

Critical thinking in undergraduate students

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Conspiracy theories and social media are part of our daily lives, and therefore it is important to be able to identify correct and appropriate information. Various studies have looked at different aspects related to critical thinking and people's misconceptions about critical thinking. For example, studies have investigated if people can distinguish between good and bad explanations by exploring typical fallacies, such as circular reasoning (e.g., Weisberg et al., 2008). Other studies have looked at students' understanding of what critical thinking is and found common misconceptions (e.g., Pnevmatikos et al., 2023). Overall, critical thinking is a complex concept, and many of its characteristics are listed as skills in the British Psychological Society benchmarks (BPS, 2019) and thus are taught in BPS accredited programmes across the UK. In line with this, critical thinking is one of the main marking criteria of assessments, and during their UG studies, psychology students have many opportunities to develop their critical thinking skills as they progress.

The current study investigates the critical thinking skills of psychology undergraduate students at the University of Nottingham, UK. Various critical thinking aspects are explored in a series of tasks, such as the conceptualisation of critical thinking (i.e., what it is and how it is acquired; survey items adapted from Pnevmatikos et al.) and students' skills to evaluate written information (items from Weisberg et al.). By comparing undergraduate students at different stages of their study (year one, two, and three), the data from the study will help lecturers to learn more about students' development of critical thinking skills and will help us to create appropriate activities for seminars and workshops.

Is the first author also the speaker?

Yes

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Please indicate up to five keywords regarding the content of your contribution

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