Beyond the classroom:
How do students evaluate political information after information literacy course?

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Abstract

This exploratory study examines how students evaluate political information one year after completing a one-semester information literacy course. The course focused on teaching students how to find and evaluate information for use in journalism and strategic communication. In-depth interviews with 22 formerly enrolled students were conducted to understand their evaluation processes. Results suggest that students demonstrate the ability to apply evaluative cues similar to those taught in the course but often struggle to evaluate political information critically and thoroughly outside familiar academic domains. Also, their evaluations were more likely driven by heuristic cues, and they rarely engaged in deep, beyond-the-surface evaluations when processing political information. This study provides a foundational understanding of students' evaluation process and offers practical recommendations for future information literacy interventions, political information evaluation, and skill transfer research.

Introduction

Following a growing consensus among experts that information literacy (IL) interventions can help inoculate against misleading political information (Cutler, 2021; Gabor, 2021; Polizzi, 2020; Williams, 2021), this study examines how students who have undergone such training apply their skills outside the classroom. While these scholars suggest that IL skills are vital for civic engagement and can transfer across diverse information contexts, this assumption may not always hold true. Moreover, some scholars have argued that IL skills and those needed to evaluate political information are compatible and should be taught simultaneously in classrooms to strengthen the relationship between civics, political literacy, and democratic health (Alexander, 2009; Cook & Walsh, 2012; Thompson, 2021). This exploratory study examines how students whose IL training was in a classroom setting and focused on non-political information contexts evaluate online political information. While baseline data would have helped establish skill transfer, this study's goal is to advance our understanding of how students ultimately navigate political information in the online ecosystem. This is a first step in understanding students' interactions and evaluation of political information in out-of-classroom contexts

Keywords: Information Literacy; Online Political Information; Information Processing

for future studies and toward designing more effective IL interventions, and to advance the conversation on how to promote critical political information consumption and evaluation.

Literature Review

Information literacy involves the ability to identify, gather, and critically evaluate information (Association of College and Research Libraries [ACRL], 2000). Scholars advocating IL interventions suggest that training can inoculate students against the negative effects of misleading information (Foley, 2017; Jones-Jang, *et al.*, 2021; Sutherland, 2025). In a study on the role of IL in identifying fake news, Jones-Jang *et al.* (2021) found that IL was positively associated with accurate identification of fake news. Specifically, individuals with more significant IL skills could navigate and find verified and credible online information. Their finding is echoed in earlier work on digital IL skills and online news, which found that individuals with more IL skills could discern between false and mainstream news (Guess, Lerner, & Lyons, 2020).

Historically grounded in the information and library science literature and facilitated by library staff (Julien, 2005), information literacy interventions have also been incorporated into course and program curricula (Kasowitz-Scheer & Pasqualoni, 2002; Kelly, 2025). An IL intervention can be beneficial for equipping students with skills to navigate the information space (Addy, 2020; Jones-Jang et al., 2021; McGrew *et al.*, 2017). At the college level, IL interventions can prepare students for their careers by teaching and prompting them to practice the information skills used in their chosen professions (Bobkowski & Younger, 2020; Bornstein, 2003). Beyond schooling, IL interventions can benefit individuals operating in an information-saturated society (Mothe & Sahut, 2011).

This study focuses on an IL intervention integrated into a journalism and mass communication program. Instructors and researchers have connected IL with the skills used in journalism and communication professions by using journalistic and communication practices, including simulating a breaking story, finding stories and sources, and verifying information sources, to teach IL (Bobkowski & Younger, 2020; Brown & Kingsley, 2010; Macmillan, 2014). For instance, Brown and Kingsley (2010) integrated IL into a journalism program by simulating a breaking news story, helping students practice evaluating sources in a journalistic context. This study follows a similar approach, focusing on a journalism and mass communication program.

JOUR 302: Information Exploration, an information literacy course

Using in-depth interviews, this study describes the evaluative strategies that students employ when assessing online political information one year after completing an IL course. This course is titled JOUR 302: Information Exploration, offered by a school of journalism and mass communication in the Midwest. While open to all students, it is a core course for journalism and strategic communication majors and minors. The course centers on teaching students how to assess the trustworthiness of information through a systematic evaluation process, which mirrors the lateral searching method used by professional fact-checkers (Flanagin & Metzger, 2000; Sutherland, 2025; Wathen & Burkell, 2002; Wineburg & McGrew, 2019). Students complete assignments that facilitate practicing the functional research and evaluation tasks they would complete as professional journalists and strategic communication practitioners. For their evaluations, the course taught students a range of evaluative skills for use in academic and professional contexts, including identifying evaluative cues, gathering evidence about these cues, evaluating their contribution to credibility, and deciding whether a source is trustworthy. This study explores how those skills manifest in a different domain, specifically when students are faced with evaluating online political information beyond the classroom.

Learning Theory

Applying skills across different contexts is known as transfer of learning (Ambrose *et al.*, 2010). Education researchers have studied this transfer of learning and distinguish between near transfer, where the contexts are significantly similar, and far transfer, where the contexts are substantially different (Kluge, Frank, Maafi, & Kuzmanovska, 2016; Linou & Kontogiannis, 2004). This study examines a form of far transfer as it examines students' application of skills from a classroom-based, non-political context to an out-of-classroom political context. Although transfer does not occur automatically, it can be facilitated by the relevance of concepts and students' understanding of applicability conditions. For example, Ambrose *et al.* (2010) suggested that students transfer skills better if they can apply the abstract concept they have learned

to a practical context. Students can also transfer better if they understand the conditions under which they can use certain skills. This study, therefore, explores how students apply skills from one context to another. By observing their evaluation strategies and reasoning, this study provides a case for how far transfer manifests in an out-of-classroom setting.

Political Information Evaluation

To become critical users of the online information ecosystem, students must be able to transfer their evaluative skills from the classroom to real-world contexts, such as political information. Scholars argue that critical evaluation of online political information helps individuals understand socio-political issues and navigate the online space effectively (Barassi, 2015; Delli Carpini, 2000; McCurdy, 2010, 2011; McGrew et al., 2018; Polizzi, 2020). Hobbs (2010) emphasized the need for citizens in a democracy to develop competencies in news consumption and information evaluation. These competencies, in turn, could foster a more participatory democracy and social progress (Kellner & Share, 2007). Similarly, Alexander (2009) emphasizes the importance of IL to political information context and argues that both concepts are "inextricably linked and impossible to separate" (p. 11).

The consequences of political IL are significant (Walton *et al.*, 2020). For instance, citing the 2016 Brexit referendum and the 2016 U.S. presidential election as instances, these scholars have argued that the outcomes of political events might be different if young people had the skills to help them more accurately assess the political information to which they are exposed.

Research on political information evaluation often highlights political knowledge, defined as a citizen's ability to answer specific fact-based questions about government (Boudreau & Lupia, 2011; Delli Carpini & Keeter, 1993, 1996). However, recent political events and the information environment's state call for a re-evaluation of what it means to be politically informed to include not only factual knowledge but also critical evaluation of political content, considering factors like the content credibility, source's intent and motivations (Bochel, 2009; Cassel & Lo, 1997; Kahne, Hodgin, & Eidman-Aadahl, 2016; Lund & Carr, 2008; Pun, 2017; Walton *et al.*, 2020).

Further, at the core of the ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education* is informed citizenship (Lenker, 2016; McGrew *et al.*, 2018).

Since the online information environment facilitates how students learn and communicate about politics, IL can serve as a useful framework for examining how students make sense of political information in an out-of-class context (Lenker, 2016; McGrew, 2020). Although there is sufficient literature on the relationship between IL and informed citizenship, there is little evidence that students can actually transfer the skills used in academic contexts to a citizenship context, such as when they evaluate political information (Jacobs & Berg, 2011). This study examines how students who took a classroom-context IL intervention evaluate online political information in an environment saturated with misleading information.

A Dual Model of Information Processing: The Heuristic-Systematic Model

Research on information processing centers on a dual cognitive model, which explains that there are two main ways that information is processed: with less effort or with more effort. Theoretically, this study is guided by the Heuristic-systematic model (HSM), a dual-process theory originally conceptualized to explain how attitudes are formed in persuasive contexts (Chaiken, 1980). The model posits that individuals process information in one of two ways, heuristically or systematically (Chaiken, 1980). Heuristic processing is a low-effort, automatic process that relies on mental shortcuts or schemas formed from prior experiences and low-order knowledge structures. Systematic processing, on the other hand, is the deliberate, effortful, and elaborate analysis of information.

The HSM is guided by two principles: the least effort principle and the sufficiency principle. According to the least effort principle, humans are cognitive misers (Fiske and Taylor, 1991) with a limited capacity for processing information. Therefore, humans tend to default to the more effortless heuristic mode to conserve cognitive resources (Bohner, Moskowitz, & Chaiken, 1995). For a heuristic to be used, it must be available in memory and easily accessible (Todorov, Chaiken, & Henderson, 2002). A heuristic cue's accessibility can be increased by its salience, frequency of use, or the confidence it confers on a judgment (Todorov *et al.*, 2002)

The sufficiency principle suggests that while people prefer to use the least effort, they also want to feel confident in their judgments (Bohner *et al.*, 1995). Thus, individuals will continue to process information until they reach a sufficiency threshold, which is the

point at which they feel confident enough in their evaluation to move on to another task. If their initial processing does not meet this threshold, they may be motivated to engage in more systematic, effortful processing (Bohner *et al.*, 1995). Based on this framework, this study expects that students will primarily rely on the least effort principle when evaluating online political information. It is anticipated that they will use heuristics as their default evaluation strategy, as the domain of online politics is likely outside the scope of the IL training that they received and may not trigger the sufficiency threshold and the associated deep, systematic processing.

Research Question

Based on the preceding literature review, this study asks: How do students from a classroom-based IL course evaluate online political information and to what extent do their evaluation strategies reflect the skills taught in their training?

Method

This study used an exploratory design to examine how students evaluate online political information and addressed its research question with in-depth interviews. Most research on students' evaluations of online information has been conducted with self-report surveys, written open-ended questions, and course-based assessments (e.g., Burgoyne & Chuppa-Cornell, 2015). These studies do not allow researchers to probe students' reasoning and motives for their evaluations (Daugherty & Russo, 2011; Gross & Latham, 2013). However, exceptions include Hargattai *et al.* (2010), who combined surveys and interviews to investigate contextual factors for students' online information credibility evaluations. Data for this study was generated through one-on-one, in-depth interviews with participants, which provided an opportunity to capture their reasoning and evaluation processes in detail (Craig & Corrall, 2007). While this study's design did not include a pre-assessment to allow for a pre-post comparison, it enabled a detailed analysis of how students assess information in an out-of-classroom context when they are faced with online political content.

Data Collection

This study used purposive sampling for participant selection. Under this approach, participants are selected based on specific criteria (Haro-de-Rosario *et al.*, 2018). To examine how students who have undergone an IL intervention in the form of the JOUR

302 course evaluate political information in an-out-of-classroom setting, the researcher recruited students formerly enrolled in JOUR 302.

A total of 22 participants completed the interview, and saturation was reached by the 19th interview (Francis *et al.*, 2010; Nascimento *et al.*, 2018). Saturation was determined at the point during the data collection when new interview responses did not produce any significant change to the information gathered (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). In addition, each participant received a $20 incentive for completing the interview. Each interview session lasted 35 minutes. Participants' ages ranged from 18 to 24. Approximately 68% of respondents identified as female, and 32% identified as male. In answering the political affiliation question, 13 participants identified as Democrats (59.10%), five participants reported that they were Republicans (22.73%), three participants identified as independent (13.64%), and one person identified as unaffiliated (4.25%).

Materials and Procedure

The University's Human Research Protection Program approved this study and materials before data collection. Students who volunteered to participate received an article two hours before the interview. A two-hour interval before the interview was decided based on a pilot that tested three different time intervals between receiving the article and the interview. To avoid priming, email instructions did not mention credibility, assessment, or evaluation. Participants were only instructed to read and familiarize themselves with the article.

The article was about a relevant topic to students, set within a political context, and published by a non-legacy news source. Participants read a BuzzFeed article about CrossFit, a fitness business, with issues around political ideologies. This article was chosen to assess students' ability to apply classroom evaluation skills to a political information context, while also reflecting the type of content students encounter regularly. Also, the article discussed two intersecting relevant topics of fitness and the CrossFit brand in one article. In terms of fitness, Research shows that college students view fitness positively, associating it with self-esteem, physical attractiveness, and a better quality of life (Das & Evans, 2014; Ouyang *et al.*, 2020). At the same time, CrossFit is reported as a popular fitness brand among college students (Hartmann, 2020). Since both fitness and CrossFit are rel-

evant to college students and research suggests that personal relevance of the topic influences information processing, it was expected that participants would find the topic engaging. See Appendix A for a link to the article participants received.

Data Analysis

The researcher transcribed the interview data, and the data were analyzed using thematic analysis and open coding. Themes were identified iteratively using a theoretical approach, which involves a top-down analysis of the data where the researcher focused on how the data can answer the research questions of the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Hayes, 1997; Saldaña, 2009).

Results

This study examined how students who completed a classroom-specific IL course apply their evaluative skills to an out-of-classroom online political information context. The findings from interviews revealed that students were able to identify cues such as bias, links, and the reputation of the source, thus providing insight into how their evaluative skills manifest in an out-of-classroom context.

Bias

In JOUR 302, students were taught to recognize bias in the information they encounter, whether it is explicit or implicit, and to identify forms of bias such as gender, racial, ideological, or commercial. The interviewees applied this concept by pointing out that the article they evaluated was "definitely biased" and reflected a "Democrat's viewpoint." One participant said, "there is an obvious slant of the article against the Republican congresswoman Marjorie Greene" (Maria). Another participant concurred because, "I can tell that it has bias in it, that is written from a left-leaning perspective" (Norah).

Referring to a statement in the article, Norah illustrated the left-leaning bias in the article, saying:

> there was one part in the article, I believe it is towards the middle, where the congresswoman who this was written about said that Democrats closed all gyms. And then in parenthesis, the writers of the article wrote "They didn't, by the way." So I think that that kind of showed automatically that this was written from people who were really Democrats.

The article's focus on CrossFit's efforts to distance itself from controversial members and conservative-leaning ideologies may have positioned the article as left-leaning and this colored participants' perception of the article. With a title and lede that suggests that Congresswoman Greene is a controversial user of the CrossFit brand, some participants perceived the article to be adversarial and biased against the Congresswoman. While these responses align with the JOUR 302 approach, where students learn to evaluate information for bias, the responses were often limited to surface-level analysis without exploring the broader implications of such bias.

Links to External Sources

In JOUR 302, students learn how to attribute information using journalistic conventions including the phrase "according to," and by providing hyperlinks that allow readers to verify information. Participants in this study applied this thinking by referencing that they would consider the presence of links to external sources in their evaluation. These participants said they could click on the links and read up on the attributed information sources to better understand the article. One participant emphasized that the number of links in the article neutralized the effect of the bias as "the many hyperlinks to other things just made [the article] credible to me" (Noah). It should be noted that while most participants in the study considered the numerous hyperlinks to external sources, only two of them actually clicked on those links to verify the information. This discrepancy between identifying an evaluative cue (linked sources) and actually using them to check the information reflects findings from previous studies, which have shown that students often claim to evaluate sources without actually doing so (Metzger *et al.*, 2015). Despite recognizing that linked sources could be evaluative indicators, students' evaluation processes rarely included engaging in the full verification process. This finding demonstrates their reliance on the less effortful heuristic approach over systematic verification. This suggests that a gap exists between recognizing an evaluation indicator in the classroom and applying it in real-world contexts.

Reputation and on the Surface Reasonings

In JOUR 302, students are expected to articulate detailed reasoning for their evaluation decisions to demonstrate a critical and holistic consideration of the evaluation process. In this study, most participants' evaluation rationales were largely superficial, without detailed explanations for their evaluations. For instance, when probed why they think Buzzfeed is not a credible source of political information, most participants kept alluding to the reputation of Buzzfeed without explaining why the reputation diminish-

es the credibility of the source. For example, Jordan said, "Buzzfeed isn't really the first place I would go to get political [news] because you rate them [Buzzfeed] by their reputation. That's all I can think of off the top of my head." Responding to the same prompt, Samantha noted that Buzzfeed "does not have a trustworthy reputation" and is not one of the "reliable sources for me." These reasonings are at best on the surface level as they did not describe how reputation affects credibility. Based on Bobkowski and Younger's (2020) work on how well students provide supportive evidence for their information evaluations, participants in the current study oscillated between levels 1 and 2 on the information evaluation scale as outlined in their study. According to the authors, level 1 evaluation identifies an evaluative cue but does not include an evaluation of the cue. Level 2 evaluation means that students identify an evaluative cue, evaluate the cue, but do not provide supporting evidence for the evaluation outside of their opinions.

Context of Information and Recent Events Matter

This project expected students to be able to consider the context of the information they read. The context here refers to the settings and ideas that facilitate a robust understanding of the information (Ben Amram, Aharony, & Bar Ilan, 2021). In this study, participants would have demonstrated their ability to contextualize political information by reflecting on the current sociopolitical setting and interpreting the article in its light. For example, participants were expected to talk about Congresswoman Marjorie Greene, her role in the current political space, and to establish a link between her political activities and the article they read. This expectation was not met because only a few participants considered the information context as explained above. For these participants, information context, including the background of the topic, the political figure, and the relationship between the information and current events, is important for evaluating the political information. According to Adam, "understanding this is necessary for critical understanding of information."

Moreover, these participants explained that they would consider why Buzzfeed published the article. According to these participants, since politics is not a popular terrain for Buzzfeed, finding out why the source published the article was crucial to their evaluation. Also, these participants explained that the article was trustworthy because the topic was "relevant to the political atmosphere and all the political events

with people like Marjorie Taylor Greene" (Peyton).

In sum, only a few participants were able to consider the context of information and the implications when evaluating political information.

Perceived difficulty and lack of interest

As part of their evaluation processes, many participants said they find political information articles like the Buzzfeed article difficult to understand. They attributed this difficulty to a disinterest in and a lack of understanding of politics. One participant, for instance, explained that "I'm admittedly not interested in reading about politics because there is so much that we do not know about it." As another participant echoed, evaluating political information is challenging because it is not interesting. Several participants described the political information as "boring," which appeared to reduce their motivation to engage deeply with the content. According to one participant,

> To be completely frank with you, I find politics boring. I would far more spend time with a story that's, you know, humanity-based or something more interesting and relevant to me. I'm really into fashion and travel. I'll be more interested in sitting down and thinking about those things.

This feeling of boredom and perceived difficulty in evaluating political information seemed to impact the thoroughness of their evaluations. Moreover, their lack of interest and perceived difficulty might be because of their inability to reconcile the relevance of an information domain that is not closely associated with their schoolwork or personal interests. To better contextualize, a couple of participants who engaged more deeply with the information and considered the context of the information domain had some experience with political science, worked on a political campaign, or wrote political news for a newspaper.

Overall, results revealed a pattern where former JOUR 302 students were able to identify evaluative cues related to the IL course, yet their evaluation processes remained largely superficial and lacked detailed, supportive evidence for their evaluation. This is consistent with prior research findings, which showed that students evaluate information superficially without providing well-thought-out evidence (Bobkowski & Younger, 2020). Instead, their assessments were generic, and they relied on their opinion as the interpretive tool.

Although nearly all participants could outline common evaluation cues, such as checking for bias,

external sources, and the reputation of a source, they also admitted that political information is boring and challenging to understand. The findings suggest a discrepancy between students' theoretical understanding of evaluation skills taught within a journalism and mass communication classroom. and their practical application in an out-of-classroom political context.

Discussion

To further prior research on IL, this study asked how students whose IL training was in a non-political classroom context evaluate online political information. This study's findings indicate their current evaluation processes outside of a classroom setting and suggest a clear discrepancy between students' theoretical understanding of IL skills as learned in a non-political classroom context and the practical application in an out-of-classroom online political information context.

Participants used evaluative cues that are similar to the ones from JOUR 302, albeit without detailed explanations to support their reasoning and evaluations. Also, only a few participants could position their responses within a broader political context and explain how political perspectives and affiliations may have shaped the article they read. Although nearly all participants could identify bias in the article, they failed to contextualize the bias within the information they read. For instance, only a couple of participants were able to draw on Buzzfeed's reputation as a source that is sympathetic to liberal views in explaining the reported bias against conservative ideologies.

Also, participants' experience with Buzzfeed as a source influenced their evaluation. Participants perceived that Buzzfeed, based on their experience with the outlet, is associated with entertainment and pop culture and is less a source for political information or, as one participant put it, "a serious news place." Yet many participants reasoned that the attribution and copious links to sources were enough to allay their initial skepticism about the article.

Students' evaluation of political information implicates research that has shown that IL competencies contribute to informed citizenship (Barassi, 2015; McGrew *et al.*, 2018; McGrew, 2020; Walton *et al.*, 2020). These scholars suggest that democracy thrives where citizens can distinguish between good quality and low-quality information, as this facilitates a civic discourse that embraces diverse perspectives. Some of these scholars outlined a process that sug-

gests that the ability to distinguish between credible and non-credible political information requires more cognitive efforts for elaborate processing than what is required to know specific facts-based political questions (Walton *et al.*, 2020). However, the responses in this study reflect a pattern in former IL students' disinterest in their assessments of political information outside the classroom context. Participants' reported difficulty and lack of interest in evaluating political information offer insights into their reliance on heuristic processing. This finding aligns with the HSM's least effort principle, which suggests that humans, as cognitive misers (Fiske & Taylor, 1991), will use the most effective strategies to conserve cognitive resources. As the perceived difficulty in evaluating political information creates cognitive friction and the disinterest removes the motivation to overcome it, the default is to revert to heuristic shortcuts instead of engaging in the effortful systematic processing that is required for a thorough evaluation of the online political information. Overall, students who participated in this study relied on heuristic evaluative cues to evaluate online political information, a pattern that demonstrates the challenge for informed citizenry and of skill transfer across contexts (Kahne & Bowyer, 2017; Polizzi, 2020).

Limitations

This study was exploratory and did not consider the pre-JOUR 302 skills. Without such baseline data, this study is limited because it is difficult to ascertain whether the participants learned the skills in JOUR 302 or not. The study's design does not allow for a direct assessment of skill transfer. Rather, the study explores and provides a descriptive analysis of the observed discrepancy between the taught evaluative process and students' evaluations in a different context. It is therefore difficult to ascertain whether the skills were transferred or not, or whether JOUR 302 was solely responsible for their evaluation process. This provides another opportunity that future research may consider. Also, this study's limited scope, a specific student group from one course within a program, limits the generalizability of findings.

Conclusion and future considerations

Calls for IL as an inoculation against political misinformation rest on the assumption that IL interventions could prepare students for political information literacy (Alexander, 2009; Cutler, 2021; Gabor, 2021;

Williams, 2021). This study suggests that students may find it difficult to evaluate political information critically and thoroughly outside familiar domains, including domains not specific to their coursework. Findings highlight that the presumed link between IL training and practical political literacy is complicated by the cognitive and motivational challenges that students face when evaluating information. Overall, this study provides a foundational understanding of how students approach evaluation, thereby creating a starting point for future research where these challenges can be further explored in out-of-classroom domains.

Moreover, this study can contribute to the IL interventions in journalism and mass communication curriculum. Students' evaluation of political information indicates that IL interventions may help prepare students who are not political science majors to think about political information in more substantive ways than they did without exposure to political information contexts. It might be beneficial to incorporate political stories or assignment tasks with civic implications into interventions.

Students in this study who considered the information context and did a better job evaluating political information were students who reported an interest in political topics or experience in the political domain. Several participants reported that they are not politically knowledgeable and interested. Perhaps their disinterest in evaluating political information is a function of their inability to see the connection between political information and their personal lives. If students understood the critical role of politics and political information in different aspects of their lives, perhaps their interest in politics may be piqued, and that, in turn, may lessen their struggle in evaluating political information. Yet, there is the possibility that making such connections may be outside the purview of course-specific IL interventions. A better idea could be to connect politics to the profession, instead of drawing a connection between politics and the individual self. For instance, it may be useful to talk about political topics that impact the profession, in the case of this study, journalism and mass communication professions, with explanations of the third-order effects that such impact may have on students' careers.

Further, IL intervention instruction like the JOUR 302 course should consider students' news-seeking behaviors. In practical terms, this would mean that instructions include assessing how students find and consume information when it is not related to their classroom assignments. It may be useful to provide opportunities for students to learn to find information on topics that are not restricted exclusively to the classroom, as this may better prepare students to recognize and thoroughly apply the IL skills to contexts outside the classroom. Also, to better connect the relevance of evaluative skills to the journalism and mass communication professions, creating both instructional and assessment materials that are even more tailored for daily contexts outside the classroom with career-relevant outcomes may be beneficial. Ultimately, the findings from this study are vital first steps that provide insights for designing effective information literacy interventions that can directly help students navigate the challenges of evaluating online political information.

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Appendix A: Link to the Buzzfeed Article

Olushola Aromona's (Ph.D.) research focuses on political communication in emerging democracies, information and media literacy, and online political information evaluation.