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Perceived Behavioral Control and Personal Intent to Read Critically in Learning a Foreign Language

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Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to read critically among students at the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Tirana. The research examines the impact of perceived behavioral control on personal attitudes toward critical reading during the foreign language learning process, and how students' perceptions of their ability to control their reading behaviors influence their intention to engage in critical reading practices. In addition, to explore behavioral intentions, it is necessary to identify the factors that shape students' intentions toward critical reading, particularly in an era characterized by information overload. The primary data analysis used SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) to validate the hypotheses based on a non-probabilistic sampling of 200 students of the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the University of Tirana submitted to a questionnaire. The results reveal that perceived behavioral control is essential in shaping students' intentions to read critically. Our educational strategies are improve critical reading

Keywords:

Motivation,
Personal intention,
Perceived behavioral control,
Critical reading,
Critical thinking

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skills and promote a culture of critical engagement among students. The originality lies in the targeted examination of perceived behavioral control within the framework of critical reading, its empirical analysis, and its practical implications for education, not only advance critical reading research but also provide valuable insights for improving educational practices in diverse learning environments.

學習外語時的知覺行為控制與批判性閱讀的個人意圖

摘要：

批判性閱讀是培養批判性思考的中心。學習外語強調成功執行三種技能的動機：閱讀、寫作和口語。此外，個人意圖和感知行為控制等其他因素影響任何企業，也應該對批判性閱讀的成功產生影響。研究目的：調查地拉那大學外語學院學生的知覺行為控制與個人批判性閱讀意圖之間的關係。具體來說，本研究探討了外語學習過程中知覺行為控制對個人批判性閱讀態度的影響，以及學生對自己控制閱讀行為能力的看法如何影響他們進行批判性閱讀實踐的意圖。此外，為了探索行為意圖，有必要確定影響學生批判性閱讀意圖的因素，特別是在資訊過載的時代。方法論：它涉及主要和次要來源。主要資料分析使用社會科學統計軟體包來驗證基於對地拉那大學外語學院 200 名學生提交的問卷調查的非機率抽樣的假設。主要發現：結果表明，感知行為控制對於塑造學生批判性閱讀的意圖至關重要。應用：這些發現可以為教育策略提供信息，以提高批判性閱讀技能並促進學生批判性參與的文化。新穎性/原創性：整體而言，本研究的原創性在於它在批判性閱讀的框架內對知覺行為控制進行有針對性的檢視、實證分析及其對教育的實際影響。這些貢獻不僅推進了批判性閱讀研究，也為改善不同學習環境中的教育實踐提供了寶貴的見解。

关键词：動機、個人意圖、知覺行為控制、批判性閱讀、批判性思維

1. Introduction

Modern people frequently need to make decisions and solve problems. In order to do so efficiently and effectively, citizens must critically evaluate what they see, hear, and read. In addition, with a vast amount of printed material available in all areas in this age of “information explosion,” it is easy to feel overwhelmed. However, the information accumulated on people's desks and in their heads is often useless because of its vast volume (Taglieber, 2008). However, many students struggle to develop these skills, often because of a lack of confidence or perceived control over their reading abilities.

Critical thinking refers to deliberately planned behavior and perceived control of behavior. It requires will, but in addition to will, ability and control, as well as the influence of all factors that influence planned behavior, including behavioral intentions, attitudes, social impact, perceived control, self-efficacy, and self-image (Snippe et al., 2021). A central assumption of the theory of planned behavior is that “behavioral intentions” are the most important determinants of behavior (Wallston, 2001).

Behavioral intention refers to an individual's expectations of engaging in specific behaviors. Behavioral intentions are presumed proximal antecedents of behavior (Neighbors & Zvorsky, 2013). Intentions are goals formulated through introspection or

reasoning.

Motivation to engage in cognitive resources is a state of arousal that directs behavior toward particular goals (Cook & Artino, 2016). Motivation is generated by assessing and comparing the relationship between one's perceptions of a current goal state and those of one's desired goal state (Bandhu et al., 2024). When a behavioral intention is formed, it is often the result of generalized motivational processes that direct behavior toward a specific goal. These motivational processes can be triggered by an individual's confidence in their ability to perform a particular behavior (Kidwell & Jewell, 2010).

Critical reading involves analysis, interpretation, and evaluation. Each of these processes incites critical readers to interact with the text in different ways, such as focusing attention on important points and examples, taking notes, testing answers to one's questions, brainstorming, outlining, describing the text or argument, and raising objections to the ideas or evidence presented.

This research aims to study the relationship between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to read critically, seeing this as an essential issue today. This study focused on recognizing the relationships between variables that critically affect reading. The hypotheses are as follows:

H: Perceived behavioral control has a significant positive relationship with personal intention to read

critically.

This study will help to examine the process of reading critically from the perspective of perceived behavioral control. To date, we have treated the concept of motivation as a key factor in the success of this process.

Through this study, we aim to shed light on the critical reading process from the perspective of perceived behavioral control, expanding the existing body of knowledge and offering practical implications for educators and students alike.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is the evidence of cognitive and intellectual growth and development (Ennis, 2015). Cognitive and intellectual growth and development in humans results from the acquisition of CT skills (Nor & Sihes, 2021).

Scholars in the field of critical thinking have noted seven dispositions that focus on attitudes toward life. Dispositions include inquisitiveness, open-mindedness, systematicity, truth-seeking, analyticity, self-confidence, and maturity of judgement (Facione, 2000). Critical thinking disposition is an integral aspect of the cognitive domain that enhances the knowledge, understanding, analysis, synthesis, and critical presentation of issues based on an established yardstick (Obi, 2023).

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Normative beliefs are posited to mediate the influence of the attitude \times attitude-strength interaction on students' self-identity as critical thinkers. Thus, students with strong and positive attitudes toward critical thinking will have strong normative beliefs associated with their skills, which, in turn, will affect their self-identity as critical thinkers (Celuch et al., 2009).

Motivation was characterized as a unidimensional quality, of which more was better and less was worse for learning and performing school tasks. Motivation is a temporary task-specific source of energy for cognitive and language activities, including reading. However, motivation is also multifaceted. All aspects of motivation are activating, but within an individual, some aspects of motivation are stronger than others (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2009).

2.2. Intentional behavior

According to the theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991), behaviors are influenced by intentions determined by three factors: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Figure 1).

Subjective norms and attitudes regarding behavior influence one's intention to engage in behavior. Subjective norms are an operationalization of social norms and refer to perceptions of the degree to which important others support a specific behavior. Attitudes reflect an individual's global evaluation of performing a particular behavior (Sparks et al., 2006).

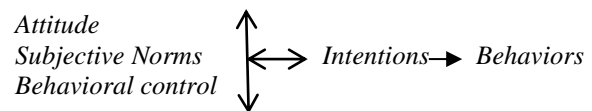


Figure 1. Influences according to the theory of planned behavior

The overarching concept of perceived behavioral control comprises two components: self-efficacy, dealing largely with the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior, and controllability, the extent to which performance is up to the person. It has been suggested that self-efficacy and controllability may reflect beliefs about the presence of internal and external factors (Ajzen, 2006). Intentional behavior is a factor in planned behavior. The theory of planned behavior states that behavioral achievement depends on both motivation (intention) and ability (behavioral control). It distinguishes between three types of beliefs—behavioral, normative, and control—and comprises six constructs that represent a person's actual control over the behavior (Rad et al., 2022; Yzer, 2012).

Attitudes: This refers to the degree to which a person evaluates a behavior of interest favorably or unfavorably.

Behavioral intention: This refers to the motivational factors that influence a given behavior, where the stronger the intention to perform the behavior, the more likely the behavior is to be performed.

Subjective norms: This refers to the belief that most people approve or disapprove of a behavior.

Social norms: These refer to customary codes of behavior in a group of people or a larger cultural context.

Perceived power: This refers to the perceived presence of factors that may facilitate or impede behavioral performance.

Perceived behavioral control: This refers to a person's perception of the ease or difficulty of performing a behavior of interest. Perceived behavioral control varies across situations and actions, resulting in a person having varying perceptions of behavioral control depending on the situation.

2.3. Reading Process

According to Ahmadi and Pourhossein (2017), reading comprehension is defined as obtaining the correct message from a text or a written language. Reading comprehension is an interactive mental process involving a reader's linguistic knowledge, knowledge of the world, and knowledge of a given topic. Reading comprehension is an interactive process in which readers interact with the text as their prior experience is activated. Moreover, readers construct meaning from a text by relying on prior experience in parallel, contrast, or affirm what the author has suggested in the text. Reading comprehension is defined as the level of understanding of a text or message. This understanding comes from the interaction between written words and how they trigger knowledge outside the text or message. Proficient reading depends on the ability to recognize words quickly and effortlessly.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This research aims to study the relationship between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to read critically, seeing this as a very important issue today. This study focuses on recognizing the relationships between variables that affect reading in a critical way (throughout life).

Both primary and secondary sources were used in this study. Primary data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to validate the hypotheses. The analysis was based on a non-probabilistic sampling of 200 students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages of the University of Tirana who were submitted to a questionnaire.

3.2. Data Nature and Sources

After reviewing the foreign literature, it would be of interest to understand the connection between the most important variables and the intention to read critically among the students of the University of Tirana.

H: Perceived behavioral control has a significant positive relationship with the intention to read critically.

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS. The following analyses were performed:

- Descriptive statistics: To summarize demographic data and questionnaire responses.
- Correlation analysis: To determine the relationship between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to read critically, Pearson's correlation coefficient was used.
- Regression analysis: To assess the predictive power of perceived behavioral control on students' intentions.

3.3. Variables and Hypotheses

The philosophy of our research is positive because we are working in an observable social reality to test whether perceived behavioral control has any significant impact on the intention to read critically. Our research strategy is a survey, which is usually a deductive approach, as the study begins with theorizing and generating hypotheses on the determinants that influence the intention to read critically. Then, these theories and hypotheses are tested and studied, leading to a confirmation of the initial theory. In addition, the research we are conducting is a deductive approach because it is based on theory testing.

3.4. Model

The model used in this project is an empirical model, as the collection of data has been accompanied by the processing and presentation of the results found by the analysis.

The population that will be subjected to our study will be students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Tirana. The questionnaire consisted

of several questions measured on a Likert scale from 1-7. The students surveyed in this study were of different sexes; 72% were female and 56% were male.

Analysis of the questionnaire data was performed using the SPSS software. Secondary data for this study were collected from an in-depth review of foreign literature.

3.5. Criteria of the Research Object

This study focused on the relationship between perceived behavioral control and students' intentions to read critically. The criteria for selecting and defining this research object include the following.

The focus on critical reading is pertinent in today's information-rich society, where the ability to analyze and evaluate texts is essential for academic success and informed citizenship.

This research specifically targeted university students, particularly those enrolled in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Tirana. This specificity allows for focused analysis of a particular demographic and context.

Both perceived behavioral control and intention to read critically are defined in measurable terms, enabling the use of statistical methods to assess their relationship. This was achieved through structured questionnaires using a Likert-type scale.

This study is grounded in the theory of planned behavior (TPB), which provides a robust framework for understanding how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence intentions and behaviors. While focusing on a specific population, these findings have implications for broader educational contexts. These criteria allow for potential extrapolation of the results to other academic settings and demographics.

The research object was chosen based on its potential to inform educational practices and interventions aimed at improving students' critical reading skills. This relevance of pedagogical approaches enhances the value of this study.

The criteria encompass elements from psychology, education, and behavioral science, allowing for a multidisciplinary approach that enriches the understanding of the research object.

This study addresses contemporary challenges faced by students in navigating information overload, making it timely and significant in the current academic landscape. By establishing these criteria, the research object is clearly defined, ensuring a focused investigation that provides valuable insights into the fields of education and psychology, particularly concerning critical reading and student engagement.

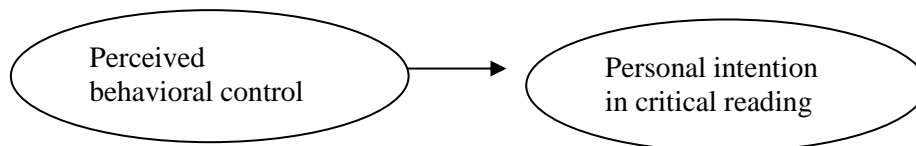


Figure 2. Relationship between perceived behavioral control and personal intention in critical reading

Varimax with the Kaiser Normalization method was used to group the questions for each component. Factor I, Critical reading, has nine questions; Factor II, Perceived behavioral control, has six questions.

4. Results

Table 1 presents the descriptive data of the critical

reading intention: the order of the questions is made from the lowest to the highest; the statement with the lowest average “*I have to continue reading critically in the future/even after study achievement*” (9) has $M=3.38$, $SD=2.374$, and the statement with the highest average “*I will make every effort to specialize and self-skill in critical reading*” (3) has $M=5.32$, $SD=1.673$.

Table 1. Intentions to read critically in a foreign language-descriptive statistics

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have to continue reading critically in the future/even after completing my studies (9)	200	1	7	3.38	2.374
I plan to become more proficient in critical reading for the purpose of writing essays and reports after graduation. (7)	200	1	7	3.98	1.831
My goal is to become a professional critical reader (for professional purposes) (2)	200	1	7	4.47	1.692
I plan to have my own personal library within 5 years after graduation (8)	200	1	7	4.59	1.879
I will do everything to become an analyst of the written text (1)	200	1	7	4.60	1.751
I'm seriously considering being a professional critical reader (4)	200	1	7	4.72	1.860
I am determined to develop my skills as a critical reader (6)	200	1	7	4.98	1.598
I am determined to become a professional reader (5)	200	1	7	5.01	1.673
I will make every effort to specialize and master myself in critical reading (3)	200	1	7	5.32	1.673
Valid N	200				

Tables 2-4 show the scales of perceived behavioral control.

Table 2. Reliability statistics (Developed by the authors)

Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
.909	6

Table 3. Gender (Developed by the authors)

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Female	144	72.0	72.0
	Male	56	28.0	100.0
Total	200	100.0	100.0	

Table 4. Perceived behavioral control – descriptive statistics (Developed by the authors)

Statements	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. deviation
To start reading critically and using it all the time would be easy for me (1)	200	1	7	3.69	1.655
I know how to develop a project based on critical reading (5)	200	1	7	4.33	1.601
I know the necessary practical features to begin to undertake critical reading (4)	200	1	7	4.35	1.640
I can control the process of creating a new project (3)	200	1	7	4.48	1.533
If I used critical reading, I would have a high chance of being successful (6)	200	1	7	4.84	1.409
A project with effective reading (2)	200	1	7	6.02	1.298
Valid N (list)	200				

Table 4 presents the descriptive data of perceived behavioral control; the order of the questions is made from the lowest to the highest; the statement with the lowest average, "To start reading critically and use it throughout

time it would be something easy for me" (1), has $M=3.69$, $SD=1.655$), and the statement with the highest average, "A project with effective reading" (2), has $M=6.02$, $SD = 1.298$.

Table 5. Group statistics (Developed by the authors)

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Perceived behavioral control	Female	144	26.1250	8.09115	0.67426
	Male	56	28.1607	7.05762	0.94311

Table 6. Correlation between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to critical reading (Developed by the authors)

		Perceived behavioral control to read critically	Personal intention in critical reading
Perceived behavioral control	Pearson correlation	1	0.682**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	200	200
Personal intention to read critically	Pearson correlation	0.682**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	200	200

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 6 presents the correlation between perceived behavioral control and intention to read critically. The results show that perceived behavioral control has a significant positive relationship with the goal of critical reading ($r(n=200)=.682$, $p \leq .01$). The results show that entrepreneurial intention also increases as perceived behavioral control increases.

In relation to the other variables considered, perceived control of the behavior, there is a significant positive relationship with the intention to read critically, where as the perceived control of the behavior increases, the intention to read critically also increases. This finding supports our hypotheses.

5. Discussion

The theory of planned behavior assumes that individuals act rationally according to their attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In other words, people may not articulate a particular attitude, but this may nonetheless influence their decision making. Rather than saying that humans behave rationally, some researchers call this "sense-making" (Kan & Fabrigar, 2017).

Perceived behavioral control refers to people's perceptions of their ability to perform a given behavior. Perceived behavioral control is assumed to be determined by the total set of accessible control beliefs, such as beliefs about the presence of factors that may facilitate or impede the performance of a behavior. Perceived behavioral control can, together with intention, be used to predict behavior (Conner, 2001).

Attitude toward a behavior is the degree to which the performance of a behavior is valued positively or negatively. Intention is an indication of a person's readiness to perform a given behavior, and is considered an immediate antecedent of behavior. The intention is based on the attitude toward the behavior. Subjective norm refers to the perceived social pressure to engage in a behavior. Normative beliefs reflect the perceived

pressure to engage in a certain behavior exerted by significant referent individuals or groups.

We can distinguish between critical thinking and critical reading. Critical reading is a technique used to discover information and ideas in a text. Critical reading refers to careful, active, reflective, and analytic reading. Critical thinking is a technique for evaluating information and ideas in order to decide what to accept and believe. Critical thinking involves reflecting on the validity of what one has read, in light of our prior knowledge and understanding of the world (Turan et al., 2019).

Critical reading appears to come before critical thinking; only once we have fully understood a text (critical reading) can we truly evaluate its assertions (critical thinking). Conversely, critical thinking depends on critical reading. We are responsible for isolating real issues of agreement or disagreement (Koray & Çetinkılıç, 2020).

Textbooks on critical reading commonly ask students to accomplish certain goals, none of which refers to something on the page. Each requires inferences from evidence within the text. For example, recognizing purpose involves inferring a basis for choices of content and language, recognizing tone and persuasive elements involves classifying the nature of language choices, and recognizing bias involves classifying the nature of patterns of choice of content and language (Saidalv & Noorezam, 2020).

Perceived behavioral control to read critically: people form an intention to perform a behavior on the basis of three independent cognitions: attitude, a global cognitive evaluation toward performing a behavior; subjective norm, perceived social pressure to perform a behavior, is based on a deliberation over the likelihood of encountering salient facilitating or inhibiting control factors weighted by the power of those factors to facilitate or inhibit behavior (Kidwell & Jewell, 2010). Individuals who perceive a high level of control over a

behavior are typically confident in their ability to perform the behavior, and consequently, are likely to perceive a small gap between their current and desired abilities to achieve the goal. Individuals with high perceived control are likely to experience complacency and thus lack the motivation to engage in effortful cognitive processing to supplement or enhance their existing resources available to form a behavioral intention.

In contrast to high perceived control, individuals with low levels of perceived control are typically less confident in their ability to perform a behavior, and are thus likely to perceive that a large gap exists between their actual and desired ability to achieve the goal. These individuals have heightened arousal as a result of their perceived deficiencies (Kidwell & Jewell, 2010) and are therefore likely to perceive that they must exert cognitive effort to close the gap between their actual and desired ability levels (Fleming et al., 2023).

They are either inhibited through complacency that comes from being highly confident, or stimulated through arousal that comes from the desire to perform a behavior successfully. Hence, one's motivation to engage in cognitive resources may be, at least in part, based on one's level of perceived control (Seymour & Walsh, 2006).

Reading motivation is even more important for learners because they have to be motivated to learn English and improve their reading comprehension.

According to Seymour and Walsh (2006), motivation for learners is always the main element affecting their reading comprehension. However, it has not yet been recognized that motivation is a main factor in reading comprehension. Reading motivation is one of the main factors for foreign-language students, helping them read more effectively.

The findings of this study underscore the significant role of perceived behavioral control in shaping students' intentions to read critically. As hypothesized, a positive correlation was found between perceived behavioral control and intention to engage in critical reading, indicating that students who believe that they can effectively control their reading processes are more likely to express a desire to read critically. This aligns with the theory of planned behavior, which posits that perceived control, along with attitudes and subjective norms, influences behavioral intentions (Ajzen, 1991).

The results suggest that students' beliefs about their ability to read critically significantly impact their intentions. Students who perceive themselves as capable and equipped with necessary skills are more likely to commit to developing critical reading abilities. This finding emphasizes the importance of fostering self-efficacy and confidence among learners.

While motivation has been recognized as a key factor in previous studies, this study highlights how perceived behavioral control serves as a motivational driver. Students with high perceived control may feel

less anxious and more motivated to engage critically in text. Conversely, those with low perceived control may experience feelings of inadequacy, leading to avoidance of critical reading tasks.

The findings suggest that educators should focus on enhancing students' perceived behavioral control. This can be achieved through targeted interventions aimed at building confidence, providing resources, and developing critical reading strategies. For instance, teaching students effective reading techniques and providing supportive feedback can empower them to approach texts with greater assurance.

The distinction between critical thinking and critical reading remains significant. While critical reading is an essential precursor to critical thinking, this study highlights that, without a strong intention to engage in critical reading, the development of critical thinking skills may be compromised. This reinforces the necessity of prioritizing critical reading in educational curricula.

6. Conclusion

This study focuses on recognizing the relationships between the variables that affect critical reading. This research aims to study the relationship between perceived behavioral control and personal intention to read critically, seeing this as an essential issue today.

The participants in our study were students from the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Tirana. The questionnaire consisted of several questions measured on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 7. The students surveyed in this study were of different sexes; 72% were female and 56% were male.

The order of the questions ranged from lowest to highest. The statement with the lowest average, "*I have to continue reading critically in the future/even after study achievement*" (9), has $M=3.38$, $SD=2.374$, and the statement with the highest average, "*I will make every effort to specialize and self-skill in critical reading*" (3), has $M=5.32$, $SD=1.673$.

The results showed that perceived behavioral control had a significant positive relationship with the goal of critical reading ($r(n=200)=.682$, $p \leq .01$). The results show that entrepreneurial intention also increases as perceived behavioral control increases.

As for the other variables considered, perceived control of the behavior had a significant positive relationship with the intention to read critically. As perceived control of the behavior increases, the intention to read critically also increases, which supports our hypothesis.

The critical thinkers were skeptical. They approach texts with the same skepticism and suspicion as the spoken remarks. They ask questions and analyze them. They consciously apply tactics and strategies to uncover meaning or to assure their understanding.

Reading comprehension is a complicated process, because students must read written words, decode vocabulary, and recognize the meaning of the text.

English language learning shows that reading comprehension is the main factor in English language teaching. Reading motivation is essential for student success in text recognition and understanding.

Reading motivation is the large amount of motivation that students have to consider their positive or negative ideas about reading. Students with perceived control of their behavior usually consider reading an essential factor in their daily activities, accept challenges in the reading process, and are likely to be successful readers. Reading motivation is defined as one's purpose, idea, and desire related to the title, action, and results of reading.

It became clear that perceived control of behavior positively impacted students' reading comprehension. Students with perceived behavior control can be encouraged to make educated guesses, achieve better results, solve problems or difficulties while reading the text, and reduce comprehensive anxiety. Teachers should be encouraged to consider the perceived control of their behavior in their regular English classes so that their students can become motivated in a reading comprehension situation.

6.1. Innovation/Originality in Relation to Existing Literature

This study introduces several innovative and original aspects that contribute to the existing body of literature on critical reading and behavioral intention, particularly within the framework of the theory of planned behavior (TPB):

While much of the existing literature addresses general reading comprehension and critical thinking skills, this study investigates the nuances of critical reading as a distinct process. This emphasis helps delineate the importance of critical reading in academic contexts.

The exploration of perceived behavioral control as a central variable influencing students' intentions to read critically is a relatively under-explored area in the literature. This focus adds depth to the understanding of the motivational factors affecting reading behavior, going beyond the typical discussions of attitude and subjective norms.

- By conducting empirical research specifically in the context of university students in the Faculty of Foreign Languages at the University of Tirana, this study provides localized insights that may be applicable to similar educational contexts. This contrasts with broader studies that often lack specificity in terms of demographic focus.

- Utilizing quantitative methods and statistical analysis (e.g., SPSS) to assess the relationship between perceived behavioral control and reading intentions adds a rigorous empirical foundation to theoretical concepts. This approach helps validate the applicability of TPB in educational settings.

6.2. Practical Implications for Pedagogy

This study offers concrete recommendations for educators to enhance students' critical reading skills, linking theoretical insights to practical applications. This focus on pedagogical implications distinguishes it from the theoretical literature, which lacks actionable insights.

By bridging concepts from psychology, education, and behavioral science, this study fosters a multidisciplinary approach that enriches discussions surrounding critical reading and student engagement, thus expanding the relevance of findings beyond a single field.

The originality of this study lies in its targeted focus on critical reading, integration of perceived behavioral control within the TPB framework, and empirical examination of a specific student population, all of which offer practical implications for education and address gender dynamics. This innovative approach enhances our understanding of the factors that influence critical reading intentions and contributes new insights to academic discourse.

6.3. Academic Contribution Limitations and Further Study

This study is mainly based on a sample selected from the context of Albania. Based on these results, we expect that this study can be developed even more widely in other countries to compare the results and reach a comprehensive conclusion.

This research contributes to the academic community by providing valuable insights into the dynamics of critical reading, enhancing our understanding of the factors that influence students' intentions and behaviors, and offering practical implications for educators seeking to improve reading skills in diverse student populations.

4.4. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations can enhance students' perceived behavioral control and intention to read critically.

1. Implement workshops focused on critical reading strategies that equip students with the tools and techniques to analyze texts effectively.
2. Establish mentorship programs. Mentorship can help build confidence and provide personalized feedback on reading practices.
3. Foster a classroom atmosphere that encourages open dialogue and collaboration. Promote discussions around texts that allow students to share their interpretations and constructively challenge each other's viewpoints.
4. Utilize digital tools and resources that support critical reading and enhance students' engagement and confidence in their reading abilities.
5. Provide regular assessments that allow students to reflect on their reading practices and receive constructive feedback.
6. Encourage a growth mindset among students by

highlighting that reading skills can be developed over time through practice and effort.

7. Engage parents and community members in promoting critical reading practices outside the classroom.

By implementing these recommendations, educators can create a more conducive environment for fostering critical reading skills and ultimately enhance students' academic performance and lifelong learning capabilities.

Author Contributions

Conceptualization, M.A.; methodology, K.A.; validation, M.A.; formal analysis, K.A.; investigation, M.A.; resources, K.A.; data curation, M.A.; writing—original draft preparation, all authors contributed equally; writing—review and editing, K.A.; visualization, K.A.; supervision, M.A.; project administration, M.A. All authors read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

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Data Availability Statement

The original contributions of this study are as follows. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding authors.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

Ethical Compliance

All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional and/or national research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

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