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Political Affiliation and Facebook Users' Evaluation of Election-Related Visual Content During Bangladesh's 2024 National Election

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Abstract
This study examines the association between political affiliation and Facebook users' evaluations of images and videos of Bangladesh's 2024 national election. An exploratory sequential mixed-methods design was adopted for this study, integrating six expert interviews with a survey of 400 Facebook users, which was conducted between August and September 2024. Participants evaluated eight stimuli posted on Facebook between November 2023 and January 2024. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically, and quantitative survey results were examined using descriptive statistics and chi-square tests. The findings show statistically significant associations between political affiliation and evaluations of all eight stimuli. The strength of these associations varied across stimuli. This highlights the importance of content-specific differences in evaluation of political information. Respondents demonstrated distinct patterns of acceptance, rejection, and uncertainty. Furthermore, 68.25% of respondents reported rarely verifying political information. Expert interviews identified existing beliefs, emotional responses, and interpersonal trust as potentially relevant factors. The study contributes to understanding the role of political affiliation and a high level of uncertainty in misinformation evaluation. Its findings are limited by non-probability sampling and its focus on perceived credibility. This study reveals people's self-reported ability to identify misinformation rather than accurate detection of it. Future studies could address these limitations through representative sampling and experimental designs.

Keywords: political affiliation, misinformation evaluation, confirmation bias, digital literacy, Facebook.

Introduction

Social media has become one of the major sources of political information in Bangladesh. Nowadays, people use Facebook to get political information, share opinions, and discuss social affairs. On Facebook,

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people spread false or misleading information alongside facts. This becomes more concerning during elections. Because people pay greater attention to political parties, candidates, and election-related events. So, it is important to understand how people evaluate such information. Especially when the content they see may not always be accurate.

People approach political information with preconceived notions. Their political beliefs, group identities, emotions, and social relationships may affect how they judge information. Selective exposure describes how people may prefer information that is consistent with their existing views. Besides, confirmation bias explains the tendency to interpret information in ways that fit previous beliefs (Stroud, 2010; Nickerson, 1998). The idea that group membership can become part of a person's identity and can affect how information about an in-group or out-group is explained in Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Hence, political affiliation may be related to the way users evaluate the same political information.

Yet political affiliation may not be the only explanation for all misinformation responses. Cognitive factors such as confidence, uncertainty, and verification practices may also be relevant. Emotional responses can become important in the presence of strongly presented or personally meaningful political content. Social factors are another stimulus because political information often comes from people whom users already trust, such as family members and friends. So, evaluation of misinformation needs to be considered within a wider political, cognitive, emotional, and social context.

Previous study in Bangladesh has explored the role of Facebook in shaping political opinions during the 2024 national election (Islam & Islam, 2024). Badrinathan (2021) examined how political differences relate to people's responses to misinformation in India. But how Facebook users from different political groups in Bangladesh evaluate the same election-related images and videos has received little attention. This study examines that issue by looking at how users accepted, rejected, or remained unsure about eight visual stimuli.

Political tension surrounded Bangladesh's 2024 national election as the main opposition party chose to boycott it. Then Facebook played an important role in sharing political news, opinions, and election-related information (ULAB, 2024; Islam & Islam, 2024). Against this background,

the study examines how political affiliation relates to Facebook users' evaluations of election-related content.

The study follows an exploratory sequential mixed-method design. The two sets of findings, interview and survey data, were considered simultaneously during interpretation to explore the answers to the following questions.

RQ1: Is political affiliation significantly associated with Facebook users' evaluations of eight election-related visual stimuli?

RQ2: How do acceptance, rejection, and uncertainty vary across stimuli and political-affiliation groups?

RQ3: What cognitive, emotional, and social factors emerge from survey responses and expert interviews as relevant to users' evaluations?

Literature Review

In political communication, misinformation has emerged as a new concern. Social media spreads a large amount of political information at a time and allows its users to react to and share that content. Because of its spreading speed, where circulation takes place before any checking, it is tough to identify and monitor misinformation during elections. Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) discussed the role of false political stories in the 2016 United States election, where they found that people were more likely to believe misinformation about the candidates they support. Flynn et al. (2017) examined the nature and sources of political misperceptions. They identified directionally motivated reasoning as a central mechanism through which pre-existing political beliefs contribute to the persistence of misinformation and diminish the effectiveness of factual corrections. These studies show that political misinformation is connected with both false information itself and the way people understand political claims.

Study on misinformation also shows that users do not always receive political information neutrally. They may have strong political attitudes before encountering a particular claim. Selective exposure explains the tendency to choose or pay attention to information that agrees with existing ideas (Stroud, 2010). Iyengar and Hahn (2009) also found evidence that there is a relationship between political preferences and media selection. Their work shows that individuals preferentially selected news

sources that align with their political orientations while avoiding ideologically oppositional sources.

Another way to understand this process is confirmation bias. Nickerson (1998) described confirmation bias as the tendency to search for, interpret, and remember information in ways that are consistent with existing beliefs, which means that people give more favorable attention to information that fits their previous views. However, confirmation bias is not concrete proof of the phenomenon that says everyone will accept information that supports their political views. Political information is often complex, and users can accept, reject, question, or remain uncertain about the same type of content.

Political affiliation can also be understood through Social Identity Theory. Tajfel and Turner (1979) explained how people can develop part of their self-concept from group membership. Hence, political groups can become meaningful social groups. In the case of both the in-group's and the opposing group's political information, the meaning can come out beyond its factual content. This also may affect how users judge political claims. This theory is useful in studies in which respondents are asked to report their political affiliation and then evaluate election-related stimuli.

Previous studies have examined how social media algorithms and users' choices affect exposure to political information. Bakshy et al. (2015) found that both Facebook's news feed ranking and users' choices influenced the political news they encountered. Flaxman et al. (2016) explored filter bubbles and echo chambers in online news consumption. Cinelli et al. (2021) also found evidence of echo-chamber patterns on Facebook and other social media platforms.

These studies help explain the wider environment in which political information circulates. However, the present study did not examine Facebook's algorithms, personalized content exposure, or echo-chamber effects. Instead, it focuses on how respondents evaluated election-related images and videos.

Besides, political Communication in Bangladesh has its own history, political divisions, and patterns of social media use. So, it is important to examine this in Bangladesh's context. Although existing scolarly studies provide a useful theoretical basis, there remains limited evidence on how political affiliation relates to the evaluation of election-related misinformation among Bangladeshi Facebook users. While most studies

focus on exposure, belief, or dissemination, how people evaluate political content on social media receives very little attention.

Theoretical Framework

This study is theoretically grounded in Selective Exposure Theory, Confirmation Bias, and Social Identity Theory, which provide complementary perspectives for understanding the relationship between political affiliation and the evaluation of election-related misinformation on Facebook.

Selective Exposure Theory describes that people tend to seek, notice and engage with information that supports their existing attitudes. They are not keen to engage with information that challenges those attitudes (Stroud, 2010). People encounter political information through their interests, interactions, and social contacts in Facebook. Since this study did not measure Facebook algorithms, selective exposure is treated as a possible explanation.

Confirmation Bias explains how existing beliefs may affect the interpretation and evaluation of information (Nickerson, 1998). In terms of politics, information that supports a person's existing belief may receive a different evaluation from information that challenges that belief. The findings of this study are consistent with this possibility. However, confirmation bias was not directly measured as a causal mechanism in the study.

Social Identity Theory helps explain how political affiliation can shape users' evaluation of political information. People may see themselves as part of certain political groups and distinguish between groups they support and groups they oppose (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Political information can therefore be evaluated through the lens of users' group identities.

Selective Exposure Theory describes why people prefer information that agrees with their views. Confirmation Bias explains how people evaluate information based on what they already believe. And how being a part of a political group may shape their views was explained by Social Identity Theory. Collectively, these perspectives establish an analytical framework for examining variations in respondents' evaluations of election-related visual misinformation across political affiliations in the context of Bangladesh's 2024 national election.

The study did not directly measure selective exposure, confirmation bias, or social identity processes. By situating the observed associations within established theories of information processing and group identification, the framework informs the interpretation of the empirical findings without assuming that the underlying psychological mechanisms or causal relationships have been directly established; rather, they offer possible explanations for the differences between political groups.

Methodology

Research Design

An exploratory sequential mixed-methods design is used in this study. At first, qualitative interviews with experts were conducted to gain contextual understanding of political misinformation, political beliefs, emotional responses, the role of social trust, and the tendency to verify. Then, the interviews were used to contextualize and prepare the quantitative survey questions.

For RQ1, chi-square tests were used to examine the relationship between political affiliation and responses to the eight images and videos. Cramér's V measured the strength of these associations. RQ2 examined how respondents accepted, rejected, or remained unsure about each stimulus. To compare these responses across political groups, frequencies, percentages, and cross-tabulations were used. RQ3 examined survey responses on confidence, verification habits, and trusted information sources. The expert interviews provided the perspective that people's personal beliefs, emotions, and social relationships play a distinct role in evaluating any political content.

Qualitative Phase

In the qualitative phase, two communication scholars, two psychologists, and two professional fact-checkers participated in semi-structured in-depth interviews. Based on professional knowledge and experience, six experts were selected for the interviews. The interviews were recorded digitally and later transcribed manually. Then, the transcripts were reviewed to identify the themes of political beliefs, emotional responses, interpersonal trust, and verification practices. These themes were used to develop the questionnaire and were later considered for discussion alongside the survey findings.

Questionnaire and Data Collection

The questionnaire was prepared using relevant literature and insights received from the qualitative phase. The questionnaire contained information on demography, political affiliation and engagement, Facebook usage, sources of political information, evaluation of misinformation, confidence in identifying misinformation, verification practices, interpersonal trust, emotional responses, and responses to election-related content.

Five images and three videos related to Bangladesh's 2024 national election were used to examine respondents' evaluations of political content. Those were drawn from election-related content dated between November 2023 and January 2024. As the survey was conducted between August and September 2024, respondents evaluated these images and videos retrospectively.

Respondents evaluated the content using the given response options. The responses were categorized as true, fake/deepfake, uncertain, or other (independent evaluation). The 'other' category included judgments such as misleading content and old events presented as new. These classifications represent respondents' perceptions rather than independently established factual accuracy. Before starting the main survey, a pilot study with 30 respondents was conducted to check the wording, question order, clarity, and response options.

Quantitative Phase and Participants

The survey included 400 Facebook users from different parts of Bangladesh. Survey responses were collected through Google Forms between August and September 2024. The study followed a non-probability convenience sampling technique to recruit Bangladeshi Facebook users. All entries were manually reviewed, resulting in a final dataset of 400 valid responses.

The study used Cochran's formula to decide the sample size. Based on a 95% confidence level, a 5% margin of error, and an assumed population proportion of 0.50, the estimated sample size was about 384. The survey included 400 respondents. Since the participants were recruited through online networks rather than random selection, the findings represent the people who took part in the survey; they cannot be generalized to all Facebook users in Bangladesh.

Measurement and Data Analysis

The six expert interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis techniques to identify the common ideas. The identified key themes were political beliefs, emotional responses, interpersonal trust, and verification practices. These findings were then considered together with the survey results to provide contextual interpretations.

The participants of the survey reported their political affiliation by selecting one affiliation from the given seven categories. They also evaluated eight election-related stimuli: five images and three videos. They evaluated these stimuli by identifying them as true, fake/deepfake, uncertain, or other (independent evaluation). Participants self-rated their confidence in identifying misinformation on a five-point scale. The survey also asked for their Facebook usage duration, their tendency to verify political information, and whom they trusted personally as a source of political information.

Findings

The findings come from a survey of 400 Facebook users and interviews with six experts. The survey findings cover respondents' demographic and political backgrounds, Facebook use for political information, confidence level and tendency to verify content, and their evaluation of eight election-related stimuli. The study also examines the association between political affiliation and the tendency to believe or disbelieve the eight stimuli (misinformation). The expert interviews provide further context on the cognitive, emotional, and social factors related to these findings.

Respondent Profile

Of the 400 respondents, 61.5% were male, 35.75% were female, and 2.75% chose not to disclose their gender. The largest age group was 18–24 years (31.5%), followed by 35–44 years (29.5%) and 25–34 years (23.5%). Students made up 36.25% of the respondents. These figures describe the people who took part in the survey and do not necessarily reflect the wider Facebook user population in Bangladesh. Table 1 demonstrates the political affiliation of the respondents.

Table 1

Political affiliation of respondents (N = 400)

Political Affiliation	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
BNP	156	39.00
Awami League	119	29.75
Neutral	46	11.50
Jamat-e-Islami	31	7.75
Jatiya Party	23	5.75
Leftist Parties	18	4.50
Other/Prefer not to disclose	7	1.75
Total	**400**	**100**

Note. Political affiliation was self-reported by the respondents.

Facebook Use, Confidence, and Verification

Facebook was reported as a source of political information by 345 respondents out of 400, or 86.25% of the sample. Regarding daily Facebook use, 64% reported that they use Facebook for approximately two hours per day. 17.75% of the participants use it for three to four hours. The longest users, who use Facebook for more than five hours, were 12%, and 6.25% of participants were the shortest users, consuming less than one hour. However, this does not show how much they relied on the platform for political news.

Table 2

Time spent daily on Facebook by the respondents (N = 400)

Daily Facebook Use	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
≤1 hour	25	6.25
1-2 hours	256	64.00
3-4 hours	71	17.75
≥5 hours	48	12.00

Note. Daily Facebook use was self-reported by participants and refers to overall platform use, not time spent specifically on political information.

Participants had different levels of confidence in identifying misinformation. Most (65.75%) chose the neutral option. Another 12.50%

reported very low confidence and 12.25% reported low confidence. Among the 400 participants, only 9.50% rated their confidence as high or very high. The average self-rated confidence score was 2.78 out of 5, indicating a mid-range confidence level in identifying misinformation.

Table 3

Respondents' Confidence in Identifying Misinformation on Facebook

Measure	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very Low	50	12.50
Low	49	12.25
Neutral	263	65.75
High	15	3.75
Very High	23	5.75
Total	**400**	**100**

Note. N = 400. Participants self-rated their confidence in identifying misinformation on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (very low) to 5 (very high).

With 3.75% of participants who never verify any political information on Facebook, most participants (68.25%) answered that they rarely checked the accuracy of the information. 22% of them responded that they check it sometimes, and only 6% reported checking it frequently. So, the result shows that very few participants have the habit of verifying political information regularly.

Table 4

Tendency of Verifying Political Information on Facebook (N = 400)

Verifying Political Information	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Never	15	3.75
Rarely	273	68.25
Sometimes	88	22.00
Frequently	24	6.00
Total	**400**	**100**

Note. Responses indicate how frequently participants reported verifying political information on Facebook. The results reflect self-reported verification practices.

Evaluation of the Eight Stimuli

The participants' responses for the eight stimuli were divided into four categories: true, fake/deepfake, uncertain, and other (independent evaluation). For example, in Image 2, 8.75% of participants described the content as 'old event presented as new,' and 8.25% considered it 'misleading.' These responses were combined under the category 'Other.' It also includes misleading presentation for Video 1 (15.25%) and misleading content for Video 3 (8.50%). For each image and video, the percentages added up to 100%. These categories show how the participants evaluated the content.

Table 5

Respondents' Evaluations of Eight Election-Related Visual Stimuli

Stimulus	Acceptance/ True (%)	Rejection/ Fake or Deepfake (%)	Other (Independent Evaluation (%)	Uncertain (%)
Image 1	55.75	13.50	0	30.75
Image 2	11.00	52.00	17	20.00
Image 3	52.25	31.25	0	16.50
Image 4	3.25	68.25	0	28.50
Image 5	1.50	72.25	0	26.25
Video 1	52.00	7.00	15.25	25.75
Video 2	3.00	13.25	0	83.75
Video 3	6.50	58.00	8.50	27.00

Note. N = 400 for each stimulus.

During the evaluation of the eight images and videos, the survey results show that participants were not equally confident in identifying the contents. Their evaluation varied across the stimuli. With a 55.75% acceptance rate, Image 1 was considered true, while 30.75% were unsure about it. Image 3 showed a similar pattern. 52.25% accepted it as true. In contrast, Images 4 and 5 were mostly rejected, with 68.25% and 72.25% identifying them as fake, respectively. Besides, a relatively large proportion of participants remained uncertain about whether to identify these images as true/fake.

Participants provided varied responses to Image 2. More than half (52%) of respondents identified it as fake, and 11% viewed it as true.

However, some respondents gave specific judgments. 8.75% said it was an old event presented as new, and 8.25% described it as misleading.

Unlike the image content, video responses showed an even higher level of uncertainty. Video 1 was considered true by 52% of respondents, 15.25% viewed it as misleading, and 25.75% were unsure. Video 2 showed the highest level of uncertainty, with 83.75% of respondents selecting 'don't know.' Since the video's factual accuracy was not independently verified, this reflects respondents' uncertainty rather than their inability to identify misinformation. For Video 3, 58% considered it fake or a deepfake, while 27% were unsure. Apparently, respondents evaluated the images and videos differently. Some accepted the content as true; others rejected it by identifying it as fake, and the rest remained uncertain.

Political Affiliation and Stimulus Evaluation

The chi-square test results and Cramér's V values indicated that political affiliation was associated with respondents' evaluations of all eight images and videos. The strongest association was found for Image 3 (V = .504), while Video 2 showed the weakest (V = .282). The degrees of freedom ranged from 12 to 18, depending on the number of response categories (three or four).

Table 6

Association Between Political Affiliation and Evaluation of Election-Related Stimuli

Stimulus	χ^2	*df*	*p*	Cramer's *V*
Image 1	190.31	12	< .001	.488
Image 2	207.90	18	< .001	.416
Image 3	203.17	12	< .001	.504
Image 4	106.02	12	< .001	.364
Image 5	142.69	12	< .001	.422
Video 1	219.44	18	< .001	.428
Video 2	63.42	12	< .001	.282
Video 3	181.20	18	< .001	.389

Note. N = 400; χ^2 = Pearson's chi-square statistic; df = degrees of freedom; Cramér's V = effect size. Statistical significance was assessed using Monte Carlo tests and Holm-adjusted p-values. All analyses included 400 valid responses. 'Other evaluation' responses were retained as a separate category where applicable.

The survey findings showed significant associations between political affiliation and participants' evaluations of all eight images and videos (Holm-adjusted $p < .001$). The strength of these associations varied across stimuli, indicating that participants from different political groups evaluated the content differently. However, these findings reflect differences in perceived credibility rather than the accuracy of misinformation identification.

Table 7

Association Strengths and Bootstrap Confidence Intervals

Stimulus	Cramér's V	95% bootstrap CI
Image 1	.488	.457–.547
Image 2	.416	.396–.475
Image 3	.504	.472–.563
Image 4	.364	.330–.433
Image 5	.422	.342–.543
Video 1	.428	.410–.482
Video 2	.282	.229–.404
Video 3	.389	.360–.459

Note. N = 400. Cramér's V measures the strength of the association between political affiliation and participants' evaluations of each stimulus. CI = confidence interval.

The cross-tabulation results help explain these differences. For some stimuli, respondents from different political groups gave very different answers. For example, 93.6% of BNP supporters considered Image 1 true, whereas among the neutral respondents only 2.2% gave the same response. A similar difference appeared for Image 3, where 92.3% of BNP supporters considered it true, compared with 6.5% of neutral respondents.

Image 2 also showed clear differences. About 91.7% of BNP supporters identified it as fake, compared with 31.1% of Awami League supporters and 22.58% of Jamaat-e-Islami supporters. Image 5 showed another noticeable difference: 96.2% of BNP supporters identified it as fake, compared with 60.5% of Awami League supporters, 64.52% of Jamaat-e-Islami supporters, 78.3% of Jatiya Party supporters, and 43.5% of neutral respondents.

The same pattern appeared in some of the videos. For Video 1, 92.9% of BNP supporters considered it true, compared with 2.2% of neutral respondents. In the case of Video 3, 93.6% of BNP supporters identified it as a deepfake. Apart from BNP supporters, fewer than half of the participants evaluated it as fake (Awami League supporters: 39.5%; neutral participants: 17.4%). However, Video 2 was different because uncertainty was high across most political groups.

The expert interviews provide a better understanding of how people's thoughts, emotions, and social relationships can influence people's evaluation of political content. Psychologists explained the role of emotional attachment and existing beliefs in evaluating the accuracy of political content. Communication experts focused on how political identity can affect the credibility people place in political information. And Fact-checkers highlighted the importance of checking the source, date, and context of images and videos to assess a piece of content's authenticity. These perspectives from the experts help explain the different patterns found in the survey.

They further described that people may respond differently to content that supports or challenges their preconceived notions. These results help explain the differences observed across participants of different political groups. But that does not prove that political affiliation directly causes differences in the evaluation of misinformation. Rather, the interviews provide possible explanations for the patterns found in the quantitative data.

Discussion

This study explored how political affiliation shapes Facebook users' evaluations of election-related content in Bangladesh using an exploratory sequential mixed-methods design to address its research questions. The first research question of this study investigated whether political affiliation was related to respondents' evaluation of election-related misinformation or not. The results showed a significant association for all eight stimuli. However, the strength of this association varied across the stimuli. Image 3 had the strongest association (V = .504) and Video 2 the weakest (V = .282).

The results align with previous studies on selective exposure, which suggest that political attitudes may influence individuals' preferences

and engagement with political information (Stroud, 2010; Iyengar & Hahn, 2009). It can also be explained through the lens of confirmation bias: individuals interpret information in ways consistent with their existing beliefs and attitudes (Nickerson, 1998). Besides, Social Identity Theory provides a relevant framework for understanding these differences. Political affiliation can shape part of an individual's social identity, which in turn can be influenced by how individuals perceive and interpret political information (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Likewise, political affiliation may play an important role in shaping their evaluations of such content.

Different politically affiliated groups responded to the eight images and videos in various ways. There are chances that apart from political affiliation, the content itself may have influenced participants' evaluation. Rather than providing context for this difference, the study did not directly test factors such as verification habits, emotions, or trust in others, which may have affected participants' responses.

Since not every image or video was independently verified, the findings of the study reflect how respondents evaluated the content, not how accurately they identified misinformation. For this reason, the study cannot determine which political groups were better at identifying false or misleading information.

The findings of the second research question revealed differences in participants' evaluation of election-related misinformation. Participants showed different levels of acceptance, rejection, and uncertainty across the eight images and videos. They showed clear responses in identifying some content, but in others, participants expressed uncertainty about evaluating its credibility.

Particularly, Video 2 received a high level of uncertainty. More than four-fifths of respondents selected 'don't know', suggesting that users may not always make a clear decision when evaluating political content. Studies on misinformation often focuse on people's belief or rejection of false claims. But uncertainty is also an important response. This suggests that Facebook users may lack sufficient confidence to make a clear decision about content credibility.

The findings also raise questions about participants' verification habits. Most participants reported rarely cross-checking political information. So, despite uncertainty, people did not verify the content

regularly. These survey responses are evidence that it is important to adopt verification habits rather than relying solely on personal confidence.

So, the findings suggest that misinformation evaluation involves more than acceptance or rejection, where uncertainty is also a meaningful response, particularly when Facebook users find it difficult to assess the credibility of political content.

Moreover, the survey explores respondents' confidence in identifying misinformation, their tendency to check political information, their political views, and the sources they trust. The interviews brought in the experts' views on political loyalty, existing beliefs, and emotional reactions. The study did not examine how each of these factors affected people's evaluations. They help explain the context of the findings, but the results do not show that they caused the differences in responses.

Cognitive factors were seen in respondents' confidence in identifying misinformation. The mean confidence score for identifying misinformation was 2.78 out of 5, with most choosing the neutral response. Meanwhile, 68.25% of participants said they rarely cross-checked political information. These results show that feeling confident about identifying misinformation does not necessarily mean that individuals regularly verify the information they encounter.

Political beliefs also emerged as an important factor in respondents' self-reported perceptions. Sixty-six percent stated that their political opinions strongly influenced their likelihood of believing misinformation. This finding is consistent with the observed associations between political affiliation and evaluations of all eight stimuli. However, as this measure was self-reported, it cannot establish how political beliefs directly influenced respondents' judgments.

Emotional factors were mainly identified through the expert interviews. The experts discussed how emotional responses can influence Facebook users' interpretation of politically sensitive information, suggesting that emotions can play a role in evaluating misinformation. However, the study did not directly measure the effects of specific emotions and therefore cannot establish their individual influence on respondents' evaluations.

Participants reported social factors as preferred sources of trusted information. 140 respondents identified family and friends as a trusted source, followed by news agencies (130) and official political pages (30).

These findings show that personal relationships and information sources can shape Facebook users' approach towards political content. However, trusting a source does not necessarily mean the information is accurate.

The main contribution of the study is that political affiliation is consistently associated with the evaluation of election-related misinformation. The results also indicate that the strength of the association varied across content, meaning that political affiliation alone cannot explain every response.

People did not respond to every political image or video in the same way. Some content was accepted as true, some was rejected, and some was marked as unsure. This makes it difficult to divide Facebook users into two groups based on whether they believe misinformation. Acceptance, rejection, and uncertainty are different responses. And each deserves attention when examining how people evaluate political content.

Conclusion and Limitations

The findings show that people from different political groups did not always judge the same election-related content in the same way. The study examined this issue through a survey of 400 Facebook users during Bangladesh's 2024 national election. Political affiliation was significantly associated with responses to all eight images and videos. But the strength of these relationships varied. The study adds to the scholarly archive in Bangladesh by showing how political affiliation relates to different judgments of election-related content. The survey also examined respondents' confidence and how often they checked political information. The expert interviews explored the possible roles of political beliefs, emotions, and trust in others.

However, the study has some limitations. Several findings of this study depended on participants' self-reported views and practices. The study examined how respondents evaluated political content, not whether their evaluations were correct. This study could also not explain the differences between political groups. Although many respondents rarely checked political information and were unsure about Video 2, the study did not examine whether these two findings were related. The expert interviews brought up another concern. People may trust information because it comes from someone they know, which raises questions about how they check sources, understand content, and decide what to share with others.

The study did not test whether improving these practices would change how people evaluate political information. These remain areas for future studies.

Ethics Statement

The author obtained ethics approval to conduct this study from the Biosafety, Biosecurity, and Ethical Clearance Committee of Jahangirnagar University, Bangladesh, with reference number: BBEC, JU/M 2024/07 (114).

AI Statement

The author used generative AI to refine the manuscript's language and identify relevant literature.

Conflict of Interest

There is no potential conflict of interest in this study.

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