The Implementation of Critical Reading Techniques Towards the 2024 Presidential Election News

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Abstract

This study examines student behaviors and perceptions regarding engagement with election-related news, emphasizing the role of critical reading techniques in fostering informed electoral decisions. Students actively utilized diverse news sources, employing strategies like simultaneous access, highlighting, and note-taking to assess credibility and manage information overload. Questionnaire results indicated that 75% of respondents engaged in critical reading practices, displaying an awareness of biases and cross-referencing capabilities. However, challenges such as information overload and misinformation remained, with 25% of students showing little interest in election content. While 80% of participants demonstrated a strong grasp of critical reading processes, noticeable gaps in education and awareness were observed. Interviews revealed that students found their experiences enlightening, which improved their ability to identify credible information and navigate conflicting reports. Many reported enhanced comprehensions and decision-making due to critical reading strategies, underlining the necessity for educational initiatives focused on media literacy. This research highlights the essential role of critical reading in election-related information, advocating for active democratic engagement. Future efforts should prioritize workshops and resources that equip students with skills to identify credible news, fostering a more informed and engaged electorate.

INTRODUCTION

Elections are crucial occasions in democratic societies that establish a nation's direction and leadership. A democracy's capacity for informed decision-making is essential to its overall health. Voters, however, face formidable obstacles as a result of the abundance of information as well as the growth of false information and biased reporting. The ability to read critically becomes essential for navigating this confusing information environment. In light of the upcoming Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential elections in 2024, this study examines how X University English literature students apply these strategies.

A clear distinction has been made between critical and non-critical reading. Antonova & Tyrkheeva, (2021) has stated that non-critical reading focuses on linear activities to have a textual recognition of a text. It aims to logically comprehend a text as a systematic structure consisting of

information, ideas, and opinions of the author. Meanwhile critical reading is an analytic activity in which a reader intensively reads a text to identify text structures covering its information, values, assumptions, and language usage during the reading process. When reading critically, a reader involves total interpretation and evaluation on a text. Hidayati et al., 2020) also define that 'critical reading is the reading skills that involve a higher level of thinking in which the reader uses a questioning attitude, logical analysis, and inference to judge the worth of what is read'.

Understanding a text's literal meaning is only one aspect of critical reading; other skills include assessing a work's underlying meanings, spotting biases, and determining the reliability of sources (Ozensoy, 2021). Voters need these abilities because they have to sort through a lot of news articles, social media posts, political commercials, and speeches from candidates. People are better able to make decisions based on a thorough comprehension of the issues and the reliability of the material they come across when they have developed critical reading abilities.

It is anticipated that Indonesia's 2024 election would be fiercely competitive and have a big impact on the country's politics, society, and economy. Voters must evaluate the abundance of information and the variety of viewpoints that are presented to them. This election offers English literature students a chance to put their academic knowledge to use in a real-world setting. The purpose of this study is to offer light on the efficacy of critical reading strategies in promoting informed political engagement by analyzing how these students interact with election-related content.

This study will investigate a number of important topics, including the students' general involvement in the electoral process, their capacity to assess the reliability of various information sources, and their aptitude for recognizing and comprehending political content biases. By concentrating on these areas, the study hopes to illustrate the benefits of English literature education for informed citizenry and show the wider applicability of critical reading abilities in modern democratic processes.

In light of the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections, this study examines how X University English literature students apply critical reading strategies. It aims to comprehend how their scholastic background affects their capacity to interact critically with political data, ultimately promoting an informed and involved voter. The findings will add to the larger conversation on how education may improve media literacy and political involvement through this approach. Elections are crucial occasions in democratic societies that establish a nation's direction and leadership. A democracy's capacity for informed decision-making is essential to its overall health. Voters, however, face formidable obstacles as a result of the abundance of information as well as the growth of false information and biased reporting. The ability to read critically becomes essential for navigating this confusing information environment. In light of the upcoming Indonesian presidential and vice-presidential elections in 2024, this study examines how X University English literature students apply these strategies.

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Al Roomy, (2022) state that critical reading is a reading activity that is carried out wisely, tolerantly, deeply, intensively, and analytically and not wanting to find fault with the author. Aghajani & Gholamrezapour, (2019) say that Critical reading is the application of critical thinking processes to reading. In its implementation, critical reading activities involve high-level cognition processes. This is because readers are required to apply analytic, synthetic, and evaluative thinking processes. Johnson (2007) states that critical reading as an actualization of critical thinking is a directed process in mental activities to solve problems, make decisions, analyze, and evaluate systematically an opinion. Harjasujana in Dalman also states that in the critical reading process, three ways of reading are known, namely:

1. Reading on the line, which is to be able to summarize the entire reading and recognize the parts as a strong foothold material to provide an assessment of the content of the reading.

2. Reading between the lines, which is to analyze what the author really means, especially what is implied.

3. Reading beyond the lines, which is to evaluate the relevance of the ideas outlined in the reading discussion.

Elections are a very important means of democracy in the life of a state because they are a tangible manifestation of the existence of democracy. Elections held periodically are a must as a means of democracy that makes sovereignty the core of state life. The purpose of holding elections is to elect members of the House of Representatives, members of the Regional Representatives Council, the President and Vice President, and to elect members of the Regional People's Representatives Council, as a means of realizing popular sovereignty to produce representatives of the people and a democratic state government based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. In practice, the organization of elections requires special arrangements. The objectives of regulating the holding of elections as stipulated in Article 4 of Law 7/2017, which include:

1. Strengthening the democratic state system.
2. Realizing elections that are fair and have integrity.
3. Ensuring consistency in the regulation of the electoral system.
4. Providing legal certainty and preventing duplication in electoral arrangements.
5. Realizing effective and efficient elections.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. Based on (Creswell, 2020) qualitative descriptive research method is a research method carried out with the main objective of creating a picture or description of a particular phenomenon. Qualitative research is a methodological approach used to explore and understand individuals' experiences, perspectives, and behaviors in their natural settings. Unlike quantitative research that focuses on quantifying data and testing hypotheses, qualitative research seeks to delve deeper into the meanings, interpretations, and subjective experiences of participants. It often involves techniques such as interviews, focus groups, observations, and textual analysis to gather rich, detailed data that can provide insights into complex social phenomena.

The research presented employs a descriptive qualitative method to explore the critical reading skills of X University English Literature students in analyzing news related to the 2024 presidential and vice-presidential elections. The study aims to understand how students evaluate the credibility and potential biases of news while identifying the challenges they face in the process, particularly in distinguishing between valid and hoax news.

The objects of this research are news texts concerning the elections, chosen due to concerns about the prevalence of false information during politically charged times. The subjects are students from the university who actively follow political news, as their literacy skills may offer deeper insights into critical reading techniques.

Data collection is conducted through observation, questionnaires, and interviews. The observation aims to observe how college students engage with election-related news in real-time, focusing on their application of critical reading techniques, as well as any behaviors or strategies that may not emerge from self-reported methods. The questionnaire as a non-test technique, primarily

distributed online. These questionnaires aim to assess students' application of critical reading methods, their confidence in identifying credible news sources, and the challenges they encounter. Questions focus on the students' engagement with election news and their experiences applying critical reading techniques. The interviews have a goal to to gain deeper insights into their experiences and perceptions regarding critical reading techniques. This allows for a more personalized exploration of the challenges faced and the thought processes behind their reading strategies.

Data analysis will be performed using thematic analysis which involves identifying, analyzing, and interpreting patterns within the qualitative data gathered from the observation, the questionnaire, interviews responses. This approach helps provide a comprehensive understanding of students' critical reading practices and their impact on decision-making during the election.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study's results are presented in this chapter along with a thorough explanation of the findings, which are essential to comprehending how voters apply and are affected by critical reading techniques.

Student Engagement with Election-Related News

Based on the observation, it showed that students can engage with multiple sources by accessing various news sources simultaneously to verify information. Students also can have ability in critical analysis of content through highlighting and note-taking while analyzing articles. To critically evaluate source credibility. While doing group discussions and peer feedback, the students can do a collaborative learning, debate, and evaluation of article credibility among peers. In order to have effective time management during news consumption to prevent information overload, Students can have 10-minute read time per article and summarized for peers. In aspect of expression of skepticism and healthy doubt by opening skepticism towards sensational headlines and claims made in political content. The students can suggest fact-checking a dubious claim before accepting it as valid.

Critical Reading Enhances Informed Electoral Decisions.
Application of Critical Reading Techniques

Question 1 :   During the last election, did you apply critical reading techniques when accessing information about the presidential and vice-presidential elections?

The data analysis that follows shows how respondents used critical reading strategies to obtain knowledge about the most recent presidential and vice presidential elections. The degree to which respondents employ critical reading strategies when evaluating information is described in this analysis, which is given as a description.

Respondents were questioned about whether they used critical reading strategies to obtain information on the presidential and vice-presidential elections during the last election. Different replies showed varying degrees of involvement with critical reading activities.

Fifteen (75%) of the twenty respondents said they used critical reading strategies to obtain election-related information. This involved tasks like assessing the reliability of sources, cross-referencing data from several sources, and assessing the bias and language employed in the information's presenting. Respondent 5, for example, stated, "Yes, I applied critical reading techniques to evaluate

the information I accessed about the presidential and vice presidential elections. I made sure to analyze the credibility of the sources and cross-check facts from multiple outlets." The majority of responders demonstrate a significant awareness and implementation of critical reading methods, as seen by this degree of engagement.

Two respondents (10%) indicated that they sometimes used these techniques but not consistently. Respondent 8 mentioned, "I barely use it because I'm not really looking for information when election time, but when it's time to find the information I use some critical reading techniques." This implies a limited involvement in critical reading, potentially impacted by the information's perceived significance at the moment.

Three respondents (15%) admitted that they did not apply critical reading techniques. Respondent 4 simply said, "Not really." while Respondent 13 stated, "No, I didn't." This minority shows a lack of involvement with critical reading, which may stem from a number of things, including a lack of awareness, interest, or confidence of applying such techniques.

Question 2 :   Did you actively follow the development of information about the election?

The data analysis that follows shows how respondents used critical reading strategies to obtain knowledge about the most recent presidential and vice presidential elections. The degree to which respondents employ critical reading strategies when examining political material is described in this analysis, which is given as a description.

According to the analysis, the majority of respondents (65%) actively tracked the evolution of election-related material. This group interacted with news articles, social media posts, and official announcements, among other information sources. For example, Respondent 5 mentioned, "Yes, I actively followed the development of information about the election by keeping up with news reports, social media updates, and official announcements. This helped me stay informed about the latest events and statements from the candidates." This indicates a proactive approach to staying informed, which is crucial for making well-rounded decisions in a democratic process.

However, 25% of respondents said they didn't actively monitor the results of the election. Respondent 10 said, "I'm actually the type of person who doesn't really like politics, so I didn't really follow the developments about the last election." This lack of participation may result from a broad disengagement from the election process or from a personal disinterest in politics.

10% of respondents did not always monitor election developments, suggesting that they only occasionally engaged with election-related material. Respondent 17 indicated, "Sometimes," suggesting a less consistent but still occasional interest in staying updated.

Awareness of Critical Reading Techniques

Question 3 : Do you know what critical reading techniques are? If yes, can you briefly explain?

It is clear from the responses that the vast majority of respondents (80%) clearly comprehend critical reading strategies. These methods entail the examination and assessment of data for relevance, accuracy, bias, and credibility. Respondent 5 provides an example of this comprehension by saying, "Yes, critical reading techniques involve analyzing and evaluating the information for accuracy, bias, and reliability. This includes identifying the author's purpose, examining the evidence provided, checking for logical consistency, and considering the context in which the information was presented."

Additionally, responses show differing levels of comprehension depth. A few respondents gave thorough answers including topics like recognizing logical fallacies (Respondent 12), examining information from several sources (Respondent 9), and placing it in perspective (Respondent 11). However, 10% of respondents either had a vague understanding or indicated no clear grasp of critical reading techniques (Respondent 10 and Respondent 17). This suggests a potential gap in literacy education or awareness regarding the skills necessary for evaluating information critically.

Challenges in Applying Critical Reading Techniques

Question 4 : What are the challenges you face when trying to apply critical reading techniques in evaluating election-related information?

The responses highlight a number of typical difficulties encountered when using critical reading strategies to assess material pertaining to elections. 80% of the respondents said it was difficult to keep up with the sheer amount of information accessible, most of it conflicting or misleading.

Furthermore, 70% of respondents mentioned issues with bias and disinformation, highlighting the widespread existence of biased reporting and untrustworthy sources during elections. Additionally, half of the participants recognized the necessity of overcoming personal biases that could influence their understanding of election information.

Question 5 : When applying critical reading techniques during the election, did you experience any difficulties? If so, can you mention what these difficulties were?

The responses indicate a number of significant difficulties people have when using critical reading strategies to analyze material about elections. A significant proportion of participants (45%) recognized information overload as a primary challenge, indicating the copious quantity of material accessible, which could complicate the critical analysis process.

Additionally, 55% of respondents said they had trouble telling trustworthy sources apart from untrustworthy ones. Fifty percent of the respondents found it difficult to recognize bias, which suggests that biased reporting is a common occurrence in election coverage.

Furthermore, 40% of respondents cited dealing with disinformation as a major concern, which is consistent with the extensive circulation of misleading information during elections, especially on social media platforms.

Lastly, 20% of respondents cited the complexity of election-related issues as a barrier, emphasizing the necessity of more in-depth knowledge and analysis to successfully traverse these subjects.

Impact of Critical Reading Techniques

Question 6 : How did applying critical reading techniques impact your understanding and decisions during the election?

80% of respondents said that using critical reading strategies really enhanced their comprehension and ability to make decisions during the election. This demonstrates how important critical reading abilities are for understanding complicated information and coming to wise decisions. Through the often overwhelming volume of election-related information available, critical reading helps people choose trustworthy sources and accurate facts.

Critical reading strategies were noted by a sizable percentage of respondents (60%) as being helpful in differentiating between ideas or propaganda and real facts. This skill is especially important during an election, when biased reporting and false information are prevalent. By distinguishing between opinion and truth, voters can avoid being influenced by misleading or emotionally charged content and instead base their judgments on factual and impartial information.

Critical reading, according to half of the respondents (50%) helped them identify propaganda and biases in the material they came across. Voters need to be able to critically assess information sources and comprehend the underlying motives of various messages. Voters can take into account many viewpoints and arrive at more well-rounded conclusions when they are aware of prejudice.

A significant portion of the participants (45%) expressed that engaging in critical reading gave them a more nuanced and impartial viewpoint of the candidates and their policies. This thorough comprehension is attained by analyzing data critically, recognizing biases, and taking the larger context into account. With this kind of viewpoint, voters can make intelligent and well-informed judgments.

A smaller percentage of respondents (15%) said that using critical reading strategies had no influence on their choices or that they hadn't used them before the election. This indicates that even if many people find critical reading approaches useful, some people may not use them or may not think they have a big enough impact. This would suggest that more instruction and knowledge about the advantages of critical reading are required.

Voters' comprehension and decision-making processes are greatly impacted when critical reading strategies are used during elections. A complete viewpoint, the ability to discern between opinion and truth, and the recognition of biases are all critical abilities that contribute to careful and educated voting. Schema, media literacy, and critical thinking theories offer a strong foundation for comprehending these advantages. The fact that some respondents did not notice any appreciable advantages, however, shows that public education regarding the value and practical use of critical reading skills still needs to be improved.

Regarding the questionnaire result, a significant majority of the respondents (75%) reported actively applying critical reading techniques when seeking information about the elections. These techniques included assessing source credibility, cross-referencing information from multiple outlets, and evaluating bias in the content. Responses indicated that students recognized the importance of these strategies, with some noting specific methods such as checking for biases and analyzing the language used in articles. However, 15% of respondents indicated they did not engage in these techniques, which may stem from a lack of awareness or confidence.

Approximately 65% of participants actively followed the developments related to the elections through various channels, including news articles, social media, and official announcements. This proactive engagement is crucial for making informed electoral decisions. Nevertheless, 25% expressed minimal interest in closely following the election, suggesting disengagement or apathy towards the political process.

When asked about their understanding of critical reading, 80% demonstrated a good grasp of the concepts. They highlighted the need to evaluate information's relevance, accuracy, and potential bias. While most respondents provided detailed explanations that included critical thinking

components, about 10% acknowledged having a weaker understanding, pointing to potential gaps in their education regarding these important skills.

Respondents identified several challenges in applying critical reading techniques. A notable 80% mentioned information overload, complicating their ability to discern credible information. Additionally, 70% faced difficulties related to identifying bias and misinformation, which are common in election coverage. Personal biases and emotional responses to politically charged content were also cited as obstacles.

The analysis revealed that 80% of respondents felt that using critical reading techniques significantly enhanced their understanding and decision-making during the elections. By applying these methods, students reported being able to distinguish between factual information and propaganda, leading to more informed and balanced choices regarding candidates. However, 15% noted that they either did not apply these techniques or felt they made no difference, suggesting a need for increased education and awareness about the value of critical reading.

Student Response Regarding Their Experiences and Perceptions of Critical Reading Techniques

Based on interviews result, their experience with critical reading techniques during the election was quite enlightening. They primarily applied techniques like cross-referencing sources, looking for authoritative data, and questioning the language used in articles. They were surprised at how often they had to compare multiple reports to discern the truth, especially when sensational headlines were involved. It felt empowering for them to dig deeper rather than just accepting information at face value.

One of the biggest challenges they faced was the sheer volume of information available. It was overwhelming, especially when many sources contradicted each other. For example, they saw two reputable news outlets report entirely different narratives about a candidate. It's challenging to figure out which source to trust when both claim to be reliable. They also found it difficult to assess bias, as many articles used emotionally charged language without clear legitimate backing.

Applying critical reading techniques greatly enhanced their understanding of the candidates and their policies. For instance, they were able to look beyond surface-level information and assess the implications of their policies more thoughtfully. By identifying biases in how each candidate was presented in the media, they could form a more rounded view, rather than a diluted version influenced by partisan reporting.

Reflecting on their practices, they believe they could benefit from improving skills in identifying logical fallacies and better recognizing propaganda. Attending workshops focused on media literacy would be helpful. Additionally, incorporating more tools for filtering out unreliable sources, like curated news feeds or apps specifically designed to highlight credible journalism, could enhance their ability to discern between credible and non-credible news in future elections.

DISCUSSION

The study focuses on student behavior and perceptions regarding engagement with election-related news, emphasizing the significance of critical reading techniques in shaping informed electoral decisions. Several key themes emerged from the research, highlighting the methods and challenges faced by students in navigating the complex media landscape.

Students demonstrated the capacity to engage with a variety of news sources, utilizing skills such as simultaneous access to multiple outlets to verify information. Techniques like highlighting and note-taking were common practices among students when analyzing articles, enabling critical evaluation of source credibility. Group discussions facilitated collaborative learning, allowing peers to debate and evaluate article credibility collectively. Moreover, strategies for effective time management during news consumption, such as allocating a 10-minute read per article followed by peer summaries, were vital in preventing information overload.

A pronounced skepticism was observed towards sensational headlines and claims within political content. Students frequently advocated for fact-checking dubious claims before accepting them as valid, showcasing a growing awareness of the necessity for critical investigation in modern media consumption.

The findings through questionnaire show that a sizable portion of respondents (75%) actively used critical reading techniques to find out information about upcoming elections. These respondents evaluated the bias and language used in the information presentation, cross-referenced facts, and assessed the credibility of sources. This high degree of participation indicates that the participants are significantly aware of and use critical reading strategies. On the other hand, 15% of respondents said they never used these strategies, while 10% said they only used them infrequently. This minority indicates a lack of critical reading engagement, which may be brought about by ignorance, disinterest, or a lack of confidence in one's ability to use such strategies. Overall, the data shows that most respondents have a solid awareness of the value of critical thinking when absorbing political information.

A significant proportion of participants (65%) engaged in active monitoring of election-related developments using diverse channels, including news articles, social media, and official declarations. In a democratic process, making well-informed decisions requires a proactive approach to information gathering. Nonetheless, 25% of respondents showed little active interest in monitoring election results, suggesting a lack of engagement with the electoral process. Furthermore, 10% of respondents said they occasionally interacted with election-related content. These results emphasize how crucial it is to keep up with election-related information in order to make wise decisions.

80% of respondents clearly comprehend critical reading procedures, which involve evaluating information for relevance, correctness, bias, and credibility. This is evident from the respondents' responses. There was variation in the level of understanding among the responders; some gave thorough explanations that included identifying logical fallacies, analyzing data from several sources, and placing the data in context. 10% of respondents, however, seemed to have a hazy or unclear comprehension of critical reading strategies, suggesting a possible weakness in literacy instruction or awareness of the abilities required for critically analyzing information. This disparity indicates that in order to improve comprehension and implementation of critical reading strategies, more education and awareness campaigns are required.

The participants identified multiple prevalent obstacles while utilizing critical reading strategies on information pertaining to elections. A significant majority (80%) said they had trouble keeping up with the sheer amount of information accessible, most of it contradictory or deceptive. This is consistent with the Information Overload Theory (Phillips-Wren & Adya, 2020) which holds that processing information and making decisions might be hampered by an abundance of information. Furthermore, 70% of respondents brought up the subject of bias and misinformation, highlighting the widespread

presence of biased reporting and unreliable sources across election seasons. Moreover, half of the respondents recognized the necessity of overcoming individual prejudices that can impact their comprehension of electoral data. These results highlight the difficulties and complexities involved in conducting a critical assessment of election-related material.

Respondents who applied critical reading skills to the analysis of election-related material noted a number of major challenges. Of the participants, 45% cited information overload as their biggest difficulty. This underscores the deluge of available data that might impede the process of critical analysis. Furthermore, 50% of respondents found it challenging to identify bias in the information, and 55% of respondents had trouble telling trustworthy sources from untrustworthy ones. 40% of respondents expressed dealing with disinformation as a serious issue, which is not surprising given the widespread spread of false information during elections, especially on social media platforms. Additionally, 20% of respondents saw the complexity of election-related issues as a barrier, highlighting the necessity of deeper understanding and analysis to properly handle these subjects. These results highlight the primary issues around the amount of information available, the reliability of sources, and the existence of bias and false information.

During the election, 80% of respondents' comprehension and decision-making improved when critical reading strategies were used. According to these respondents, reading critically greatly improved their comprehension and decision-making skills. The methods assisted them in sorting through the frequently bewildering amount of election-related content to find reliable sources and correct information. In addition, 60% of respondents said that these methods were helpful in differentiating between propaganda and truth, which is crucial during elections when skewed news coverage and misleading information are common. Identifying biases and propaganda in the information they came across through critical reading, according to half of the respondents, allowed them to weigh different viewpoints and come to more well-rounded conclusions. In addition, 45% of respondents said that reading critically gave them a more balanced and complex perspective on the candidates and their platforms. 15% of respondents, however, said that critical reading techniques had no influence on their decisions or that they were not used, indicating a need for more knowledge and understanding of the advantages of critical reading.

The results show that respondents used critical reading strategies to a great degree, which helped them make more informed selections throughout the election. Nonetheless, obstacles like disinformation, bias, and information overload continue to exist, making it more difficult to use these strategies. There is a need for more education and understanding on the benefits of critical reading, as evidenced by the minority who either did not employ these strategies or thought they were ineffective. All things considered, the study emphasizes how crucial critical reading is for navigating the complicated and frequently biased terrain of election-related information, encouraging deliberate and informed engagement in the democratic process.

Interviews revealed that students found their experience with critical reading techniques enlightening, mainly using methods such as cross-referencing sources, seeking authoritative data, and critically assessing language used in articles. Despite facing challenges with the volume of contradictory information and assessing biases, they recognized the empowerment that came from examining sources beyond face value. Reflecting on their practices, students identified areas for improvement, such as recognizing logical fallacies and propaganda more effectively. Future efforts

could include attending media literacy workshops and utilizing tools designed to filter unreliable sources, which could further refine their ability to discern credible news in future electoral contexts.

This research underlines the vital role of critical reading techniques in forming informed electoral decisions and highlights the importance of educational initiatives to strengthen these skills among students, fostering a more discerning generation of media consumers.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The study emphasizes the critical importance of reading techniques in helping students navigate the complex landscape of election-related news, fostering informed electoral decisions. The findings reveal a significant engagement with critical reading methods, with 75% of respondents actively applying techniques to evaluate sources, assess biases, and cross-reference information. This high level of engagement signifies a strong awareness among students regarding the value of critical thinking in processing political information.

However, challenges such as information overload, the prevalence of bias, and the difficulty in distinguishing reliable sources from misinformation persist. While a majority reported improved comprehension and decision-making as a result of employing critical reading strategies, a notable minority still indicated a lack of confidence or understanding in utilizing these techniques. This underlines the necessity for ongoing educational efforts that focus on enhancing media literacy and critical reading skills among students.

As students increasingly encounter sensational headlines and conflicting narratives, it is crucial to cultivate their analytical abilities and support them in developing a skeptical attitude toward information sources. By addressing the barriers identified in this research, such as personal biases and emotional responses to politically charged content, educational initiatives can further empower students to engage meaningfully in the democratic process.

Overall, this research not only highlights the pivotal role that critical reading plays in aiding students in discerning credible information but also calls for continued investment in education to strengthen these essential skills, ultimately contributing to a more informed and engaged citizenry. Efforts to promote media literacy workshops and tools that help filter unreliable information can further enhance students' capacities to navigate the intricacies of modern electoral politics, ensuring they make well-informed decisions in future elections.

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