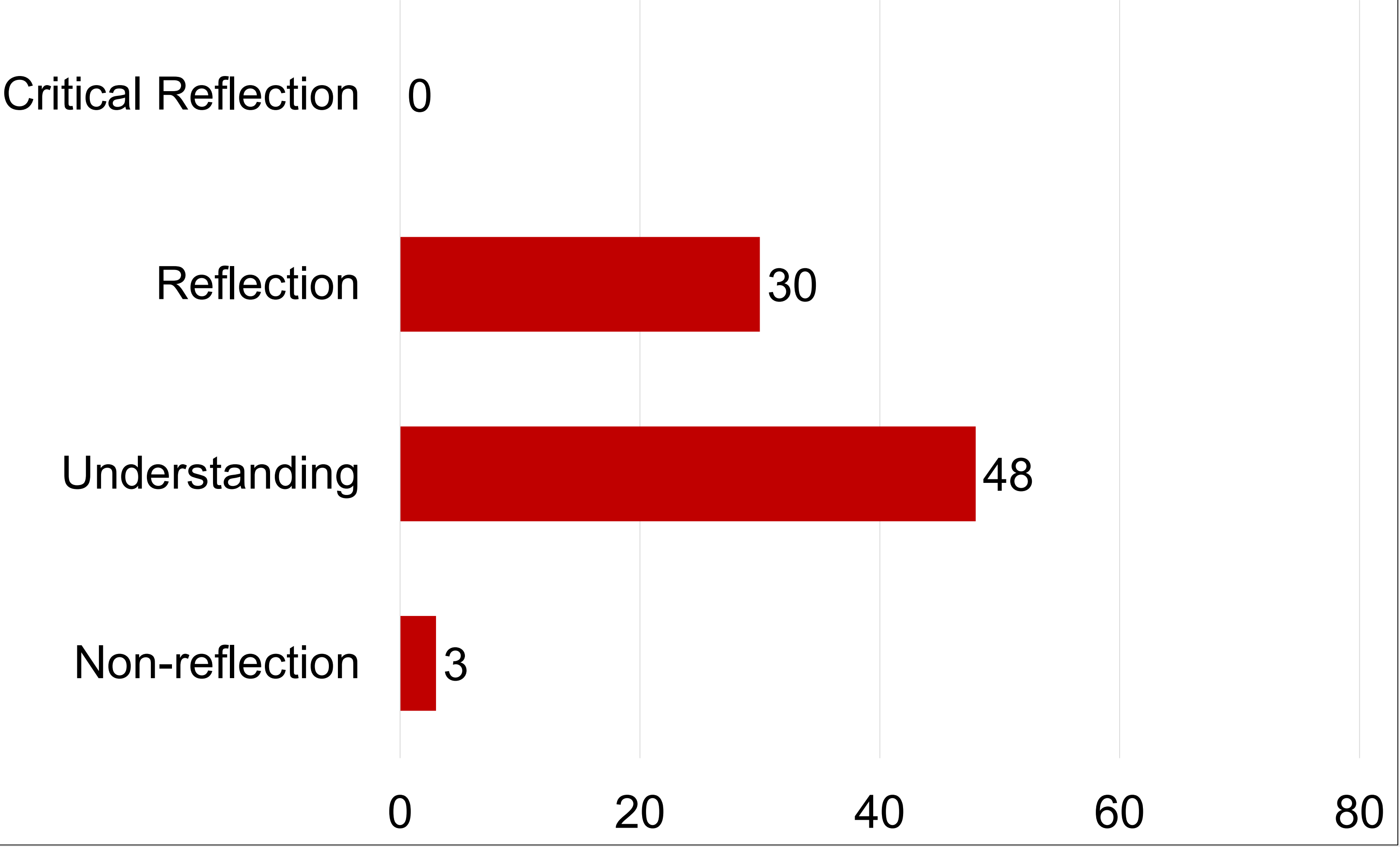
2. Kember, et al. A four-category scheme for coding and assessing the level of reflection in written work. *Assess Eval High Educ.* August 2008;33(4):369-379.

RESULTS

Thematic Analysis

Theme	<u>Weight</u> ^a : # of References (%) n=308	<u>Mention</u> ^b : # of Essays (%) n=81	Illustrative Quote
Beneficial for the Student	79 (26)	63 (78)	<i>“I learned how to think on the spot by fielding questions that were unexpected or by finding new questions to ask the students.”</i>
Pre-Experience Apprehension	57 (19)	56 (69)	<i>“I have a fear of public speaking. Combining that with my lack of experience and fondness of children, I knew for sure that it was not going to turn out well.”</i>
Beneficial for the Audience	51 (17)	48 (59)	<i>“It was very neat to see how intrigued this boy was and to see how his questions made the other kids in the classroom even more interested in our presentation.”</i>
Community Involvement	45 (15)	37 (46)	<i>“...there are other things we can do besides just working in the pharmacy to impact people and provide social awareness of health related issues in the community.”</i>
Overall Change in Opinion	39 (13)	35 (43)	<i>“Even though I was really overwhelmed at first, in the end, it was actually very fun, and I would gladly do it again.”</i>
Future Impact on Career	37 (12)	33 (41)	<i>“When I graduate from SIUe and start my practice, I will be a teacher every day to my patients and this experience has allowed me to take a glimpse into that.”</i>
^a Total number of references to theme ^b Total number of essays mentioning theme			

Depth of Reflection Achieved



DISCUSSION

- Thematic analysis provides insight into students’ perception of their experience
- Future studies could assess annual reflections to determine change in depth of reflection over time
- Strengths:
 - Two investigator comparative method
 - Third investigator consulted to resolve any discrepancies
 - Mixed methods approach
- Limitations
 - Small sample size, single cohort and study site
 - Broad themes identified
 - Assignment instructions may have influenced responses