



Understanding Philippine History Education in the Age of Disinformation: A Phenomenological Exploration

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Abstract

In Philippine history education, the growing influence of digital media has shifted students' learning preferences, offering both opportunities and challenges. The widespread use of social media platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok has affected how students access and engage with historical content. A key challenge is that social media, with its easily digestible information, impacts students' attention spans and trust in traditional versus digital sources. This shift underscores the importance of integrating multimedia tools into history education while maintaining rigorous academic standards. This study examines how students' inclination toward social media influences their engagement with historical content and trust in information sources. Using a phenomenological approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews with students from diverse educational backgrounds. The analysis highlights the growing reliance on visual and auditory learning methods, reflecting the "digital native" phenomenon. Although social media offers easy access to information, students still prefer traditionally published historical materials for their credibility and authoritative nature. However, the brevity of social media content tends to reduce students' interest in conducting deeper historical research. The study recommends that educators incorporate multimedia elements in history education to improve student engagement while fostering critical thinking and media literacy. Balancing the use of digital tools with high academic standards is essential to ensure students develop a comprehensive understanding of history.

Keywords: *Critical Thinking and Media Literacy, Digital Vs. Traditional Sources, Multimedia Integration, Philippine History Education, Social Media Influence*

A. Introduction

History teaches political intelligence, morality, personal growth, and the value of learning from past mistakes. Academically, it cultivates critical skills such as reading, writing, research, and analysis. In the Philippines, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) mandates teaching history. Under CHED Memorandum Order No. 20, Series of 2013, Philippine History is included in the General Education Core Courses, now titled "Readings in Philippine History." This course emphasizes analyzing and interpreting primary sources from various historical periods, offering a comprehensive view of the nation's past. Traditionally, history has been revered as an authoritative source of empirical truths, providing insights derived from specific contexts and conditions—naturally presented by scientific developments or shaped by human actions. As Ylagan (2020) highlights, history imparts valuable lessons through its unfolding events. Yet, in the digital age, social media significantly challenges this perception by transforming how historical narratives are created and disseminated.

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The fragility of physical archives and human memory can undermine the life that history breathes into concepts and principles. With their rapid spread of information, social media platforms introduce new dynamics that may distort or amplify historical narratives. There is a risk of historical lessons being forgotten, misrepresented, or manipulated to fit contemporary biases or to sanitize past injustices. As Guiang (2020) observes, every generation constructs its own history, influenced by its present needs and perspectives. The "constructed past" produced by historians reflect a generation's collective experiences, ideals, and biases.

In contrast, social media enables younger generations to rapidly craft and share their own narratives, often shaped by current values and experiences rather than established historical methods. While older generations may be concerned about the implications of historical revisionism, younger generations are increasingly focused on developing their interpretations of history in response to the digital age's demands. This shift underscores the evolving nature of historical scholarship and the growing need to critically engage with how history is presented and perceived in the social media era. In recent years, the rise of disinformation online and the agents disseminating such falsehoods have been widely recognized. Research in disinformation detection and related fields has gained momentum, with scholars examining various aspects of the problem from diverse perspectives. Disinformation has been a tool individuals, groups, and governments used for decades to influence public opinion by spreading falsified information to sway political alignment.

The internet has further amplified the spread of propaganda, allowing false information to reach broader audiences more rapidly. Hoaxes and rumors on platforms like WhatsApp and Facebook have led to real-world consequences fueled by sensationalized content that elicits strong emotional reactions and increases engagement (Shu et al., 2017; Vosoughi, Roy, & Aral, 2018). The low cost of creating disinformation and using automated bots to spread it exacerbates this problem (Shao et al., 2017). Millennials, especially students, are particularly susceptible to disinformation due to a lack of awareness and critical evaluation skills (Sharma et al., 2019). Teaching Philippine History in this "Age of Disinformation" presents significant challenges. This is the deliberate spreading of false information crafted to deceive. Unlike misinformation, which may result from error, "disinformation involves a calculated effort to mislead an audience." (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017) History teachers must convey the importance of studying the past, a task made more difficult when students question the relevance of historical events to contemporary issues. They often ask why we need to dwell on the past when it seems more practical to focus on the present (Bhatnagar, 2018). Sometimes, teachers struggle to contextualize historical events within the framework of current events, making the subject appear disconnected from present realities. As a result, students may turn to alternative sources that offer different narratives or interpretations of historical events.

Today, Philippine History teachers face conflicting information from books, social media, and other sources that significantly influence students' perspectives. In their experience teaching Philippine History, teachers encountered numerous challenges, particularly in this digital age, where students are bombarded with various narratives and often confused about what to believe. The search for alternative sources increasingly exposes students to disinformation that contradicts the content taught in schools or presented in textbooks. This divergence in perspectives is particularly concerning in the context of teaching Philippine History, as it reflects a broader trend of skepticism among students who are digital natives—those who have grown up immersed in digital technology and social media (Prensky, 2001). This skepticism often leads students to question the accuracy and consistency of the historical narratives presented in formal education, favoring information from online sources that may be unverified or misleading (McGrew et al., 2018).

The availability of alternative narratives, especially those propagated on social media and other digital platforms, challenges traditional historical education by presenting conflicting accounts that can sometimes distort facts or promote biased interpretations. This situation has inspired an in-depth exploration of the lived experiences of teachers in Philippine History, who now face the challenge of engaging students who increasingly rely on information from sources outside the academic realm. Research has shown that digital natives are more prone to encountering and sometimes believing disinformation, given the algorithm-driven nature of content dissemination on platforms like Facebook and YouTube, which can amplify sensational or ideologically charged narratives (Vaidhyanathan, 2018; Tandoc, Lim, & Ling, 2020). Teachers are now tasked with conveying historical facts and developing critical thinking skills among students to navigate the complex information landscape. This involves guiding students to critically assess various sources' reliability and understand the importance of evidence-based historical inquiry. In light of these challenges, an in-depth analysis of how teachers manage these evolving dynamics is crucial for understanding how historical education can adapt to the digital age and combat the spread of disinformation (Wineburg & McGrew, 2019).

This skepticism often leads to heated debates between students and teachers over historical events. Students challenge the narratives presented by their teachers, insisting that what they have learned from other sources is the truth. These issues underscore the need to understand the lived experiences of history teachers in this age of disinformation. What challenges do they face in teaching history, and where do the students' doubts originate? How much do they trust the traditional published historical materials, and how does it impact their learning preferences and engagement?

These questions have become increasingly urgent in the context of historical revisionism and disinformation. Teachers from the University of Rizal System, Tomas Claudio Colleges, EAST Colleges of Rizal, and Renaissance School of Science and Technology have shared similar experiences, highlighting how disinformation and biased historical interpretations, especially on social media, shape students' views. The narratives of these teachers will help trace the origins of disinformation and understand the motives behind historical revisionism. This study aimed to explore the lived experiences of college teachers in the Morong, Baras, Teresa, Cardona District (MBTC) in Rizal Province who teach Philippine history and related subjects in this era of disinformation. Specifically, it sought to uncover the meanings these teachers derive from their experiences and their challenges in reconciling the contradictions between officially sanctioned history and the diverse narratives in today's digital landscape.

B. Methods

1. Research Design

The study employed a qualitative research design, specifically utilizing the phenomenological approach. This design was chosen to deeply explore and understand the lived experiences of individuals who teach Philippine history. As Van Manen (1990) outlined, phenomenology focuses on capturing the essence of human experiences related to a particular phenomenon. In this case, the study aimed to explore how educators experience and engage with history education in the context of changing digital media influences.

2. Research Procedure

The research was conducted in three main stages (Van Manen, 1990). In the first stage, the focus was on understanding the participants' life experiences concerning the phenomenon of digital media's impact on history education. This involved gathering detailed descriptions of their experiences through interviews and discussions. In the second stage, the data underwent thematic analysis to identify the essential themes related to the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013).

Finally, the third stage involved practical application, where the findings were used to suggest ways to improve educational practices in history teaching, aligning with Van Manen's framework of phenomenological research that emphasizes real-world impact and application (Magrini, 2012).

3. Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through two primary methods: unstructured individual interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs). Unstructured interviews allowed the participants to express their lived experiences in their own words, encouraging detailed, nuanced responses (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). This method allowed the researchers to gain deep insights into the participants' thoughts and feelings about the phenomenon. Following the individual interviews, FGDs were conducted to validate the information obtained and encourage collaborative reflection among the participants. The FGDs allowed for expanding ideas, generating a richer understanding of how digital media influences history teaching (Morgan, 1997).

4. Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis followed Van Manen's (1990) phenomenological method, which consists of three key steps. First, the researchers transcribed the interviews and FGDs verbatim, accurately representing the participants' experiences (Moustakas, 1994). Next, thematic analysis was employed to identify recurring themes across the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This involved coding and categorizing the data into essential themes that reflect the core experiences of the participants. Lastly, the themes were interpreted to provide practical insights for educational practice. The analysis focused on how the participants' experiences could inform improvements in teaching strategies, particularly in balancing traditional historical scholarship with the engaging aspects of digital media.

C. Findings and Discussion

The students exhibit distinct learning styles and behaviors that reflect a strong inclination toward digital media and visual content. They often rely on social media platforms such as Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok for information rather than traditional books or library resources. For instance, Prof. A observed that students "*appreciate more what they see and hear,*" indicating a preference for visual and auditory materials over text-based learning. Similarly, Prof. C noted that students depend "*on social media*" as their primary data source.

This reliance on digital media is associated with a shorter attention span and a tendency to become easily distracted. Prof. A remarked that students "*get bored easily.*" At the same time, Prof. B pointed out that social media often diverts their attention away from academic subjects, particularly history, where they sometimes exhibit a lack of interest and require motivation to engage. Prof. E described this behavior as the character of the "*instant generation,*" suggesting a preference for quick, easily accessible information rather than in-depth reading or research.

In the classroom, students are generally more vocal and expressive. Prof. D highlighted their increased activity and participation, noting that they are active in discussions, while Prof. G emphasized their tendency to be very vocal and "*speak their minds.*" Prof. E also observed that students are sensitive and enjoy debating and arguing, reflecting a higher level of confidence and freedom of expression than previous generations.

The narratives reveal several significant issues encountered in teaching Philippine History in an era of social media and disinformation. Professors consistently note that students' heavy reliance on social media platforms for historical information presents a significant challenge. Prof. A pointed out that "*We have students who may have wrong ideas on some part of our history because of the impact of social media,*" highlighting the problem of disinformation. Prof.

C echoed this concern, stating, "*Majority of my students are highly dependent on social media like Facebook, YouTube, and even TikTok as historical data sources,*" indicating a widespread issue of reliance on potentially unreliable sources.

Prof. B discussed the confusion caused by conflicting ideas from various sources, including "*Some of the videos, TikTok, blog, Facebook, and YouTube are not reliable.*" This highlights how the abundance of unverified and inaccurate information on social media can influence students' perceptions. Prof. E expressed concern about identifying misinformation, noting, "*The problem in social media is that we can't identify what misinformation and disinformation are,*" reflecting the difficulty in distinguishing reliable content from falsehoods.

Moreover, Prof. F and Prof. G observed that the persuasive nature of social media often leads students to question traditional academic sources. Prof. F stated, "*What can be frustrating is social media uses evidence to convince readers and viewers, and these readers, on the other hand no longer bother to verify if the data is reliable.*" Prof. G added, "*Because of so much influence by social media, the students are even questioning the book's content,*" showing a shift in Trust from established sources to social media content. The data underscores a pervasive issue where social media platforms contribute to the spread of disinformation and historical revisionism, complicating the teaching and learning of Philippine History.

Researchers have proposed several solutions to address the issues in teaching Philippine history amid the challenge of disinformation. Prof. B advocates for collaboration among authors to resolve content inconsistencies, suggesting that "*authors collaborate to solve the problem of inconsistency of content to come up with a unified history.*" This collaborative approach ensures a cohesive historical narrative by reconciling different perspectives.

Prof. D emphasizes the importance of resource collaboration to avoid biases, noting, "*Collaboration of resources or materials... we have to create our materials and then collaborate with other sources of data.*" This strategy involves developing and sharing educational materials to present a balanced and objective account of history.

Prof. E supports a broad collaborative effort involving historians, writers, authors, and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP), stating that these groups should "*collaborate*" and "*share resources such as artifacts and other primary sources*" to produce complete and comprehensive historical data. This solution aims to integrate diverse resources to understand history better.

Prof. G highlights the need to reconcile differences among historical accounts to provide a unified history. She suggests that "*there should be a collaboration between authors and writers of Philippine history books... to come up with one history so that the students will no longer be confused as different history books have different versions of events.*" This approach is guided by the principle of "*one history, one nation,*" aiming to eliminate confusion and provide a consistent historical narrative for students.

The narratives indicate a strong preference among students for published historical materials over perceived content from other sources. For instance, Prof. A states, "*Students who still believe in published historical content are greater than those who do not.*" Similarly, Prof. B remarks, "*Students who believe in published historical content are greater than students who believe in other sources like social media.*" Prof. C observes, "*Most of my students still believed in published historical content than believe in social media sources which I think some are unreliable.*" Prof. D highlights, "*Based on my observations, more of my students believed in the published historical content and around students believed in students' perceived content.*" Prof. E notes, "*The weight given by my students on published historical content is higher than the weight they give to social media content,*" pointing out that students continue to trust published books and references more. Prof. F mentions, "*More students believe in published historical*

content." Prof. G adds, "I perceive that students believe in the published books more. Parents or grandparents, peer groups, and other sources influence their belief in social media." Finally, Prof. H states, "Students believe in published historical content," reinforcing the trend that students generally trust published materials over alternative sources.

Table 1. Learning Preferences, Social Media Impact, and Trust in Historical Content

Theme	Participant	Statements
Digital Media and Learning Preferences	Prof. A	"Students appreciate more on what they see and hear," indicating a preference for visual and auditory materials over text-based learning.
	Prof. C	"Students are very much dependent on social media as their primary source of data."
	Prof. D	"Students are active in discussions and tend to speak their minds," reflecting increased participation and vocal expression in the classroom.
	Prof. E	"Students are sensitive and enjoy debating and arguing," showing a higher level of confidence and freedom of expression."
Impact of Social Media on Attention and Engagement	Prof. A	"Students get bored easily," highlighting a shorter attention span and a tendency to become easily distracted.
	Prof. B	"Social media often diverts their attention away from academic subjects," especially history, where they show a lack of interest and require motivation to engage.
	Prof. E	"Instant generation prefers quick, easily accessible information rather than in-depth reading or research."
Trust in Historical Materials vs. Social Media Content	Prof. A	"Few students may have wrong ideas on some part of our history because of the impact of social media."
	Prof. B	"Some of the videos, TikTok, blog, Facebook, and YouTube are not reliable," indicating confusion caused by conflicting ideas from various sources.
	Prof. C	"Some of my students are highly dependent on social media like Facebook, YouTube, and even TikTok as sources of historical data."
	Prof. F	"Social media uses evidence to convince readers, and these readers no longer bother to verify if the data is reliable."
	Prof. G	"Students are even questioning the content of the book because of so much influence by social media," showing a shift in Trust from established sources to social media content.
	Prof. A	"Students who still believe in published historical content are greater than those who do not."
	Prof. B	"Students who believe in published historical content are greater than students who believe in other resources like social media."
	Prof. E	"The weight given by my students on published historical content is higher than the weight they give to social media content."

1. Digital Media and Learning Preferences

The evolution of students' learning preferences in Philippine history education is intricately linked to their growing inclination toward digital media and visual content. This shift is part of a broader educational trend driven by the increasing prominence of platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok, which cater to students' preference for visual and auditory learning methods. Such platforms offer dynamic and interactive content that significantly impacts students' engagement with historical material.

Observations from educators, such as Prof. A's remark that students "*appreciate more on what they see and hear*" and Prof. C's noting of their "*dependence on social media*," highlight a significant departure from traditional text-based resources. This trend aligns with the broader educational shift where multimedia content—characterized by its dynamic and interactive elements—provides immediate gratification and enhances engagement. According to the Pew Research Center (2018), the rise of digital media has transformed how students consume information, favoring formats that provide instant visual and auditory stimulation over traditional text-based materials.

The concept of "digital natives," introduced by Prensky (2001), provides insight into this shift. Students who have grown up in a technologically saturated environment are more inclined to learn through media that integrates various forms of content, reflecting their habitual engagement with digital technologies. This generational shift underscores educators' need to adapt their pedagogical strategies to align with students' media consumption habits.

This shift necessitates re-evaluating pedagogical approaches in the context of Philippine history education. Mayer's multimedia learning theory supports the idea that students learn more effectively when information is presented in visual and verbal formats (Mayer, 2009). This theory is particularly relevant for teaching history, where complex narratives and concepts can benefit from dynamic visuals and audio elements. Prof. A's observation that students appreciate "what they see and hear" underscores the effectiveness of multimedia tools in making historical content more accessible and engaging.

However, the reliance on platforms like TikTok and YouTube also reveals a preference for quick, easily digestible information. This preference, described as part of the "instant generation" phenomenon, highlights educators' challenges in addressing shorter attention spans and a tendency for rapid content consumption (Prensky, 2001; Pew Research Center, 2018). The rapid pace of social media content contrasts sharply with the more demanding nature of traditional text-based learning, which requires sustained focus and in-depth processing. This shift can impact students' ability to engage deeply with historical material, potentially leading to a superficial understanding of complex historical events and contexts.

Research by Hattie (2009) supports that integrating multimedia elements into traditional curricula can enhance learning by aligning with students' media consumption habits. Hattie emphasizes that effective teaching strategies often combine various modes of content delivery to cater to diverse learning preferences. In history education, this approach involves using multimedia resources to complement traditional texts, designing assignments that encourage critical assessment of digital content, and fostering skills for discerning reliable information amidst the vast array of digital media.

Moreover, the challenge of the "instant generation" phenomenon calls for innovative pedagogical strategies that balance the engaging potential of digital media with the need for deeper cognitive engagement. Integrating multimedia tools should not replace traditional educational methods but complement them to create a more balanced and comprehensive learning experience. Educators can better support students in achieving a nuanced understanding

of historical content by incorporating multimedia elements that enhance engagement while emphasizing the importance of critical thinking and thorough analysis.

Understanding the impact of digital media on students' learning preferences and attention spans is crucial for effective history education in the disinformation age. By balancing the benefits of multimedia tools with the need for rigorous academic standards, educators can create a more engaging and intellectually stimulating learning environment. This approach caters to students' modern learning preferences and ensures that they develop the critical thinking skills necessary for navigating and interpreting historical information in a complex digital landscape.

2. Impact of Social Media on Attention and Engagement

In Philippine history education, the pervasive influence of digital media, mainly social media platforms, has profound implications for students' attention spans and engagement levels. Observations from educators, such as Prof. A's remark that students "*get easily bored*" and Prof. B's concerns about social media diverting attention from academic subjects, highlight significant challenges in teaching Philippine history. Prof. E's characterization of students as part of the "*generation of instant*" underscores a shift towards preferring quick, easily accessible information over more in-depth historical research.

The impact of social media on attention spans is particularly concerning in the context of history education. In the Philippines, where history education is crucial for understanding national identity and historical context, the allure of social media's immediate gratification can overshadow the importance of comprehensive historical study. Nicholas Carr (2011) argues that the constant bombardment of stimuli online decreases the ability to focus on more demanding academic tasks. This aligns with findings from Rosen, Carrier, and Cheever (2013), who note that rapid information consumption on platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Facebook fosters skimming habits rather than deep engagement. This shift in learning preferences can make it challenging for students to engage with Philippine history's more nuanced and detailed content, which often requires sustained reading, critical analysis, and reflection.

Moreover, the preference for instant information, as described by Prof. E, aligns with broader trends in media consumption that affect how students approach historical study. Social media's emphasis on brief, engaging content contrasts sharply with the depth required for understanding complex historical events and processes. This discrepancy can lead to reduced patience for tasks that require sustained attention and critical analysis, impacting students' ability to engage deeply with historical material and critically evaluate historical narratives in the face of misinformation. As noted by Guiang (2020), the risk of students accepting surface-level interpretations without delving into deeper analyses presents a significant barrier to cultivating a comprehensive understanding of history.

Research by Barzilai and Eshet-Alkalai (2017) supports the idea that the digital age has altered cognitive processes, leading to what some call "continuous partial attention," where individuals constantly divide their focus among multiple streams of information. This fragmented attention span affects the ability to process and retain historical knowledge. Similarly, Vaidhyathan (2018) discusses how platforms like Facebook are designed to maximize engagement through constant updates and notifications, further eroding the ability to concentrate on more substantial academic content.

In the disinformation age, the challenges posed by social media's impact on attention and engagement are exacerbated. Disinformation and historically inaccurate content often circulate widely on social media, presenting additional hurdles for students in distinguishing credible historical information from misleading or false narratives. Lazer et al. (2018) emphasize that the viral nature of misinformation on digital platforms can distort public understanding of history and other critical subjects, making it more challenging for educators to counteract these effects

in the classroom. This problem underscores the need for history educators to address both the challenges of diminished attention spans and the prevalence of disinformation.

To effectively navigate these challenges, educators must integrate strategies that balance the benefits of digital media with the need for deep, critical engagement with historical content. Mayer (2009) suggests using multimedia learning principles that combine visual and textual information to enhance student engagement while promoting deeper cognitive processing. This might involve incorporating multimedia elements into history curricula to make content more engaging and relevant while emphasizing the importance of traditional research methods and critical analysis skills. Educators should aim to create learning environments that leverage the appeal of digital media to enhance engagement without sacrificing the depth and rigor of historical study.

Additionally, fostering media literacy and critical thinking skills is essential for students to navigate the complexities of information in the digital age. Wineburg and McGrew (2019) highlight the importance of “lateral reading,” a strategy where students are taught to verify the credibility of information by consulting multiple sources and considering the authority and expertise behind them. By teaching students to evaluate sources and discern credible historical information from misinformation critically, educators can help them develop a more critical understanding of Philippine history and its relevance. This approach can empower students to engage more effectively with historical content, even in the face of the challenges posed by the digital media landscape.

Furthermore, O'Donnell and Cramer (2019) emphasize that while digital media can offer valuable resources for historical education, critically evaluating these resources is paramount. As such, combining traditional pedagogical approaches with digital literacy education can help bridge the gap between students' digital inclinations and the need for rigorous historical analysis. Educators are encouraged to develop curricula that incorporate digital tools and teach students how to critically assess the credibility of digital content, understand its potential biases, and evaluate its place in the larger context of historical scholarship. Understanding the impact of social media on attention and engagement is crucial for enhancing Philippine history education.

3. Trust in Historical Materials vs. Social Media Content

The discussion of "Trust in Historical Materials vs. Social Media Content" is particularly relevant in the context of Philippine history education, where there is an ongoing tension between students' Trust in traditionally published materials, such as books, and their increasing reliance on digital media, including social media, for information. The prevalence of social media as a primary source of information among students poses a looming threat to the integrity of historical education. This shift necessitates a deeper examination of how students perceive the credibility of different sources and the implications for their understanding of history.

Social media platforms offer immediate, engaging, and often personalized content, which appeals to digital natives—students who have grown up in an era dominated by digital technology (Prensky, 2001). However, the nature of content on social media is fundamentally different from that found in traditional published materials. Rapid updates, user-generated posts, and a lack of rigorous fact-checking frequently characterize social media content. As Lazer et al. (2018) note, the rise of "fake news" and misinformation on social media can significantly impact users' perceptions of reality, especially when they are not equipped with the necessary skills to evaluate the credibility of information critically.

The unchecked reliance on social media for historical information is problematic in the Philippines, where historical education is integral to shaping national identity and understanding socio-political contexts. Students may be exposed to biased narratives, incomplete accounts, or outright falsehoods that diverge from established historical facts found in peer-reviewed

publications. The rapid dissemination of misinformation on social media can create confusion and skepticism about historical events, especially among students who may not have the critical literacy skills to discern reliable sources from unreliable ones.

Despite the rise of digital media, studies suggest that students prefer traditional historical materials such as published books and scholarly articles for history education. This preference is rooted in the perceived reliability and authority of these sources. According to O'Donnell and Cramer (2019), the editorial and peer-review processes underpinning academic publications provide scrutiny and verification that social media content lacks. In the context of Philippine history education, students often regard traditional sources as more credible and trustworthy, reinforcing the value of these materials in academic settings.

Barzilai and Eshet-Alkalai (2017) also support the preference for traditional materials, highlighting that, despite the proliferation of digital media, students remain strongly inclined to use print sources for accurate historical information. This tendency reflects a broader belief in the superior credibility and depth of traditional materials, which are less prone to the manipulation and misinformation that can characterize digital platforms.

The challenge for educators in the Philippines is to balance the engaging potential of digital media with the credibility and reliability of traditional historical resources. While digital media can offer contemporary contexts, interactive elements, and broader access to information, it also requires careful curation to ensure accuracy. Educators need to guide students in navigating digital content critically. This involves teaching them to distinguish between credible and non-credible sources, understand the biases inherent in user-generated content, and recognize the value of peer-reviewed and well-researched materials.

Integrating media literacy into the history curriculum is essential to address these challenges. Media literacy education can equip students with the skills to assess digital content critically, discern factual information from misinformation, and make informed decisions about the sources they trust. By fostering critical thinking skills, educators can help students appreciate the strengths and limitations of digital and traditional sources, leading to a more nuanced understanding of history.

History educators should focus on developing a comprehensive pedagogical approach that encourages critical engagement with all forms of media. This approach should emphasize the importance of source credibility, context, and the rigorous validation processes that underpin scholarly publications. Carr (2011) argues in *The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains* that the overwhelming flow of digital information can lead to shallow thinking if not appropriately managed. Therefore, fostering deep, reflective engagement with historical materials—whether digital or traditional—is crucial for developing a well-rounded understanding of history.

By incorporating lessons on lateral reading and civic online reasoning, as recommended by Wineburg and McGrew (2019), educators can teach students to cross-check information across multiple sources and develop a more sophisticated approach to consuming digital content. This strategy not only enhances students' historical knowledge but also prepares them to navigate the broader information landscape of the digital age.

The looming threat of social media as the primary source of information for students in the Philippines underscores the need for a balanced and informed approach to historical education. While digital media offers engaging possibilities, it is essential to maintain the credibility and rigor associated with traditional historical materials. By fostering media literacy and critical thinking, educators can help students develop a discerning eye for credible information, leading to a deeper and more informed understanding of Philippine history. This approach ensures that

students are not only consumers of information but also critical thinkers who value both the immediacy of digital media and the reliability of traditional scholarly resources.

D. Conclusion

The shift towards digital media and visual content in Philippine history education significantly transforms students' learning preferences. Platforms like Facebook, YouTube, and TikTok have encouraged a broader trend where visual and auditory methods are favored over traditional text-based resources. Educators have observed that students engage more with dynamic, interactive content, reflecting their familiarity with digital media. Mayer's multimedia learning theory supports this shift, suggesting that students benefit from a combination of visual and verbal formats. However, the quick consumption habits promoted by social media pose challenges, such as shorter attention spans and superficial engagement with complex historical narratives.

To navigate these challenges, educators must balance the engaging potential of digital media with maintaining academic rigor. Incorporating multimedia elements into traditional curricula can cater to students' media habits while promoting critical thinking and deep engagement with historical material. This involves using digital tools to complement texts, fostering media literacy skills, and designing assignments that encourage critical evaluation of online content. Furthermore, the reliance on social media raises concerns about credibility, underscoring the need to teach students to distinguish between reliable sources and misinformation. By combining multimedia engagement with academic standards, educators can create a dynamic learning environment that prepares students to navigate historical information in the digital age..

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