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MEDIA LITERACY AND FAKE NEWS CONSUMPTION IN BANGLADESH: THE MAIN TENDENCIES AND TRENDS (2012-2022)

Thesis for a Candidate Degree in Philological Sciences

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На правах рукописи

Хоссаин Барек

МЕДИАГРАМОТНОСТЬ И ПОТРЕБЛЕНИЕ ФЕЙКОВЫХ НОВОСТЕЙ В БАНГЛАДЕШ: ОСНОВНЫЕ ТЕНДЕНЦИИ И ТРЕНДЫ (2012-2022 ГГ.)

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ДИССЕРТАЦИЯ

на соискание ученой степени кандидата филологических наук

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INTRODUCTION

The relevance of the study. Technological developments have brought innovation and transformation in various areas of the global world. Media platforms have also been subject to innovative transformations. New rules for working with content have begun to emerge in the traditional journalistic approach. Social media has become the most effective tool to achieve this goal. The audience can also quickly receive various news and share opinions through social networks. However, this speed only sometimes plays a positive role in a society with low levels of media literacy. Developing countries like Bangladesh continue to have low overall literacy rates. For this reason, fake news is considered one of the biggest threats creating political and social tension in the country.

According to the UK Parliament's Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Committee, fake news directly threatens politics and democracy because it misleads audiences[1]. Russian scientists are coming long ago to understand media literacy[2], as the ability to receive, analyse, evaluate and transmit messages in different forms, and critically evaluate the messages received and disseminated, to be aware of the possible consequences of their actions. The ability to evaluate the reliability of the content received is a key condition for media literacy, along with the ability to creatively use different forms of media, countering fakes and disinformation. Media literacy has become an important condition for overcoming the digital divide in the Russian Federation, and the State Duma adopted a law introducing penalties for the dissemination of knowingly false information[3].

A survey of Americans conducted by Pew Research before the start of the infodemic in 2016 showed that before the era of the rise of fake news, about 65% of US citizens believed that fake news confused them about the real state of things[4]. The massive spread of fake news leads to unexpected social losses: financial losses, spreading fear and increasing racism, and manipulating the outcome of political events. On the other hand, true and false information have walked side by side since the very beginning of human civilization. In this process, some

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[1] Arman Z.R. (2019), SPOT Test: A unified model to spot fake news. Gateway Journalism Review. Vol. 48, no. 354, Pp. 22.

[2] Федоров А.В. Медиаобразование и медиаграмотность: учебное пособие для вузов. Москва, Директ-Медиа, 2013. 342 с.

[3] Госдума приняла закон о фейках про действия военнослужащих. Https://www.e1.ru/text/politics/2022/03/04/70486820/

[4] Pew research survey, 15.12.2016. URL: https://www.pewresearch.org/journalism/2016/12/15/many-americans-believe-fake-news-is-sowing- confusion/ (Accessed 12.05.2023).

have chosen the truth, while others have deliberately spread misleading information for their own selfish purposes.

If in ancient times, when people were accustomed to living in caves or clustered villages, information, real or fake, was limited by geographical boundaries, over time technology has removed these restrictions. The world is now replete with internet-connected mobile phones that are closely linked to social media. During the COVID-19 communications crisis and the resulting onslaught of fake news, misinformation and fabricated news have spread like wildfire on social media. Various social media platforms including Facebook[5], YouTube, WhatsApp, Instagram[6], Twitter[7], etc. have become the most commonly used means of disseminating both truthful and misleading information.

Taking advantage of digital platforms, some media outlets exchange rumors in order to place advertisements in exchange for user likes and generate income from Google and other platforms. Under these circumstances, the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the spread of misinformation an "infodemic." The Infodemic COVID-19 Observatory, based on a 200 million Twitter[8] database from January 21, 2020 to May 7, 2020, noted that almost half of the messages were transmitted through robots during this period[9]. However, the issue of Social Media vs. Mass Media is still highly controversial. It is obvious that social networks have become a powerful and significant platform in many countries around the world, since, according to them, it is an alternative structure for the systematic processing of information alternative to traditional media.

The Government of Bangladesh has been implementing the "Digital Bangladesh Program" since 2009 under the slogan "Vision 2021". As part of this program, the Government of Bangladesh has taken a number of initiatives on issues such as e-governance, e-commerce, e-banking and promotion of signal delivery capabilities of mobile networks. In the country, a larger portion of the population has gained access to mobile phones and the Internet compared to the recent past. Thus, with the development of Web 2.0, social networks

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[5] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[6] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[7] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[8] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[9] Muzykant V.L., Muqsith M.A., Pratomo R.R., & Barabash V. (2021), "Fake News on COVID-19 in Indonesia". In: Berube D.M. (eds) Pandemic Communication and Resilience. Risk, Systems and Decisions. [Online]. Springer, Cham. URL: https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-77344-1_22.

have become an important tool and network for creating virtual communities in the 21st century. According to the Digital 2020 - Global Digital Overview report, Facebook[10] has become the most popular social network with 2.4 billion users worldwide[11].

Although this platform has made a significant contribution in making the voices of the marginalized sections of society heard, it has unfortunately led to some serious social and communal conflicts in Bangladesh[12]. For example, the country has witnessed a series of violent clashes and numerous events of a destructive nature, such as the Ramu riots in 2012, the false rumors about Sayeedi in 2013 and the Nasirnagar incident in 2016, which, after the spread of fake news on Facebook[13], led to the deaths of residents in Bangladesh which caused state restrictions for Internet users in order to avoid more chaos. At the same time, the volume of misinformation about COVID-19 has rapidly worsened the situation of countries in the world, making it difficult to control the rapid spread of the coronavirus, which has caused a crisis in the universal healthcare system.

"Fake news" easily disseminated when the population has a low level of media literacy, can include both harmless false information and malicious fakes spread in personal or corporate interests rather than in the public interest[14]. Media literacy itself, as the ability to receive, analyze, evaluate and transmit messages in various forms, has been developing since the 1930s, but reached popularity in the 1960s and 70s. The Bangladesh Center for the Development of Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) has been sponsoring media literacy initiatives in Bangladesh since 2002, promoting the demand for media literacy. Despite limitations such as a poor infrastructure, lack of resources and politicization of the media landscape, media literacy is considered vital to the development of Bangladeshi democracy and the functioning of an independent media. The study period includes the period 2012-2022. All this determines the relevance of this work.

The degree of scientific development of the research problem. The degree of scientific development of a topic includes the work of scientists on various aspects of the problems being studied. Russian and foreign researchers periodically address the problem of

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[10] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[11] Kamp S. (2020), Digital 2020: Global Digital Overview - DataReportal - Global Digital Insights. DataReportal. Web link: https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2020-global-digital-overview.
[12] Rafe R. (2019), Bangladesh: Fake news on Facebook fuels communal violence. DW.com. Web link: https://www.dw.com/en/bangladesh-fake-news-on-facebook-fuels-communal-violence/a-51083787.
[13] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[14] Wardle C., and Derakhshan D. H. (2017), "Information Disorder: Toward an interdisciplinary framework for research and policy making," the Council of Europe, Strasbourg Cedex.

media literacy and the phenomenon of fake news as a formation that has become a serious problem in the Internet era. The work is based on documents, books and periodicals exploring the concept of fake news (disinformation, misleading information, unreliable information). The study is based on monographs, various books and periodicals, which examine the concepts of media literacy in the context of the spread of fake news. The research is based on the works of: Guess, A. M., Lockett, D., Lyons, B., Montgomery, J. M., Nyhan, B., Reifler, J.[15], Rochlin, N.[16], Sundar, S. S., Molina, M. D., Cho, E.[17], Beauvais, C.[18], Lazer D.M.[19], Jack S.[20], Thandoc E.C.[21] and others.

The work is also based on various studies on fake news within the framework of social network theory, media literacy, modern journalism, etc. When developing the research formulation, the author analyzed English, Russian-language and Bangladeshi literature on countering fake news: McDougall J., and Rega I.[22], Kachkaeva A., Kolchina A., Shomova S., and Yarovaya E.[23], Atikuzzaman M., and Ahmed S. M. Z.[24] and others. Finally, Islam J. & Khan M. J.[25], Muniruzzaman A. N. M.[26], and Muzykant V. L., Hossain B., Muqsith M. A., and Fatima M. J.[27] said that to combat misinformation, rumors, fake news, and tabloid journalism in developing nations like Bangladesh, where literacy rates are still low, it is

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[15] Guess A. M., Lockett D., Lyons B., Montgomery J. M., Nyhan B., & Reifler J. (2020), "Fake news" may have limited effects on political participation beyond increasing beliefs in false claims. Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review. URL: https://doi.org/10.37016/mr-2020-004.

[16] Rochlin N. (2017), Fake news: Belief in post-truth. Library Hi Tech, 35(3), pp. 386–392. URL: https://doi.org/10.1108/LHT-03-2017-0062S.

[17] Sundar S. S., Molina M. D., & Cho E. (2021), Seeing Is Believing: Is Video Modality More Powerful in Spreading Fake News via Online Messaging Apps? Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, 26(6), pp. 301–319. URL: https://doi.org/10.1093/jcmc/zmab010.

[18] Beauvais C. (2022), Fake news: Why do we believe it? Joint Bone Spine, 89(4), 105371. URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbspin.2022.105371.

[19] Lazer D. M. J. (2018), "The Science of Fake news," in Science, pp. 1094-1096. URL: https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aao2998.

[20] Jack C. (2017), Lexicon of lies: Terms for Problematic Information. Data & Society Logo.

[21] Tandoc E.C., Lim Z.W., Ling R. (2018), "Defining 'Fake news' A Typology of Scholarly Definitions," Digital Journalism, vol. 6, no. 2, pp. 137-153.

[22] McDougall J., & Rega I. (2022), Beyond Solutionism: Differently Motivating Media Literacy. Media and Communication, 10(4). URL: https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.v10i4.5715.

[23] Kachkaeva A., Kolchina A., Shomova S., & Yarovaya E. (2020), 'Trust, but verify': Problems of formation of media literacy and critical thinking of Russian students. Media Practice and Education, 21(3), 200–211. URL: https://doi.org/10.1080/25741136.2020.1752569.

[24] Atikuzzaman M., Ahmed S. M. Z. (2023), Information Literacy Self-Efficacy Scale: Validating the translated version of the scale for use among Bangla-speaking population. The Journal of Academic Librarianship, 49(1), 102623. URL: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2022.102623.

[25] ইসলাম জে. & খান এম. জে. (2023), নির্বাচনকে কেন্দ্র করে বাড়ছে অপতথ্য ছড়ানো. ডেইলি স্টার বাংলা. https://bangla.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/politics/news-532076.

[26] মুনীরুজ্জামান আ. ন. ম. (2023), আগামী নির্বাচনে অপতথ্য ব্যবহারের ঝুঁকি বাড়ছে. প্রথম আলো. URL: https://www.prothomalo.com/opinion/column/zt0fmz4mho

[27] Muzykant V. L., Hossain B., Muqsith M. A., & Fatima M. J. (2022). Media Literacy and Fake News: Bangladesh Perspective. Jurnal Cita Hukum, 10(2), 223–238. URL: https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v10i2. .

imperative to increase media literacy levels. In this regard, governments and non-governmental groups should work collaboratively to fix the deficiencies in this process. Problems of media literacy as a means of countering fakes in the focus of Russian scientists: Вартанова Е.Л.[28], Ильченко С.Н.[29], Крылова Е.Н.[30], Манойло А.В., Петренко А.И., Фролов Д. Б.[31], Рева Е.К., Межина В.А.[32], Федоров А.В.[33], Шестерина А.М.[34] and others.

The object of the study is the state of media literacy of the population as a knowledge system that counters the consumption of fake news in Bangladesh.

The subject of the study is the relationship between the level of media literacy and the consumption of false information, shaping the news ecosystem, which has a destructive impact on media users in Bangladesh.

The purpose of the study is, based on an analysis of existing concepts of media literacy, to identify emerging tendencies and existing trends in the spread of fakes in order to develop general recommendations for countering false information in Bangladesh.

To achieve this goal, these **main tasks** were formulated:

• To study the prerequisites for the emergence and functioning of fake news in the media system of Bangladesh.

• Analyze the features of the process of digitalization of national media after the country gained independence.

• Based on modern practices of traditional and new media, explore the digital media environment and the characteristics of the socio-demographic structure of media content consumers in Bangladesh.

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[28] Вартанова Е.Л., Вихрова О.Ю., Самородова Э.В. Медиаграмотность как условие преодоления цифрового неравенства в Российской Федерации. Электронный научный журнал. Медиаскоп. 2021. № 1. Http://mediascope.ru/2679

[29] Ильченко С.Н. Фейк как антиисточник информации: риск для профессиональных стандартов журналистики // Гуманитарный вектор. 2018. Т. 5. № 13. - С. 70-76.

[30] Крылова Е.Н. Фейковые новости на страницах столичных периодических изданий начала XX в. (на примере статей о полиции в газете «Новое время») // Historia provinciae - Журнал Региональной Истории. 2020. Т. 3. - №4. - С. 765-798.

[31] Манойло А. В., Петренко А. И., Фролов Д. Б. Государственная информационная политика в условиях информационно-психологической войны. М.: Горячая линия-Телеком, 2021. 25.

[32] Рева Е.К., Межина В.А. Особенности предоставления контента на YouTube об экстремальных ситуациях: жанры и форматы // Гуманитарный Вектор. 2020. Т. 5. № 15. - С. 110-115.

[33] Федоров А.В. Медиаобразование и медиаграмотность: учебное пособие для вузов. Москва, Директ-Медиа, 2013. 342 с.

[34] Шестерина А.М. Особенности репрезентации фейковой информации в аудиовизуальном медиаконтенте // Вестник НГУ. Серия: История, филология. - 2021. - № 6. - С. 237-246. Http://vestnik.nsu.ru/historyphilology.

• Determine the relationship between digitalization processes, the development of national journalism and the level of media literacy as a system countering fake news in Bangladesh.

• Conduct an analysis of the interaction between general literacy and media literacy in the context of the development of information and computer technologies (ICT) and the related concept of "Information disorder".

• Develop evaluation criteria and principles for mediametric measurements of the influence of media literacy on countering fakes.

• To specify the parameters of the influence of the patriarchal culture of the country on the level of media literacy, to formulate recommendations for the implementation of a training system for verifying facts on the country's popular media platforms.

Research hypotheses is that a high level of media literacy with low general educational standards of the population can significantly resist the emergence and spread of fake news with timely diagnosis of the disseminated false information on social networks. Only the cooperation of national governments with professional journalistic communities can contribute to the development of digital literacy for the population of Bangladesh. The author significantly supplemented and enriched this approach, presenting a new perspective on the phenomenon of fake news as a threat to information security, and gave his own assessment of the importance of media education in the context of countering the spread of fakes in the framework of achieving the sustainable development goals of Bangladesh.

Scientific novelty. The scientific novelty of the dissertation lies in the fact that for the first time in the work:

the causes of occurrence, features of functioning, the distribution channels used, as well as the results of the impact of fakes on media users in Bangladesh were comprehensively reviewed and assessed;

based on a wide range of sources and taking into account expert assessments, key parameters of the relationship between the state of media literacy and the public's trust in false information published on social networks have been identified;

the linguistic and stylistic characteristics of sites and media platforms disseminating fake news in the political, economic and social spheres of Bangladesh are analysed;

a cause-and-effect relationship has been identified between a low level of media literacy and the relatively free spread of fakes, leading to destructive consequences for Bangladeshi society;

developed criteria to evaluate the effectiveness of fact verification programs using an analytical process method to predict the cognitive, emotional and behavioral reactions of Bangladeshi media users;

the basics of mediametric modelling of media literacy training programs implemented jointly with the government and the professional journalistic community are proposed as a new way of managing public trust in the era of digitalization;

presented a unique perspective on identifying fake news as a serious threat to the information security of the poorest countries in the world, which are solving the problems of sustainable development of statehood.

The article uses materials and original sources in Russian, English and Bengali, many of which are being introduced into scientific circulation for the first time.

Theoretical and methodological basis. The dissertation is based on general scientific empirical and theoretical research methods. Quantitative methods of sociological research allow us to obtain basic empirical information about the penetration of fake news into various strata of society, identify the attitude of respondents to the problem under study, qualitative methods explore the deep motives of experts from 6 leading universities and the largest media organizations in the country to obtain a professional opinion about the level of media literacy in the country and the problem of countering fakes. To define the concepts of media literacy and fake news, to identify the close connection between them in a broad perspective, deductive and inductive methods and statistical analysis are used. Linguistic stylistic analysis is used to study the content of fake materials. Typological analysis is used to classify different fake news stories and study their functional characteristics. The theoretical and methodological framework allows us to systematize existing theoretical developments in the field of digital media literacy to solve the problem of whether a high level of media literacy can reduce the rate of spread of false news among consumers of media content. Statistical analysis methods are used to study the socio-demographic characteristics of the target audience, channels and areas of dissemination of fake information, to study emerging trends and established trends that most influence the effectiveness of the media literacy system that counters fakes.

The empirical object was 2000 materials from the largest media platforms and international social networks Twitter[35], Facebook[36], Instagram[37], YouTube, WhatsApp. Quantitative and qualitative of sociological research methods were used by the researcher to identify emerging trends and ongoing trends in the media consumption of Bangladeshis. A total of 1248 daily newspapers, almost 100 news websites, broadcasts from 28 FM radio stations, 45 commercial television networks and 32 local radio stations were analyzed, of which the Bangladeshi online portals MTNews24, BD24 Report, Daily Ekattor, Daily Sambad were in the focus.

TV Channels: Somoy TV 2022 (spreading seven fake news reports in 2022), Daily Jugantor with 5 false reports; Jago News, Channel 24 TV, Amader Shomoy, and Bangla News 24 (with 4 fakes each), Ajker Patrika, Channel I, RTV, and Ekushey TV in 2022 (3 fakes), Kaler Kantho, Prothom Alo, Samakal, Ittefaq, Daily Campus, Bangladesh Today, Shomoyer Alo, Somoyer Konthosor, Sarabangla, Business Standard, Dhaka Post, Banglavision, NTV, Jamuna TV and DBC News (2 fakes), Bangla Tribune, Daily Star, Bangladesh Journal, News Bangla 24, Desh Rupantar, Ekattor TV, Dhaka Tribune, Bangladesh Pratidin, Bhorer Kagaj, Dhaka Times, Manabkantha, Janakantha, Purboposhchimbd, Zoom Bangla and Bangla Insider each published fake news. 300 materials from leading national centers fighting fake content were studied - BD Fact Check (*www.bdfactcheck.com*), Boom Bangladesh (*www.boombd.com*) Factkhuji (*www.factkhuji.org*), Rumor Scanner (*www.rumorscanner.com*), Jachai -Verification (*www.jachai.org*), and Fact Watch (*www.fact-watch.org*).

The 100 most typical fake news stories for the period 2012-2022 were selected and analyzed, including 11 that led to the largest communal clashes and human casualties. In addition, a questionnaire was developed and distributed among 500 respondents to identify the level of media literacy, frequency of occurrence, form and content of fakes, and channels of their distribution. 441 respondents responded to the questionnaire (211 men or 47.8% of the total number of respondents and 230 women (52.2%), of which 311 were aged 17-22 years (70.5%), 124 were aged 23-28 years (28.1%), 6 aged 28-33 years (1.4%) from 8 leading Bangladeshi universities, representing all regions of the country. University of Dhaka 92

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[35] Twiter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[36] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[37] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

respondents (20.8%), University of Chittagong - 80 (18.1%), University of Rajshahi - 75 (17%), University of Barisal - 61 (13.8%), University of Khulna - 41 (9.3%), Shahjalal University of Science and Technology - 28 (6.3%), Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islamic University - 28 (6.3%), Rangpur University - 36 (8.2%). 258 people received education at the college level (58.5% of the total number of respondents), completed a bachelor's degree (175 people or 39.7%), and eight people (1.8%) had a master's degree. The data obtained helped to identify the frequency and degree of penetration of fakes into the segments we studied and made it possible to determine the attitude of respondents towards fake news. Also, in April - May 2022, a series of in-depth interviews were conducted as an important part of qualitative sociological research, which made it possible to identify the motives for media consumption of fakes with the Director General of Press Institute Bangladesh-PIB, Chief News Editor at Independent Television, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the national news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), Editor at TheReport.live, Specialist- Factcheck at Daily Ajker Patrika and Chief News Editor at Daily Anandabazar.

Provisions for the Defense

• The modern media landscape of Bangladesh is implicit in the practice of creating and disseminating fake news, as a legacy of the recent colonial past.

• Current scientific research in the field of media literacy of media consumption confirms that the transition of national media to the digital plane requires new training programs that take into account national traditions and mentality to verify published information in the context of Bangladesh's search for its digital identity and minimizing possible reputational risks.

• But against the backdrop of extremely low overall literacy, fake news channels, which have reached half of the country's population, are having a destructive impact on a modern Bangladeshi society, especially the younger generation.

• Users with a high level of media literacy have a level of trust that allows them to refute existing rumors about the low correlation between the level of media literacy and trust in fake news. It is education that concentrates the value guidelines that form educational media platforms for highly intellectual communication as a criterion for intercommunity communication in Bangladesh.

• The high annual growth rate of the spread of fake news on media platforms in Bangladesh can, in the absence of proper control from the professional community, turn in the near decade into an uncontested source of information for users in virtual echo chambers.

• In the context of new media, the impact on users of social networks has already led to changes in media consumption habits, as well as in lifestyles in rural areas with 60% of population, destroying traditional way of life, and establishing new ideas about social justice.

• The manipulative use of linguistic and stylistic techniques can create new semantic meanings with negative connotations and reputational risks for the majority of Internet and social media users in a country with a low level of general literacy.

• Mediametric measurements in the format of quantitative and qualitative sociological research allow us to identify key parameters and formulate common principles of media literacy that allow us to verify the authenticity of modern news, minimizing the possible damage from fakes.

• Considering that users with low levels of media literacy are more likely to accept and share false information, focus on the student community as the most open to implementing educational programs to test the level of media education for determine the conversion rate of media literacy into the ability to prevent the spread of fakes.

• Media literacy, as an essential skill in the social, cultural and economic development of civilization, is a prerequisite for the citizens of Bangladesh to successfully participate in the formation of an information society based on making informed decisions in the conduct of public discourse and the ability to navigate the complex media landscape of the country.

The theoretical significance of the work lies in the fact that, together with the clarification of the theory of "Information disorder", the relationship between the processes of digitalization and the development of national journalism is projected onto the level of modern media literacy, which opposes fake news, an analytical review of scientific research into the media environment and the socio-demographic structure of consumers of media content in Bangladesh, and then, based on an analysis of the existing theoretical framework of general literacy programs, the characteristics and evaluation criteria of its interaction with media education in the context of the development of information and computer technologies (ICT) are summarized, which makes it possible to clarify the theory of media literacy.

The approach used ensures the theoretical and methodological reliability of the dissertation research and its significant contribution to solving an important scientific problem

related to countering the emergence and spread of fake news based on timely diagnosis of false information on social networks. Research in this area makes it possible, by specifying the parameters of the influence of the country's culture on the level of media literacy, to reach the formation of a unified fact-checking system, formulating recommendations for the introduction of a training system for verifying facts on popular media platforms to preserve the national authenticity and minimize the image losses of the state in the era of digitalization, which can to form the basis for the development of new research directions on media literacy in online journalism, digital communications and new media technologies.

The practical significance is determined by the complexity of the study, which revealed the need to improve the quality of media literacy programs to effectively counter fake news. The developed methodology for mediametric modelling of media literacy training programs implemented jointly with the government and the professional journalistic community, as a new way of managing public trust in the era of digitalization, allows us to formulate a list of problems associated with the influence of the country's patriarchal culture on the level of media literacy, as well as present appropriate substantiated proposals for eliminating them. The findings of this research are of interest to experts in the field of media education, media linguistics, communication strategies, as well as for government organizations interested in countering the spread of fake news, for experts studying the impact of fake news on digital media in times of crisis to protect countries from the spread destructive propaganda. The developed practical recommendations can also be useful to journalists, philologists, sociologists and representatives of other relevant humanities disciplines.

The dissertation author's independent contribution is to enrich the limited methodological horizon of research into the problem of fake news as a phenomenon that received new impetus in the post-COVID period, which accelerated the pace of the creation of virtual communities. The author's approach deserves the status of novelty, considering users as a subject capable of interpreting the choice in favor of fake news in the presence of a low level of media literacy, which indicates the relationship of the level of media literacy in Bangladesh as a significant factor influencing people's views related to consumption news. Media literate people are more likely to critically analyze information, users with low literacy levels are both recipients and distributors of false information. Besides it:

• The concept of the emergence and spread of false news has been analysed and significantly expanded, and the features of their functioning in the context of the concept of media literacy have been identified.

• A significant level of media literacy allows you to verify information received by double-checking material before cross-referencing and considering alternative points of view, while users with low levels of literacy are more likely to be recipients and spreaders of false information.

• The position put forward by the author of the study that virtual communities actively integrate media into their daily lives made it possible to successfully test and confirm the relevance of the concept of "Information disorder" for Bangladeshi users of social networks.

• Research carried out by the author showed that the Bangladeshi audience consumes fake news daily through major digital distribution channels significantly more than through traditional media.

• Considering the direct relationship between media consumption and the volume of false information received, increasing the level of media literacy, the researcher concludes, should be based on the creation of programs that can not only verify received messages, but develop the practical skills necessary for critical analysis of media content.

• Consumption of media in modern conditions, as a way of filling one's free time, should be closely linked with the promotion of media literacy in society to create a kind of psychological stability in the minds of the younger generation of Bangladeshis.

Approbation of research results. The main results of the study were presented at seminars and lectures at the Department of Mass Communications - "Mass Media Sociology" and "Media Economics" of the Faculty of Philology of the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia named after Patrice Lumumba as well as at international scientific conferences held by Moscow State University named after M.V. Lomonosov. Findings of the study are presented in 17 scientific publications, including six articles in peer-reviewed journals, 4 included in the RUDN List, three articles cited in world citation databases (Web of Science).

List of works published by the author on the topic of the dissertation:

1. *Muzykant V. L., Hossain B., Muqsith M. A., & Fatima M. J.* (2022). Media Literacy and Fake News: Bangladesh Perspective. *Jurnal Cita Hukum,* 10(2), 223–238. URL: https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v10i2.259211. **(Web of Science).**

2. *Hoesin C. F. I. S., Poplavskaya N. V., & Hossain B.* (2022). Цифровая грамотность как средство от инфодемии Covid-19 в Индонезии (Digital Literacy as an Antidote to Covid-19 Infodemic in Indonesi). *Jurnal Cita Hukum,* 10(3), 631-648. URL: https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v10i3.30010. **(Web of Science).**

3. Hossain B., Fatima M.J., Muzykant V. L., Hoesin C. F. I. S., & Nahiduzzaman M. (2023). An Overview of Digital Media Literacy in Digital Bangladesh. *Jurnal Cita Hukum,* 11(2), 267–288. URL: https://doi.org/10.15408/jch.v11i2.34755. **(Web of Science).**

4. *Музыкант В.Л., Бурдовская Е.Ю., Музыкант Е.В., Кайзер Б.* (2023). Инвективные трансформации в современной масс-медийной коммуникации. Филологические науки. Москва. № 3. Стр. 31-39. URL: https://doi.org/10.20339/PhS.3-23.031. **(ВАК).**

5. *Hossain B., Muzykant V.L., & Nahiduzzaman M.* (2022). Roles of Fact-checking Organizations in Bangladesh to Tackle Fake News. *Журнал "Закон и Власть",* No. 5. Pp. 3-8. URL: https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=50096734. **(ВАК).**

6. *Hossain B., Muzykant V.L., & Nahiduzzaman M.* (2022). Spreading Rumors in Bangladesh: An Analysis of Sources and Causes. *Научный журнал "Социология".* No. 6. Pp. 189-197. Https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=50111359. **(ВАК).**

7. *Muzykant V.L. Hossain B.* (2021). Information and Misleading Information During COVID-19 on social media in Bangladesh // RUDN University. Means of Mass Communications in a Multipolar World: Problems and Prospects. Moscow. Vol. 01. Pp. 552-558. URL: https://repository.rudn.ru/ru/records/article/record/92561/.

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9. *Hossain M.N., Hossain B., & Alam R.M.K.* (2022). Absolute globalization: The way to confront the global challenges // The Business and Management Review. UK. Vol. 13. Pp. 126-133.   URL: https://cberuk.com/cdn/conference_proceedings/2022-09-16-09-17-30-AM.pdf.

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http://library.lgaki.info:404/2017/%D0%A1%D0%B1%D0%BE%D1%80%D0%BD%D0%B8%D0%BA_%D1%80%D0%B5%D0%BA%D0%BB%D0%B0%D0%BC%D0%B0.pdf.

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URL: https://ejournal.upnvj.ac.id/jep/article/view/3850/pdf.

12. *Muzykant V.L., Muqsith M.A., Kaiser B.* (2022). Фейковые новости как основа дезинформации на современных медиаплатформах // Культура в фокусе научных парадигм. Донецкий национальный университет. Научное издание. Донецк. Pp. 258-264. URL: https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=49341943.

13. *Hossain B., Alam R.M.K., Hossain M.N., & Fatima M. J.* (2022). Influence of social media in the Practice of Journalism in Bangladesh // The Business and Management Review. UK. Vol. 13. Pp. 116-122. URL: https://cberuk.com/cdn/conference_proceedings/2023-01-18-08-34-34-AM.pdf.

14. *Muzykant V.L., Hossain B.* (2023). On the Origins of of Bengali National Journalism // Journalism and Media in the Age of Global Challenge // Conference proceedings. RUDN. Moscow. Vol. 1. Pp. 404-420.

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17. *Muzykant V.L., Hossain B., Masudur R.H.M.* (2022), Digital Journalism and Communal Violence in Bangladesh: A Case Study// The 14th International Media Readings in Moscow «Mass Media and Communications-2022». Moscow. Pp. 44-45.
URL: https://elibrary.ru/item.asp?id=49874655.

Volume and the structure of the thesis. The structure is determined by the purpose and logic of the material's presentation, aimed at testing the hypothesis and solving the tasks outlined. The dissertation consists of Introduction, three chapters (nine paragraphs) with intermediate conclusions, Conclusions, a List of references and Appendixes. The study is presented on 196 pages, including 26 figures, 4 tables, appendixes. The list of references contains 240 titles.

CHAPTER 1. MEDIA SYSTEM OF BANGLADESH: PREREQUISITES FOR THE EMERGENCE AND FUNCTIONING OF FAKE NEWS

1.1. *THE ROLE OF SOCIAL STRUCTURE IN THE FORMATION OF A MODERN MEDIA SYSTEM*

The social structure played a crucial part in the development of the modern media system. Social structures are the underlying networks of institutions, rules, and interactions that make up society. It impacts the operations of media organizations, the material they generate, and the general dynamics of the media environment. The country's socioeconomic structure has significantly shaped Bangladesh's modern media system.

In Bangladesh, ownership of media outlets is often concentrated in the hands of influential people or groups with strong links to political parties. Media independence and plurality are problems resulting from this ownership concentration. Bangladesh is ranked 163rd out of 180 nations by Reporters Without Borders (RWB, 2023), the lowest ranking of any South Asian country (apart from Myanmar). The nation's rating has declined, pointing to a worrying trend. Press criticism has been more hostile, notably from governing party members and government officials. Alarming techniques crush dissenting opinions, and assaults on journalists are not held accountable.

Bangladesh's societal structure impacts the country's political and ideological climate, affecting the media environment. The political clout and domination of the governing party may affect media licensing policies and content control measures. Before the midterm elections 2018, the Bangladeshi government shut down at least 58 news websites recognized for their critical reporting, raising concerns about media independence and the freedom of speech (Daily Star, 2018).

Journalists criticizing the government's policies have been accused of being targeted and silenced by the government. For instance, the safety and freedom of journalists were questioned when well-known journalist Shafiqul Islam Kajol was detained in 2020 after being missing for many months (Al Jazeera, 2020).

The societal structure of Bangladesh has an impact on the media industry's professional procedures and standards. The expectations and attitudes of society affect journalistic standards and ethics. Due to political pressure, safety concerns, and financial limitations, it might be difficult to respect these standards (Article 19, 2021).

Regulations and censorship of the media in Bangladesh are influenced by social structure and political dynamics. The government has a history of passing legislation that

limits free speech, including the Digital Security Act (DSA), which has come under fire for restricting press freedom and criticism. At least 355 complaints have been brought under the DSA against journalists, according to data from the Centre for Governance Studies (CGS), and over half of those cases were brought by people connected to political parties or public authorities. There are signs that further legislation is being developed to restrict the media, constraining its capabilities rather than encouraging a free press. The article stresses that limiting press freedom interferes with the public's ability to hold the powerful responsible via information and knowledge, endangering democracy (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Media bias may be influenced by Bangladesh's social structure and its prevailing beliefs and political allegiances. Media organizations sometimes affiliate themselves with specific political ideas or parties, which results in biased reporting and a lack of variety of viewpoints. This may affect objective and accurate news reporting (Hamada, 2017).

Pro-government organizations that target opponents and disseminate propaganda are present on Bangladesh's online media and social media platforms. These organizations often launch coordinated defamation campaigns and spread false information (Faiaz Z., 2022).

Journalists and activists in Bangladesh have experienced abuse and threats on social media. Accusations of being an anti-Bangladesh conspirator and propagandist have been leveled at Tasneem Khalil, editor-in-chief of Netra News, by pro-government blogs and Facebook[38] groups (The Diplomat, 2022). Social structure impacts the audience's demographics, values, and consumption patterns. Media companies modify their material depending on age, gender, socioeconomic class, and cultural background to appeal to certain societal groups.

Bangladeshi journalists are often pressured to self-censor or avoid covering sensitive subjects. Worries about legal repercussions, social anxiety, or legal issues could bring this pressure on. The capacity of the media to operate as a watchdog and to provide critical reporting may be harmed by such self-censorship (Amnesty International, 2020).

While carrying out their responsibilities, journalists and media workers in Bangladesh have been the target of assaults, threats, and acts of violence. In addition to undermining press freedom, these occurrences have a chilling effect on journalists and discourage them from covering controversial topics (Reporters Without Borders, 2020).

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[38] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

The Bangladeshi legal system, which includes defamation and sedition statutes, may be used to stifle critical reporting and restrict freedom of speech. Media freedom has been further impacted by the broad interpretation and enforcement of these regulations, leading to journalists' intimidation and incarceration (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

Despite these obstacles, alternative and independent media channels have developed in Bangladesh and are now a vital source of critical reporting and various viewpoints. These publications, like Netra News and others, have emphasized investigative journalism and questioned the prevailing narratives (Ritzen, 2023). The social structure, which includes the economic environment, influences the advertising money flow to media companies. Financial constraints may impact media outlets' editorial freedom if they rely too much on sponsors or advertisers who have a stake in the content's direction (Asia Times, 2017).

Women journalists may encounter obstacles in gaining access to particular beats or positions of authority, and the portrayal of women in media content can reinforce traditional roles gender (Tahmina, 2022). These factors can contribute to gender biases and stereotypes in the media in Bangladesh. Factors like education levels, socioeconomic disparities, and digital divides can impact people's capacity to engage with media content critically and successfully navigate the media landscape, affecting media literacy and access to information in society (Friedrich Ebert Foundation, 2021).

In Bangladesh, civil society organizations and media watchdogs contribute to fostering a healthier media ecosystem by advocating for media freedom, promoting ethical journalism, and holding media organizations and the government accountable (International Media Support, 2022). Media outlets may navigate these sensitivities to maintain social cohesion or avoid backlash (Banji, 2011). Religious and cultural sensitivities can influence media content and coverage, particularly religion, ethnicity, and social issues. Close ties between political parties and media organizations can result in biased reporting, selective coverage, and the promotion of partisan agendas, affecting media independence and objectivity (Ali & Muurlink, 2022). Laws, regulations, and policies relating to media ownership, licensing, content control, and journalistic practices are shaped by societal values, political considerations, and public opinion; these regulations can positively and negatively affect media freedom (Freedom House, 2022).

Foreign investments, partnerships, and the influence of international media organizations can shape the country's media ownership, content production, and technology adoption (Center for International Media Assistance, 2021). The social structure in Bangladesh interacts with international actors and influences the media system.

These additional arguments emphasize the impact of social structure on ad income, female representation, media literacy, and the function of civil society in influencing Bangladesh's modern media system. They provide us with a more thorough knowledge of the intricate forces at work in the nation's media environment. These extra details illuminate self-censorship, journalist safety worries, the legislative environment that affects press freedom, and the function of alternative and independent media in Bangladesh. They draw attention to the intricate dynamics inside the nation's media system that social structure impacts.

These justifications provide light on how Bangladesh's socioeconomic structure affects the country's political and ideological climate, the practices and standards of the media sector, restrictions on and censorship of the media and the existence of prejudice. The references provided more insights into the particular difficulties encountered in the setting of Bangladeshi media.

Overall, a society's social structure, including ownership, audience dynamics, political influence, professional practices, and the effect of digital platforms, significantly influences how the modern media system is shaped. Understanding this interaction is essential for examining and assessing how the media operates and its influence on contemporary society.

Bangladesh means "Land of Bengal", a country located in South Asia (Appendix A, figure 1). The official name of Bangladesh is the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Bangladeshi people have won their independence twice, one from the British and the other from the Pakistanis (Haider, 2021).

When British colonial rule ended in 1947, the area of Bengal separated into East Bengal and West Bengal. Then in 1955, East Bengal was renamed East Pakistan, and in 1971 it succeeded in gaining independence from West Pakistan as Bangladesh. However, perhaps the most remarkable success is in the cultural field. The Bengal language has a distinguished history in literature and remains one of South Asia's most dynamic forces in the arts and humanities (Muaaz, 2022).

According to the 2022 census (Appendix A, figure 2), Muslims constitute 91.04 percent of the total population, Hindus 7.95 percent of the total population, Buddhists 0.61 percent of the total population, Christian's 0.30 percent of the total population, and other communities' 0.12 percent of the total population (www.bbs.gov.bd).

The education system of Bangladesh has three levels – primary level, secondary level, and higher education or university level. Public and private schools run five-year primary, seven-year secondary, three-year junior, two-year secondary, and two-year higher secondary stages. Private schools are self-financed. In Bangladesh, the tertiary level, i.e., university-level

education is 3-5 years. This education is imparted through 36 public and 79 private universities and affiliated colleges under the supervision of the University Grants Commission. Students can choose either Bengali or English as a medium of instruction. In addition, Islamic education in Bangladesh is generally based on mosques and madrasas (www.moedu.gov.bd).

Further, those willing to conduct social structure significantly determine Bangladesh's modern media landscape. It impacts how media material is produced, disseminated, and consumed, as well as how the media sector operates and is set up. The media landscape is shaped by political and economic forces, which also affect how free and independent the media is. The media system is significantly shaped by social strata based on class, gender, religion, and ethnicity. As they affect how different social groups are portrayed in media material, cultural and religious standards significantly affect the media system.

Bangladesh's social structure affects the current media system through political and economic issues, social hierarchies, cultural and religious traditions, the digital gap, and the impact of social movements. Through political and economic reasons, social hierarchies, cultural and religious standards, the digital divide, and the effect of social activities, this framework creates the current media system.

1.1.1. THE ROLE OF MEDIA IN TRANSITION TO A NEW SOCIAL ORDER, SOCIAL CLASSES, AND STRATIFICATION

In Bangladesh, the media has significantly influenced the establishment of social classes, stratification, and the transition to a new social structure. By shedding focus on the challenges of marginalized communities, it has promoted social justice and raised public awareness of social issues and injustice. Promoting understanding and communication across diverse socioeconomic strata, it acts as a bridge for social transformation. Additionally, it has given previously voiceless groups a platform to tell their tales and defend their rights, giving the oppressed more power. Finally, it has played a significant role in the struggle against and elimination of societal stereotypes and prejudice.

The media in Bangladesh has significantly influenced socioeconomic strata, societal stratification, and the process of establishing a new social order. Through diverse narrative techniques, it has represented many people from various socioeconomic classes, held people responsible, and encouraged entrepreneurship. Social networking platforms and digital media have been used to organize protests, raise awareness of social issues, and amplify the voices of activists.

Potential company owners now have a platform to showcase their talents and innovations, fostering socioeconomic mobility. By spreading awareness, encouraging discourse, empowering marginalized people, eradicating stereotypes, upholding accountability, and promoting entrepreneurship, the media in Bangladesh significantly influences social stratification and socioeconomic classes and shapes the transition to a new social order.

Hindus led East Bengal's villages, urban land control, government service, finance, trade, and livelihoods prior to the separation of British India in 1947. Hindu elites were confined to Calcutta after partition, which was the first time that East Bengal was under Muslim rule. Local Bengali Muslims acquired control of important factories when the country gained independence in 1971, while non-Bengali Muslims established a tiny business community known as "Bonik Samaj." The equilibrium between urban and rural areas was thrown off by the growth of a middle-income class and bureaucracies. Political allegiances became essential for holding positions of authority, resulting in the rise of new elites who purchased land and drove out affluent peasants (Bandyopadhyay D., 2022).

The unexpected rise of the middle class and the proliferation of military and civilian bureaucracies have upset the balance between urban and rural areas. Partisanship, political identity, or a revolutionary paper system became critical for entering leadership positions in fast-moving political elites or industrial establishments. It is hardly reflected in the performance of the middle class. The new aristocrats began to cut resources into the land to establish political and social influence. It led to new national elite replacing many wealthy peasants.

On the other hand, except for caste prejudice against Hindus, there were no clear class distinctions in Bangladeshi society in the aftermath of the 1980s. It was described as broad, bohemian, and free of strict social norms (Sultana & Subedi, 2016). However, social class divisions were flexible between classes and were influenced by occupational disparities. Hindu institutions based on caste had little effect on Bangladesh's predominately Muslim society, as the balance of economic and political power weakened class distinctions.

Marriages were more affected by prestige and riches than by family dynamics. Furthermore, Bangladesh's largely Muslim society made little sense in terms of traditional Muslim class divides. Following Bangladesh's independence, a large number of so-called elite families broke out to speak traditional Urdu (Devine & White, 2013).

Family, Household and Kinship

A family or group, which is frequently made up of an extended male-dominated family system, is the fundamental unit of society in rural Bangladesh. Large structures known as houses are home to some single families. The hierarchy of social organization is built on kinship relationships and is regulated by religious rites. Local mullahs and mosques uphold the law, and elders' informal councils deal with social issues. Brick buildings have replaced traditional rural living in rural areas, and communities and districts are important organizational units. Although there is a tendency to encourage kids to pursue careers in cities, farming still has a significant role to play. Education, money, and wages are now used to determine social rank instead of more conventional indicators. The village's economic status hasn't been significantly impacted by this transformation (Sultana et al., 2018).

The Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) reports that the poverty rate in the nation was 24.30 percent in 2016. But the COVID-19 pandemic has a big impact on poverty rates. 22.9% of the population has been forced into poverty because of the epidemic, according to joint research conducted in November 2022 by the Power and Participation Research Center (PPRC) and the BRAC Institute of Governance and Development (BIGD).

There are more than 7 million individuals in total. Over 57.7 million people now live below the poverty line, according to the Center for Policy Dialogue (CPD), a nonprofit research organization. Like this, a study by the South Asia Network on Economic Modelling (SANEM) shows that the percentage of people living in poverty has doubled, reaching 42% (CPD; SANEM).

According to the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS) inaugural digital report, "Census and Household Census 2022," 11 crores 63 thousand 597 of the country's population live in villages, while five crores 9 thousand 72 do. Upazilas were created for decentralized administration in the 1980s due to the fast growth of suburban and metropolitan areas. On the other hand, many metropolitan districts lacked contemporary amenities and had shoddy sewage systems.

Those who worked in government, commerce, and industry were the prominent residents of cities (Rahman et al., 2022). Although many live in large families, most urban residents in Bangladesh are in single-person homes. Even if some urban regions have grown minor dependencies or organizations, governing structures are still required.

While preserving ties to the village's resources and family, many continue living permanently in the city. Libraries and social or athletic organizations are standard in urban areas. Urban residents do, however, typically have less and more fleeting social bonds and goodwill than people in rural societies (Chowdhury, 1995).

In Bangladeshi society, relatives and extended family are essential since they share a household's economic, domestic, and social identities. Matrilineal links are valued even though patriarchy is the predominant family structure (Rahman, 1999).

1.2. *POLITICAL STRUCTURE AND MEDIA FAKES*

The Bangladeshi government shutdown 191 news websites on the excuse that they were disseminating "anti-state propaganda" and set up a coordinating committee under the control of the foreign ministry (The Hindu, 2023). According to supporters of independent media, the reality on the ground contradicts the government's apparent commitment to combatting false information and anti-state propaganda shown by these steps. The Bangladeshi government blocked at least 58 news websites known for their dissenting reporting before the 2018 midterm elections.

Facebook[39] and Twitter[40], on the other hand, claimed that the Bangladeshi government was part of a network that disseminated anti-opposition misinformation. Fact-checkers have often refuted the false information spread by pro-government websites over the last several years, yet little to no action has been taken against these websites.

Zulkarnain Saer Khan, a Bangladeshi citizen currently living in Europe, has allegedly engaged in several illicit encounters with women and has often been apprehended by police authorities. Dr Maruf Mallick, a media expert and professor at the DW Akademie, asserts that the government attacks its opponents by battling false information and at. The most crucial information in this text is that Khan has been the target of a network of social media pages, profiles, and websites run by unidentified individuals and that the video's use of four out of five images depicting Khan with five different women to show that the journalist "had sexual relationships" with several women is false.

Khan appeared in a well-liked investigative show that the Qatar-based Al Jazeera channel aired in February 2021. Since that time, Khan has relocated and joined the investigative unit of Al Jazeera as a researcher. The documentary won the Best Investigative Report category at the annual Amnesty International UK Media Awards 2022 despite the Bangladeshi government calling the film "a false, defamatory, and politically motivated smear campaign" as soon as it was published. Along with the leaders of the ruling Awami League,

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[39] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[40] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Khan was defamed in pieces published by pro-government media. Several pro-government Facebook[41] groups and websites also joined the attack.

The smear campaign was made up of falsehoods and manipulated photos. Since February 2021, Zulkarnain Saer Khan, an investigative media outlet focusing on Bangladesh, has been the subject of a coordinated smear campaign (CPJ, 2023). Tasneem Khalil, editor-in-chief of Netra News, an investigative media outlet focused on Bangladesh and headquarters in Sweden, is often attacked by pro-government blogs and Facebook[42] groups as an anti-Bangladesh conspirator, foreign agent and propagandist.

Another foreign journalist who was the target of a witch hunt by pro-government social media sites is Musfiqul Fazal Ansary. He attends press conferences at the White House and inquires about the abuses of human rights by the Bangladeshi government. He is the editor of the independent news source JustNewsBD.

In Bangladesh, during the preceding ten years, at least 15 journalists have perished, according to the United Nations. The UN has received multiple allegations detailing the arbitrary detention, assault, kidnapping, threats, and judicial harassment of journalists, activists, and members of civil society organizations in Bangladesh. This author has been a fact-checker for numerous international organizations for the past six years, building a database of websites and Facebook[43] pages often accused of disseminating false information. It was found that over 150 Facebook[44] groups and 20 websites frequently and methodically produce, publish, and propagate wrong material in favour of the government. In November and December 2022, a Facebook[45] group with around a million members was closely observed for a few weeks. Among its moderators was the coordinator of CRI, the propaganda wing of the ruling Awami League.

Some of the managers and moderators of this group are also members of the 150 Facebook[46] pages and websites monitored for this research. CRI is a verified social network

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[43] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[44] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[45] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[46]Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

page of a government organization. This network of websites and Facebook[47] pages included all instances of defamation campaigns aimed towards unaffiliated journalists. One of the most well-known fake news articles from the run-up to the 2018 election has just resurfaced on many network sites, and AFP has once again debunked it. Since it has no control over who advertises what on websites, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting has yet to take steps to prevent the spread of incorrect information.

1.2.1. STRUCTURE OF GOVERNMENT AND DEPARTMENT OF GOVERNANCE

In the parliamentary democracy of Bangladesh, residents elect the "Jatiya Sangsad," a unicameral parliament, every five years. The Prime Minister is chosen by the President and is required to hold office after receiving an endorsement of confidence from Parliament. The 14 articles of the Constitution were adopted in 1972. The President may hold office for a maximum of two terms, and the Supreme Court is the most powerful body in the land. As of 2011, there were 350 members of the National Assembly, with 50 seats set out for women. As per Article 55-3 of the Constitution, the Prime Minister appoints the Cabinet, which is jointly accountable to the Parliament.

While preserving ties to the village's resources and family, many continue living permanently in the city. Libraries and social or athletic organizations are standard in urban areas. Urban residents do, however, typically have less and more fleeting social bonds and goodwill than people in rural societies (Rahman et al., 2022).

In Bangladeshi society, relatives and extended family are essential since they share a household's economic, domestic, and social identities (Chowdhury, 1995). Matrilineal links are valued even though patriarchy is the predominant family structure (Rahman, 1999). While the President is the nation's head of state and presides over the Council of Ministers, the Prime Minister has complete authority over Bangladesh's administrative division.

However, the President is obligated to heed the Prime Minister's counsel. The President appoints ministers with specific responsibilities guided by the Prime Minister. The administrative branch of government occupies the most powerful position in the governance of the state. It is responsible for enforcing all state laws, with the prime minister acting as the ultimate policy maker.

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[47] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Many political factions have representation in Parliament, which has the authority to manage the government. The Law Division of the governing body of Bangladesh maintains the authority to create, alter, and repeal laws authorized by the Constitution. Bangladesh also has a parliamentary system. According to parliamentary sovereignty, laws and regulations must be constitutional to be implemented by the Administration unless they are unconstitutional.

In Bangladesh, the judiciary carries out all judicial duties, including punishing criminals by the Constitution and the law to uphold justice and defend rights. Upholding the rule of law depends on the judiciary's independence and impartiality. The Constitution supports the judiciary's independence and guarantees it, and through protecting the Constitution, it preserves its judicial duties. The three government agencies of Bangladesh guarantee security uphold human rights and enforce the law. In a parliamentary government, the government creates the Constitution and its laws, regulations, and action plans (Panday & Hossain, 2011).

1.2.2. FAKES IN POLITICAL PARTIES EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES IN BANGLADESH

In Bangladesh, political parties include characteristics of oligarchy, authoritarianism, and democracy. Political coups have halted the democratic growth process, but formal democratic coalitions and a legislative structure were reinstated in 1991 (Amundsen, 2016; Nahar, 2017; & Rahman, 2022). According to Rahman (2022), many democracy indexes have classified the current political system of Bangladesh as "semi-authoritarian," "hybrid," or just "partly free." Although there were signs of re-democratization from the beginning of the 1990s to the late 2000s, the nation now seems to be back on its previous course of "democratic backsliding."

The Bangladesh Awami League (AL) and the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), the two largest parties, have alternately won elections and ruled the nation. Sheikh Hasina became the first leader to occupy the office of ruler for three terms in the nation's history when the AL coalition won the 2018 elections and is still in power. The AL is a left-leaning, secular party that supports nationalism, socialism, democracy, and secularism. It has been ruled by Sheikh Hasina since 1981; the "Father of the Bengali nation" Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's daughter currently holds her fifth term as the nation's leader. On the other hand, the BNP is a centre-right political faction that supports free market principles and opposes communism and socialism but promotes Bangladeshi nationalism. With affiliations with

Islamist parties, it is a fundamentally religious party representing the Islamic conscience of Bangladesh's Muslim majority.

Ziaur Rahman founded the party in 1978 to civilize his rule; Khaleda Zia assumed the presidency in 1983, making it challenging to get the party to depose her (Amundsen, 2016). Therefore, the Bangladesh Nationalist Party is still working to recover as of 2023 after choosing to boycott the 2014 election. Begum Khaleda Zia was incarcerated in 2018 on suspicion of corruption but was released on bail in 2020 because of a government executive decree. Multiple extensions have been made to the bail, with the sixth extension occurring in March 2022. The BNP leadership, however, still laments repression (Rahman, 2022).

Hussein Mohammad Ershad, a former military leader, founded the Jatiya Party, another centre-right party, in 1984. With only 26 of the 350 parliamentary seats held by the JP, it is challenging for them to continue serving as the main opposition force (Rahman, 2022). However, it has since split up and is currently in decline. Whereas Bangladesh Jamaat-e-Islami (JIB), the fourth-largest party, is a pragmatic Islamist group connected to Muslim colonial-era organizations (Amundsen, 2016). However, the JIB forfeited its organizational status due to the leadership's war crimes committed during the 1971 Liberation War (Rahman, 2022).

It is BNP's most significant ally, although BNP is severing ties with it because some Jamaat officials were found guilty of "crimes against mankind" during the Bangladesh conflict. It is associated with the party doctrine rather than the dynasty (Amundsen, 2016). Another right-centred Islamist political party is Islamic Oikyo Jote (IOJ), a group of seven parties founded in 1990, which aims to construct a Khilafat-inspired Islamic political system and won one seat in the legislature in the general elections of 1996 (Islam, 2021).

Some other political parties with communist ideology have few supporters in Bangladesh. Communist Party (CPP) was established in 1948 during the Communist Party of India's second Congress (Islam, 2021). At the same time, the East Pakistan Communist Party (EPCP) was founded. In 1966, the EPCP broke apart into the EPCP (Marxist-Leninist) and EPCP (pro-Soviet). EPCP (ML) split into four parties by 1970. On the other hand, after Bangladesh's creation, the Jatiya Samajtantric Dal (JSD) emerged as an essential communist organization and was founded on October 31, 1972, and formed a campaign against the government and the Awami League (AL) in power (Islam, 2021).

Islam (2021) claimed that numerous divisions of this party had led to the formation of different groups. Furthermore, former Awami League chief Kamal Hossain founded the Gana-forum in 1992, founded in August 1993 as a political party and supporter of an equitable society based on rules and a more robust civil society.

Political parties and false news are intertwined in Bangladesh and can significantly affect the political climate and public opinion. False or misleading material presented as information is referred to as fake news, and it may be disseminated via various channels, including social media, websites, and conventional media institutions. Fake news has been known to be used by political parties for personal gain, and the emergence of social media platforms has significantly contributed to its spread. The Bangladeshi government has taken action to combat false news, but there are worries that this rule can be abused. The 2023 national elections in Bangladesh have led to a surge in the spread of rumors, disinformation, and fake news on social media and messaging apps (ইসলাম জে, & খান এম. জে., 2023). According to the fact-checking organization DismisLab, in September 2023 alone, fact-checkers detected at least 84 cases of political disinformation. That number was 32 in January. Based on a review of 2,049 verified fake news stories, spreading misinformation about US visa policies and sanctions increased in September (তমা টি.ই & দাস পি.পি., 2023).
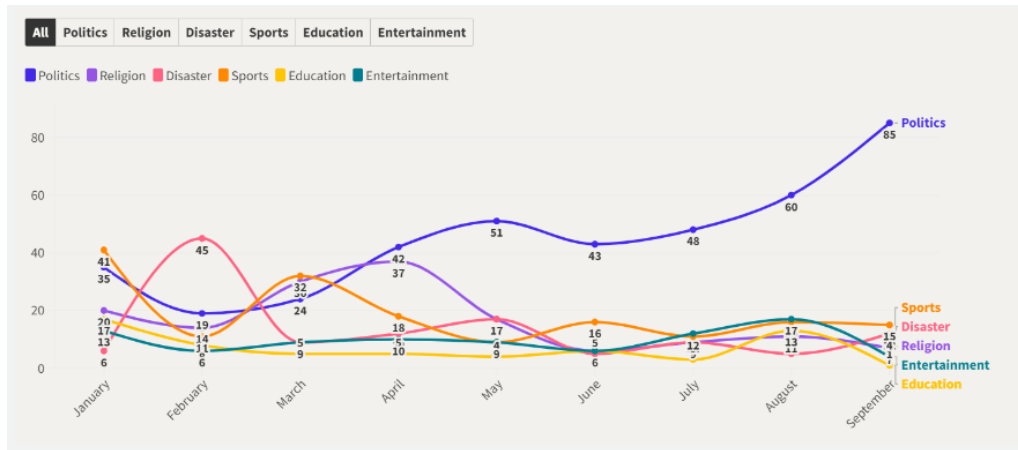
Figure 1. Fact-checkers detected at least 84 cases of political disinformation. *Source : https://i0.wp.com/dismislab.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Factcheck-Database.png?w=1454&ssl=1*

This includes false claims of visa restrictions against Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, ministers, advisers, pro-government teachers, and police officers, as well as false statements by the US ambassador about visa restrictions against BNP acting chairman Tarique Rahman and Secretary General Mirza Fakhrul Islam Alamgir (মুনীরুজ্জামান আ. ন. ম.,2023). M. Sumon Rahman, a journalism professor at the University of Liberal Arts, stated that misleading information is being spread in front of a kind of war and will be used to influence people's thinking in the upcoming national elections. Professor Suman heads Factwatch, a news or information audit organization.

The analysis shows that Awami League supporters are running anti-BNP campaigns through bots, personal profiles, and groups. The cyber warriors of BNP, Jamaat-e-Islami, and other opposition parties seem to be increasing their reliance on foreign influencers and anonymous Telegram channels and group chats as government agencies work to remove "anti-state" comments from social media. Some of these foreign influencers are Bangladeshi nationals spreading confusion abroad.

Many people are creating their pages or profiles as media companies and being listed as news sites on social network without reporters or publishers. A common tactic in the dissemination of fake news is to spread misleading and false information in the guise of workers of another political party. Another technique is the 'Thrust Trap', where profiles are created in the name of women, increased followers by posting photos and videos, and then spreading rumours or fake information through these profiles.

The Daily Star has found only three real admins or moderators of dozens of groups in Bangladesh, including the ruling party's Centre for Research and Information (CRI) and the ruling party's social media wing. The ruling party's web team provides training called 'The Drill' to help block and remove posts and avoid the 'trap of fact-checking.' Participants were invited to a similar workshop on Facebook[48] Blocking/Restriction on September 25.

On October 29, the day after the BNP rally in Nayapaltan, the party's social media wing produced two photo cards of former journalist Rafiq Bhuiyan being killed in police firing. The photos have been shared widely on social media, reaching nine times more people than other posts on that page. Rumours spread faster than fire, and Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights claimed that police killed Rafiq Bhuiyan. Facebook's[49] Ad Library shows that two official pages of BNP have spent \$19,531 on political ads in the last year (শিমুল তা., 2023).

Bangladesh has been collecting public information using the open-source intelligence (OSINT) method since 2017 and works accordingly. The National Telecommunication Monitoring Centre blocks or filters social media content as part of cyberspace monitoring activities. In the last three months, at least 700 pages, IDs, and groups have been shut down by the Cyber and Special Crime Division of the police for spreading rumours. However, law enforcement agencies cannot remove or block any content posted from outside the country.

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[48] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[49] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Social media analysts say government agencies mainly target those who post anti-government posts. Election Commission officials are aware of these campaigns on social media before the election and can create a team to counter fake information and fake news again after announcing the election schedule. In August, officials from Facebook[50] and TikTok met with Election Commission officials to discuss how to prevent or remove and block the spread of misinformation, especially hate and communal speech, through Facebook[51].

1.3. NATIONAL MEDIA ECONOMY AS THE FOUNDATION FOR MEDIA INDEPENDENCE IN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh's economy has expanded significantly over the last several decades, and the nation's economic structure has had a considerable impact on the development of the media environment there. The industrial, services, and agriculture sectors all play a significant role in the development of the economy. Many different media types exist, including print, broadcast, and digital. The nation's economic structure influences the operation and dynamics of the media sector. As a result of the concentration of ownership in the media in Bangladesh among a few powerful businesses and people, there may be skewed reporting or self-censorship.

The rise of the services sector has aided in the development of digital media, which depends on advertising income. Economic reasons, political pressures, and power dynamics all affect media freedom.

Here, (Appendix A, figure 3) displays Bangladesh demonstrated resiliency in the face of the pandemic's effects and recovered in 2021 with a growth rate of 6.9%. According to the estimated numbers, growth would reach 7.1% in 2022 before dipping slightly to 5.3% in 2023 and then rising to 6.5% in 2024.

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[50] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[51] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Bangladesh's economy may be summed down into three sectors:

- *Primary Sector:* Agriculture accounts for 30% of GDP and employs 45% of the labour force. Jute, rice, tobacco, tea, and sugarcane are important crops.
- *Secondary Sector:* Small and medium-sized businesses account for 30% of employment and 25% of GDP. Construction, medicines, and textiles are all industries.
- *Tertiary industry:* The service industry accounts for 25% of employment and substantially impacts GDP. The hospitality sector has expanded significantly.

Bangladeshi media has been affected by economic structure. Bangladesh's economic structure influences the flow of advertising money to media companies. Media companies, for instance, depend substantially on money from government ads. Because they rely on government advertising, media outlets may feel under pressure to match their editorial stance with that of the government (Transparency International Bangladesh, 2020).

The viability of media organizations in Bangladesh is impacted by scarce financial resources and issues with profitability. Financial limitations are a problem for many media institutions, which results in lowered journalistic standards and less money spent on high-quality reporting. Additionally, these budgetary constraints may make media organizations more vulnerable to outside pressures and compromises (Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2022).

Bangladesh's economic structure impacts users' ability to access digital media. Even while the number of people using the internet has greatly expanded recently, access still needs to be improved, especially in rural and neglected regions. Specific demographic groups are constrained by this digital gap in their capacity to access various media sources and engage fully in the digital media environment (UNESCO, 2023).

The country's economic structure influences Bangladeshi media companies' content production. Due to budgetary constraints, media outlets may emphasize the material that earns more advertising money or appeals to favoured interests. This emphasis on financial viability may restrict the variety of viewpoints and place less emphasis on critical reporting and investigative journalism (Centre for Governance Studies, 2019).

Bangladesh's economic structure has an impact on media entrepreneurship. Due to the current economic difficulties, startups and independent media projects may need assistance in obtaining financing and maintaining their operations. The development of alternative and independent media organizations that provide a variety of perspectives and contest the prevailing narratives may be constrained as a result (Bay, 2018).

Bangladesh's digital media industry has seen tremendous development in recent years. Digital ads on international digital media sources are now subject to taxes, but local online media are still unable to compete with the big players on the international stage. It is difficult to estimate the number of journalists in Bangladesh since it is challenging to define the profession. Paying journalists fairly and enforcing compliance guidelines are essential for ensuring higher-quality news. Appropriate legislation is required to protect the interests of journalists and employees (Ghatack, 2018).

1.3.1. THE ROLE OF PRESS IN BANGLADESH ECONOMIC SCENARIO: BEFORE AND AFTER INDEPENDENCE

Due to its ideal climate, excellent farmland, abundant resources, and comparatively high living level, East Bengal, which subsequently became Bangladesh, was historically prosperous. East Bengal's development was restricted to agriculture due to British colonization in the 17th century, which redirected attention to Calcutta (Bandyopadhyay, 2022). The colonial infrastructure built in the 18th and 19th centuries helped the area maintain its position as a significant producer of rice and jute for Kolkata and other markets. Despite these benefits, geographical constraints, seasonal flooding, traditional farming practices, and land-use restrictions hampered economic expansion (Bandyopadhyay, 2022).

East Bengal faced the problem of developing a new industrial sector and modernizing agriculture amidst a population expansion after the division of British India in 1947 (Bandyopadhyay, 2022). However, East Pakistan's (previously East Bengal's) development budget needed to be increased, which led to a deteriorating economy. The leaders of West Pakistan came under fire for failing to support the economic growth and development of East Pakistan (Vogelsang, 1972, 248–250).

Bangladesh's post-independence economic situation was challenging. High rural resident density, population increase, chronic starvation, millions being displaced, shortages of basic foodstuffs, lost jute markets, a lack of foreign exchange, shaky financial institutions, and a workforce with insufficient skills were some of these issues. The transportation infrastructure was severely damaged, and inflation was very high. However, backing from the United States and the World Bank and quick economic assistance from India, including significant aid and food grains, helped address some of the issues (Sen, 1999).

Before and after independence, the press had a dramatically different role in Bangladesh's economic climate. Before 1971, the media played a significant role in educating the public about financial issues, promoting economic rights, and exposing economic

injustices. After 1971, the press remained a crucial source for researching and analysing economic developments, government regulations, and business reporting. Before 1971, media and journals highlighted the economic disparities among the people and increased public sympathy for the independence movement. After 1971, the press remained a crucial source for researching and analysing economic developments, government regulations, and business reporting.

In Bangladesh, the media has had a vital role in shaping the business climate, increasing public awareness, advancing economic rights, exposing injustices, evaluating policies, and stimulating debate. Business and economic news publications like "The Financial Express" and "Business Standard Bangladesh" assist corporate decision-makers in making educated decisions. The government of Bangladesh has benefited from development journalism by emphasizing its development initiatives, infrastructure development, and economic growth. Investigative journalism is crucial to expose financial irregularities, economic crimes, and corruption. People may debate economic issues in public discourse and opinion-shaping venues, allowing them to share their thoughts, opinions, and concerns.

Financial literacy and education aim to empower individuals to make informed financial decisions by educating the public about these issues. The press in Bangladesh had an essential role in shaping the economic climate, increasing knowledge, supporting economic rights, exposing injustices, evaluating policies, and creating public discourse before and after independence.

1.4. FEATURES OF THE PROCESS OF MEDIA DIGITALIZATION IN BANGLADESH

The incumbent prime minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina, stated in the Bangladesh Awami League's 2008 election platform that by 2021, "Digital Bangladesh" would exist. In order to achieve this goal, the government made significant efforts, which increase internet access and mobile phone usage. 52.58 million People in Bangladesh were online as of the beginning of 2022, or 31.5% of the total population.

There are now 163.3 million more people who use mobile phones. Between 2021 and 2022, the number of internet users increased by 5.5 million (+11.6%), according to the Kepios analysis. These advancements have made it easier to get a smartphone with an internet connection and to transfer data freely (Kemp, 2022).
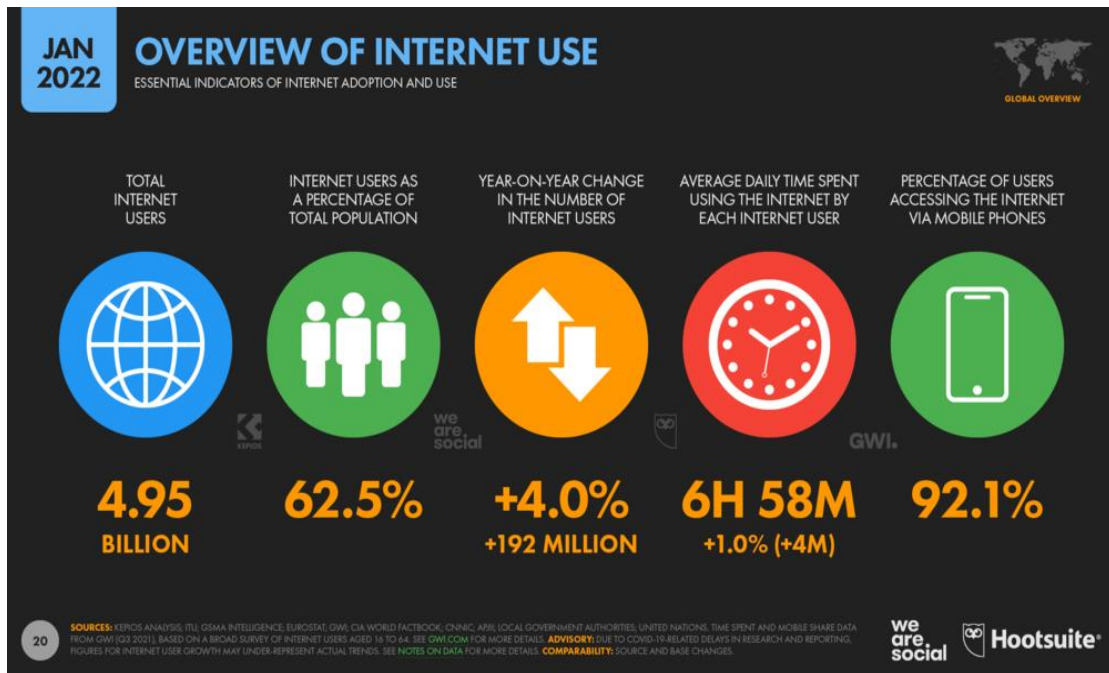
Figure 2. Overview of Internet Use in Bangladesh. *Source :*

https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2022-global-overview-report

Digital Bangladesh Philosophy

The Digital Bangladesh philosophy encourages the effective and efficient application of technology in various fields, including the economy, education, environment, healthcare, employment, and poverty alleviation. It promotes a growth-oriented mindset, optimistic outlook, and creative solutions to realize the goal of a "Digital Bangladesh." Fundamental values aiming for comprehensive societal development and inclusivity include democracy, human rights, transparency, accountability, justice, and using technology to deliver government services to all citizens. It includes every demographic group without distinction based on access to technology.

The Human Resource Development, Connected Citizens, Digital Government, Digital Economy, and Cashless Society pillars, combined with promoting the ICT sector, form the foundation of the Digital Bangladesh ideology. The government understands that digitization and telecommunications can close the information and service gap because 85% of the population lives in rural areas with poor infrastructure, resulting in advancements in several areas, including the economy, education, innovation, social welfare, and politics (Aziz, 2020, 304–319).

Digital Bangladesh's mission

By reducing poverty, assuring a sustainable future, expanding the economy, modernizing bureaucracy, and embracing the Fourth Industrial Revolution, Digital Bangladesh seeks to achieve total development and change through digitalization. For 2021, a national development agenda has been set (Mazumdar & Alharahsheh, 2020). For continuing development, the Bangladesh 2041 vision must be differentiated and modified to account for impending major trends (Chowdhury, 2021).

Strategies towards Digitalization

In its digitization mission, Bangladesh mainly focused on improving infrastructure and human support to achieve its digitization aspirations quickly and successfully. As part of infrastructure development, Bangladesh brought a total population (Vadana et al., 2021).

- Access to the affordable and reliable power supply
- As part of mobile and telecommunications network insurance

Bangladesh has developed a workforce to produce inventors, investors, entrepreneurs, educators, operators, and professionals who will automatically design and follow the path of successful implementation of digitization. Establishment of Bangladesh's short, medium and long-term plans to achieve the goals.

Mass Electrification

For its digitized mission, Bangladesh's top priority has been to provide access to affordable and reliable energy sources for the entire population. Bangladesh has installed various power grids, including solar power. Wind, hydro, biogas, and biomass power plants provided access to electricity for the entire population, including those living in remote areas (Mollik et al., 2016, 553–567).

• Install solar panels and solar PVC in hilly and mountainous areas

• Wind turbines installed in coastal areas

• Biogas and biomass power plants in small remote communities;

By 2018, 90% of the population had access to affordable and reliable energy sources. This figure will accelerate to 99.5% of the total population in 2021, with a per capita electricity consumption of 565 kWh (World Bank, 2022).

Mobile and Telecommunication Networks

Cellular networks and other telecommunications channels are now widely used in Bangladesh due to the privatization of the ICT industry. With 55 million mobile and 1 million network clients by 2012, 100% of the population was covered by mobile and telecom services. Mobile subscriptions dropped from 183 million to 127.26 million as of August 2022 (BTRC, 2022). With a growth rate of 6.8% during the last ten years, Bangladesh is one of the fastest-expanding economies. It is anticipated to grow from 41st to 25th in the world's economies by 2035. With subscriptions rising from 86 million in 2016 to 178 million in 2022, mobile technology accounts for almost 5% of the nation's GDP (Aas, 2022).

Human resource creation

Bangladesh has prioritized developing appropriate human capital by emphasizing education, technology, and research. Human capital is essential for a successful digital transformation (Chowdhury, 2018). The installation of computer labs with high-speed internet in schools and universities, the development of laboratories and contemporary facilities in educational institutions, and the introduction of ICT labs and computer training facilities in rural areas are key objectives. Approximately 300,000 students were graduating from Bangladesh's 53 universities as of July 2022, including 19 technical universities, 49 polytechnic institutions, and 37 vocational training centres (UGC, 2022).

The news stream, which offers up-to-date and current information on events in the country and outside, is the most widely used online news source in Bangladesh. Both print and digital news media like and value interviews highly. A multifaceted event is covered in web packages before a journalist arrives. The opinion genre is often used to express viewpoints or analyse current societal concerns or conditions that are social, political, cultural, technological, or sports in nature.

In Bangladesh, the visual story is the most-read subgenre of internet news. In 2014, Prothom Alo started supplying video content for its online channels. In July 2016, 27 Prothom Alo journalists participated in a three-day mobile journalism course. A unique kind of news reporting called live blogging uses SMS, MMS, email, social networks, and instant messaging software. A collection of graphs, maps, quotes, and sometimes even images are used to communicate information in infographics graphically. On the Prothom Alo, live blogging has been practised in Bangladesh (Khan & Shnaider, 2021).

Infographics are popular because they can store more data than any other format. The 2012 New York Times story "Snow Fall: The Avalanche at Tunnel Creek" had thousands of

words and many images, galleries, videos, animations, and text transitions. The Dhaka Post online news outlet was the first to publish Web Stories, formerly known as AMP Story and created by Google. Publishers are no longer limited to a closed ecosystem or platform by using Web Stories to develop visual storytelling with captivating animations and tappable interactivity that can be shared and embedded online. In Bangladesh, protomalo.com receives more than 12.5 million visits every month, with 70% of those users between 18 and 34 (Khan & Shnaider, 2021). Before becoming modern and transitioning to offset printing, newspapers in Bangladesh were printed by hand. All publications are now made digitally, and computers are the most common desktop equipment. The new trend of mobile Internet, which was brought to Bangladesh on February 19, 2018, is often used by literate people there. Bangladeshi media strive to improve the calibre and level of news for the public. The first online publication, bdnews24.com, is available on all media platforms twenty-four hours a day. The first online newspaper to produce iOS apps is Banglanews24. The well-known Prothom Alo app is now available for users of iPhones, iPads, smartphones, and tablets on Android and Windows platforms. Most Bangladeshi news websites use social media platforms, and many online publications have mobile applications. Some smartphone applications can read QR codes, which are two-dimensional bar codes. Media messengers are becoming increasingly common, with Prothom Alo dominating the market.

1.4.1. IMPACT OF DIGITAL INCLUSION IN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh's adoption of technology and initiatives to fight poverty and improve lives has led to significant growth in the country's digital transformation. Internet access was made possible by email and bulletin board services in the 1990s. The government has strongly emphasised digital inclusion by making all people's access to digital services possible. Initiatives include building academic institutions with contemporary amenities, adding computer laboratories to schools and universities, and establishing ICT labs in remote areas.

Increased employment in the information technology sector, growth in independent contractors, and significant GDP contributions from this sector have all been observed in Bangladesh. Online platforms, mobile help desks, and websites deliver government services. Digital payment systems, telemedicine, e-commerce, and online education have all flourished. Bangladesh is moving toward 5G technology and has deployed its satellites and connected to underwater cables for improved internet access (Palak, 2020; UGC, 2022; BTRC, 2022).

Union Digital Centre

On November 11, 2010, Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina opened Union Information and Service Centres to 4,501 unions nationwide through video conferencing to bring government services to people's doorsteps efficiently, quickly, and affordably. From this centre, rural people can quickly receive information and necessary services related to life and survival in a familiar environment close to home. Initially, only activities focused on Union Parishad were launched, but now separate digital hubs have been set up for municipalities, city businesses, textile workers, and experts. Over 300 public and private services are now available to people through 8,280 digital centres across the country (Faroqi & Collings, 2020). The Digital Centre has simplified the standard of living and changed the outlook for ordinary people. People now believe that all kinds of services are available closer to home. Gaining people's trust is the most critical achievement on his digital journey to Bangladesh. As a result, everyone in the country can benefit from implementing Digital Bangladesh.

Digital Justice System

The road to a genuinely digital Bangladesh has only sometimes been smooth, but it's good to see the government investing in the right places. No department is more important and in need of updating than our judiciary. To this end, the government has embarked on a large-scale plan to digitize the judicial system to improve legal services to citizens. Law, justice, and parliamentary affairs minister Anisul Haque said the ministry has embarked on an electronic justice project worth about 2,690 crores. It aims not only to introduce digital systems into the judiciary but also to automate the judiciary (Wan et al., 2022, 317–343). Administrative system and court procedures, and the establishment of electronic courts. Moreover, while judges, lawyers, and other relevant officials are being trained to adapt to the new system, more ICT skills are generally needed for the plan to work.

But it's important to understand that accurate digitization is more than just throwing money into a project or buying equipment with early enthusiasm. Success depends on a change of mindset in which staff and citizens understand the need for participation. It means abandoning old and inefficient working methods in a modified and improved system. Technology is the foundation of progress, and to improve services, digital ways of working must be introduced in judicial matters and other areas such as health care, business, law enforcement, and government.

Creating a Cashless Society

There are now over 18 crore cellular connections in the country. Currently, there are approximately 13 cores of Internet users. A World Economic Forum (WEF) report notes that mobile banking services are helping to reduce socio-economic inequality in rural areas. People's involvement in financial services powered by information technology is quite surprising. Online banking, electronic money transfers, and ATM cards play a role in establishing e-government, realizing a cashless society, and expanding e-commerce. Bangladesh ranks 53rd in ONT and 37th in National Cyber Security Index based on legal measures, technical capacity, institutional measures, capacity building, and cooperation adopted by 194 countries worldwide. As a result, Bangladesh ranks first among South Asia and her SAARC countries (Moudud-Ul-Huq & Hossain, 2020).

E-Government Activities

The e-government program has digitized Bangladesh's nearly two-century-old British colonial service system. Quickly access over 52,000 websites online with over 9.5 million thematic content and over 685 e-services. More than 60 million people are served through 8 thousand 280 digital centres and more than 7 million through the National Helpline 333. 75 lakhs monthly Digital Centre and National Information Service users. If 100% of government services are online by 2025, you can easily imagine the time, money, and travel savings for citizens. One crore 67 lakh files have been dumped in electronic documents. More than 47 lakh 71 thousand e-mutations have been performed online. As part of the "Four Tier National Data Centre" project, a world-class integrated data centre has been developed in the country. As a result, public services are improved by increasing the storage capacity of electronic services from various government agencies, ensuring the cyber security of electronic services, and sharing information between national and international agencies.

Digital Economy

There are also positive trends in the domestic digital economy. In 2018 alone, ICT exports exceeded $1 billion. Currently, the export value of the ICT sector is USD 1.3 billion. Bangladesh ranks him second in the online workforce. About 650,000 freelancers earn about US$500 million from outsourcing. Of the 39 high-tech and IT parks, 166 domestic and foreign companies have started operations in 9 parks that have already been established. The investment amount was 1.5 billion rupees, employment of 21,000 people, and human resource development of 32,000 people. Ten thousand five hundred women were trained as part of the

Women's Empowerment Project. Information technology has created 20,000 jobs (Sakil, 2018).

Digital Management During Covid-19

The government's digital initiatives amid the coronavirus pandemic have allowed some operations to continue. A robust information technology infrastructure has successfully completed virtual meetings, court cases, business continuity plans, and trade activities (Badiuzzaman et al., 2021). Technology has maintained economic growth and enabled millions of individuals to access services like education, healthcare, and orientation programs. To provide digital content for pupils at all levels, the Ministries of Education, Primary and Mass Education, and Information and Communication Technology worked together (Islam & Islam, 2020). Universities and training institutions can now conduct educational activities efficiently thanks to the introduction a "virtual class" platform. The Department of Information and Communication Technology's Vaccine Administration System "Suraksha" website has made vaccination activities easier and enabled information storage and management for the general population (Islam & Islam, 2020).

999 in Action

The worldwide emergency number "911" was first launched by AT&T in 1968, offering a dependable means of getting prompt assistance. In collaboration with the police, fire brigade, civil defence headquarters, and the Ministry of Health, Bangladesh's ICT department launched the "999" emergency service in December 2017 (Hossain et al., 2018, 1–11). Within a specific radius, this service guarantees accessibility and cost-free calls. Dialling "999" in a medical or life-threatening emergency is possible even without phone credits. Users will receive assistance from trained representatives by being connected to law enforcement or ambulance services. It is crucial to be aware of and use the authorized emergency number to get help when needed.

Tech Innovation

Numerous facets of our lives have been altered by technological advancement, including food delivery, transportation, and one-click access to services. With software businesses selling to more than 40 nations, Bangladesh is developing as a major participant in the tech industry, becoming a significant exporter. The success of these initiatives shows the potential for neighbourhood organizations to succeed with the correct assistance. The sector

is positioned for additional expansion and international presence, with 3,000 IT and software enterprises serving a market worth NOK 9,000 yearly (Fan et al., 2018, 964–985).

CONCLUSION ON CHAPTER 1

The social structure of Bangladesh has significantly shaped the modern media system, with ownership of media outlets often concentrated in the hands of influential people or groups with strong links to political parties. Press criticism has been more hostile, and regulations and censorship of the media are influenced by social structure and political dynamics. Media bias may be influenced by Bangladesh's social structure and its prevailing beliefs and political allegiances, and pro-government organizations that target opponents and disseminate propaganda are present on Bangladesh's online media and social media platforms. Journalists and media workers in Bangladesh have been the target of assaults, threats, and acts of violence, and the Bangladeshi legal system may be used to stifle critical reporting and restrict freedom of speech. Civil society organizations and media watchdogs contribute to fostering a healthier media ecosystem by advocating for media freedom, promoting ethical journalism, and holding media organizations and the government accountable.

Religious and cultural sensitivities can influence media content and coverage, particularly religion, ethnicity, and social issues. Foreign investments, partnerships, and the influence of international media organizations can shape Bangladesh's media ownership, content production, and technology adoption. The media in Bangladesh has significantly influenced the establishment of social classes, stratification, and the transition to a new social order. Through diverse narrative techniques, it has represented many people from various socioeconomic classes, held people responsible, and encouraged entrepreneurship. Social networking platforms and digital media have been used to organize protests, raise awareness of social issues, and amplify the voices of activists. By spreading awareness, encouraging discourse, empowering marginalized people, eradicating stereotypes, upholding accountability, and promoting entrepreneurship, the media in Bangladesh significantly influences social stratification and socioeconomic classes and shapes.

The Bangladeshi government shutdown 191 news websites on the excuse of disseminating "anti-state propaganda" and set up a coordinating committee under the control of the foreign ministry. Fact-checkers have often refuted the false information spread by pro-government websites over the last several years, yet little to no action has been taken against these websites. Zulkarnain Saer Khan, a Bangladeshi citizen currently living in Europe, has been the target of a network of social media pages, profiles, and websites run by unidentified individuals, and the video's use of four out of five images depicting Khan with five different

women is false. Political parties have used fake news for personal gain, and the emergence of social media platforms has contributed to its spread. The Bangladeshi government has taken action to combat false news, but there are worries that this rule can be abused. The role of the press in Bangladesh's economic situation before and after independence was mainly due to its ideal climate, excellent farmland, abundant resources, and high living level. However, geographical constraints, seasonal flooding, traditional farming practices, and land-use restrictions could have improved economic expansion. Bangladesh's post-independence economic situation was challenging due to high rural resident density, population increase, chronic starvation, millions being displaced, and shortages of basic foodstuffs, lost jute markets, a lack of foreign exchange, shaky financial institutions, and a workforce with insufficient skills. Investigative journalism is crucial to expose financial irregularities, economic crimes, and corruption.

Bangladeshi media has been affected by economic structure, such as the flow of advertising money to media companies, the viability of media organizations, and the ability to access digital media. Financial limitations are a problem for many media institutions, which results in lowered journalistic standards and less money spent on high-quality reporting. Access to digital media still needs to be improved in rural and neglected regions. Bangladesh has recently started on a digitization journey to realize the concept of a "Digital Bangladesh." Under the direction of Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, the government has put plans and measures into place to encourage digital inclusion and use technology for societal advancement. Digitalization has significantly improved many industries, empowering people, improving service delivery, and fostering economic growth. In order to achieve equitable growth and comprehensive development, Bangladesh is continuing its efforts to close the digital gap, upgrade infrastructure, and develop its human resources. Bangladesh is well-positioned for future growth and development due to its rich cultural legacy, distinctive terrain, diversified society, and embrace of digitalization. The road towards a "Digital Bangladesh" is evidence of the country's commitment to embracing technology and using its socially beneficial potential. Before becoming modern and transitioning to offset printing, newspapers in Bangladesh were printed by hand. All publications are now made digitally, and computers are the most common desktop equipment. The Bangladeshi government shutdown 191 news websites on the excuse of disseminating "anti-state propaganda" and set up a coordinating committee under the control of the foreign ministry. Fact-checkers have often refuted the false information spread by pro-government websites over the last several years, yet little to no action has been taken against these websites.

CHAPTER 2. DEVELOPMENT OF FAKE NEWS AND ITS IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN BANGLADESH

2.1. THE EVOLUTION OF BANGLADESH MEDIA SYSTEM PRIOR TO THE 1971 LIBERATION WAR

The inaugural authorized newspaper the *Bengal Gazette* was published on 29 January in 1780 by James Augustus Hickey in Calcutta in Undivided India, marking the beginning of press in Bengal (Basu, 2013; Abir & Shamim, 2020; Jahangir, 2000; Islam, 2009). The region has experienced significant political changes throughout the years, including the division of India and the establishment of East Pakistan, which eventually became Bangladesh. There were procedures for acquiring and sharing information during the ancient dynasty and Mughal empire periods, even before an official newspaper existed (Haidar, 2014; Rahman &Ahmed, 2021). Despite many obstacles, newspapers were essential to the socio-cultural and political developments in the area. On the other hand, Bangladesh's media sector and journalists have been pressured and intimidated ever since the first newspaper was published (Kamal, 2010). With the introduction of satellite television and the internet, the 1991 restoration of democracy expanded the media industry (Azad, 2018). In the early 2000s, online journalism began taking off, encouraging several media companies to incorporate multimedia platforms (Uddin, 2018). Governments have sought to control the media in Bangladesh, where the two have a complex relationship.

Young people are also actively involved in the media. However, some media businesses only offer short-term payments to journalists who endure employment uncertainty and low compensation. This chapter explores the evolution of the press in Bangladesh from two vantage points: prior to the liberation war (1971) and following the liberation war up to the most recent developments in the media industry.

Bangladesh's press before the 1971 Liberation War had a rich history. The first newspaper in Bengal was the Bengal Gazette, established in 1780 by James Augustus Hickey (Jahangir, 2000). However, newspapers published in Calcutta until 1818 were predominantly English and managed by Europeans (Abir & Shamim, 2020; Rahman & Ahmed, 2021).

In April 1818, the Serampore mission initiated the publication of the first Bengali magazine, Digdarshan (Abir & Shamim, 2020). Following that, the Bengali weekly newspaper Samachar Darpan was also published by the Serampore missionaries in the same year, edited by John Clarke Marshman (Islam, 2009; Abir & Shamim, 2020; Rahman & Ahmed, 2021; Islam, 2021). In the same year, Gangakishore Bhattacharya or Gangadhar

Bhattacharya, started the Bengal Gazette under Bengali ownership (Abir & Shamim, 2020). Notable newspapers during this period included Sambad Kaumadi (1821), Sambad Prabhakar (1831), and Tattobodhini in 1843 (Islam, 2009; Yusuf & Salam, 2015; Devnath, 2021).

These early publications played a role in addressing the issues faced by oppressed workers and peasants in the indigo plantations and contributed to the Bengal Renaissance movement (Basu, 2013). During the 19th century, British government-imposed laws and regulations restricted the press, but newspapers like Grambarta Prakashika emerged to champion public interests (Yusuf & Salam, 2015). The Indian Revolt of 1857 significantly impacted the national consciousness of Indians and other nations. Kangal Harinath's Grambarta Prakashika newspaper was the first newspaper to be published for the public instead of the British government or elite (Yusuf & Salam, 2015).

The Indian Revolt of 1857 significantly impacted newspaper publications in East Bengal (Yusuf & Salam, 2015; Islam: 2009). In 1871-1890, the number of newspapers and magazines increased, reaching the countryside. However, the number of publications declined in the 1890s due to the waning momentum of the Brahma movement and the ineffectiveness of the educated Bengali middle class (Mamoon, 2021).

Throughout the 20th century, political parties formed, leading to the establishment of newspapers aligned with specific ideologies. Key publications before the partition of India included The Mussalman (1906), Naboyug (1922), Shikha (1927), Dainik Azad (1936), and Dainik Ittehad (1946). The language movement in East Pakistan in 1952 marked a pivotal moment, with newspapers playing a crucial role in supporting the freedom movement (Yusuf and Salam, 2015). The press faced censorship and repression during the 1971 war, but newspapers like Dainik Azadi emerged soon after Bangladesh's independence (Rahman & Ahmed, 2021; Yusuf & Salam, 2015; Haidar, 2014).

The development of three journals, one of which was a daily publication in Bangladesh before 1947, is one of the text's most significant facts. In 1947, the country's first medium-wave 5 kW radio station went into service, and two years later, a 7.5 kW transmitter headquartered in Dhaka made its debut. With the assistance of the Soviet Union, Bangladesh was made radioactively active, and the first television station in Dhaka began transmitting in 1964. A 110 MW, thermal power plant built in Gorasal by USSR engineers increased the country's electrical production by 20%. Numerous new sovereign governments have been established due to the victory of the national liberation wars and the disintegration of imperialism's colonial organization.

The nine-month military war resulted in the birth of the People's Republic of Bangladesh. Since 1923, the Calcutta-based organization Muzafar Ahmad has published the Bengali periodical "Ganabani" (The Voice of the People), and the national culture-promotional journal "Porichoi" (Acquaintance) initially appeared in the 1930s. Despite the suppression of the colonial authorities, the weekly "Jon Juddha" (People's War) was published in Calcutta and distributed across Bengal. The state of Pakistan was founded in 1949 on the territory of East Bengal by progressive forces led by communists. Liberal parties in Dhaka made the second attempt.

The weekly journal "Juger Dhabi" (Demand of the Era), which was published by the People's League, the Communist Party, and other democratic organizations, was first released. The publication joined the struggle to reestablish democratic rights and opposed imperialists' creation of military blocs. Despite the brutal persecution, the People's League kept publishing the weekly "Shikha" (Teaching), substituting Marxist doctrine. The press of the progressive forces has played a significant role in the National Democratic Front's organization. On December 7, 1970, in the country's first general election, the People's League, one of the most popular parties, gained 160 of the 300 seats in the National Assembly.

The events leading up to East Bengal's war for independence are the most crucial aspects of this essay. The Pakistani ruling elite rejected these conclusions and employed force to try to appease the fury of the Bengali population in East Pakistan. Following a popular uprising and violent conflict in response, Bangladesh's independent republic was founded on March 26, 1971. The military regime of Yahya Khan initially targeted the creative intelligentsia, political opposition centers, and symbols of the national struggle to stop East Bengali magazines from releasing correct information. The military authorities' warnings became a reality as soon as hostilities began.

Soldiers destroyed the offices of the opposition daily "Ittefaq" (The Accord) and the English-language daily People on March 26. The Shongbad building (News) was shot on March 30 by cannons. Before becoming the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bangladesh, M. Farhad was the deputy editor. Bozlur Rahman started editing this newspaper when the weekly "Ekota" appeared.

The circumstances that led to the following weekly "Ekota" issue, which urged readers to participate in a more substantial rebellion and use additional resources, were created and prepared for delivery. On March 29, the Bengali periodicals "Purbodesh" and "Morning News" as well as the daily "Pakistan Observer" were permitted to resume publishing. On March 30, the "Dainik Pakistan" publication resumed, "Ittefaq" began, and "Shongbad" was

only resumed in an independent Bangladesh. Despite the communication embargo that had been put in place, the forces of world democracy could get a more objective perspective of the events in East Bengal. Materials ready for publication were translated into English before publication, and printing proofs were shown to a military censor representative.

The Yahya Khan dictatorship was outraged and did not reply to the pieces published in other European journals. Progressive forces in the country felt obligated to launch their publications, but the system's technical and sometimes organizational complexity stopped them from initially putting up printing output. The liberation movement was divided into three stages: stage 1 included spontaneous resistance, stage 2 involved a temporary retreat, and Stage 3 began in the autumn of 1971. From March through the middle of July 1971, leaflets conveyed their position on numerous important issues. The first edition of the weekly journal "Mukti Juddha" was published on July 14 and outlined the goals and objectives of every progressive individual in this fight against the invaders.

Five key parties sent representatives to the Advisory Committee's first meeting in September. The People's League party's monthly newspaper claims that the main political parties have shown their patriotism despite having divergent political ideologies.

2.1.1. THE MEDIA LANDSCAPE OF MODERN BANGLADESH AS A PART OF AN ARTIFICIALLY CREATED ECOSYSTEM

Bangladesh's press saw significant changes following the War of Independence in 1971. Following the exit of newspaper proprietors in 1972, the government assumed control of several publications, including Morning News, The Pakistan Observer, Purbodesh, and Chitrali. Through a board of directors, the Ministry of Information oversaw these publications (Jahangir, 2000; Rahman & Ahmed, 2021).

The weekly newsletter Bichitra was introduced by Dainik Bangla Publication that same year. In February 1974, the "Newspaper Employees Act (Terms of Service)" was introduced. However, the government took over Dainik Ittefaq and Dainik Bangla on June 16, 1975, because they shared their viewpoints (Jahangir, 2000; Rahman & Ahmed, 2021).

After the assassination of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman on August 15, 1975, previously outlawed journals were permitted to begin publication. The Bangladesh Press Council and Press Institute Bangladesh were founded around this time. Newspapers were subjected to rigorous regulation between 1982 and 1989, leading to almost fifty important periodicals shutting down. The format and presentation of succeeding weekly magazines were

strongly impacted by the publication of the Jai Jai Din newspaper in 1984 (Jahangir, 2000; Rahman & Ahmed, 2015).

Judge Shahabuddin Ahmed, the head of the interim administration following the toppling of the Ershad dictatorship in December 1990, overturned the Special Powers Act's (1974) censorship and publication restriction provisions, notably Articles 16, 17, and 18. In order to remove limits on press freedom, the Law on Printing and Publications was revised in the 1990s, which allowed for the printing of periodicals with a range of opinions (Rahman & Ahmed, 2015).

After 1990, Bangladesh's politics entered a democratic order, leading to the publication of many new newspapers. These include Ittefaq, Janakantha, Inqilab, Ajker Kagoj, Bhorer Kagoj, Banglabazar Patrika, Mukta Kantha, ProthomAlo, Bangladesh Observer, The Daily Star, Financial Express, Independent and New Nation. In the 1980s, most daily and weekly newspapers switched to desktop publishing technology. Additionally, the first Bengali women's magazine, Begum (1947), was published during the Pakistani period.

Government organizations with institutional ties to the news media include the Bangladesh Press Council, the Press Institute Bangladesh, the Films and Broadcasting Division, the Press Information Division and the Foreign Publicity Branch. The newspaper industry includes the country's Constitution and Penal Code, Criminal Procedure Code, Official Secrets Law, Special Powers Law, Printing Houses and Publications (Declaration and Registration) Law, Telegraph Law, Post Office Law, Foreign Relations Law and Copyright Regulation. The average circulation of daily newspapers and periodicals in Bangladesh in 1997 was 2,237,960, while the circulation of magazines was approximately 987,810. In 2008, 412 daily newspapers and 712 magazines were published, with more than 90% published in Bengali.

The founding of numerous publications such as Ittefaq, Janakantha, Inqilab, Ajker Kagoj, Bhorer Kagoj, Banglabazar Patrika, Mukta Kantha, ProthomAlo, Bangladesh Observer, The Daily Star, Financial Express, Independent, and New Nation followed Bangladesh's transition to democracy after 1990. In the 1980s, newspapers started using desktop publishing. The Pakistani era is when the first Bengali women's magazine, Begum, was founded, 2022). The Bangladesh Press Council, Bangladesh Press Institute, Films and Broadcasting Division, Press Information Division, and Foreign Publicity Branch are government entities with ties to the news media. The Constitution, the Penal Code, the Criminal Procedure Code, the Official Secrets Law, the Special Powers Law, the Printing Houses and Publications (Declaration and Registration) Law, the Telegraph Law, the Post

Office Law, the Foreign Relations Law, and the Copyright Regulation all apply to the newspaper industry.

Daily newspaper and periodical circulation in Bangladesh averaged 2,237,960 copies in 1997, with magazine circulation at roughly 987,810. Over 90% of the 712 periodicals and 412 daily newspapers produced by 2008 were in Bengali. Although the print media in Bangladesh has moved online, just 25% of people read newspapers or magazines weekly.

The literacy rates in urban areas are 81.28%, while in rural areas, they are 71.56%. A 1998 study indicated that 55% of readers believe in free speech, and only 12% trust newspapers. There are numerous media outlets in Bangladesh, including TV networks, radio stations, web portals, news organizations, and newspapers. Consumption of online news and social media has increased due to satellite broadcasting and fast internet (Azad, 2018).

According to the National Media Survey from 2016 and the Nielsen Bangladesh Survey from 2017, Bangladesh has 45 private TV stations and well-known Bengali publications like ProthomAlo and Bangladesh Protidin. The distribution of English newspapers is constrained. There are initiatives to improve newspaper circulation, which is now around 1.5 million, through government advertising and subsidies (Azad, 2018). Television, the internet, and social media threaten print media, yet important bilingual publications like ProthomAlo and The Daily Star continue to exist (Azad, 2018). East West Media Group, Mediastar Limited, Mediaworld Limited, Times Media Limited, and Jamuna Group are significant print publication firms (Azad, 2018).

According to current data from government information portal, 1,277 daily newspapers are published in Bangladesh. Two hundred eighteen national Bengali dailies, 293 regional Bengali dailies, and 40 national English dailies are among them. Bangladesh has 346 registered web portals, including 15 TV channel portals, 169 daily newspaper portals, and 162 popular online news portals (www.pressinform.gov.bd).

The information was first released on January 2, 1972, in Pravda, the Soviet nation's daily and one of the world's most insightful publications. The murdering and rape of women committed by the Pakistani army during the liberation struggle, as well as the cruelty and crimes committed by the Pakistani occupation forces and the medieval savagery of Genghis Khan, Hal Khan, and Nadir Shah, saddened the conscience of the whole world.

On January 8, 1972, upon returning from the Pakistani army, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman was the first to acknowledge the roughly 30 lakh Liberation War fatalities during a news conference in London. The National Geography, the world's most renowned and esteemed newspaper, published information about the 30 lakh Bengalis who lost their

lives as martyrs during the freedom fight of 1971 on September 27, 1972. After India, the Soviet Union became Bangladesh's most muscular friend in the war for independence, and the Soviet Union gave India guarantees that appropriate measures would be taken if China or the United States entered the conflict.

Bangladesh's 1971 Liberation War was a turning moment in its history. On April 3, 1971, President Yahya Khan sent a letter to Soviet President Nicolai Padogoni in which he proclaimed political equality and brought up crisis-related problems. Following the murder on March 25, India was the first nation to act. The post-war successes of Bangladesh were also significantly influenced by the Soviet Union. The battle to separate Bangladesh from Pakistan resulted in the foundation of a new nation and paved the ground for a significant transformation of the media landscape.

Before the war, there were many restrictions on and censorship of the media in Bangladesh. Still, the spirit of liberation and the desire for independence inspired a newfound sense of journalistic autonomy and tenacity among Bangladeshis. When Bangladesh's Constitution was adopted in 1972, the government took steps to create a favorable atmosphere for media development. An important turning point in Bangladesh's press history was the establishment of the Bangladesh Press Council in 1973. It was crucial for upholding moral standards, safeguarding press freedom, and settling grievances. Due to the freedom to express different points of view, independent newspapers, magazines, and radio stations grew during the post-liberation period.

Due to technological advancements like offset printing and digital technology, news and information may now be disseminated broadly, of more excellent quality, and with less difficulty. As Bangladesh's press has grown, there have been challenges, such as assault, harassment, and threats. But Bangladesh's solid and resilient media industry is nonetheless committed to upholding the principles of democracy and free expression. Despite the challenges, Bangladesh's press continues to be an essential component of promoting democracy, creating transparency, and giving the people's voice.

2.1.2. RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTING IN MODERN BANGLADESH

Bangladesh has a long history of radio broadcasting that dates to the beginning of the twentieth century. After the partition of India in 1947, All India Radio (AIR) launched a radio station in Dhaka, which ultimately came under the administration of Radio Pakistan (Lelyveld, 1994). Radio Pakistan was instrumental in the independence movement's informational campaign during the 1971 Bangladesh Liberation War (Ahmad, 2021). The Dhaka radio

station changed its name to Bangladesh Betar in 1971 and was designated the country's official radio broadcaster (Haque, 1975). Private FM radio stations first appeared when the government passed the Private Radio Station Policy in 1996 (Gayen, 2012). Government radio, foreign radio, commercial radio, and community radio are the four radio stations currently transmitting in Bangladesh. There are 28 approved private FM radios, while Bangladesh Betar runs 35 FM stations and 14 regional radio stations (Alim-uz-Zaman, 2021). Internet radio stations also influence the varied radio landscape in the nation.

Bangladesh's television sector has experienced substantial expansion and change. In addition to BTV, BTV World, Sangsad Bangladesh Television, and Chittagong Center of BTV, there are four government-run television networks. There are also 45 approved private television channels, of which 35 are broadcasting. Bangladesh Television (BTV) was created following Bangladesh's independence in 1971, growing its coverage and becoming an essential news and entertainment source (Azad, 2019). In the 1990s, private satellite television channels were introduced, bringing variety and competition to the market (Khan, 2020).

The emergence of internet-based platforms and digital broadcasting technology were two effects of the digital era (Islam & Md Syed, 2022). Bangladeshis still rely heavily on television, which has adapted to new technology and changing consumer preferences.

There are 1248 daily newspapers, over 100 online news sites, 28 FM radio stations, 45 commercial television networks, and 32 community radio stations in Bangladesh (Dhaka Tribune, 2019). Very few reliable statistics are available on the financial scale of Bangladesh's media business.

According to an internet article citing corporate research, the sector has a 2016 market value of Rs 27 billion and a 10–12% annual growth rate. According to the same survey, the television business grew by 200 per cent between 2012 and 2016, print media by 150 percent, radio by 350 percent, and digital platforms by 1500 percent (Ghosh, 2016). The Covid-19 epidemic, however, has had a significant negative influence on the media sector (Paul, 2020). According to a study, only 86 newspapers were still operating as of 2 July 2020, while 254 publications had shut down. Just four English and seven Bengali.

Newspapers might pay staff members. Additionally, to survive, paychecks have been withheld month after month, and newspaper print runs have been cut. The current national budget (2020–2021), according to the Bangladesh Newspaper Owners Association (BGA), does not adequately address their requests, and the lives and livelihoods of journalists and other newspaper staff are now even more uncertain. Nearly 1,000 journalists have lost their jobs or are not being paid in the months after the country's breakout of the pandemic, according

to the Dhaka Journalists Union (DJU). They had already applied to a special fund that would pay deserving journalists each Rs 10,000 ($125) when it was established in June 2020. It is also discovered that the majority of the district-level publications have shut down as a result of this catastrophic circumstance. Several other professional organizations, such as Ghangai, Bangladesh Newspaper Editors' Association (an association of newspaper editors), Television Channel Owners' Association (ANAG), Bangladesh Federal Journalists' Union (BJU), and Dhaka Reporters' Unity, unsuccessfully pleaded with the government for protection (Kabir, 2020).

The media in Bangladesh has seen several changes in terms of organization, content, use, and ownership since the 1990s when the democratic period started. In 1991, to resurrect democracy

The emergence of new communication technology and the indisputable effects of globalization have also impacted Bangladeshi media. Additionally, due to neo-liberal policies, Bangladesh depends heavily on foreign assistance. Due to the introduction of new media, it has developed into a nation with free economies where competition has risen. In addition, it is said that the government no longer serves as the primary regulator of the media ecosystem.

Consequently, during the last 20 years, Bangladesh's media has seen substantial expansion. However, the two major political parties in power have pledged to grant the state-owned media autonomy or complete control of the press.Various administrative and legislative limits on the state apparatus have traditionally defined the culture of control over public and commercial media.

Before independence, the print media in Bangladesh had been privately held. Still, when one-party control (Baksal) was temporarily instituted following independence in 1975, all but four state-run publications were shut down. Later, print media became the primary source of news and commentary. The 2016 National Media Survey (GHG) indicates that 23.8 per cent of Bangladeshis read print media, which places the country second in terms of prevalence. It is generally known that the government uses a discriminatory policy to distribute newspaper ads to restrict and stifle press freedom.

Bangladesh Television, or BTV, the only state-owned broadcaster until the 1990s, was widely regarded as the official voice of the governing party. 1992 saw the introduction of television in Bangladesh thanks to the Validation of Receive Only Dish (NTD). Bangladesh entered the commercial satellite television era with the debut of ATN Bangla in 1997, Channel I in 1999, and Ekushey TV in 2000. According to the 2017 Nielsen poll, television has surpassed all other forms of media in Bangladesh, with 84 per cent of viewers in 2016.

The percentage was 74% in 2011. Since the advent of commercial satellite television, it has been common practice to provide TV licenses to companies and politicians who support the government.

Before the entry of for-profit and community radio stations in 1998, the state-owned radio network Bangladesh Betar similarly enjoyed a monopoly. Despite having a broad audience in both urban and rural regions, Bangladesh Betar has not prospered because the governments who have come and gone have utilized it for state propaganda. Additionally, this propaganda is a one-sided effort on the governing party's and its officials' behalf. It's news and other programming are no longer as well-liked as they once were.

The National Media Survey-NMS (2016) estimates that just 12.4% of the country's population watches it, with a slightly higher 16.7% in metropolitan regions. Mass media also includes the availability of digital technology and government initiatives to utilize it wisely. Most media firms are extending their digital presence in addition to their conventional activities, which impacts the business. According to figures by the Bangladesh Telecommunication Regulatory Commission (TRC) for 2020, there were more than 100 million Internet users in Bangladesh as of March. Consequently, the importance of online news portals for news and commentary is rising. Bangladesh's first online news site (nafhabongi24.paras) was established in 2004, and eight thousand registration requests for online news portals were made in 2019.

2.1.3. FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND POWER RELATIONS IN BANGLADESH AS A PART OF FAKES ECOSYSTEM

Over the years, discussion and worry have surrounded the freedom of the press in Bangladesh (Haque, 2019). Despite constitutional protections for the right to free speech and expression, pressing freedom has needed help to be effectively implemented and protected. Restrictive laws such as the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Act and the Official Secrets Act (Khan, 2003, 391–405) have come under fire for their ability to stifle press freedom and free speech. Because of their criticism or dissenting opinions, these laws have been applied to imprison journalists, bloggers, and social media users. According to Lacy and Mookherjee (2020), journalists in Bangladesh face numerous difficulties, including security monitoring, digital misuse, defamation, and criminal prosecutions.

Additionally, extremist Islamists have been attacking journalists since 1992, with a surge since 2013 and new regulations passed in 2016. Furthermore, new legislation was implemented in 2013 to replace the ICT Law, and extreme Islamists have been attacking

journalists since 1992 with an upsurge since 2013 (Lacy & Mookherjee, 2020, 280–305). There is little diversity of opinions and skewed reporting due to the concentration of media ownership in Bangladesh among a small number of people or organizations with political allegiances.

In general, the capacity of journalists to report independently and hold that in authority accountable needs to be improved by restrictive regulations, dangers to journalists' safety, and media ownership concentration in Bangladesh. Concerns regarding the prevalence of false information and misinformation in Bangladesh's media environment have grown in recent years. The phrase "fake ecosystem" describes the abundance of incorrect data, propaganda, and disinformation that spreads via several media outlets, particularly the internet and social media.

The proliferation of false news severely threatens the freedom of the press in Bangladesh. It may cause the public's faith in the media to decline and damage the reputation of reliable news sources. It has sometimes led to violence, threats, and intimidation against journalists. Lack of variety and pluralism in the media is one of the main problems causing the phoney ecosystem. Few influential media outlets dominate Bangladesh's media landscape, and there are few possibilities for independent and critical journalism. A small variety of viewpoints may be reflected due to this concentration of media ownership, which may also restrict journalists' capacity to report freely and honestly.

The existence of rules and regulations that may be utilized to restrict journalistic freedom presents another difficulty. For instance, the 2018-enacted Digital Security Act has drawn criticism for its open-ended clauses that might be used to target journalists and limit their ability to cover critical topics. Additionally, journalists have been threatened and harassed due to Bangladesh's defamation laws.

In Bangladesh, there have also been cases of journalists being subjected to assaults, threats, and even murder. Journalists' capacity to exercise their right to free speech is further constrained by these violent actions, which foster an environment of fear and self-censorship among them. It is essential to remember that not all Bangladeshi media organizations participate in the false ecosystem. Credible news outlets and journalists work hard to provide the public with accurate and trustworthy information. The difficulties created by the wrong environment and the limitations on press freedom, however, underline the need for media reforms, such as fostering media plurality, ensuring the safety of journalists, and evaluating and modifying laws that restrict press freedom.

To address these issues and provide a more stable climate for press freedom in Bangladesh, civil society groups, journalists associations, and international human rights organizations are all making continuing efforts.

BOOM Bangladesh's annual report aims to highlight the statistics of fake and misleading news published in the country's mainstream media. It is to be noted that this figure does not reflect the overall picture of phony news published in the country's media (শাকির আ., 2023)[52].

গণমাধ্যমের নাম	প্রকাশিত ভুয়া খবরের সংখ্যা
সময় টিভি	৭ টি
যুগান্তর	৫ টি
জাগো নিউজ	৪ টি
চ্যানেল২৪ টিভি	৪ টি
আমাদের সময়	৪ টি
বাংলানিউজ২৪	৪ টি
আজকের পত্রিকা	৩ টি
চ্যানেল আই	৩ টি
আরটিভি	৩ টি
একুশে টিভি	৩ টি
কালের কণ্ঠ	২ টি
বাংলাভিশন	২ টি
বিজনেস স্ট্যান্ডার্ড	২ টি
সমকাল	২ টি
ঢাকা পোস্ট	২ টি
এনটিভি	২ টি
ইত্তেফাক	২ টি
প্রথম আলো	২ টি
ডেইলি ক্যাম্পাস	২ টি
ডিবিসি নিউজ	২ টি
বাংলাদেশ টুডে	২ টি
সময়ের আলো	২ টি
সময়ের কণ্ঠস্বর	২ টি
যমুনা টিভি	২ টি
সারাবাংলা	২ টি
বাংলা ট্রিবিউন	১ টি
ডেইলি স্টার	১ টি
বাংলাদেশ জার্নাল	১ টি
নিউজবাংলা২৪	১ টি
দেশ রূপান্তর	১ টি
একাত্তর টিভি	১ টি
ঢাকা ট্রিবিউন	১ টি
বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন	১ টি
ভোরের কাগজ	১ টি
ঢাকা টাইমস	১ টি
মানবকণ্ঠ	১ টি
জনকণ্ঠ	১ টি
পূর্বপশ্চিমবিডি	১ টি
জুমবাংলা	১ টি
বাংলা ইনসাইডার	১ টি

Figure 3. The statistics of fake and misleading news. *Source :*

https://www.boombd.com/fact-file/fake-news-in-the-mainstream-media-2022-somoy-tv-is-at-the-top-again-20675?infinitescroll=1

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[52] শাকির আ. (২০২৩), গণমাধ্যমে ভুয়া খবর ২০২২: এবারও শীর্ষে সময় টিভি. বুমবিডি. URL: https://www.boombd.com/fact-file/fake-news-in-the-mainstream-media-2022-somoy-tv-is-at-the-top-again-20675?infinitescroll=1.

The report is based on the statistics of fake and misleading news published in the Bangladeshi press, which Boom Bangladesh has identified and fact-checked. In addition, Boom Bangladesh has rated the Facebook[53] pages of all the media in the statistics as a fact check partner of the network in Bangladesh. However, most media outlets were later exempted from the misinformation rating by making the necessary amendments to their respective news and appealing to follow the rules. Boom Bangladesh's fact-checkers did not observe the country's media, nor did the fact-check report fake news images or statistics. Out of the news published in the media of Bangladesh in the outgoing year 2022, 16 fake news have been identified, BOOM Bangladesh.

Sixteen phony news stories have been published in one or more media outlets at different times of the year. In this case, there was a tendency among the media to copy or follow fake or misleading news after publishing it in other contemporary media. In this trend of copying or following, several media outlets have spread the same news exactly or a little bit here and there, and in most cases, Boom Bangladesh has faced the rating.

সময়	গণমাধ্যমের নাম	প্রকাশিত ভুয়া খবরের সংখ্যা	অবস্থান
২০২২ সালের ১ জানুয়ারি থেকে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর পর্যন্ত	সময় টিভি	৭ টি	প্রথম
	যুগান্তর	৫ টি	দ্বিতীয়
	জাগো নিউজ, চ্যানেল২৪ টিভি, আমাদের সময় ও বাংলানিউজ২৪	৪ টি	তৃতীয়
	আজকের পত্রিকা, চ্যানেল আই, আরটিভি ও একুশে টিভি	৩ টি	চতুর্থ
	কালের কণ্ঠ, প্রথম আলো, সমকাল, ইত্তেফাক, ডেইলি ক্যাম্পাস, বাংলাদেশ টুডে, সময়ের আলো, সময়ের কণ্ঠস্বর, সারাবাংলা, বিজনেস স্ট্যান্ডার্ড, ঢাকা পোস্ট, বাংলাভিশন, এনটিভি, যমুনা টিভি ও ডিবিসি নিউজ	২ টি	পঞ্চম
	বাংলা ট্রিবিউন, ডেইলি স্টার, বাংলাদেশ জার্নাল, নিউজবাংলা২৪, দেশ রুপান্তর, একাত্তর টিভি, ঢাকা ট্রিবিউন, বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, ভোরের কাগজ, ঢাকা টাইমস, মানবকণ্ঠ, জনকণ্ঠ, পূর্বপশ্চিমবিডি, জুমবাংলা ও বাংলা ইনসাইডার	১ টি	ষষ্ঠ

Figure 4. The statistics of fake and misleading news. *Source :*
https://www.boombd.com/fact-file/fake-news-in-the-mainstream-media-2022-somoy-tv-is-at-the-top-again-20675?infinitescroll=1

In some cases, the number of media followed was more than 30. BOOM Bangladesh has identified fake and misleading news in 40 mainstream media outlets in this statistic. However, several online portals, such as MTNews24, BD24 Report, Daily Ekattor, and Daily Sambad, have yet to be included in this figure. However, these portals have millions of

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[53] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

followers on social network platforms, and their pages are verified. Boom Bangladesh rated them for publishing fake news. Still, it excluded them from the annual figures as they are relatively less known in journalism, or their publishers and editors need to be more detailed in those portals.

By the end of 2022, BOOM Bangladesh entered its fourth year as a Fact Check Partner of Facebook[54], completing the third year of fact-checking activities in the country. In 2020 and 2021, an annual report was published on the statistics of fake news identified in Bangladesh's media. Now let's take a look at a list of how many fake and misleading news were placed in which media in 2022 look at the list of the same statistics a little differently Somoy TV at the top, according to the second epochal statistics, Somoy Television alone tops the list by spreading at most minuscule seven fake news in 2022.

২০২০ সাল

সময়	অবস্থান	সংবাদমাধ্যম	ভুয়া ও বিভ্রান্তিকর খবরের সংখ্যা
মার্চ ২০২০ থেকে ডিসেম্বর ২০২০	১ম	সময় টিভি	১০টি
	২য়	বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন ও কালের কণ্ঠ	৮টি
	৩য়	যুগান্তর	৭টি
	৪র্থ	ইনকিলাব ও জনকণ্ঠ	৬টি
	৫ম	ইত্তেফাক	৪টি

২০২১ সাল

সময়	প্রকাশিত ভুয়া খবরের সংখ্যা	গণমাধ্যমের নাম
২০২১ সালের ১ জানুয়ারি থেকে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর পর্যন্ত	৩টি	সময় টিভি, ইনকিলাব, আরটিভি
	২টি	একাত্তর টিভি, জনকণ্ঠ, ডিবিসি নিউজ, ইত্তেফাক
	১টি	জাগো নিউজ ২৪, ঢাকা পোস্ট, চ্যানেল ২৪, ঢাকা টাইমস ২৪, এনটিভি, একুশে টিভি, বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, বিজনেস ইনসাইডার, সমকাল, যুগান্তর, জুম বাংলা, বাংলা টিভি, মানবকণ্ঠ ও চ্যানেল আই

২০২২ সাল

সময়	গণমাধ্যমের নাম	প্রকাশিত ভুয়া খবরের সংখ্যা	অবস্থান
২০২২ সালের ১ জানুয়ারি থেকে ৩১ ডিসেম্বর পর্যন্ত	সময় টিভি	৭টি	প্রথম
	যুগান্তর	৫টি	দ্বিতীয়
	জাগো নিউজ, চ্যানেল২৪ টিভি, আমাদের সময় ও বাংলানিউজ২৪	৪টি	তৃতীয়
	আজকের পত্রিকা, চ্যানেল আই, আরটিভি ও একুশে টিভি	৩টি	চতুর্থ
	কালের কণ্ঠ, প্রথম আলো, সমকাল, ইত্তেফাক, ডেইলি ক্যাম্পাস, বাংলাদেশ টুডে, সময়ের আলো, সময়ের কণ্ঠস্বর, সারাবাংলা, বিজনেস স্ট্যান্ডার্ড, ঢাকা পোস্ট, বাংলাভিশন, এনটিভি, যমুনা টিভি ও ডিবিসি নিউজ	২টি	পঞ্চম
	বাংলা ট্রিবিউন, ডেইলি স্টার, বাংলাদেশ জার্নাল, নিউজবাংলা২৪, দেশ রূপান্তর, একাত্তর টিভি, ঢাকা ট্রিবিউন, বাংলাদেশ প্রতিদিন, ভোরের কাগজ, ঢাকা টাইমস, মানবকণ্ঠ, জনকণ্ঠ, পূর্বপশ্চিমবিডি, জুমবাংলা ও বাংলা ইনসাইডার	১টি	ষষ্ঠ

Figure 5. Fake and misleading TV news placed in 2022. *Source : https://www.boombd.com/fact-file/fake-news-in-the-mainstream-media-2022-somoy-tv-is-at-the-top-again-20675?infinitescroll=1*

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[54] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

On the other hand, the Daily Jugantor is in the second position on the list by publishing at least five fake news. Jago News, Channel 24 TV, Amader Shomoy, and Bangla News 24 are in the third position with four fake news reports each. Apart from this, at least three fake and misleading news were published by Ajker Patrika, Channel I, RTV, and Ekushey TV in 2022. At least two phony news were published by Kaler Kantho, Prothom Alo, Samakal, Ittefaq, Daily Campus, Bangladesh Today, Shomoyer Alo, Somoyer Konthosor, Sarabangla, Business Standard, Dhaka Post, Banglavision, NTV, Jamuna TV and DBC News.

At least one fake news has been identified in Bangla Tribune, Daily Star, Bangladesh Journal, News Bangla 24, Desh Rupantar, Ekattor TV, Dhaka Tribune, Bangladesh Pratidin, Bhorer Kagaj, Dhaka Times, Manabkantha, Janakantha, Purboposhchimbd, Zoom Bangla and Bangla Insider. Now, look at the comparison of the detection of fake and misleading news in Bangladesh's mainstream media by BOOM Bangladesh in 2020, 2021, and 2022.

According to the comparison list of fake news in the press in 2020, 2021, and 2022, Time Television is in the top position for the third consecutive time by spreading at most minuscule seven fake and misleading news in 2022. Earlier in 2021, Time TV was in the top position jointly with RTV and Inquilab by publishing at least three fake news. And in 2020, Time TV alone topped the list by posting at least ten phony news stories.

Meanwhile, Daily Jugantor is second on the list, publishing at least five fake and misleading news stories in 2022. In 2021, BOOM Bangladesh identified at least one news published in the era as counterfeit. However, in 2020, the media was third on the list by posting at least seven fake news. BD Fact Check wants to increase the media knowledge of the citizens of Bangladesh. The site's founder and chief executive, Zahed Arman, said that by increasing "media literacy" among the public, they can easily understand fake and true information (থিয়াম শ., 2018). "In the absence of proper 'media literacy,' many intellectuals, university teachers, and state officials are also sharing fake news," he added. "The only way out of this is to increase public media literacy," he said."

2.2. THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL NETWORKS ON A NEW JOURNALISM

In the digital age, a category of media called "New Media" has emerged or established. It covers a wide range of digital platforms, resources, and communication channels that enable fresh ways to create, distribute, and consume information. New media in Bangladesh have fundamentally altered society, communication, and the economy by fostering civic engagement, individual empowerment, information sharing, economic growth, and cultural

diversity. It has sped up information transfer and reduced reliance on traditional media sources (Social Media and Social Relationship among Youth, 2022, 1–11).

Bangladesh was the first country where new media emerged due to the rapid growth of internet usage and technological advancements in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Online news portals first debuted in the early 2000s, and social media platforms started to take off in the middle of the decade. Blogging and online activism first appeared in Bangladesh in the middle of the 2000s (Al-Zaman, 2020). New media in Bangladesh has been influenced by technological advancements, shifting media consumption trends, and changing user habits.

Thanks to the expansion of mobile Internet and smartphones, a more significant segment of the public may now access online content, digital content creation, and influencer culture. The number of people shopping online has increased, as has the use of online marketplaces and e-commerce websites. New media, which likewise alters the media landscape in Bangladesh, continues to affect public opinion (Kabir, 2020).

The emergence of new media has substantially altered how information is distributed, shared, and consumed worldwide. This has increased Bangladeshi citizens' access to information and gives them more influence. News dissemination has improved due to citizen journalism's growth and content creation democratization. However, individuals' personal and societal well-being is put in danger by the online dissemination of inaccurate information, hate speech, and misleading news. To manage Bangladesh's developing information ecosystem and realize its potential for societal transformation, policymakers, media professionals, and individuals must thoroughly understand the new media era (Rashid, 2013).

In Bangladesh, there are four types of online journalism: social media use, independent online newspapers, online newspapers with significant investments, and online versions of print newspapers (Haq, 2014). Due to rising smartphone and internet usage, it has seen significant growth. Internet usage in Bangladesh was estimated to be 7.5 Gbps in 2008, but by early 2023 it had substantially climbed to 41,000 Gbps (Internet penetration in..., 2023). One hundred twenty-five million people now use the internet, up from 800,000 in 2008, according to Mustafa Jabbar, Minister of Posts and Telecommunications (Internet penetration in..., 2023). With 66.94 million internet users as of the beginning of 2023, Bangladesh had a 38.9 per cent internet penetration rate (Kemp, 2023). Broadband, 3G, and 4G connections are just a few options Internet service providers (ISPs) offer. According to Posts and Telecommunications Minister Mustafa Jabbar, the government has made considerable strides in mobile network coverage, hitting 98 per cent with 4G technology and adopting 5G in 2021 (Internet penetration in..., 2023).

According to data from OOSGA (2023) & Kemp (2023) Bangladesh has 44.70 million social media users or 26.0 per cent of the country's total population, and Facebook[55], YouTube, Instagram[56], IMO, and Messenger are among the most widely used platforms. On the other hand, Napoleoncat data (March 2023) claimed that Facebook[57], Instagram[58], Messenger, and Linkedin are Bangladesh's most used social media platforms (figure 5). Besides, Linkedin, WhatsApp, TikTok, Telegram, and Snapchat are the other popular social media platforms in Bangladesh. E-commerce has flourished, and government initiatives promote internet penetration and digital connectivity. However, it also brings challenges like misinformation, fake news, cyberbullying, privacy concerns, and excessive screen time.

Figure 6. Social Media Users in Bangladesh (March 2023). (Access Date: 10.05.2023).
Source: https://napoleoncat.com/stats/social-media-users-in-bangladesh/2023/

Fifty million people, or more than 29% of the population, actively use Facebook[59] (Social Media in..., 2023). Social media sites are essential for spreading the news. Bangladeshi online news portals offer their readers a variety of coverage, real-time updates, and multimedia content. However, the country's media professionals occasionally raise concerns about press

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[57] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[58] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[59] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

freedom, censorship, and the 2018 Digital Security Act, which could limit the freedom of expression.

In addition, Bangladesh had a population of 172.1 million in January 2023, with a growth rate of 1.0 per cent (Kemp, 2023). Whereas 50.4 per cent of the population are female and 49.6 per cent are male. More importantly, sixty per cent of the population lived in rural areas, with approximately 40 per cent in metropolitan areas. The age distribution showed that 53.9 per cent of the population was between the ages of 13 and 44 (Kemp, 2023). Consequently, youth make up the majority of social media users and more than half of the total population.

Social media platform usage and popularity may change, with new platforms emerging while older ones become less popular. Online media in Bangladesh is booming and offers a variety of perspectives despite obstacles like restricted rural internet access, cost concerns, and a lack of digital literacy (Haq, 2014). Social media platforms have impacted several societal spheres, including business, politics, and social activity.

Furthermore, Bangladesh has seen a sharp rise in digital journalism thanks to the widespread usage of smartphones and the internet. Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune, and Somoy TV are important participants. Real-time reporting and audience reach opportunities; a lack of adequate internet connectivity, particularly in distant locations, is problematic. Social media platforms have significantly aided the growth of digital journalism. It has altered the media environment by enhancing news accessibility, promoting citizen participation, and upgrading information exchange and consumption.

By making a variety of news sources accessible and reducing reliance on conventional media, digital platforms have impacted traditional journalism. However, it has also resulted in the need to combat incorrect information and economic issues. Traditional media companies are adapting by using digital platforms and engaging with audiences.

Bangladesh's new media industry has much room to develop and change. New media platforms will significantly influence public opinion, convey information, and promote civic involvement as technology develops and internet usage rises. A growing number of individuals in Bangladesh have access to smartphones and the Internet, causing a rapid digital transition in the country. The younger generation, who are more tech-savvy and open to digital information, is particularly well-served by this trend and has a broad audience to which new

media sources can reach. Bangladesh has a substantial presence on social media sites like Facebook[60], Twitter[61], and YouTube (Al-Zaman & Noman, 2021).

These platforms enable sharing of news, opinions, and entertainment content by people, groups, and media outlets. Social media will be used much more for news consumption and interaction with online groups. New media gives Citizens more power to contribute to news production actively. Through citizen journalism, individuals can report on occurrences, share their stories, and contribute to public dialogue. Citizen journalism is anticipated to become more prevalent in Bangladesh as access to mobile devices and social media increases, offering alternative viewpoints and grassroots coverage (Khan et al., 2022).

It is anticipated that there will be a rise in demand for digital material, such as online news articles, podcasts, blogs, and video production. This will open chances for journalists, influencers, content producers, and digital marketers to develop exciting and educational content tailored to particular audience groups. Vlogs, podcasts, and live streaming will all become more popular. Governments frequently create rules in response to the new media's expanding influence to ensure the broadcast of morality and responsibility. Bangladesh may implement new regulations or modify current ones to handle issues like false information, hate speech, and privacy concerns.

The future media environment will be heavily influenced by how healthy freedom of expression and responsible journalism are balanced. Finding sustainable business models will be vital as new media channels develop. Media outlets may turn to advertising, sponsorships, subscriptions, and crowdsourcing as essential revenue sources. Finding the ideal balance between financial viability and upholding editorial freedom will be difficult on an ongoing basis.

Bangladesh has many regional languages spoken throughout the country's many regions. In order to better serve specific language communities, localized and vernacular material will become more prevalent in new media in the future. This will make it possible for a media environment that is more inclusive and improve non-English speaking groups' access to information.

It is crucial to remember that several elements, including technology development, legislative frameworks, and societal changes, will impact the future of new media in

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[61] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Bangladesh. However, the country's media landscape will likely continue to be significantly shaped by new media due to rising digitalization and shifting media consumer habits (Rahman et al., 2017).

Bangladesh's new media industry has experienced substantial growth in recent years and has excellent potential for further development. This potential is influenced by several factors, including expanding social media usage, increased internet usage, digital material consumption, and e-commerce expansion. Over the past ten years, as cell phones have become more accessible and connection has improved, internet usage has skyrocketed. Increasingly popular social media sites like Facebook[62], YouTube, and Instagram[63] give content producers, influencers, and digital marketers a chance to reach a broad audience. The consumption of digital material is also rising, with online news portals, podcasts, online video streaming, and music streaming gaining popularity among young people and urban residents (Akter & Sultana, 2020).

Bangladesh has seen a phenomenal increase in e-commerce. Customers increasingly use online marketplaces like Daraz and AjkerDeal, which have expanded advertising and marketing efforts online. Bangladesh's digital advertising business is rising quickly, providing new media companies with chances to monetize their platforms and make money. Young people in Bangladesh are launching content-creation enterprises, online news portals, and digital marketing firms as they venture into digital media (Sultana & Akter, 2021). To fully achieve the potential for growth in the new media sector in Bangladesh, issues such as low digital literacy, infrastructure constraints, and regulatory frameworks must be addressed. However, the future of new media in the nation appears bright because of continued technological breakthroughs and the growing use of digital platforms.

Numerous obstacles could impede the development of new media in Bangladesh. Internet use, the digital gap between urban and rural areas, the lack of adequate digital literacy skills, and the still-evolving regulatory environment are a few of these. Only 56% of the people in Bangladesh had internet connections as of 2021, making it a country with a comparatively low internet penetration rate; in rural areas, where a sizable section of the population dwells, this divide restricts the dissemination and consumption of new media material (Al-Zaman,

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[63] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

2021). The regulatory environment for new media in Bangladesh is also still developing, challenging its expansion.

Government restrictions are required to ensure the ethical use of media platforms, but they should balance the need for innovation and freedom of expression. For new media businesses in Bangladesh, achieving financial stability and reliable revenue creation remain significant obstacles. The development of new media platforms might need to be improved by infrastructure limitations like constrained bandwidth and frequent power outages. The development of new media in Bangladesh may be impacted by socio-cultural factors, including traditional media, linguistic preferences, and limited English ability (Al-Zaman et al., 2020). Initiatives to raise digital literacy, promote regulatory clarity, and support sustainable business models can all help to solve these issues and advance the growth and development of new media in Bangladesh.

Bangladesh's increasing adoption of digital technology and internet usage has opened up new opportunities for new media innovation. Localized content, platforms for user-generated content, social impact journalism, data journalism, and visualization are a few of them. Localized content can accommodate Bangladesh's distinctive cultural, linguistic, and regional variety, while mobile-first content can serve the expanding mobile user base (Islam et al., 2022). Platforms for user-generated content can enable people and communities to express themselves, whereas social impact journalism can increase public awareness of social concerns and promote reform. Data journalism and visualization can offer the public, insightful information. Creating cutting-edge data journalism platforms and data visualization tools can assist in making complex content more approachable and exciting.

How tales are experienced and told may be entirely changed by virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies. The increased need for entertainment and knowledge on the go can be satisfied via podcasting and audio material. Subscription-based services, targeted advertising, and branded content are a few monetization strategies that can support and sustain the expansion of new media platforms in Bangladesh.

Partnerships between media outlets, technology businesses, and journalists can aid innovation. The constraints of the digital infrastructure, connectivity concerns, and the need to ensure the ethical use of technology may present obstacles to these prospects. Innovative New Media techniques can advance the media sector in Bangladesh with the appropriate plans and partnerships.

Bangladesh's media landscape has substantially changed during the New Media Era due to technological breakthroughs and shifting consumer preferences. Internet adoption, the

rise of social media, digital journalism, citizen journalism, and influencer culture are examples. Smartphones and inexpensive data plans have expanded Internet usage, and social media sites like Facebook[64], YouTube, and Twitter[65] have emerged as essential venues for communication, entertainment, and news. Online news portals and platforms are becoming more well-known alongside traditional print and broadcast media, signalling the rise of digital journalism as a powerful force. Thanks to citizen journalism, citizens feel empowered to participate in news reporting, and Bangladesh now has a thriving influencer scene (Goni & Tabassum, 2020).

Influencers, frequently well-known individuals with sizable internet fan bases, have become crucial business marketing channels and are vital in influencing public opinion. With firms investing in targeted ads, sponsored content, and influencer relationships to efficiently reach and engage their target audiences, digital advertising has also altered the advertising sector. In Bangladesh, online streaming services have become more popular and now provide a variety of entertainment possibilities. Bangladesh has also seen an increase in e-commerce, with platforms and marketplaces making it more straightforward for customers to shop online.

Bangladesh has seen a digital revolution due to the New Media Era, which has altered how people consume news, entertainment, and information. The increasing use of the Internet and the growth of digital platforms have created new avenues for business, expression, and communication. The forecast for new media in Bangladesh is optimistic, and there is much room for expansion in the years to come. Increasing internet penetration, expanding social media use, and changing news consumption habits are three critical variables influencing Bangladesh's New Media landscape in the future.

Affordable smartphones, better connectivity, and government measures to encourage Internet access have increased Internet penetration. Social media platforms like Facebook[66], Twitter[67], and Instagram[68] have become extremely popular in Bangladesh. New social media influencers are developing and gaining the power to influence trends and public opinion.

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[66] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[67] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[68] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Online news sources and digital media platforms compete with traditional media outlets like newspapers and television.

With increased digital advertising spending in Bangladesh, online news portals are anticipated to continue growing. Platforms for online video streaming and over-the-top (OTT) services are becoming more popular, including Bongo, Bioscope, and regional services like Amazon Prime Video and Netflix (Hossain, 2022, 355-376). Government, industry stakeholders, and content producers must work together to create a supportive environment for the growth of New Media in order to take advantage of this potential and overcome obstacles. In order to promote innovation and guarantee user security and safety, this requires tackling concerns like internet infrastructure development, digital literacy, data privacy, and regulatory frameworks.

Social media has dramatically impacted journalism, which has altered how news is produced, disseminated, and consumed. New journalism, frequently digital or online, has resulted from expanding social media platforms. A global audience can be reached, real-time reporting is possible, and user-generated content may be included in news articles thanks to social media. The news cycle has been significantly affected as news organizations try to keep up with the pace of social media, and information spreads swiftly due to these changes. Social media has substantially impacted new journalism, which has altered how news is distributed, absorbed, and generated.

News now has a larger audience and is now more readily available. Additionally, it has facilitated real-time reporting, promoted user-generated content, fostered audience interaction amongst journalists, made it more challenging to combat misinformation, and forced the evolution of journalism's financial structures. Journalists have thus been able to benefit from social media users' pooled knowledge and experiences, stimulate direct engagement and communication with their audience, strengthen their relationships with that audience, and gather data for prospective reporting. Social media's rapid dissemination of information has also made it harder for false information and disinformation to proliferate, making it easier for this material to do so. To keep up with the changing environment, news companies must adopt digital platforms and develop new revenue streams.

Social Media and New Journalism

Social media, online platforms and websites that enable social interaction, content sharing, and participation in online communities. It allows a large audience to interact, communicate, and exchange data, concepts, and viewpoints with other people, groups, and businesses. Social networking systems frequently provide features such as making a profile,

posting and sharing text, pictures, and videos, commenting on, liking, responding to content, chatting, and following or subscribing to other users or pages. Several well-known social media platforms include Facebook[69], Twitter[70], Instagram[71], YouTube, and TikTok. Social media has fundamentally transformed how people connect with one another, gather information, and communicate with one another.

The late 1960s and early 1970s saw the emergence of the "new journalism" style of reporting and narrative. It challenged accepted journalistic norms by incorporating literary methods and personal opinions into news reporting. Subjectivity, literary techniques, in-depth reporting, alternative perspectives, narrative structure, and numerous perspectives are the fundamental traits of new journalism (Pauly, 2014).

Authors with a solid connection to the new journalism include Tom Wolfe, Truman Capote, Hunter S. Thompson, Joan Didion, and Gay Talese. Their works, such as Tom Wolfe's "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test" and Hunter S. Thompson's "Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas," serve as examples of the ideas and practices of the new journalism. Literary and narrative journalism still influences earlier forms, despite the shift in style.

There are advantages and disadvantages to the practice of journalism in the complicated and diverse interaction between social media and modern journalism. The use of social media has had a profound impact on journalism, leading to the development of "new journalism" or "social media journalism."

News Dissemination

Social media sites are widely used as news dissemination venues. Journalists and news organizations use social network platforms to share breaking news, interact with their audiences, and increase website traffic. Real-time reporting and greater accessibility for journalists are now possible thanks to social media's democratization of news distribution (Sultana & Fussell, 2021).

User-Generated Content

Social media platforms have allowed regular people to start their news organizations. As events occur, users can post news, pictures, videos, and eyewitness reports, supporting or replacing traditional news coverage. Information has become more accessible as a result, with

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[71] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

people able to challenge established narratives, contribute to the news cycle, and unearth tales that might have gone unnoticed (Sultan et al., 2020).

Enhanced Engagement

The way news organizations and journalists engage with their viewers has changed due to social media. Journalists can interact with their readers and viewers in real-time, reply to comments, and collect feedback. This degree of participation can improve openness, accountability, and trust in media by enabling journalists to address complaints or provide further context directly.

Misleading News

The growth of social media has also led to problems like the distribution of false information and fake news. Due to the accessibility of information sharing, unreliable or misleading news can spread swiftly online and spread misinformation. The additional duty placed on journalists nowadays is to fact-check and validate information before reporting on it, as well as to battle disinformation and encourage media literacy among social media users.

Adapting Commercial Structures

Social media has upended established commercial structures in journalism. Due to the fall in print advertising revenue, many news organizations now significantly rely on digital platforms and social media for advertising and income generation. Concerns have been expressed concerning this change's possible influence on news organizations' editorial freedom and the financial viability of high-quality journalism.

Ethics-Related Matters

For journalists, social media presents ethical issues. When journalists interact with sources or express personal ideas on social media platforms, privacy issues, conflicts of interest, and upholding professional boundaries may arise. To preserve the integrity and credibility of their reporting, news organizations and journalists must manage these ethical issues.

Social media and modern journalism have a complicated and changing relationship. While social media has opened up new channels for the communication of news, audience participation, and the inclusion of varied viewpoints, it also brings risks, including spreading false information and disrupting established business structures. To ensure the ongoing creation of accurate and trustworthy news in the digital era, journalists and news organizations must adapt to this shifting landscape, adopt new methods, and preserve ethical standards.

Social Medias Beneficial Effects on New Journalism: Instantaneous News Dissemination

News is immediately shared on social media channels, allowing for real-time updates and breaking news. As a result, news now circulates more quickly, allowing individuals to follow current events as they develop. Because social media is real-time, citizen journalists may swiftly report on events and share their thoughts using it as a valuable tool.

Increased Audience Involvement

Social media makes it easier for journalists to communicate directly with their audience. Journalists can converse with their followers, reply to comments, and participate in debates. In addition to fostering a sense of community, this interaction enables journalists to get feedback, respond to issues, and learn from their audience. Readers are more likely to believe you when you have a close relationship with them.

Expanded Accessibility and Reach

Social media has democratized news distribution, enabling journalists to reach a worldwide audience without being constrained by conventional media routes. By distributing their work across platforms, journalists can reach audiences who might not have regular access to traditional news sources. This openness has enhanced the diversity of perspectives in journalism and made news more accessible to underserved areas.

Crowdsourced Reporting

Social media platforms offer a platform for gathering information from users on the ground through crowdsourcing, making it more straightforward for journalists to collect firsthand stories, pictures, and videos. In addition to traditional reporting, this user-generated content offers different viewpoints and insights. In order to find stories and confirm facts, journalists can use the power of the crowd, which will improve the breadth and accuracy of their reporting.

Data-driven Journalism

Social media platforms produce much data about user behaviour, preferences, and trends. Journalists can use this information to spot breaking news, gauge public opinion, and spot patterns or trends. Data-driven journalism improves reporting's depth and assists journalists in finding stories that otherwise could have gone overlooked.

Storytelling Innovation

Social media networks give journalists access to various multimedia tools for engaging and interactive storytelling. In order to convey news in a more aesthetically pleasing and understandable, they can include photographs, videos, infographics, and live streaming. This

has produced creative storytelling methods and immersive experiences that enthral consumers and improve the interest level of news consumption.

Consumption More Engaging

Even while social media has improved modern journalism in several ways, it is still essential to recognize and handle its drawbacks, including false information, echo chambers, and privacy issues. To maintain the integrity and caliber of the news they generate, journalists and news organizations must handle these obstacles responsibly.

How Social Media Affects New Journalism

While social media has improved access to information and the capacity to reach more significant audiences for journalists, it has also hurt new journalism. The following are some detrimental effects of social media on new journalism:

Escalation Of False Information

Social media sites have developed into a haven for quickly disseminating false information. Fake information can spread quickly. Thanks to the ease of sharing and the lack of processes for fact-checking, leading to the publication of fake or misleading news reports. As a result, journalism loses credibility, and people need help differentiating trustworthy sources from false ones.

Social media's emphasis is compromising journalistic standards on speed and brevity, which frequently contradicts conventional journalism's values, including accuracy, verification, and thoroughness. The standard of journalism may need to improve due to pressure on journalists to prioritize breaking news and quick updates over in-depth reporting. Concentrating on attention-grabbing headlines and sensationalism further erodes the objectivity of news reporting.

Filter Bubbles and Acho Chambers

Social media algorithms are made only to display content that supports users' values and interests, which results in echo chambers and filter bubbles. This effect restricts exposure to other viewpoints and may confirm existing biases. People may be less likely to read news articles that contradict their beliefs. As a result, creating a polarized and fragmented information landscape.

Reduced Faith in Journalism

Public trust in journalism has decreased due to the spread of fake news and the perception of bias on social media platforms. The difficulty of audiences distinguishing between trustworthy and untrustworthy sources on social media has resulted in skepticism and

cynicism. This lack of confidence affects journalism's function as a watchdog and lessens its impact on society.

Social media networks favor engagement metrics like likes, shares, and comments, which pressure authors to produce click-driven material. Because of this, media companies and journalists may be encouraged to focus on click-driven material rather than in-depth investigative research. Following virality and popularity could draw attention away from significant, less dramatic news events.

Threats to Secrecy and Privacy

Social networking sites frequently demand users to provide personal information, putting journalists' sources and safety in danger. In a time of general social media use, maintaining confidentiality and preserving sources' identities becomes more difficult. Additionally, journalists' capacity to report freely and courageously may be hampered by the ongoing surveillance and tracking of their online activity.

It is crucial to remember that social media can be used effectively for journalism as a tool. However, the negative consequences mentioned above emphasize the difficulties and dangers connected to the fusion of social media and new journalism.

Social Medias Impact on New Journalism in Different Contexts and Regions

Social media has significantly impacted new journalism in Bangladesh, changing how it is produced, distributed, and read. Here are some instances of its effects in various settings and places:

Citizen Journalism

Social media platforms like Facebook[72], Twitter[73], and YouTube have given citizen journalists in Bangladesh more power. Citizen journalism has emerged now that news may be recorded and shared in real time. For instance, during political demonstrations or protests, people frequently record and post videos on social media, offering alternate viewpoints and breaking news faster than conventional media outlets.

News Dissemination

In Bangladesh, social media platforms are frequently used to disseminate news. Social media is used by both established media outlets and emerging online news sources to

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distribute their news stories, videos, and live coverage. Users' social media feeds can be quickly accessed to access news items, diversifying their information sources.

Rapid Dissemination

News can spread quickly in Bangladesh thanks to social media's real-time nature. Social media users immediately share information and updates about natural disasters, important events, and breaking news stories. This has aided in rapidly disseminating news to a large audience, frequently before traditional media can report on the story.

Local Concerns Amplified

Social media has been instrumental in making local concerns in various parts of Bangladesh more prominent. It has given underrepresented groups, activists, and people a forum to draw attention to and support regional issues. For instance, local activists can use social media to raise money and support their causes, and rural farmers can communicate their hardships.

Engaging with Audience

Social media platforms allow for direct communication between journalists and their viewers. Bangladeshi journalists use tools like Facebook Live[74] and Twitter[75] conversations to interact with their audience, respond to inquiries, and gather comments. Journalists can gain a devoted following and learn more about their needs and interests by conversing with their audience.

Fighting Misinformation

While social media has created new channels to broadcast news, it has also aided in the spread of rumors and false information. However, Bangladeshi journalists and media groups use social media to battle false narratives by fact-checking, dispelling rumors, and presenting correct information.

Mobilizing Social Movements

Social media has significantly influenced Bangladesh's social movements' mobilization. Social media sites like Facebook[76] and Twitter[77] have been crucial in coordinating protests, bringing attention to human rights concerns, and promoting social and

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political change. Activists and citizen journalists use social media to plan events, exchange knowledge, and spread awareness.

It is crucial to remember that even though social media has significantly improved new journalism in Bangladesh, there are still issues like false information, privacy problems, and a need for digital literacy. To maintain accuracy and dependability, journalists and media users must critically assess the content they come across on social media networks.

CONCLUSION ON CHAPTER 2

As it is proved social media and modern journalism have a complicated and changing relationship. While social media has opened up new channels for the communication of news, audience participation, and the inclusion of varied viewpoints, it also brings risks, including spreading false information and disrupting established business structures. To ensure the ongoing creation of accurate and trustworthy news in the digital era, journalists and news organizations must adapt to this shifting landscape, adopt new methods, and preserve ethical standards. Social media platforms have made it easier for news to spread quickly and across vast distances. Information is disseminated at a never-before-seen rate, allowing the public to receive real-time news. Because of the increased need for immediate and current reporting, journalists are forced to adopt digital tools and approaches to remain relevant.

Social media has also helped highlight societal problems and encourage transparency. It has allowed citizen journalists to cover previously unreported local events, human rights violations, and other crucial problems. Social media's accessibility has given underrepresented groups a more prominent voice, highlighting their experiences and bringing attention to various social, political, and environmental issues. Blogging and online activism first emerged in Bangladesh in the mid-2000s, changing media consumption trends: 66.94 million internet users, with internet penetration at 38.9% in 2023. Overall, four types of online activities have emerged. journalism: social networks themselves, independent online newspapers, online newspapers with significant investments from oligarchs and online versions of printed newspapers. In addition, there has been a sharp rise in digital journalism due to the widespread use of smartphones and the Internet. Vlogs and live streaming are becoming more popular. Important contributors include Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune and Somoy TV and their real-time reporting has decentralized the news ecosystem of Bangladesh. Citizens were provided with a new platform for exchanging news of varying degrees, expressing their ideas and participating in public discussions. However, it has also created problems with fake news, inaccurate information, and long-term financial viability. Finding a balance between

utilizing social media's advantages and shortcomings while keeping the fundamental values of journalism accuracy, accountability, and ethical reporting became the crucial for the future of journalism in Bangladesh.

The impact of social media on digitization has significantly changed how journalism has developed in Bangladesh. Social media platforms have become potent instruments that have changed journalism practices by opening new channels for disseminating information and citizen participation and engagement.

Social media has significantly impacted new journalism in Bangladesh, changing how it is produced, distributed, and read. The emergence of social media has decentralized Bangladesh's news ecosystem and allowed people to actively participate in setting the news agenda. It has given citizens a forum to exchange news, voice their ideas, and participate in public conversation. This has pressured traditional media outlets and forced them to change how people consume news.

Social media platforms have made it easier for news to spread quickly and across vast distances. Information is disseminated at a never-before-seen rate, allowing the public to receive real-time news. Because of the increased need for immediate and current reporting, journalists are forced to adopt digital tools and approaches to remain relevant.

Social media has also helped highlight societal problems and encourage transparency. It has allowed citizen journalists to cover previously unreported local events, human rights violations, and other crucial problems. Social media's accessibility has given underrepresented groups a more prominent voice, highlighting their experiences and bringing attention to various social, political, and environmental issues. However, the emergence of social media has also created difficulties for Bangladeshi journalism. It is now a serious issue that fake news, false information, and disinformation, etc.

Social networking sites often cause threats to secrecy and privacy. They frequently demand users to provide personal information, putting journalists' sources and safety in danger. In a time of general social media use, maintaining confidentiality and preserving sources' identities becomes more difficult. Additionally, journalists' capacity to report freely and courageously may be hampered by the ongoing surveillance and tracking of their online activity. Besides it, false narratives can quickly spread through social media due to how simple it is to share information, influencing public perception. Amid the massive amount of unconfirmed news flowing online, journalists face the challenge of confirming information and guaranteeing the truth of their reporting.

Additionally, the digitalization process has impacted journalism's financial viability. Because the money from online advertising frequently needs to make up for the reduction in print circulation, traditional media outlets have needed help adjusting to the digital era. Resource limitations faced by news organizations have resulted in job losses and decreased journalism quality.

Finally, the impact of social media on the digitalization process has been closely linked to the growth of journalism in Bangladesh. Social media has helped to improve society by encouraging citizen participation, easing information sharing, and exposing social ills. However, it has also created problems with fake news, inaccurate information, and long-term financial viability. Finding a balance between utilizing social media's advantages and shortcomings while keeping the fundamental values of journalism accuracy, accountability, and ethical reporting will be crucial for the future of journalism in Bangladesh.

CHAPTER 3. THE IMPACT OF MEDIA LITERACY ON COUNTERING FAKES

3.1. THE LINGUISTIC AND STYLISTIC CHARACTERISTICS OF SITES AND MEDIA PLATFORMS DISSEMINATING FAKE IN BANGLADESH

The problem of fake news and its effects on society has recently drawn considerable attention on a global scale. Like many other nations, Bangladesh has been struggling with this issue. Evaluating media literacy and instances of fake news in Bangladesh have become crucial topics in this setting. Media literacy is the capacity to critically examine and analyze media messages and draw conclusions from that analysis. To successfully navigate the complex media environment of today's world, people must be media literate.

Fake news, conversely, can misinform and influence people, which could have detrimental effects like spreading rumors, causing social unrest, and eroding trust in institutions. Evaluating media literacy and fake news incidents in Bangladesh is significant because it can assist policymakers, media experts, and educators in better comprehending the country's current media literacy situation and formulating solutions to the fake news issue. Through this research, it might be feasible to pinpoint the elements fueling false information dissemination and the best ways to encourage media literacy among the public. In general, evaluating media literacy and instances of fake news in Bangladesh is an important topic with repercussions for the nation's social, political, and economic health.

The first mention of media literacy dates to the 1930s when teachers started instructing students on evaluating and deciphering propaganda in movies and periodicals. However, media literacy became mainstream in the 1960s and 1970s (Contemporary Cultures Damiano Felini, 2008). The Vietnam War and the development of television in the 1960s increased awareness of the influence of the media on public opinion (Hallin, 1984). Media literacy education evolved as a tool to equip individuals to critically assess media messages and participate actively in the democratic process.

During the 1970s, media literacy education was mainly centered on print media, but as technology continued to improve, the movement expanded to incorporate other types of media (Tulodziecki & Grafe, 2012). The emergence of the internet and the spread of cable television in the 1980s sparked resurgence in interest in media literacy (Carlsson, 2019). Media literacy education expanded in popularity in schools, colleges, and community-based organizations in the 1990s. In order to further media literacy education and offer teacher resources, the National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) was established in 1996 (Hobbs & Jensen, 2009). With the growth of social media and the propagation of fake news

in the twenty-first century, media literacy has taken on even more significance. Media literacy education is now acknowledged as a vital component of 21st-century learning, helping people navigate the complex media landscape and become aware, responsible, and critical media users and creators (Thoman & Jolls, 2004).

In Bangladesh, media literacy is a relatively new idea that has recently gained popularity. With a population of more than 170 million, Bangladesh is a South Asian nation with a varied media environment. The advent of digital media and the widespread usage of social media platforms have made media literacy education more crucial in Bangladesh. The concept of media literacy in Bangladesh began to take shape in the late 1990s and early 2000s when media education was introduced in universities (Chai, 2020). The Bangladesh Centre for Development Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) was founded in 2002 and quickly became one of the leading groups promoting media literacy nationwide. The BCDJC conducts research, arranges training programs and workshops, and creates instructional materials to encourage media literacy among journalists, media professionals, and the general public.

In recent years, media literacy education has become increasingly significant in Bangladesh due to the rise of digital media and the extensive usage of social media platforms. The government has taken some initiatives to advance media literacy, including establishing awareness campaigns and training media professionals.

However, there are still challenges to promoting media literacy in Bangladesh. For example, there is a lack of resources and infrastructure for media literacy education, therefore, lack of awareness among the general public about the importance of media literacy. Bangladesh's media environment is also frequently politicized, making it challenging to encourage critical thinking and educate media literacy.

Despite these obstacles, media literacy education is expanding in Bangladesh, and media literacy's significance for advancing democratic principles and free and independent media is becoming more widely acknowledged. To grasp media literacy, we need to be familiar with various forms of literacy, such as literacy, information, media, computer, digital, and digital media literacy.

These literacies are interconnected, but there are some differences as well. However, there are other models for literacy theory, including those that emphasize general and critical competencies. Even though these terms are frequently used interchangeably, they all generally rest on assumptions about the variety and relationships among new technologies (Park, 2011; Zhang & Zhu, 2016). Therefore, as technology develops, more essential skills become necessary.

Literacy

Over time, literacy has evolved from focusing mainly on technical skills to a more holistic perspective that considers language proficiency, numeracy, and social behaviors. UNESCO coined the term "functional literacy" in 1956 to describe the relationship between literacy and employment/economic growth. In the history of technology's impact on literacy, digital technology is the most recent notable advancement. "Literacy" has always had some status; despite being abused as a synonym for competence and skill. Because critical literacy obscures cultures and textual knowledge, a "social shift" in literacy practices during the 1990s concentrated on it (Gee, 1999; Luke, Comber, & Grant, 2003; UNESCO Education Sector, 2004; Martin, 2006; Buckingham, 2008; & Mills, 2010).

Information Literacy

Since Paul G. Zurkowski initially suggested information literacy as a sophisticated talent necessary for the job in 1974, it has developed. At the beginning of the 2000s, it was recognized as a crucial skill in all areas of life. The Prague Declaration of 2003 emphasized the importance of information literacy as a prerequisite for successful participation in the information society and as a factor in social, cultural, and economic development (Lloyd, 2017). In the late 2000s, the use of information and communication technology to access and create information came under increasing criticism.

Computer Literacy

According to UNESCO (2011), computer Literacy refers to a set of stoner chops that allow for active involvement in a society where products and artistic immolations are supported by computers and made available online. More specifically, the knowledge of how to use technology related to computers is referred to as computer literacy.

News Literacy

Scholars point out that news literacy focuses on a specific kind of message—news—and is "at the intersection of media and information literacy" (Malik, Cortesi, & Gasser, 2013, 7). According to Maksl, Craft, Ashley, and Miller (2017, 229), if a definition of news literacy is the goal, then the path to get there must pass through several other literacy neighborhoods, including those for media, information, digital, news, and civic literacy, all of which share conceptual ground with news literacy.

According to some academics, media literacy practices are helpful but insufficient for comprehending news in the current web-based environment of news creation and consumption (Fleming, 2013). Additionally, according to some researchers (Ashley, et al.,

2013, 8–9), it may be crucial for news media consumers to be aware of the normative objectives of journalism and the dynamics influencing news media content.

Digital Literacy

The ability to utilize and comprehend technology and navigate and engage with digital information and communication technologies is referred to as "digital literacy." The ability to use computers, smartphones, and other digital devices; the ability to navigate the internet and social media; the ability to search for information online; the ability to assess the legitimacy and dependability of digital sources; the ability to communicate and collaborate online; and the ability to use digital tools for creative expression and problem-solving are just a few examples (Wei, 2022).

The Bangladeshi government has launched several programs to increase digital literacy there. Some of these projects include the creation of digital libraries, the spread of internet connectivity to remote areas, and the development of digital education programs (Islam & Grönlund, 2011). In Bangladesh, NGOs and private groups are actively encouraging digital literacy. To help close the digital gap, many groups provide computer and internet training to underserved populations (Dohn, 2018).

Digital Media Literacy

Digital media literacy often refers to "studying" and "composing" in a digital environment. Technical knowledge, critical comprehension, production and connection skills, and civic involvement are the four hierarchically structured components of this literacy, according to Zhang and Zhu (2016). While using different online technologies and media requires technical ability, critical understanding means critically analyzing and evaluating digital content. Participating in society with technology requires acting morally and responsibly. The ability to produce texts for digital media and interact with people through media is called "production" and "connection." Critical thinking is required for digital media literacy.

Social Media Literacy

Social media literacy is the capacity to use social media platforms wisely and efficiently. It entails being aware of the effects of social media on society and one's well-being, as well as knowing how to utilize and navigate social media tools and recognize potential threats (Milenkova & Lendzhova, 2021). Given the country's recent significant growth in internet and social media usage, social media literacy is crucial in Bangladesh. While social media platforms have many advantages, such as improved communication and

information access, they can also be abused and misused, resulting in several social and political problems (Johara et al., 2021).

Social media literacy needs to be better understood in Bangladesh, especially in rural areas and among older generations who may have had less internet and social media exposure. As a result, there are now problems, including disseminating false information, hate speech, cyber bullying, and online fraud.

Defining Media Literacy

Although there has been media education for some time, the term "media literacy" became well-known in the 1970s thanks to proponents of this idea (Buckingham, 2013 in Brown et al., 2016; Uddin, 2018, 51). The ability to access, retrieve, analyze, and assess the media, as well as create content for various types of media, is collectively referred to as media literacy, according to several expert definitions (European Commission, 2007; Koltay, 2011; Uddin, 2018, 51). In contrast, "media" refers to a broad spectrum of media. To participate and be involved in one's personal, professional, and societal activities, one needs to have a critical, moral, and practical assessment of media content (Aufderheide, 1992 in Brown et al., 2016; Koltay, 2011; Uddin, 2018, 51).

Critical Concepts on Different Types of Literacies

The distinctions among these four kinds of literacies, such as information, media, computer, and digital, are shown in a table (Table 1). The ability to efficiently acquire, process, and use digital information is a component of information literacy. The critical analysis and production of content from the media in many situations are the main goals of media literacy. Computer literacy requires the skills to use computer-related technology. However, digital literacy requires many competencies, including innovation, teamwork, and lifelong learning. These qualities are necessary for surviving, studying, and functioning digitally.

Table 1: Summary of critical concepts on distinct types of literacies

(Adopted from Brown et al., 2016)

	Information Literacy	Media Literacy	Computer Literacy	Digital Literacy
	The capability to detect, identify,	The ability to access the media, to understand and to critically evaluate	A set of stoner chops that enable active participation in a	Those capabilities fit an individual for living, learning, and

Definition	recoup, process and use digital information optimally (UNESCO, 2011)	different aspects of the media and media content, and to create communications in a variety of contexts (European Commission, 2007)	society where services and artistic immolations are computer supported and distributed on the Internet (UNESCO, 2011)	working in a digital society (JISC, 2015)
Primary Focus	Information retrieval and assessment of quality	Evaluation and production of media texts	Skills in the use of computer-related technology	Innovation, collaboration, lifelong learning

Since the dawn of human civilization, accurate information has coexisted with false information. Someone in this process has opted for the truth, while others have circulated false information to their ends. On the other hand, genuine or false information stayed within geographical bounds during the prehistoric era when people were accustomed to living in caves or cluster settlements. However, thanks to the growth of Web 2.0, there is currently no barrier to information, and technologies are improving.

Mobile devices with internet access and solid social media connections cover the whole planet. According to Muzykant V. and Shlykova O. (2019), the development of a contemporary educational environment that includes schools, colleges, and universities as well as libraries, digital archives, and digitized museums, circuses, and zoos, among other things, is highly dependent on the role of media education for understanding public interest communications. In Bangladesh, communication technology and the nation's process of digital inclusion have undergone enormous changes due to the government's motto, "Digital Bangladesh." At the same time, fake news, deception, and misinformation are some of the most severe issues in these pertinent regions that occasionally lead to various socio-political and inter-religious conflicts. As a result, numerous adverse events have taken place in this nation, including racial tensions in the Ramu case (2012), Sayeedi's face appearing on the moon (2013), the Nasirnagar Case (2016), a sudden spike in salt prices in 2019, false child

abduction rumours (Bangladesh lynching in 2019), various false health advice and treatment suggestions regarding COVID 19, and so forth.

The value of social media as a source of knowledge is constantly growing. Shearer and Gottfried (2017) discovered that 74% and 68% of people use Twitter[78] and Facebook[79] for information. Twitter[80] affects political campaigns and elections, claim Broersma and Graham (2012). Many users see Facebook[81] as a valuable information source (Lampe et al., 2012). For instance, Bene (2017) discovered that many young people rely on Facebook[82] as their primary source of political news. The research also suggests the importance of opinion leaders in information seeking. As the leading platforms for communication and networking in the Arab world in 2011, Facebook[83] and Twitter[84] brought about a brand-new revolution called the Arab Spring (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Khondker, 2011; Wolfsfeld et al., 2013).

Both the cause and the effect of information pollution may be fake news. In their research, Meel and Vishwakarma (2020) outline taxonomy of misleading information that includes the following ten categories: rumors, fake news, misinformation, disinformation, clickbait, hoaxes, satire/parody, opinion spam, propaganda, and conspiracy theories. However, they add that a rumor is just unconfirmed information that, in certain circumstances, may not be untrue. On the other hand, Seo, Mohapatra, and Abdelzaher (2012) believe that fake news refers to untrue information and that accurate information is an untrue rumor. In general, a rumor is "a proposition of belief, is officially unverified when issued, and should deal with either current events or topical issues to express the emotional needs of the community and to help people make sense in the context of ambiguity, danger, or potential threat" (Kim et al., 2019). Numerous studies give typologies of false information from various angles. For instance, Chua, Aricat, and Goh (2017, 263) categorize false news based on three factors: the severity of the claim, how closely it relates to undeniable realities, and the intensity of the demand. They examine the life cycle of rumors and false information and discover that there are primarily four forms of rumor messaging: information-

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related, emotion-related, deliberative, and call-to-action. A more thorough categorization of false information is provided by Derczynski et al. (2015). They found that rumors fall into the following four categories: speculative, contentious, false, and disinformation. Consuming an asset in the hopes that it will soon increase in value is known as speculation. For instance, someone could purchase stock market shares while aware of the danger. According to them (Derczynski et al., 2015), controversy includes a public argument and divergent viewpoints. Accurate information mainly results from knowledge gaps, and misinformation is often accidental. It consists of pranks, insults, and bogus datasets.

Contrary to misinformation, which is intentionally created and spread to mislead people, disinformation is often referred to as misleading information (Al-Zaman, 2019). Because they have certain similarities, the phrases "rumor," "misinformation," "disinformation," and "fake news" are sometimes used interchangeably (e.g., Duffy, Tandoc, & Ling, 2019; Tandoc et al., 2020; Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). For instance, although some studies refer to false news as misinformation (as stated in Tandoc, Lim, & Ling, 2018), other studies characterize it as disinformation (Tandoc et al., 2020). As a result, fraudulent information or news might be intentionally spread or not. Additionally, there are two aspects of the information ecosystem that are strongly connected according to rumors and false news (Duffy et al., 2019).

Apart Sources are just as crucial to researching false news as typology. Finding the source of a virus (Shah & Zaman, 2010), sources in social and communication networks (Comin & da Fontoura Costa, 2011), sources in mixed networks (Jiang et al., 2017), and sources of misinformation in social networks (Nguyen et al., 2012) are all examples of source identification in media and Internet research. Scholars have, however, paid less attention to fake news sources on social media. Jo (2002), in contrast, divides the primary sources of Internet rumor into two groups: the Internet itself and conventional mass media. According to the survey, conventional media covers television, newspapers, and radio, while the Internet includes other online information sources, including websites and social media. The research also demonstrates that although rumors from conventional media decline with time, false news and rumors from internet sources rise. Shin, Jian, Driscoll, and Bar (2018) analyze the two primary sources of false news by examining their Twitter[85] dataset in a more relevant manner. A few rumors on Twitter[86] originate from conventional media, but most rumors come from non-traditional media. Websites,

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[86] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

social media, and other online resources are included in their definition of non-traditional media. Some sources (Muigai, 2019) identify two sources of false news on social media: online and traditional media. Reviewing the 282 false news sources reveals that 135 or (47.9%), were on Facebook[87], 41 or (14.5%) on YouTube, 31 or (11%) Instagram[88], while 19 (6.7%) were on conventional media, 33 (11.7%) were in online media, and 23 (8.2%) were fake news that circulated via other media. False information, including rumors, is broadcast on mosque mike.
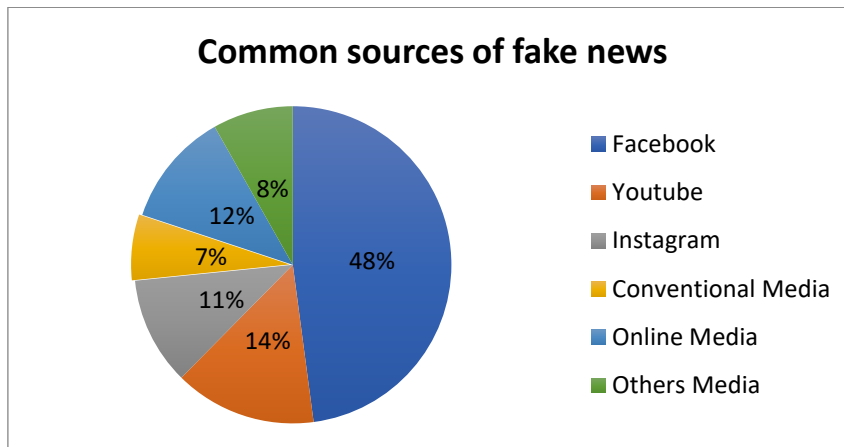
Figure 7. Common sources of fake news in Bangladesh (by H. Barek).

Numerous studies examine the objectives of false news. Even though the phrases "aim" and "intention" may seem problematic, several empirical and experimental research utilize these concepts to explain the patterns and claims of false news. Mainstream media and internet media are the two primary sources of false news on social media. Two hundred forty-nine negative fake news instances, or 88.3% of all cases, are included in the dataset (Table 2). Positive false news, on the other hand, only makes up 25 of the totals or 8.9%. The remaining 8, or (2.8%) fake news has no propensity; as a result, they are categorized as unknown.

Table 2: Aims of fake news

Rank	Aim	Frequency	Percent
1	Negative	249	88.3
2	Positive	25	8.9
3	Unknown	8	2.8
Total		*282*	*100.0*

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[87] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[88] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

In this research examines the widespread false news in Bangladesh's social media, online news sources, and newspapers. Researchers (Aichner&Jacob, 2015, 259) categorize social media into 13 different categories: blogs, business networks, collaborative projects, enterprise social networks, forums, microblogs, picture sharing, product renewal, social bookmarking, social gaming, social networks, video sharing, and virtual worlds. Five fact-checking websites were used to compile the cases of fake news: BD Fact Check (www.bdfactcheck.com), Rumor Scanner (www.rumorscanner.com), Factkhuji (www.factkhuji.org), Boom Bangladesh (www.boombd.com), Jachai (www.jachai.org), Fact Watch (www.fact-watch.org), and AFP Fact Check Bangla (www.factcheckbangla). Additionally, examples of false news were gathered from prior studies, online news sources, and newspapers. The sample for this research comprised 282 false news stories from January 2012 to December 2022.

Eleven theme-based categories are generated from the analysis of false news (see figure 21). The most significant category is politics (25.9%), followed by health (12.4%), entertainment (11.7%), crime (6.7%), and communalism (7.8%). Political fake news often focuses on elections, political people, political parties, significant political events, national and international political concerns, and development efforts. The three primary topics of false health news are the healthcare system, accidents, and fatalities. Most entertainment false news consists of celebrity rumors. Crime-related false news often concentrates on homicides, rapes, kidnappings, ethnic cleansing, and violence. Religious discussions, the relevance of religion, religious rules and regulations, and historical religious happenings are the critical components of communalism false news. In addition, the categories of false news with the most popular are those related to the economy (6.7%), sports (6.4%), international (6.0%), education (5.3%), history (4.6%), and others (6.5%).
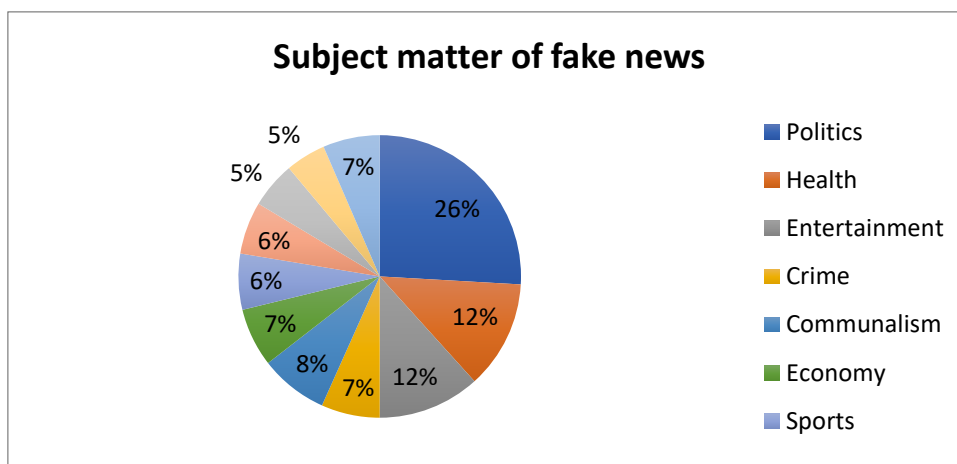

Figure 8. Subject matter of fake news (by H. Barek).

Information complexity is high in countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh, which have excellent social media penetration rates, according to Rathore & Farooq (2020) and Keelery (2020). In addition, according to Rahman and Jahan (2020), speculative stories have recently become more prevalent in Bangladesh, undermining the nation's socio-political climate. Examples include tales of the use of human heads on the Padma Bridge, a sudden spike in salt prices, and Chele dora (child abductor) uses social media such as Facebook[89] for several reasons.

In light of this, we have chosen to use a descriptive study method to gain a general understanding of the media literacy situation in Bangladesh. Because the instances in which we spoke earlier have ruined concord and fostered discrimination and animosity in society. Additionally, it is essential to understand that "media literacy" is a long-term process that can only be acquired through proper "media education" and that its requirement has grown along with the growth of media convergence. Additionally, the development of human communication, which started with the invention of the traditional alphabet and has since progressed to encompass electronic media and digitalized information, has been intricately linked to media literacy.

We discovered a few academic categories of research about the theoretical perspective of media literacy during the scanning process of earlier works on media literacy in Bangladesh. Although UNESCO has been promoting media literacy-related efforts since the 1970s (Uysal, 2016, 24–25), Bangladesh lacks systematic research and planning on media, news, and digital literacy. However, we have seen a few studies that have considered the theoretical underpinnings of media literacy. The term "media literacy" has been used in research, but no theoretical discussions have been included. While the majority of the research has been on occurrences involving fake news, misinformation, disinformation, and rumour, less has been said about media literacy as a theory when rumour and conspiracy theories have been proposed as a means of analyzing the situations (Kanozia & Arya, 2021; Al-Zaman, 2021; Hossain et al., 2020; Karim, 2021).

MRDI took the first action in this situation in 2016 about these issues (Chowdhury, 2020, 18). Through these inquiries in a controlled scope, such as what types of media and media contents are consumed by Bangladeshi people, media's ethical perceptions, and child

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[89] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

issue treatment in Bangladeshi media, the "News literacy: people's perception" research attempted to examine the citizen's perception of news literacy.

To narrow the gap between Bangladesh's government, media, and civil society, the South Asia Center for Media in Development (SACMID) and Free Press Unlimited jointly launched various initiatives in 2018. They collaborated with the professors and high school students, ages 14 to 16. The Bangladesh National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) received the results of surveys and roundtable discussion sessions SACMID conducted and organized. In addition, the Ministry of Education, the Department of Media Studies and Journalism at the University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh, and the Bangladesh Prime Ministers Access to Information Program worked together on this study. In 2020, they decided to introduce media literacy as a subject at a higher secondary school (Quarmal, Hasan, & Sultana, 2018). The main limitation of this study is its methodology, which limited the baseline survey sample to secondary school students and their teachers in Bangladesh's capital city of Dhaka. Their primary focus understood the media profile, which Bangladeshi high school students frequently use.

Unfortunately, this decision has not yet been implemented, much like many other rulings in Bangladesh. Additionally, a study named "News Literacy in Bangladesh: National Survey" was conducted in 2020 and published under the direction of MD Saiful Alam Chowdhury, an Associate Professor in the Department of Mass Communication & Journalism at Dhaka University.

The Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI) are working with UNICEF Bangladesh to complete the "Promoting News Literacy and Ethical Journalism" project, which includes this research paper. Face-to-face surveys with eighteen average groups totaling 1,209 participants were conducted as part of the research using survey and focus group discussions (FGD). As a result, 10 FGDs have made recommendations for improving outcomes. The report's restriction on respondents who are older than eighteen is its only drawback. Al-Zaman (2021) focused his research on Bangladeshi social media users' responses to misinformation about religion. The study used the content analysis method and identified two key themes: emotional reactions and rational reactions to misinformation on social media. The study's findings show that consumers' emotional responses (62.02%) are more concrete than their cognitive abilities (37.98%). The processing of the data and the issue with the findings' application are the limitations of this research.

In their research on Bangla News fact-checking tools of S. Hossain team, (Hossain et al., 2022, 355–376) employed an annotated dataset of 50K news items. In addition, they

analyzed the dataset and created a benchmark system employing innovative NLP approaches to detect fake news in Bangla. This system uses both conventional linguistic features and neural network-based methods.

The concept of mass media has undergone a significant transformation due to the rapid advancement of digital technology in the twenty-first century. The practical abilities needed to use and interact with technology and media are known as digital literacy. Some of the quantitative findings (Muzykant & Shlykova, 2019) research demonstrated that introducing new media has a qualitative impact on the media space's structure and the processes taking place there. Therefore, the terms "digital media" and "new media" have come into use. The nature and notion of mass media have evolved significantly along with these two trends. As a result, the convergence processes have expanded into the media sector, characterizing technological developments and other fields such as economics, geography, business, and culture.

To quickly produce an original information product for placement in various media settings and further concentrate the attention of the target audience, new management approaches were developed (Muqsith, 2021). Duplication of material frequently occurs when old and new media are integrated. In this circumstance, society is faced with the obvious question of what to do with traditional websites that are progressively becoming less relevant in favor of digital media.

Digital media is described as a combination of technology and content by the Canadian Center for Digital Media. E-commerce, online and offline gaming, websites and mobile applications, animation, social media, video, virtual reality, data visualization, and other things are all included in the definition of digital media (Center for Digital Media, 2020). However, in the case of New Media, you must have faith in computers to transmit messages. Manovich (2003) presents eight definitions of new media in his book "The New Media Reader". He discusses the distinction between cyber culture and new media in it. He referred to new media as a computer-based distribution channel. Software-based new media is regarded as a regulator of digital data. In addition, New Media is a combination of traditional software and already-established cultural practices (Manovich, 2003). Jagadish Chakraborty, who introduced the characteristics of new media in 2004, stated that these traits include digital, interactive, instant, hypertextual, computerized, networked, and more (Chakravarthy, 2004). The Internet, mobile devices, Skype, blogs, video conferencing, wikis, Google, social media

(Facebook[90], Twitter[91], Instagram[92], etc.), and other technologies are examples of new media types (Manjula, 2016). The digital media concept is the larger of these two ideas.

The definition above clarifies that the idea of New Media is a subset of the idea of digital media. The term "digital media" has been utilized throughout this article. Traditional media and digital media are the two primary categories of media. Print media and broadcast media are the two categories into which traditional media may be categorized. According to Bangladesh researchers (Karmakar et al., 2020), print media encompasses publications such as newspapers, books, journals, periodicals, booklets, brochures, billboards, and tiny print media, including leaflets, banners, and festoons. Radio and television are examples of broadcast media; on the other hand, conventional media is thought to include the film industry or movies. However, digital media has a broader range of platform types compared to conventional media. According to them, digital media encompasses online content such as websites, social networking platforms (Facebook[93], Twitter[94], etc.), email providers (Yahoo, Gmail), blogs, and video blogs (YouTube, Dtube, Vimeo, Daily Motion, Twitch, etc.).

As of Kepios' estimation, the number of social media users in Bangladesh increased by 4.6 million (+10.1%) between 2021 and 2022. 29.7% of Bangladesh's population, or 49.55 million people, used social media in January 2023 (Kemp, 2023).

While there are 63.3 million mobile phone customers worldwide, Bangladesh has a 31.5% internet penetration rate with 52.58 million internet users (Kemp, 2023). In Bangladesh, Facebook[95] is the most popular social media platform, with YouTube, WhatsApp, Twitter[96], Instagram[97], LinkedIn, and Imo following (Statcounter, 2022). It is crucial to remember that Facebook[98] has become increasingly popular in Bangladesh for disseminating untrue information (Karim, 2021, p. 11). Based on early 2022 data, Bangladesh

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[91] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[92] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[93] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[94] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[95] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[96] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[97] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[98] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

has 44.70 million users of the network, compared to prior predictions of thirty million users in 2017 (Karim, 2021; Kemp, 2023).
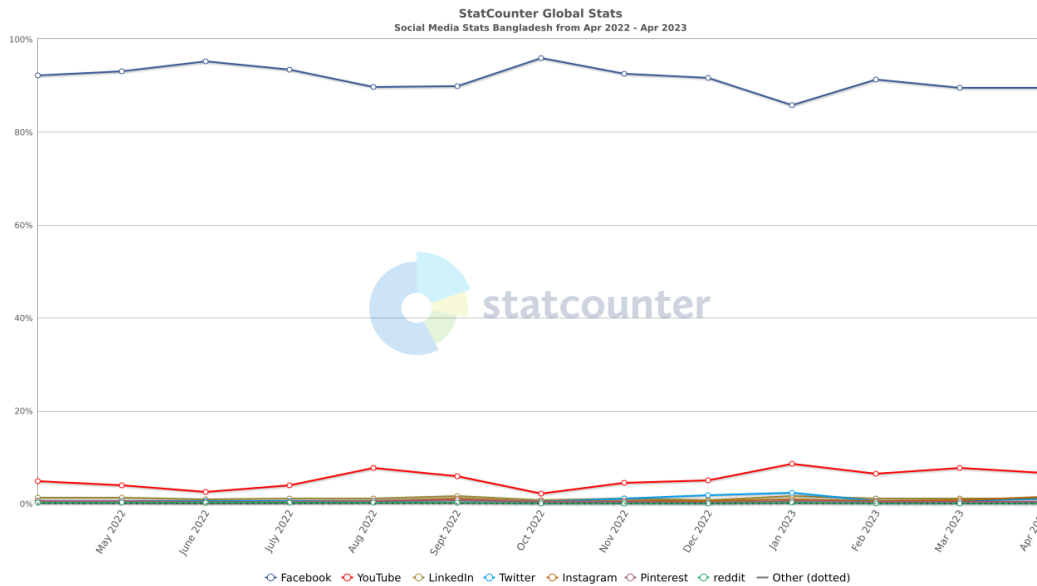
Figure 9. Social Media Stats of Bangladesh. *Source : https://gs.statcounter.com/social-media-stats/all/bangladesh*

Analyzing, assessing, and comprehending the message in traditional and digital media are all parts of media literacy. With this skill, the media's reporting process and impact can be assessed (MRDI, 2016, 15). Using media in several ways gives people new skills. These factors are considered when determining how the media's message affects our people, how society is being shaped, the causes of this construction, and the capacity to comprehend the political and ideological stance of the media organization.

The ability to access the media, retrieve, comprehend, assess, and produce media information is collectively referred to as media literacy by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). To encourage engagement and involvement in personal, professional, and social activities, one of the objectives of media literacy is to give a critical, ethical, and appropriate analysis of the content (Uddin, 2018, 51). A media literate person develops a set of abilities and knowledge that enable them to distinguish between accurate information and news and false information, fake news, disinformation, etc. The instructor integrates all information flows to and from the audience as the most important organizer of public interest communications processes and creates data flow for the students.

We agree that self-design and media proficiency is essential qualities for a modern teacher. Furthermore, according to Muzykant V. and Shlykova O. (2019), these traits should be seen as a collection of information, abilities, motivations, and character traits that will enable the development of a new concept of public interest communications. These abilities and credentials are referred to as media literacy traits. Karmakar, Talukdar, Kayyum, and Hoque (2020) suggest that eight skills may make up media literacy characteristics.

The overall literacy rate and media literacy are closely related. However, it is reasonable to assume that in developing countries like Bangladesh, the level of education in the population and the rate of media literacy are closely related. Furthermore, among the various sociopolitical problems in the relevant region, fake news, misinformation, and disinformation are among the most severe issues. "Mal-information" was included in the categorization after Warden C. and Derakhshan D.H.'s report on Information Disorder. Specifically, information based on truth is intended to hurt other people, groups, or nations, such as publishing personal information online. The norms and ethics of journalism are violated by false material like this, which includes accurate information that breaches a person's privacy without demonstrating the public interest (Muqsith et al., 2021). The critical issue is that narrative, including false, misleading, and disinformation, is prevalent in the news.

As a result, the narrative is woven into the facts picked to be featured in the news (or the facts made up or used in misleading communications). The claimed ethnicity or nationality of the criminal and the victim may be relevant to mention in crime news reports that are not disinformation or the like. The fact that the victim was a female citizen and the defendant was a man immigrant may have been significant.

Numerous damaging events have occurred in this nation, such as the Ramu communal riots, the Nasirnagar Case, and the Sayeedi Rumor. However, Roy (2018) reports that Bangladesh is currently placed 128th in the world for literacy, with 72.8% of adults aged 15 and up being literate, as opposed to the global average of 86 per cent. According to the most recent statistics, 44% and 24% of Bangladesh's population aged 15 to 24 still need secondary education. In these circumstances, media literacy information must be spread throughout all social classes in a nation like Bangladesh. Examples of various instances that happened due to Bangladeshi media literacy are provided in Table 3 (below).

Incident 1: Ramu Violence (2012)[99]

Message/information spread through Facebook[100] Post	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: September 29, 2012 **Location:** Ramu Buddhist Village, Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh **Claim:** Uttam Barua, a Buddhist youth, is accused of posting a picture of the demolition of the Qur'an on Facebook[101].	Ramu unrest includes a series of attacks by regional mobs against Buddhist temples, shrines, and Buddhist residents' homes in Ramu Upazila in Bangladesh's Cox's Bazar District on September 29, 2012. In retaliation for an image illustrating the demolition of a Quran that was released on the status of a phony Facebook[102] account with a Buddhist male identity, crowds demolished 12 Buddhist temples and monasteries as well as 50 homes. Buddhist monasteries and Hindu temples were attacked in Ukhia Upazila in Cox's Bazar District and Patiya Upazila in Chittagong District as the violence expanded. Over 300 persons were arrested in connection with the attacks against Buddhists, which involved approximately 25,000 people. However, the accused Buddhist was found innocent.

Source: Rioting mob torches temples in Bangladesh (September 30, 2012). ABC News.

Incident 2: Sayeedi Rumor (2013)[103]

Message/information spread through mosque loudspeakers, mobile phone and Facebook[104]	
Issue: Politically motivated	**Description of the incident**
Date: March 2, 2013 **Location:** Bogra, Bangladesh **Claim:** Rumor spread that Delwar Hossain Sayeedi (one of the Islamic political leaders in Bangladesh who is accused of War Crime in 1971)	Miscreants falsely claimed that the government had secretly hung Sayeedi and that an image of his face could be seen on the moon after 2 a.m. on March 3, 2013, utilizing mosque loudspeakers and mobile phones. On the streets, Sayeedi's supporters poured out. Following the Fajr prayer, a mob armed with sticks and sharp weapons

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[99] Appendix A, Figure 4.

[100] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[101] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[102] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[103] Appendix A, Figure 5.

[104] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

| was hanged by the government and his face had been seen on the moon. | attacked and set fire to the Muktijoddha Sangsad, the train station, police stations, and various government buildings. In the mayhem unleashed by Jamaat-Shibir officials, workers, and sympathizers, at least 11 people, including women and children, were killed. Following the incident, fifty cases were brought against 1.5 lakh persons in various parts of Bogura. |

Source: Bilu (2020). Sayeedi rumour riot hearing drags on. The Business Standard.

Incident 3: Attack on Homna Hindu village (2014)[105]

Message/information spread through letter, leaflet mosque mikes and Facebook[106]	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: April 27, 2014 **Location:** Homna Upazila Homna in Comilla district, Bangladesh. **Claim:** Udbhav and Srinivas, two Hindu youths of Homna Upazila of Comilla district, have been accused of posting insults to the Prophet on Facebook[107].	A planned attack on the temple-house of the Hindu community in Homana, Comilla, led by the students and teachers of eight madrasas in three upazilas, was carried out in a planned attack on the Hindu village of Dakshin Para of Baghsitarampur village, based on rumors of two Hindu youths insulting the Prophet on Facebook[108]. The attack was called from the microphone of the madrasa. A few days before, communal incitement letters and leaflets were distributed in that madras with rumors of taunting the Prophet.

Source: Pritom, S.W. (2014). The attack is planned; the style is also the same. bdnews24.com.

Incident 4: Stock market fake news (2015)[109]

Message/information spread through Facebook[110]	
Issue: Economy and crime	**Description of the incident**
Date: August 2, 2015 **Location:** Dhaka, Bangladesh.	A Although spreading rumors related to capital markets or share trading is a punishable offence, thousands of people

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[105] Appendix A, Figure 6.
[106] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[107] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[108] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[109] Appendix A, Figure 7.
[110] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Claim: A person on a Facebook[111] page called 'BD Stock Discussion' posted stock market predictions. Due to these rumors, the stock market crashed, and many traders suffered.	are constantly spreading rumors. In August 2015, a special tribunal sentenced a man to prison for spreading the rumor. A brokerage officer named Mahbub Sarwar was sentenced to two years for spreading rumors through various media, including Facebook[112]. The verdict came a month and a half after the formation of the special tribunal to crack down on crimes related to the capital market. The case was handled based on the complaint of one person. The allegation of spreading rumors about the capital market of Bangladesh is quite old. Virat Chakra is active in this work. Rumors were primarily responsible for the massive crash in Bangladesh's stock market in 2010.

Source: Hossain, A. (2015). Capital market: Thousands of people are spreading rumors on Facebook[113]. BBC Bangla.

Incident 5: Nasirnagar Case (2016)[114]

Message/information spread through mosque loudspeakers, mobile phone and Facebook[115]	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: October 29, 2016 **Location:** Nasirnagar in Brahmanbaria district, Bangladesh. **Claim:** Rasraj Das, a Hindu youth from Nasirnagar in Brahmanbaria district, has been accused of posting defamatory pictures on Facebook[116].	Following a rally over an alleged defamatory post by an illiterate Hindu youth, Rasraj Das, on Facebook[117], around 3,000 angry mobs took part in a series of violent attacks in Hindu areas of Nasirnagar, even though he had apologized to the Muslims the day before, claiming that his account had been hacked. Over a dozen temples and Puja pavilions, as well as more than 100 residences, were damaged in the

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[112] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[113] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[114] Appendix A, Figure 8.

[115] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[116] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[117] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

	attacks. The attacks harmed almost 100 persons, many of them were women.

Source: Sakhawat, A. (2016). Nasirnagar attacks driving away Hindus. Dhaka Tribune.

Incident 6: Gangachara Case (2017)[118]

Message/information spread through Facebook[119]	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: November 10, 2017 **Location:** Gangachara, Rangpur district, Bangladesh. **Claim:** A Hindu youth's alleged insult to the Prophet of Islam on Facebook[120] led to a coordinated attack out of local anger.	Titu Roy's home is in Gangachara, but he lives in Narayanganj. Gangachar has been making in the village for a few days. On the day of the incident, after a human chain, hundreds of people from the surrounding villages suddenly started gathering. Then Hindu neighbourhoods were attacked through processions, and houses were vandalized. One person was killed in police firing that day. He was arrested after the chargesheet was filed in the case against which Titu Roy was accused of contempt.

Source: Parvin, S. (2017). Five major incidents in Bangladesh surrounding fake news. BBC Bangla.

Incident 7: Tarek Rahman and Oxford debate (2018)[121]

Message/information spread through Online Portal and Facebook[122]	
Issue: Political rumor	**Description of the incident**
Date: April 10, 2018 **Location:** Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Claim:** In April 2018, a topic went viral on Facebook[123]. It is titled, "Invitation to Tariq Rahman to Become Professor at Oxford	A subject like this naturally arouses curiosity. It was being shared hundreds of times on Facebook[124]. It was easy to understand that many of those sharing it were BNP supporters. By sharing this news, BNP supporters were reminded about the 'qualification' of Tariq Rahman. No references were mentioned in this news. No one had a say.

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[118] Appendix A, Figure 9.

[119] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[120] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[121] Appendix A, Figure 10.

[122] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[123] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[124] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

University." By sharing this news, BNP supporters were reminded about the 'worthiness' of Tariq Rahman. A disreputable website called Patrika.com published fake news.	None of the mainstream media of Bangladesh has even broadcasted this news. Nobody from BNP in Dhaka knew about Tariq Rahman's alleged invitation to Oxford University. Because if Tariq Rahman had been invited to Oxford, BNP would have made it happen and promoted it. It did not happen in this case.

Source: Hossain, A. 2018. Fake news: Rumors spread by political party activists on Facebook[125]. BBC Bangla.

Incident 8: Padma Bridge and kidnapping children (2019)[126]

Message/information spread through Mobile Phone	
Issue: Political rumor	**Description of the incident**
Date: July 20, 2019 **Location:** Badda, Dhaka, Bangladesh. **Claim:** On July 20, 2019, Tashlima Akhter Renu was beaten to death by residents in North-East Badda of Dhaka on suspicion of having caught a boy. The rumor spread quickly in the area through mobile phones.	In 2019, there were 21 gang beatings nationwide on rumors of child molestation. Five people lost their lives in these incidents. On July 20 of that year, Tashlima Akhter Renu went to inquire about the admission of her daughter Tuba to the Northeast Badda Government Primary School in the capital. When some women present there suspected him of child abduction, rumors spread in the area immediately. Immediately several hundred men and women of different ages entered the school premises. Renu was taken to the head teacher's room on the second floor to protect her from the maddened mob. People broke the iron gate there, dragged Renu down, and beat him to death with kicks, kills, punches, and sticks. In that incident, Syed Nasir Uddin Titu, Renu's nephew, filed a murder case accusing 500 unknown people as the plaintiff.

Source: (2019). Why spread the rumor of people's heads on the Padma Bridge? SomoyNews TV.

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[125] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[126] Appendix A, Figure 11.

Incident 9: Burimari case (2020)[127]

Message/information spread through Mobile Phone and Facebook[128]	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: October 29, 2020 **Location:** Burimari, Lalmonirhat district, Bangladesh. **Claim:** On October 29, 2020, a Muslim youth was burnt to death by an agitated mob at Burimari in Lalmonirhat on rumors of desecration of the Quran. The rumor spread quickly in the area through mobile phones.	On October 29, 2020, a Muslim youth named Shahidunnabi Jewel visited the older woman with a companion named Abdar of Sultan Yobai. In the afternoon, they offered Asr prayers at Burimari Central Jame Masjid. While taking down the Quran, Sharif kept it in the sunset of the mosque to read after the prayer; some Quran and Hadith books accidentally fell on his feet. At this time, Jewel also picked up and kissed. He argued with the muezzin about the matter. After that, the people around rushed and locked Jewell and Sultan Yobaier in the Union Parishad building room next door. In the evening, rumours spread throughout the bazaar and neighbouring villages that two young men had been arrested for desecrating the Koran. At that time, the angry crowd broke the doors and windows of the Union Parishad building, snatched Jewel from the administration and beat him to death. Later, the body was dragged to Patgram Burimari highway and burnt to ashes.

Source: (2020). Youth beaten to death spreading rumors. Bangla News24.com.

Incident 10: Ramnathpur case (2021)[129]

Message/information spread through Facebook[130]	
Issue: Defaming religion	**Description of the incident**
Date: October 17, 2021 **Location:** Ramnathpur, Rangpur district, Bangladesh. **Claim:** Rumors spread that a Hindu teenager from Majhipara in	In three villages of Pirganj Ramnathpur Union of Rangpur, 25 houses of Hindus were burnt by the attackers. Temples were vandalized, and houses and shops were looted. Many families became destitute in one night. Rumors spread that a Hindu teenager from Majhipara in Rangpur's Ramnathpur

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[127] Appendix A, Figure 12.

[128] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[129] Appendix A, Figure 13.

[130] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

Ramnathpur Union of Rangpur had posted a picture on Facebook[131] 'insulting' Islam. Then hundreds of people surrounded the boy's house. That night, a group of disorderly mobs vandalized houses, shops, and temples in the Hindu-dominated Bara Karimpur, Kasba and Uttarpara union areas. They set fire to the house and fled.	union had posted a picture on Facebook[132] 'insulting' Islam on Sunday. Then hundreds of people surrounded the boy's house, but before that, the members of that house moved elsewhere; amid that tense situation, a disorderly group mob vandalized and looted houses, shops, and temples in the Hindu-dominated Bara Karimpur, Kasba and Uttarpara areas of the union that night. They set fire to the house and fled. During the attack, farmers, fishermen, and day laborers of the local Hindu community fled their homes for their lives. They alleged that miscreants looted money, gold ornaments, and cattle from Hindu houses. In the end, they poured petrol and set the houses on fire

Source: Monti, A.S. (2021). Attack on Hindus: Situation in three villages in Rangpur tense. DW Bangla.

Incident 11: Mashrafe's 510 crore wealth controversy (2022)[133]

Message/information spread through online portal and Facebook[134]	
Issue: Sports and politics	**Description of the incident**
Date: November 1, 2022 **Location:** *Bangalore, India.* **Claim:** At the beginning of November 2022, according to a website called Crictracker, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, the former captain of the Bangladesh national cricket team, was mentioned as the wealthiest cricketer with a property of 510 crore rupees, and it was promoted in the	India's cricket-based website Crictracker has published a report claiming that former Bangladesh national cricket team captain Mashrafe is the country's richest cricketer. Where it has been said this 'Captain Fantastic' is an ambassador of various organizations even though he is not in the central contract of BCB. The issue was mainly promoted based on information provided on some unreliable websites. Crictracker later removed their report. Mashrafe wrote on his verified Facebook[135] page to protest against fake news, "Foreign Habijabi cheap websites or

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[131] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[132] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[133] Appendix A, Figure 14.

[134] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[135] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

mainstream media including social media.	Facebook[136] pages can write whatever they want. Nothing to care about them. However, when various websites in our country write whatever they want, it feels sad!

Source: Rumor Scanne (2022).

We examined in detail fake materials about 11 cases of violence and deaths due to widespread fakes in the period 2012-2022. An analysis of 282 fake news shows that 135 or (47.9%) is from Facebook[137], 41 (14.5%) -YouTube, 31 (11%) - Instagram[138], 19 (6,7%) came from local network, as well as Internet media spread 33 (11.7%), and 23 (8.2%) distributed from other sources and rumours relayed in the mosque. As it is seen, the value of social media as a source of knowledge is constantly growing: 74% and 68% of people use Twitter[139] and Facebook[140] for information. It was also found that over half of respondents rely on Facebook[141] as their main source of political information (25.9%), health news (12.4%), entertainment (11.7%), crime (6.7%) and communalism (7.8%), where the ratio of fakes with negative connotations is 10 times higher than fakes with positive connotations.

3.1.1. FAKE NEWS AND FACT-CHECKING ORGANIZATIONS BANGLADESH IN THE POST-TRUTH ERA

Like other developed and developing nations worldwide, Bangladesh has seen an astounding rise in the number of people using the Internet and other information technology. From this angle, the accessibility of the Internet has dramatically increased the chance to disseminate information. However, this information occasionally serves as the foundation for false information, deception, and misdirection.

According to Ahmed (2018), the fact that developed democracies like the United States still has robust legal systems and legal cultures that guarantee people's physical safety and freedom from egregious forms of harassment may be in part to blame for the rise in worry about fake news in those countries. In contrast, there is no need for something as complex and

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[136] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[137] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[138] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[139] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[140] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[141] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

deceptive as fake news to affect public opinion to further one's agenda or interests in places where more direct control techniques are feasible and becoming more prevalent. He also emphasized that over time, this might change, particularly if it becomes simpler to deploy fake news as a targeted and scaled operation. However, for now, fake news may still be a supplemental choice in a toolkit with much more violent tools that can be employed with virtual impunity.

In their study on "Bengali Fake News Detection," Islam, Alam, Hossain, Motaleb, Yeasmin, Hasan, and Rahman (2020), developed a data mining method to distinguish between fake and accurate news. Through this paper, they consider categorizing Bengali false news in the context of South Asia. Additionally, a web interface based on the classifier was built to determine whether a news story was written in Bengali and whether it was authentic. With a random forest classifier, the findings demonstrate that the classification model has an accuracy of 85%.

Sultana and Fussell's (2021) six-month ethnographic study in three Bangladeshi villages revealed that the locals saw local medical experts as lacking expertise and experience and frequently fell prey to flashy advertisements for unproven and unproven treatments. While verifying doubtful information, villagers rely on their cultural myths, religious convictions, and social justice sensitivities. In addition, they frequently complained about being deceived by material that reflected these ideals, and they shared this knowledge by talking to their friends and relatives. They proposed that researchers examine misinformation and contextual fact-checking to develop appropriate well-being technology and social media for specific groups.

Al-Zaman (2021) has performed research from the standpoint of Bangladesh and classified online disinformation connected to COVID-19 into six categories, including health, politics, religion, crime, entertainment, and other topics. This study reveals that despite numerous attempts, there has yet to be much progress in reducing disinformation. Online disinformation is a worldwide phenomenon, but it may have a more significant influence in Bangladesh and other nations with less developed communication infrastructures and internet users who are less tech-savvy.

Al-Zaman (2021) has also studied how Bangladeshi social media users respond to false religious information. Two key themes, such as emotion-driven reactions and reason-based reactions to social media content and misinformation, were found using a content analysis methodology in that study. The study's conclusions show that users' emotional responses (62.02%) are more concrete than their cognitive ability (37.98%).

In contrast, Hossain et al. (2022) studied Bangla News fact-checking methods using a 50K annotated news article dataset. Additionally, they have reviewed the data set and created a reference system employing cutting-edge NLP approaches to identify fake news in Bangla using conventional language components and impartial network-based methodologies. After taking into account all of these research projects, we concluded that there are absolutely no explanatory research projects on the Bangladeshi fact-checking scenario.

We are currently experiencing what is described as the "post-truth era," a political and cultural phenomenon in which facts are disregarded (Appendix A, Figure 15) in favor of emotive arguments and personal opinions. The blurring of fact and fiction has important implications for public discourse, governmental decision-making, and the media's ability to shape public opinion. Furthermore, social media and other communication channels can be used to propagate false and misleading information quickly. It is important to comprehend the associated ideas when talking about fact-checking and fake news in this regard.

The topic of incorrect information was thus covered in this conversation, including propaganda, rumors, misinformation, disinformation, and false news. False news is information that is fully made up, whereas rumors are baseless or uncertain comments or information. Misinformation is erroneous information that is spread intentionally or unintentionally, as opposed to disinformation, which is the deliberate transmission of inaccurate data to confuse others. Mal-information is the presentation of accurate information with the aim of hurting another person. Additionally, propaganda is a tactic used to further a certain political or ideological objective that makes use of a variety of approaches, including factual information, incomplete or incorrect content, and data that cannot be independently checked.

Fake News

Unfounded news is fake (Lazer et al., 2018; Tandoc et al., 2017). Albright (2016) noted that "fake news" has become prominent following the 2016 US presidential elections, a democratic process defined by much incorrect information. False information that is reported as news is known as fake news. An alleged occurrence that never took place yet is claimed to have done so. Fake news is when falsified information is distributed under the guise of news but does not adhere to editorial norms or procedures to verify the veracity and credibility of a news item, according to the University of California's Center for Information Technology and Society. Misinformation and deception may be included in this fake news. Everyone's experience with fake news is unique (What is Fake...) The fact remains, nevertheless, that manufactured or made-up events without supporting data, quotes, or sources are fake news. It

can occasionally be unfounded rumors or "click bait" articles written for commercial gain (Shishir, 2022).

Rumor

In Bengali, the term "rumor" is the most commonly used to refer to fake news. Rumor is defined as "rumor or word of mouth", literally. That is information on an occurrence whose veracity has not been established but has been reported. The dictionary defines rumors as unconfirmed claims or information that may be true or untrue. However, the exact definition of "rumor" has given way to a more common interpretation in modern times. Rumors now refer to more inaccurate information, and fake news is also included. Government officials frequently use the phrase "rumors are being spread online" to allude to news items that have been proven false or "fake news is being spread online."

Similarly, third parties typically use the phrase "I/we are being rumored" when they feel it is vital to categorize a report as "false." The term "rumor" is used in this context to refer to "fake news," and this usage of the term is common. Information that has yet to be verified or that cannot be verified is called a rumor. Misinformation, disinformation, malinformation, and propaganda are additional concepts that require a fundamental understanding of fact-checking in addition to "fake news" or "rumor" (Shishir, 2022; Pal et al., 2020).

Misinformation

This phrase means "false information" in Bengali. The phrase "misinformation" is broad or more general. It is impossible to tell if someone intentionally or unintentionally distributed false information when it occurs. Misinformation is a term that describes false information (Tandoc et al., 2017). The Prime Minister has instructed landlords to waive three months of rent for tenants owing to the Corona pandemic, for instance, according to a Facebook[142] post. We need to find out if the individual who uploaded the incorrect information did so intentionally or unintentionally due to seeing or hearing incorrect information in other people's posts without independently checking it. Again, we cannot confirm if somebody intentionally or unintentionally shared this article. We will classify this false information as misinformation (Shishir, 2022).

Disinformation

Disinformation is known as "bad information" in Bengali. It intends to deceive individuals by disseminating false information. According to Shishir (2022) and Freelon et al.

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[142] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

(2022), disinformation conveys false information to deceive people. The same false information may be accurate for some people but false for others. Some information is initially distributed falsely. Then, many people need to grasp how others are dispersed. Because they did not intentionally disseminate the error, the identical information will be regarded as false. Also possible is the inverse. Someone first inadvertently spreads false information. Later on, though, other people knowingly took part in distributing that false information and misled others.

Disinformation, for instance, is typically disseminated against opponents in politics, ideology, and the state. Information is sometimes disseminated for financial gain. A Facebook[143] page's video of former Bangladeshi Prime Minister Khaleda Zia's address has been fact-checked. According to the study, portions of a 2017 video of BNP leader Khaleda Zia's address were chopped and spliced together to produce a new film that conveyed a different message than Zia's original speech. Remove movie portions from various locations to skew the speaker's main argument. In making and advertising new videos, the promoter intends to spread false information. It is an easy subject to understand. It is, therefore, false information (Shishir, 2022).

Mal-information

The information is accurate in this instance, yet the utmost level of malice is intended by revealing it (Loos & Ivan, 2022; Shishir, 2022). The transmission of accurate information to harm a person, society, or state is referred to in Mattagami as misinformation. The online practice of it is shared. This could be demonstrated by: In Bangladesh; a Muslim attacked a member of the minority because of their shared religious beliefs. A protest was held in response to the incident. Then someone calls to make a case for the attack on the minority in Bangladesh by posting a picture, a video or other evidence of an earlier torture episode on the Muslim minority in India. The material in that piece is weak. There is an attempt to minimize or excuse the Bangladeshi torture episode by incorporating its details into a new conversation about minority violence. Even if the information offered here is accurate, it is misleading because it was intended to harm (Shishir, 2022).

Propaganda

Propaganda aims to gain influence by promoting a specific political or ideological viewpoint. Such an aim can be excellent or terrible. Again, any approach, good or terrible, can

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accomplish any purpose. Attempting to sway people's political or ideological views by providing correct information, embellishing the truth with lies or half-truths, providing flat-out fraudulent information, or providing material that cannot be verified as true untrue are all examples of propaganda. According to Mattingly & Yao (2022) and Shishir (2022), propaganda uses facts, myths, misinformation, and disinformation.

Bangladesh, a developing nation with a low literacy rate, has experienced several occurrences involving false information, rumors, and misinformation. One of the earliest and most common tales people read in history books is that the charges smeared with beef and pork grease sparked the Sepoy Rebellion in 1857 (Towhid, 2021). Furthermore, several instances of social media abuse have posed a security danger in Bangladesh over the past ten years.

An alarming number of attacks on non-age populations, ranging from the Ramu incident in 2012 (Sarkar, 2020) to the Bhola incident in 2019 (Debnath, 2019), are fueled by social media vilification and associated falsehoods. Additionally, false child abduction accusations in 2019 provoked mob attacks on 30 people, eight of whom were killed (Bangladesh lynchings: Eight, 2019).

The growth of social networking sites and digital news platforms has profoundly impacted this. Three of Bangladesh's significant events - the Shahbagh Movement in 2013, the Quota Reform Movement in 2014, and the Road Safety Movement in 2018 - all benefited from the use of social media (Towhid, 2021). With the same tools that give them power, people can wreak havoc, confusion, and instability. On the other side, Bangladesh, like the rest of the world, suffered from severe coronavirus-related disinformation during the epidemic.

There were many rumors and false facts concerning corona virus in the past. Moreover, erroneous information regarding vaccines is circulating on social media. With their far-reaching conspiracy theories, anti-vaccine groups attempt to encourage vaccine reluctance (Kanozia & Arya, 2021, 316).

Information has been ingrained in every aspect of our lives because of the advancement of information technology. Information is now in our hands in the 21st century because of the rapid development of information technology and the success of social media. No longer the exclusive property of society's intellectual class, anyone from any class can gather, store, and share information. In addition to advancing civilization, the free flow of information causes us to miss out on essential knowledge frequently. However, the most discussed of the

problems related to this one is false news, including deepfake technology, instructive or infodemic fake news, etc.

Information flow is mainly driven by the rise of social media and the internet due to its popularity and speed. Moreover, as a result, the amount of accurate and false information is growing online. Therefore, finding accurate information is crucial and getting more so. Because of this, it is essential to confirm the information's veracity, objectivity, etc. Fact-checking is the term for this procedure of verification or testing. According to BTRC data, there were 11 crores 71 lakh 40 thousand Internet users in Bangladesh as of March 2021 (The number of internets...; 2021). According to statistics from the social media management platform Napoleon Cat, Bangladesh will have 4.82 billion Facebook[144] members by May 2021 (Afrin; 2021). Finding the false information distributed among so many people is a great challenge.

Bangladesh has three organizations that deal with this: BD Fact Check, Jacchai, and Fact Watch. A project named "The Fact Watch" was started in 2017 and is managed by the University of Liberal Arts, a nearby university. The other two have been working on their own. While BD Fact Check reaches people through its Facebook[145] page, Jaachai, Fact Watch, and Jaachai have websites. Bangladesh has no legal framework for signing up with unbiased fact-checking organizations. These organizations are therefore categorized as online media outlets. These businesses primarily validate statements made on social media.

Fact-Checking Organizations in the World

The word "fact checker" first appeared in a Collier's Weekly magazine advertisement in "Time" on March 5, 1938. Most of the advertisement's statistics focused on Time magazine's development and success. For many years to come, this process of fact-checking published information was ongoing. However, a new kind of fact-checking emerged with the development of the Internet. I was checking the accuracy of facts or previously published claims. With this new approach to fact-checking, politics has become a crucial component. Verifying the accuracy of political information or claims made by state political figures and institutions seems more crucial. According to Lucas Graves, author of "Deciding Hats Two" and prominent expert on the subject, political fact-checking has changed throughout time. Even though it began in the 1980s, it has evolved and been regulated over the years.

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As the first comprehensive political fact-checking initiative, FactCheck.org was introduced in 2003. It was initially a project of the University of Pennsylvania's Annenberg Public Policy Center. Following that, various additional websites began conducting political fact-checking in America and Europe.

Many of America's top mainstream media outlets tried to strengthen and modernize Tal's conventional fact-checking procedure in response to the advent of independent fact-checking organizations and the threat posed to mainstream media reporting by political bloggers before the 2004 US election campaign. Despite their initial resistance, American politicians gradually began to accept fact-checking their claims as a necessary component of journalism. As new independent fact-checking initiatives popped up worldwide during the 2016 US presidential campaign, the term "fake news" began to be extensively used. Before the election, the Democratic and Republican camps distributed false information on social media. Later, it was revealed that there had been an organized false news campaign from outside the US, especially on behalf of the Republicans. President Donald Trump has made discussing the word virtually a daily ritual since becoming elected. "Fake news" was deemed the most talked-about word of 2017 by Collegiate Dictionary.

Trump once referred to negative articles about him published in reputable media as "fake news". He even gave CNN, The New York Times, and The Washington Post the infamous "Fake News Award" in January 2018. Fact-checking gained popularity as fake news grew online, and the topic of the argument became widely discussed. In 2014, there were more than fifty worldwide renowned fact-checking organizations, according to a 2020 statistic by the Hueck Reporters Lab. It was 105 in 2016; by 2020, it will have reached 301. In addition, four years following Trump's election in 2016, the number of fact-checking organizations expanded globally by 200 percent. According to data from Duke Reporters Lab, three hundred forty-nine fact-checking organizations were in operation in January 2021.

Fact-Checking Organizations in Bangladesh

As fact-checking became more widespread in America and the rest of the globe, it was institutionalized in Bangladesh. The first fact-checking organization in this area, "BD Fact Check," launched its operations at the beginning of 2017. Initially, it involved a few young journalists. Soon after, "Jachai," a new initiative for fact-checking, began. In addition, Bangladesh has a few other fact-checking organizations. We have covered seven fact-checking organizations in Bangladesh in this article.

BD fact check

"BD fact check" (www.bdfactcheck.com) started working in 2016. They also have a page on Facebook[146] (https://www.facebook.com/bdfactcheck/). This organization verifies information from discussions, press conferences, public meetings, and the media and checks fake news, pictures, and videos that go viral on social media. It places more emphasis on politics and religion as fake news spreads more.

Rumor Scanner

"Rumor Scanner" (www.rumorscanner.com) officially launched on March 17, 2020, and is the first fact-checking initiative in Bangladesh to start fact-checking through websites and digital banners to make more people aware. They also have a page on Facebook[147] (https://www.facebook.com/RumorScanner). It is part of RSB Media & Research; a for-profit firm headquartered in Dhaka, Bangladesh, and performs a fact check through eight processes. It does not cover memes, trolls, humor, and sarcasm and uses six types of ratings. Rumor Scanner Bangladesh is a fact-checking organization focusing on international media outlets in Bangladesh to verify the information. They use primary sources, traceable expert opinions, scholarly literature, and image assessment platforms.

Factkhuji (Find the Fact)

'Factkhuji" (www.factkhuji.org) is an independent fact-checking platform in Bangladesh, founded by Abul Kalam Azad in 2020. In addition to the (www.factkhuji.com) website, they also have a Facebook[148] page (https://www.facebook.com/factkhuji/). It publishes verified facts to battle fake news and disinformation, with content categories such as Fact-check, Factkhuji Academy, and Event.

Boom Bangladesh

Boom is India's first and foremost data verification/fact-check website. However, this website started its journey in Bangladesh as "Boom Bangladesh" in April 2019 (www.boombd.com). Boom's main website has a separate category called "Bangladesh." The Facebook[149] page of the organization is (https://www.facebook.com/Boombangladeshnews). It has four categories: *Fake News, Fact Files, and Body Health.* Boom Ping is part of the Digital Network and certified by the

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[147] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[148] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[149] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

International Fact-Checking Network Pointer Institute. It uses eight methods to verify the information.

Jachai   (Verification)

'Jachai" is a Bangladesh-based fact-checking website (www.jachai.org) launched in 2017 and started in 2012 with a Facebook[150] page. It is independent and self-reliant, free of political and religious influence, and provides information on fake checks and rumors. It follows an NGO Model and produces posts identifying fake news (Mohammad, 2019).

Fact Watch

"Fact Watch" (www.fact-watch.org) is a project of ULAB to create Media Information Literacy in Bangladesh, aiming to create public awareness about misinformation, fake news, and rumors. The organization aims to create public awareness about misinformation, fake news, and rumors; the journey began on November 1, 2016. It communicates data verification results through its website and Facebook[151] page.

AFP Fact Check

AFP's digital verification service was launched in 2016 and has become one of the world's leading fact-checking organizations. Kadruddin Shishir is an AFP Dhaka bureau editor in charge of the Bangla website of "AFP Fact Check" (www.factcheckbangla.afp.com). Fact-checking journalism can be an excellent career, but people still need to learn about this opportunity. It is related to fake news, rumor, misinformation, disinformation, and mal-information and all kinds of discourse. Political parties can spread misleading information and disinformation for their political benefit.

Recommendations

• Bangladesh's mainstream media should be more active in addressing this issue. Every media outlet needs to have a required fact-checking section.

• Before sharing or disseminating information, news, or content, people should be more aware of its accuracy.

• There will be challenges in fact-checking, just like in journalism. In this regard, fact-checkers must band together and compel the government to fulfill its obligations.

• Young professionals should know that fact-checking is a worthwhile career.

• The political leadership should be held accountable by having comments on fact-checking.

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• The relevant authorities should conduct mandatory media literacy, fake news, and fact-checking training, workshops, or seminars for all public and private institutions, such as Press Institute Bangladesh (PIB) and Management and Resources Development Initiative (MRDI).

• Given that social media users in Bangladesh are primarily between the ages of 14 and 35, secondary school and higher secondary school curricula should include a required course on media literacy. These concerns require the National Curriculum Board of Bangladesh's attention.

3.1.2. SOME TIPS TO PREVENT THE SPREAD OF FAKE INFORMATION OR NEWS

Other studies claim that misleading information regarding the coronavirus caused at least 800 deaths worldwide in the first three months of 2020 (Haque, 2020). We must therefore use caution when disseminating news and information.

However, how can we handle it? "Full Fact", a website that verifies facts, has offered some advice on how to spot fake news and information quickly. According to media experts, people should think carefully before sharing anything on Facebook[152] (Haque, 2020). The questions are:

The first question

Who delivered the news? Start by asking yourself this. Only distribute information if the source can be relied upon. Try to become familiar with the formula if it is new.

The second question

What? Visit the website and read the real news. Take note of the image, the used number, and the comment. Comments are frequently made without citing the source or providing any context. Images or videos that appear in the news could be false. There is a chance the voices from the video have changed.

The third question

How do you feel now that you have read the news? Promoters of false information like playing on people's emotions. They know you will concentrate on the news if you feel worried or nervous. Therefore, attempt to evaluate your feelings before posting anything to social media. If you are pleased with the information, please share it. Moreover, if you have problems, attempt to confirm by checking with more sources.

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3.2. MEDIA LITERACY AND FEATURES OF THE BANGLADESHI MENTALITY IN THE PERCEPTION AND CONSUMPTION OF INFORMATION

In an era of unprecedented access to information, the proliferation of fake news has emerged as a significant challenge to societal discourse and public understanding (Kalsnes, 2018). This research discusses tendencies and trends of media literacy and fake news in Bangladesh. Also examines the relationship between media literacy and the propensity to believe in fake news. Through a comprehensive analysis, including empirical studies and theoretical frameworks, this study aims to shed light on the impact of media literacy on individuals' ability to discern between credible information and fake news. The findings underscore the importance of media literacy education in combating the spread of misinformation and enhancing critical thinking skills among media consumers.

Since the dissemination of false information and its effects on society have become significant concerns, there has been much research on media literacy and fake news beliefs. Numerous studies have examined how media literacy affects people's propensity to spread and believe false information. According to several studies, less media-literate people are more prone to think and be swayed by incorrect information. These people could find it difficult to analyze information sources critically, determine the veracity of news pieces, or identify the misleading tactics used in fake news (Kocatepe et al., 2018).

People are more likely to accept information that supports their biases or preexisting ideas. Due to their propensity to believe and spread information that supports their preexisting worldview, even when it is wrong, people who suffer from this confirmation bias may be more susceptible to fake news (Van der Meer & Hameleers, 2021). Higher media literacy increases the likelihood that people would question the integrity of news sources before taking information at face value. Conversely, those with less media literacy might need to consider the reliability of the authorities, which would make them more prone to false information (Shen et al., 2019).

The capacity to verify information and fact-check assertions is one of the most essential skills in the fight against fake news. According to research, people who are more digitally literate are better at spotting and avoiding fake news because they can browse and assess online content (Seo et al., 2019). Studies have found that educational interventions to increase media literacy and decrease the acceptance of false information are effective. These interventions include teaching critical thinking, source evaluation, fact-checking methods, and media literacy awareness. These interventions can help people distinguish between reputable and inaccurate information sources (Potter, 2010). Social media platforms can influence

people's beliefs and susceptibility to fake news by providing misinformation, echo chambers, and algorithms (Paxton et al., 2022).

In today's information-rich world, media literacy is critical in addressing and reducing the belief in fake news (Pinkleton et al., 2012). The term "media literacy" describes the capacity to use, comprehend, and assess a variety of media. Making informed decisions about the correctness, dependability, and credibility of the information one encounter is made possible by empowering people to study and comprehend the messages provided through media channels (Austin et al., 2006).

Individuals that are media literate are better able to examine and assess the information they encounter (Feuerstein, 1999). People can more easily spot inaccurate or misleading information if they know how news is created, identify bias, and double-check their sources. They gain the ability to evaluate the data, consider many viewpoints, and create more educated conclusions about the news they receive (Ku et al., 2019).

People with media literacy skills can better spot false and misleading information. It aids consumers in comprehending the strategies used by producers of false information, such as clickbait headlines, altered visuals, or deceptive narratives (Luo et al., 2022). People who are media literate can distinguish between trustworthy sources and ones that are intended to mislead or manipulate (Dame Adjin-Tettey, 2022). Understanding the complicated media environment and the variables affecting news generation and transmission is a requirement for media literacy. Recognizing the function of algorithms, social media platforms, and the economics of the media sector are part of this. Individuals can more effectively navigate the information environment and become discerning news consumers by knowing these characteristics (Nichols & LeBlanc, 2021).

Incorporating media literacy instruction into formal and informal contexts is essential. People can learn to evaluate media content critically, check information, and adopt wholesome news consumption habits through schools, educational institutions, and community organizations (Rasi et al., 2021). Early media literacy instruction can help people build lifelong abilities that will help them successfully navigate the media landscape (Cheung & Xu, 2016). Individuals that are media literate become more resilient to false information. People, who are media literate conduct fact-checking, look for varied sources and use critical thinking techniques rather than impulsively accepting or rejecting news based on personal biases or emotional reactions. This lessens susceptibility to fake news and encourages a more thorough grasp of complicated subjects (Ventsel et al., 2023).

Media literacy education is paramount in today's digital age, where information travels freely and abundantly through numerous media outlets. It enables people to make educated decisions, participate effectively in society, and navigate the vast terrain of media messages by empowering them to critically assess, evaluate, and navigate it (Dezuanni, 2018). People are urged to consider their media consumption habits through media literacy education. It encourages media balance by educating people about the adverse effects of excessive screen time, the value of various sources, and the necessity of fact-checking information before sharing or accepting it (Zdravkova, 2019).

Responsible digital citizenship is emphasized in media literacy education. It informs people about appropriate online conduct, the repercussions of cyber bullying and online harassment, the value of privacy, the need to be critical media consumers, and the significance of producing media material responsibly (Von Gillern et al., 2022). Education in media literacy fosters an appreciation for and understanding of many cultures, viewpoints, and identities. It promotes empathy, tolerance, and respect for others by encouraging people to critically evaluate stereotypes and media depictions (Bloom & Johnston, 2010).

3.3. ANALYSIS OF THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA LITERACY AND FAKE NEWS BELIEVING IN BANGLADESH

In this section, a mixed method, for instance, survey and in-depth methods have been used to examine the relationship between media literacy and believing fake news. 441 respondents from 8 public universities in 8 divisions of Bangladesh completed the survey form. That means in this research, the population was 500, but only 441 samples were able to collect. In this regard, the help of the university's student organization and journalists' association has been taken.

The survey has six parts (Appendix B). The first part of the questionnaire consisted of **demographic information**. This part of the questionnaire consists of five choirs about personal information, for example, *a) name, b) age, c) gender, d) educational background, e), university name, f) division of residence*. The second section of the survey consists of questions about **media literacy**, like *a) assessing overall media literacy skills, b) confidence in detecting fake news, and c) trust in specific sources for accurate news information*. The third section consists of questions regarding **belief in fake news**, for instance, *a. Whether you have encountered false or misleading news articles or information? b. How often do you encounter news articles you suspect may be affected? c. What actions do you usually take when you suspect fake news?*

The fourth section of the questionnaire consists of questions about **media consumption habits**, for instance, *a. On average, how much time per day news content is consumed? b. Depending on the type of media primarily used for news consumption.*

The fifth section consists of questions about **belief in fake news and media literacy**. Such as a. *How often fake news articles are believed to be accurate? And b. Whether higher media literacy skills help reduces faith in fake news?* The sixth or final part of the survey focused on **formal education or training in media literacy**. *Whether you have received any formal education or training in media literacy and whether this education or training has affected your ability to detect fake news' has been taking place.*

A) Demographic Part of the Questionnaire

Gender. The estimated population of this survey was 500 university students of Bangladesh. However, only 441 responders sent feedback by filling in the survey data provided through "Google Docs". Whereas, out of the 441 study participants, 211 respondents were male, this accounts for 47.8% of the total. Similarly, 230 respondents were female, representing 52.2% of the total[153].

Total study participants 441

48%

52%

■ Male (211)
■ Female (230)

Figure 10. Respondents Gender.

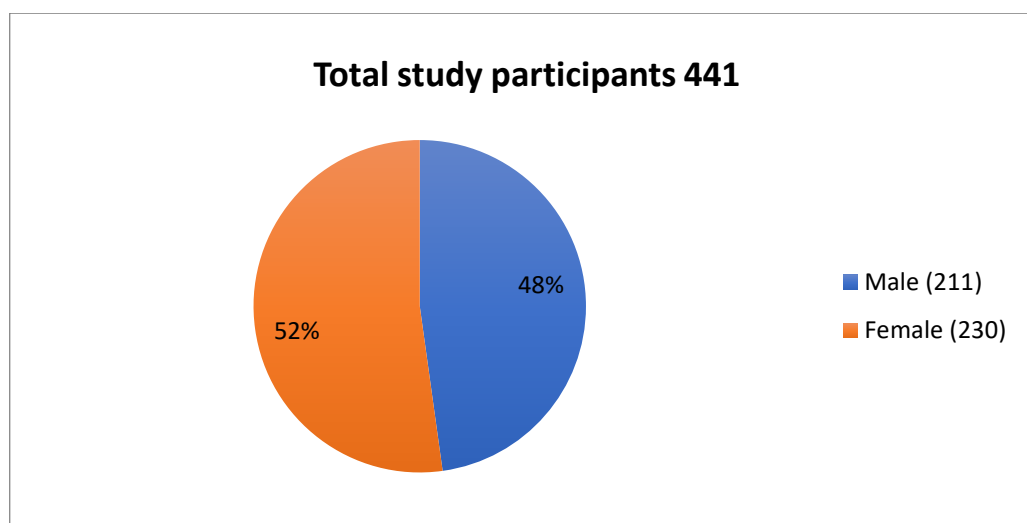*Age Group.* The age distribution of the respondents is provided in three categories. 17-22 years, this category includes 311 people, which represents 70.5% of the total respondents. 23-28 years, this category includes 124 people, which accounts for 28.1% of the total respondents. 28-33 years, this category includes six people, which comprise 1.4% of the total respondents.

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[153] Appendix C
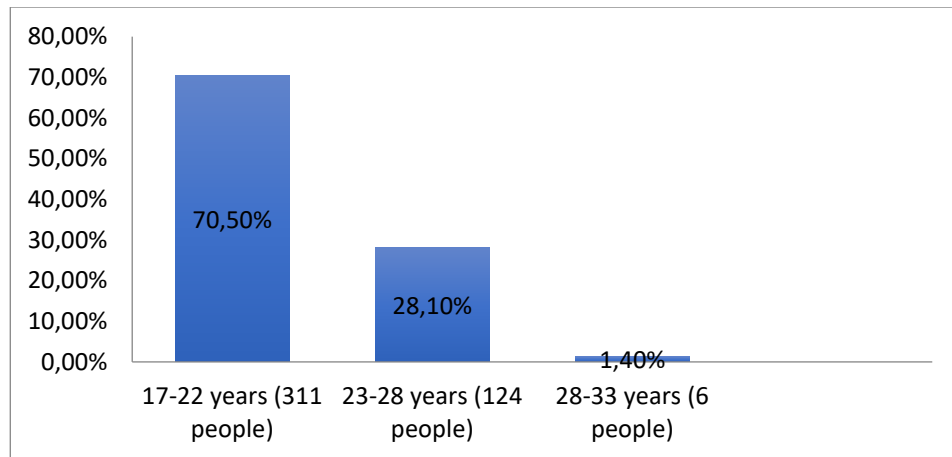
Figure 11. Respondents Age.

Educational Background. The last education attained by the respondents is provided in three categories. College, this category includes 258 people, accounting for 58.5% of the total respondents. Bachelor's Degree, this category includes 175 people, representing 39.7% of the total respondents. Master's Degree, this category includes eight people, making up 1.8% of the total respondents.
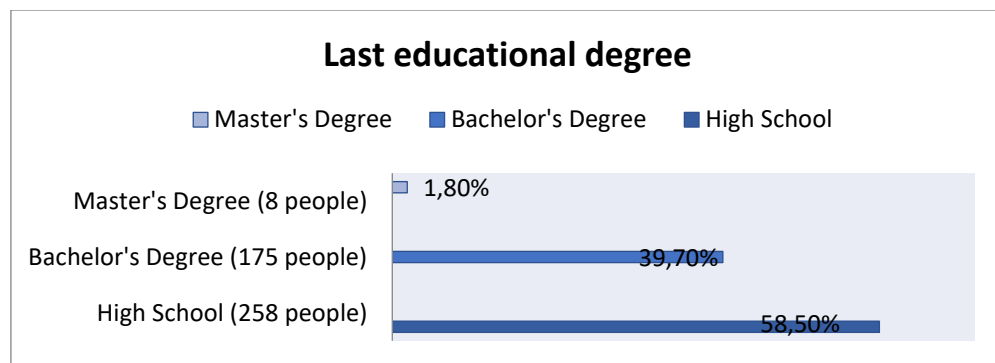
Figure 12. Respondent's last educational degrees.

The respondents include 92 or 20.8% of students at Dhaka University, 80 or 18.1% of students of Chittagong University, 75 or 17% of students of Rajshahi University, 61 or 13.8% of students of Barisal University, 41 or 9.3% of students of Khulna University, 28 or 6.3% of students of Shahjalal Science and Technology University, 28 or 6.3% of students of Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University and 36 or 8.2% of students of Rangpur University.

Respondents University enrolled

- Dhaka University
- Chittagong University
- Rajshahi University
- Barisal University
- Khulna University
- SUST

21% 18% 17% 14% 10% 6% 6% 8%
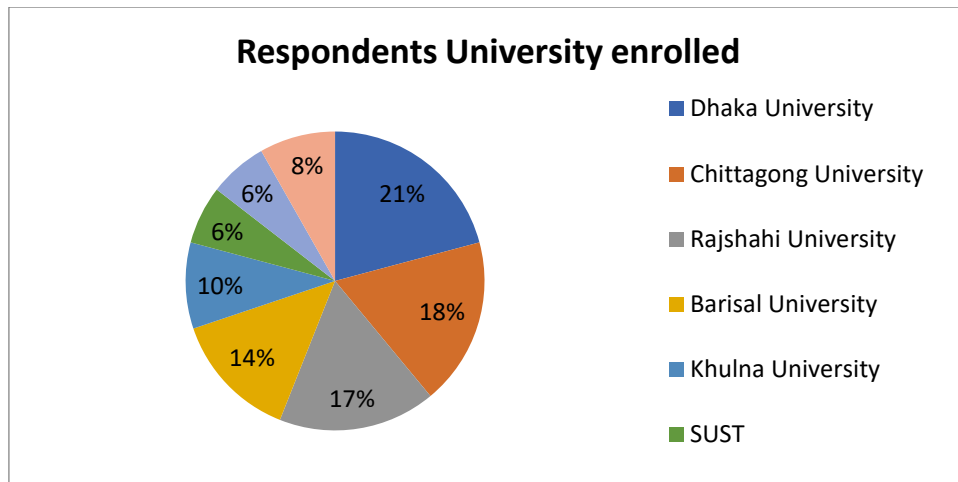
Figure 13. Currently enrolled Universities of Respondents.

Location. The location of respondents based on division, mainly from Dhaka 92; Chittagong 80 people, Rajshahi 75 people, Barisal 61 people, Khulna 41 people, Sylhet 28 people, Mymensingh 28 people and Rangpur 36 people.

Location of respondents in number
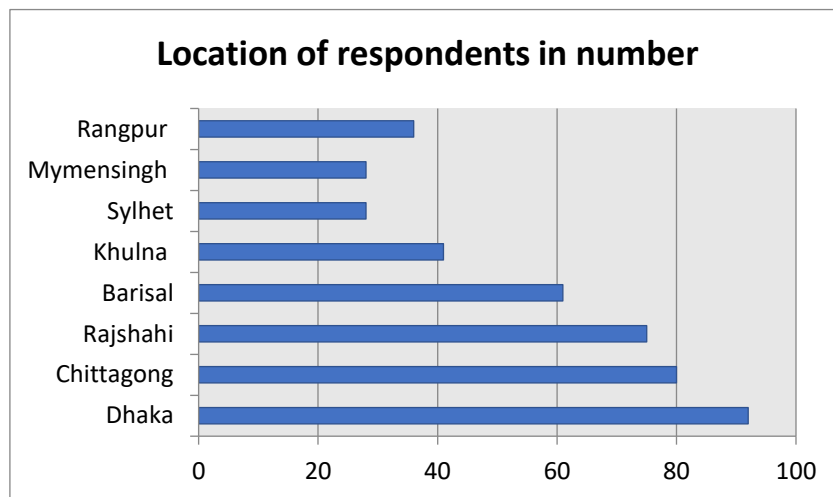
Figure 14. The Distribution of Respondent Locations.

B) Media Literacy: the survey questions and the responses

Q: Assessing overall media literacy skills

The survey asked participants to rate their overall media literacy skills and provided four answer choices: 'very low,' 'low,' 'high,' and 'very high.'

- According to the results presented, 56.9% of the respondents (251 individuals) chose 'very low' as their rating for media literacy skills. This indicates that a majority of the respondents considered their media literacy skills to be at a superficial level.

- Furthermore, 25.2% of the respondents (111 individuals) selected 'low' for media literacy skills. This suggests that many respondents perceived their media literacy skills as somewhat low but not at the lowest level.

- In contrast, 15.9% of the respondents (70 individuals) chose the 'high' option for their media literacy skills. This indicates that a smaller proportion of the respondents expressed confidence in having high media literacy skills.

- Finally, a tiny percentage of respondents, specifically 2% (9 individuals), rated their media literacy skills as 'very high.' This suggests that only a few respondents believed their media literacy skills excellent.

- Based on the survey results, most respondents perceived their media literacy skills as very low. At the same time, a smaller percentage considered their skills to be very low, low, high, or very high.
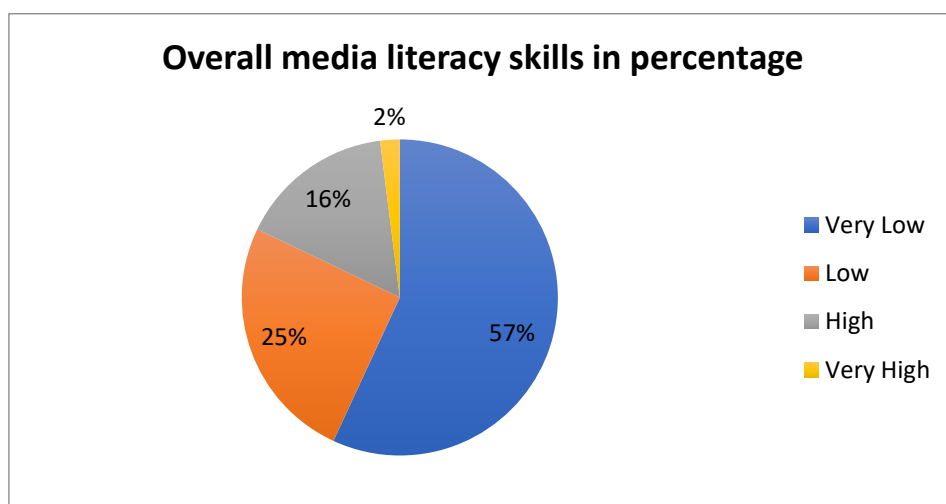
Figure 15. Responses to the question regarding how you would rate your overall media literacy skills.

Q: Confidence in detecting fake news

The next question is the responses of a group of people to a question about their confidence in detecting fake news. The respondents were given four choices to express their level of faith: 'not confident,' 'fairly confident,' 'confident,' and 'very confident.'

- Out of the total respondents, 249 people, approximately 56.5% of the respondents indicated that they need to be more confident in detecting fake news. This suggests that most respondents needed to improve their skills in identifying fake news.

- On the other hand, 113 people, accounting for around 25.6% of the respondents, expressed that they were 'fairly confident' in detecting fake news. This indicates that a significant portion of the respondents felt confident in their skills.

- Out of the 65 people surveyed, approximately 14.7% of the respondents stated they were 'confident' in detecting fake news. This subset of respondents had a higher confidence level than the overall average.

- Finally, the data shows that only 14 people, approximately 6.3% of the respondents, chose the option 'very confident' when asked about their ability to detect fake news. This indicates that a relatively small number of people felt highly confident identifying fake news.
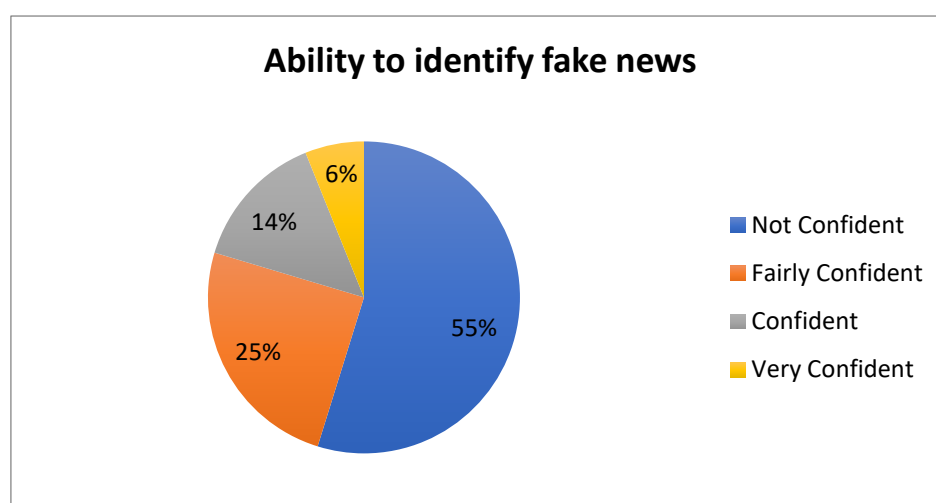
Figure 16. Responses regarding the question about how confident you are in identifying fake news.

Q: Trust in specific sources for accurate news information

The survey asked participants to indicate their trusted sources of accurate news information. The options for disseminating news information were as follows: 'Traditional news outlets'; this category includes newspapers, television, and other established media sources. 'Social media platforms' examples mentioned are Facebook[154] and Twitter[155], which have become popular news sources for many people. 'Online news websites' refers to internet-based news platforms. 'Academic journals and research publications' are scholarly sources that undergo rigorous review processes. 'Friends and family' indicate the people close to the

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[154] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[155] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

respondents who may share news or information. Finally, the 'Others' category encompasses any sources not covered by the previous options.

- Two hundred forty respondents, or 54.4%, preferred traditional news outlets as their trusted sources of accurate information.

- Thirty-seven respondents, or 8.39%, favoured online news portals.

- One hundred fifteen respondents, or 26%, expressed trust in social media platforms as their news source.

- Forty respondents, or 9%, selected academic journals and research publications as their preferred sources.

- Seven respondents, or 1.6%, mentioned friends and family as their trusted news sources.

- A small number of 2 respondents, or 0.5%, chose the 'other' option, but many indicated that they relied on information from opinion leaders and talk shows.

➢ These results indicate that a significant portion of the respondents still prefer traditional news outlets like newspapers and television for accurate news information.

➢ However, social media platforms have gained trust among many respondents.

➢ Online news portals and academic journals/research publications also have their share of faith, though to a lesser extent.

➢ Additionally, some individuals mentioned relying on opinion leaders and talk shows for information, although the number of people who chose this option could have been higher.
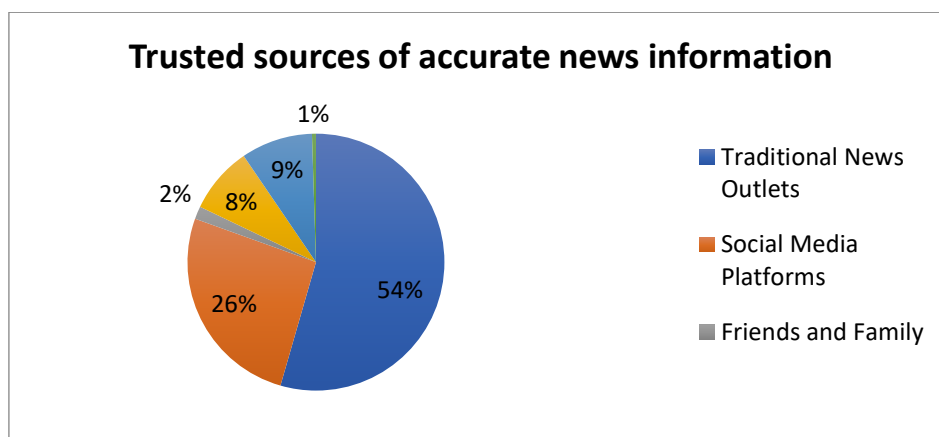
Figure 17. Responses regarding the question about which sources trust for accurate news information.

C) Belief in fake news: the survey questions and the responses

The third section consists of questions regarding belief in fake news for instance, a). Whether you have encountered false or misleading news articles or information? b). How often do you encounter news articles you suspect may be affected? c). What actions do you usually take when you suspect fake news?

Q: Whether you have encountered false or misleading news articles or information? A survey regarding people's experience encountering false or misleading news articles or information. The question provides three options for respondents to choose from: Yes, No and Not Sure.

- 'Yes', 222 respondents or 50.3% of the total respondents, chose this option. This means these individuals have encountered news articles or information they later discovered to be false or misleading.

- 'No', 107 respondents or 24.3%, chose this option. These individuals claimed they had yet to encounter any news articles or information that turned out to be false or misleading.

- 'Not sure', 112 respondents or 25.4% of the total respondents, chose this option. This indicates that these individuals needed clarification on whether they had encountered false or misleading news articles or information.
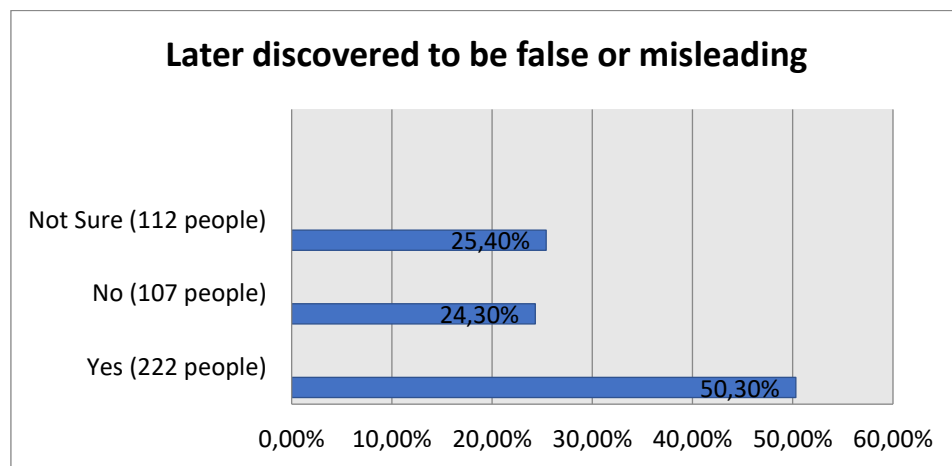
Figure 18. Responses to the question have you ever encountered news articles or information you later discovered to be false or misleading.

Q: How often do you encounter news articles you suspect may be fake? A survey question asks respondents about their encounters with news articles they suspect may be fake. The question provides four options for respondents to choose from: frequently, occasionally, rarely, and never.

- Forty-six respondents, or 10.4%, chose the option 'frequently.' This means that individuals frequently encounter news articles that they suspect may be fake.

- One hundred eighty-nine respondents, or 42.9%, chose 'occasionally.' This indicates that these individuals occasionally come across news articles that they suspect may be fake.

- Two hundred-one respondents, or 45.6%, chose 'rarely.' This suggests that these individuals rarely encounter news articles that they believe to be fake.

- Five respondents, or 1.1%, chose the option 'never.' This implies that these individuals never think that news articles are fake. These percentages represent the distribution of responses among the survey participants and provide insight into the frequency with which they encounter news articles that they suspect may be fake.
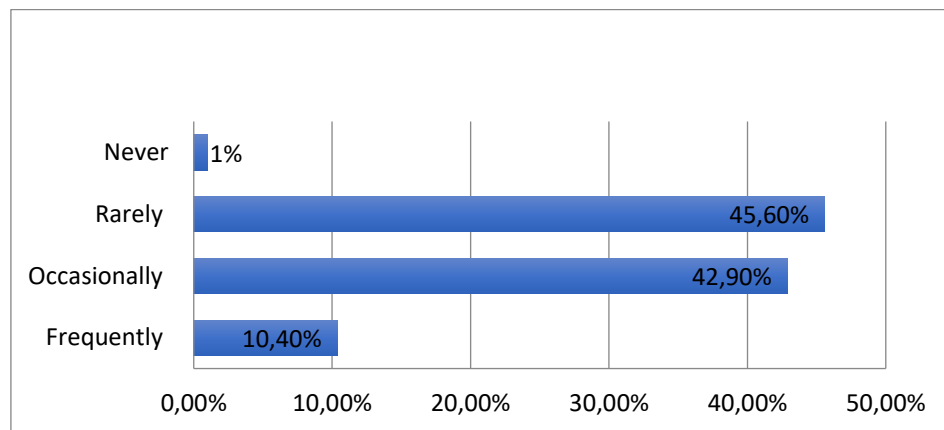
Figure 19. Responses to the question about how to encounter news articles that you suspect might be fake.

Q: What actions do you usually take when you suspect fake news?

The survey question aimed to understand individuals' actions when encountering a news article, they suspect might be fake. The respondents were given four answer choices and an option for 'Other.'

- 'Share it on social media without verifying', 88 respondents or 19.9%, chose this option. This indicates that some participants must verify their authenticity before sharing articles on social media. Sharing unverified information can contribute to the spread of misinformation if the report turns out to be fake.

- 'Ignore it and move on', 103 respondents or 23.4% chose this option. This suggests that many participants ignore the suspected fake news article and proceed without

further action. It is important to note that neglecting fake news may prevent its spread and allow misinformation to persist unchecked.

- 'Conduct further research to verify its authenticity', 67 respondents or 15.2%, chose this option. These participants demonstrate a proactive approach by taking the initiative to conduct additional research to verify the credibility of the news article. This is a responsible action to counteract the potential spread of misinformation.

- 'Seek information from trusted sources, 112 respondents or 25.4%, chose this option. By seeking input from trusted sources, participants are willing to verify the article's authenticity through reliable and credible sources. This action is a recommended approach to ensure accurate information dissemination.

- 'Report it as fake news on the platform', seven respondents or 15.9% chose this option. These participants decided to report the suspected fake news on the platform where they encountered it. Reporting helps raise awareness and prompts the platform to review and take action on the content.

- 'Other', one respondent or 0.2%, chose this option. The participant's action is not mentioned in the given information, but it states that they decided to download and collect the article for academic work. This response might indicate a unique circumstance or intention related to academic research.

➢ The survey provides insights into individuals' actions when encountering potentially fake news. While many respondents shared or ignored the notice without verification, much prioritized further research, seeking information from trusted sources and reporting the article.

➢ Encouraging critical thinking, fact-checking, and relying on reliable sources can help combat the spread of misinformation.
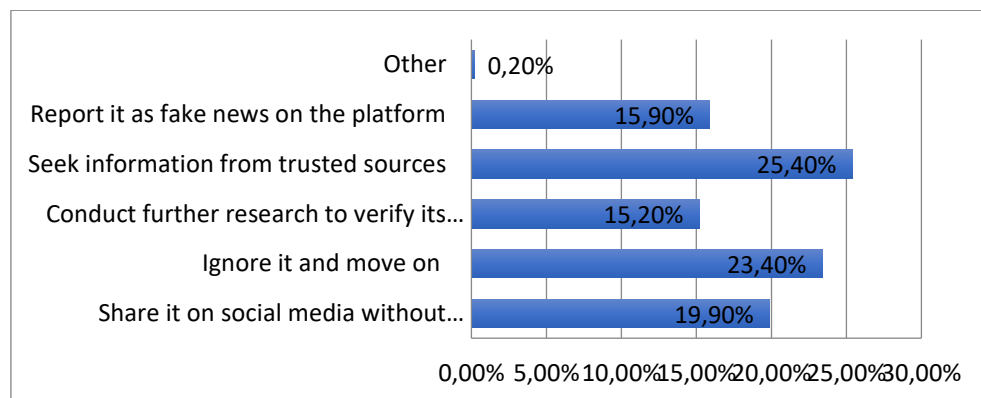
Figure 20. Responses to the question about actions do you usually take when you suspect fake news.

D) Media consumption habits: the survey questions and the responses

The fourth section consists of questions about media consumption habits (For instance, a. On average, how much time per day news content is consumed? b. Depending on the type of media primarily used for news consumption).

Q: How much time do they spend consuming news content daily?

The survey question asks respondents how much time they spend consuming news content daily. The respondents were given five answer choices to select from, representing different time intervals.

- Ninety-one respondents, which accounts for 20.6% of the participants, chose 'Less than 15 minutes.' This means these individuals spend less than 15 minutes daily consuming news content.

- One hundred ninety-nine respondents, or 45.1% of the participants, chose '15 minutes to 1 hour.' This group spends between 15 minutes and 1 hour on news consumption daily.

- One hundred twenty-nine respondents, representing 29.3% of the participants, chose '1 to 3 hours.' This indicates that they spend 1 to 3 hours daily consuming news content.

- Thirteen respondents, or 2.9% of the participants, selected '3 to 5 hours.' These individuals spend between 3 and 5 hours on news consumption daily.

- Nine respondents, equivalent to 2.09% of the participants, chose 'More than 5 hours.' This group spends more than 5 hours each day consuming news content.

These percentages provide an overview of the distribution of respondents' news consumption habits based on the given time intervals.
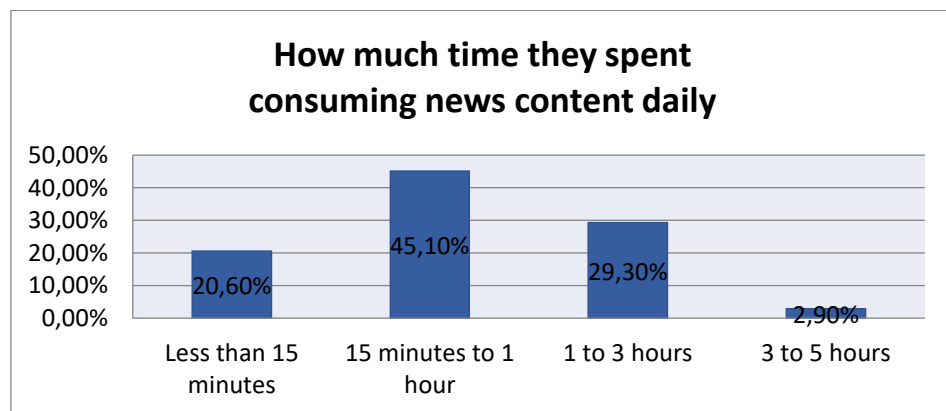
Figure 21. Responses to the question about the average daily time spent consuming news content.

Q: Depending on the type of media primarily used for news consumption.

The survey question which types of media do you primarily rely on for news consumption? The respondents were given six choices: Television, Print newspapers/magazines, online news websites, social media platforms, Radio, and Others.

- Fifty-six respondents, or 12.6% of the participants, chose 'television' as their primary news source.

- Forty-nine respondents, or 11.1% of the participants, chose 'print newspapers/magazines' as their primary news source.

- One hundred twelve respondents, or 25.4% of the participants, chose 'online news websites as their primary news source.

- One hundred ninety-nine respondents, or 45.1% of the participants, chose 'social media platforms' as their primary news source.

- Twenty-one respondents, or 4.8% of the participants, chose 'radio' as their primary news source.

- Four respondents, or 0.9% of the participants, chose 'other' sources not specified in the answer choices as their primary news source.

These percentages represent the proportion of respondents who selected each option from the total number of participants. It indicates the relative popularity or reliance on different media types for news consumption among the surveyed individuals.
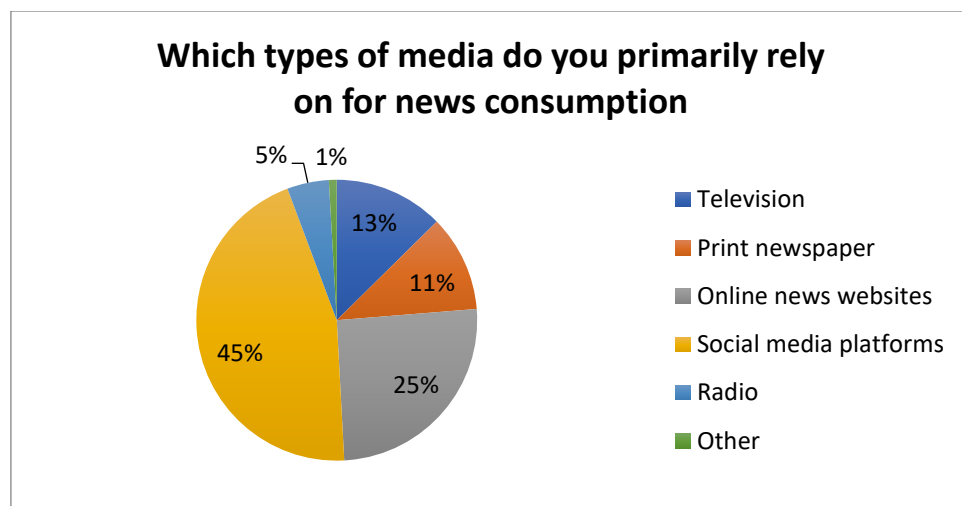
Figure 22. Responses to the question about which types of media you primarily rely on for news consumption.

E) **Belief in fake news and media literacy: the survey and responses**

The fifth section consists of these questions regarding belief in fake news and media literacy- a). How often fake news articles are believed to be accurate? and b). Whether higher media literacy skills help reduce faith in fake news?

Q: How often do you believe fake news articles to be true?

The survey question aims to understand the respondents' perception of the truthfulness of fake news articles and provides four answer choices: Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely, and Never. The survey gathered responses from a total of 441 participants.

- Forty-five participants, representing 10.2% of the total participants, chose to answer 'frequently.' This indicates that these respondents often believe fake news articles to be accurate.

- Ninety-five participants, accounting for 21.5% of the total participants, chose the answer 'occasionally.' These individuals believe fake news articles to be precise on certain occasions but less frequently than the first group.

- Eighty-eight participants, representing 19.9% of the total, chose the answer 'rarely.' This group believes that fake news articles are seldom accurate.

- Two hundred thirteen participants, constituting 48.3% of the total, chose the answer 'never.' These respondents do not believe fake news articles to be accurate at all.

➢ In summary, the survey results indicate that most respondents (48.3%) never believe fake news articles to be true.

➢ However, a significant portion of the participants still believes fake news articles to be valid to some extent, with varying frequencies.

➢
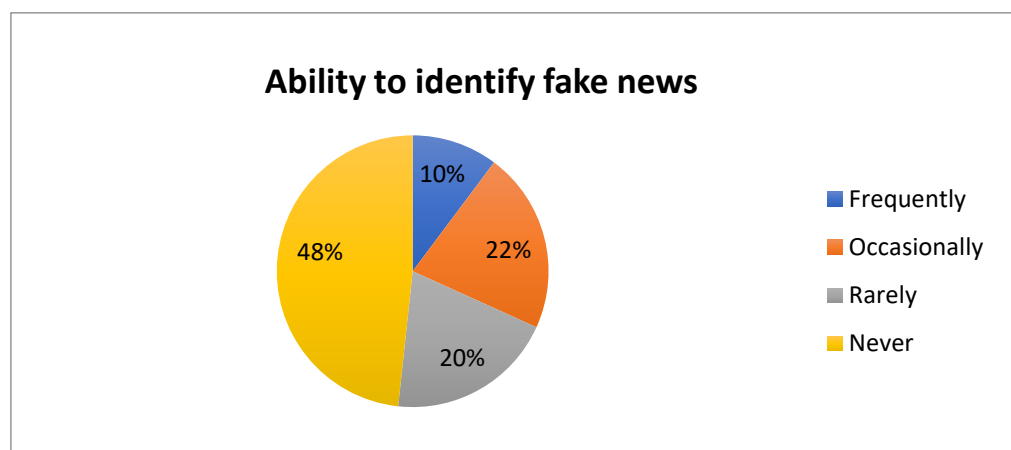
Figure 23. Responses to the question about how often you believe fake news articles to be true.

Findings and assessment

Five significant themes may be drawn from the survey's data findings about respondents' perceptions of the veracity of fake news articles:

➢ 48.3% of respondents said they never believed false news stories to be accurate, demonstrating high suspicion and critical thinking.

➢ Temporary Belief: 21.5% of the respondents occasionally think that some fake news reports are accurate.

➢ Recognition: 10.2% of Participants commonly accept fake news reports as fact, indicating a greater propensity for false information.

➢ Unusual Recognition: 19.9% of participants indicated they hesitated to accept information that must be adequately verified.

➢ Necessity of Media Literacy: The research highlights the significance of media literacy and critical thinking abilities in the fight against disinformation and the continued need for education and awareness initiatives.

These succinct themes draw attention to the different levels of belief in fake news items and emphasize the importance of encouraging media literacy and critical thinking skills to combat the adoption of misleading information.

Q: Whether higher media literacy skills help reduces faith in fake news?

The survey question is whether having higher media literacy skills helps reduce belief in fake news. The question provides three answer choices: 'Yes,' 'No,' and 'Not sure.'

• Three hundred one participants, or approximately 68.3%, answered 'Yes.' This means that these respondents believe that having higher media literacy skills does help in reducing belief in fake news.

• Thirty-six participants, or approximately 8.2%, answered 'No.' This suggests that these respondents do not believe that having higher media literacy skills helps in reducing belief in fake news.

• Additionally, 104 participants, or approximately 23.6%, chose the answer 'Not sure.' These respondents are still determining whether having higher media literacy skills reduces belief in fake news.

Findings and assessments

➢ A large proportion of the respondents (68.3%) think that lessening trust in fake news results from improved media literacy abilities.

➢ 8.2% of respondents do not think that more excellent media literacy skills contribute to a decline in trust in fake news.

➢ A sizable portion of those surveyed (23.6%) are still determining how media literacy abilities may decrease trust in fake news.

➢ The findings show various viewpoints on how well media literacy works.

➢ Promoting reasoning, information evaluation, and media literacy as valuable strategies in combating the influence of fake news requires ongoing research and teaching.
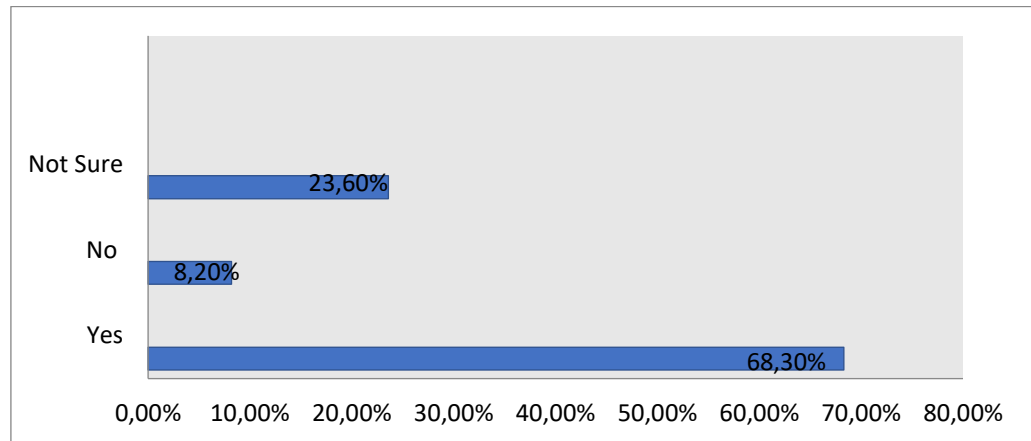
Figure 24. Responses to the question of whether media literacy skills play a crucial role in combating the spread of fake news.

F) Formal education or training in media literacy: the questionnaires and the responses

The sixth section of the survey tried to inquire about the respondents' status of formal education or training in media literacy and whether this education or training has affected their ability to detect fake news.

Q: Whether you have received any formal education or training in media literacy? and if so, whether this education or training has affected your ability to detect fake news?

The survey question asked respondents whether they had received any formal education or training in media literacy. The question provided two answers: 'Yes' and 'No.'

• Based on the survey results, out of the total number of participants, 13 individuals, or 2.9% of the respondents, selected 'Yes' as their answer, indicating that they have received formal education or training in media literacy.

• On the other hand, most respondents, specifically 428 individuals or 97.05%, chose 'No,' indicating that they have not received any formal education or training in media literacy.

Findings and assessment

- The knowledge or training given has positively impacted the participants' capacity to recognize fake news, according to the survey results.
- A large proportion of 61.5% (8 participants) of the 13 individuals who responded to this question said their ability to spot fake news has significantly improved.
- Furthermore, 30.8% (4 participants) said that it had marginally enhanced their skills.
- Only one person, or 7.7% of the responders, claimed no discernible influence.
- Notably, some participants chose not to respond to this question, meaning they either needed to receive the necessary instruction or training or were uncomfortable assessing the impact.
- However, based on the responses of those who did respond, the learning or training generally improved the participants' capacity to spot false information.
- The relatively small number of those surveyed who have received media literacy education reveals a possible deficiency in the majority of the population's media literacy abilities, given that it has been demonstrated that such education improves people's capacity to distinguish and recognize fake news.
- This conclusion emphasizes how crucial it is to support media literacy activities and offer approachable courses and workshops to give people the skills they need to assess and overcome the information world critically.
- To enable people to make informed decisions and stop the spread of false information and fake news, more research and efforts are required to raise awareness of and implement media literacy education.

Formal education or training in media literacy

3%

97%

Yes

No
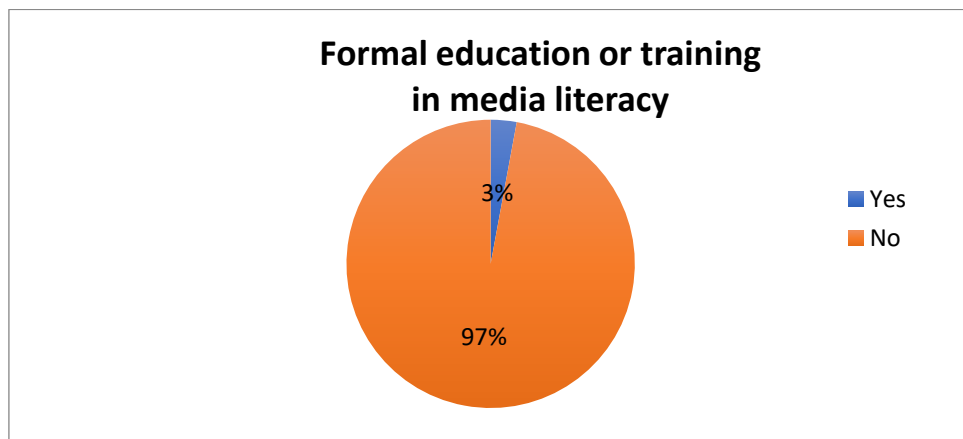
Figure 25. Responses to the question about formal education or training in media literacy.

Q: *How does this education or training impact your ability to identify fake news?*

The survey question was how does this education or training impact your ability to identify fake news? This is a supplementary question to the previous question. They have here given four answer choices: Greatly improved, somewhat improved, No significant impact, and not applicable.

- Only 13 participants answered this question.
- Other participants avoid this question.
- The respondents included 8, or 61.5%, chose 'Greatly improved,'
- 4 or 30.8%, chose 'Somewhat improved,'
- 1 or 7.7%, chose 'No significant impact.'

Findings and assessment

➢ The knowledge or training given has positively impacted the participants' capacity to recognize fake news, according to the survey results.

➢ A large proportion of 61

➢ .5% (8 participants) of the 13 individuals who responded to this question said their ability to spot fake news has significantly improved.

➢ Furthermore, 30.8% (4 participants) said that it had marginally enhanced their skills.

➢ Only one person, or 7.7% of the responders, claimed no discernible influence.

➢ Notably, some participants chose not to respond to this question, meaning they either needed to receive the necessary instruction or training or were uncomfortable assessing the impact.

➢ However, based on the responses of those who did respond, the learning or training generally improved the participants' capacity to spot false information.

Figure 26. Responses to the question regarding the education or training that impacted your ability to identify fake news.

Besides the survey, in-depth interviews with six experts across professions have been conducted to obtain input and strengthen arguments in research. In this regard, the experts have asked six detailed open-ended questions. Therefore, a web-based interview with six experts from various fields has been undertaken to gather feedback and enhance research arguments (Appendix D).

The following table consists of the details of the in-depth interviewers' information:

Table 4. About In-depth interviewers

Name	Affiliation/Designation
Zafar Wazed	Director General of Press Institute Bangladesh-PIB
Ashish Saikat	Chief News Editor at Independent Television
Professor Dr. A A M S Arefin Siddique	Chairman of the Board of Directors of the national news agency Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)
Lutfor Rahman Himel	Editor at TheReport.live
Sahos Mustafiz	Specialist- Factcheck at Daily Ajker Patrika
Neon Motiul	Chief News Editor at Daily Anandabazar

Principal subjects of interview: a) Defined and produced fake news; b) Media literacy's role in battling fake news; c) Media literacy and the acceptance of fake news; d) Media literacy's impact on identifying accurate news from false news; e) Factors affecting fake news belief in the socio-cultural and demographic spheres; f) Influence of social media and technological improvements on media literacy and fake news.

Interviewee 1. Name: Zafar Wazed

Main themes regarding the first interview answers

- ➢ fabrication and misrepresentation are manipulation techniques used to produce fake news.
- ➢ Using media literacy as a tool for information analysis and evaluation
- ➢ fake news warning signs and indicators (clickbait, sensationalized material)
- ➢ Information cross-referencing and source verification
- ➢ Impact of media literacy on analytical and critical thinking skills
- ➢ Education's role in fostering media literacy
- ➢ Social media algorithms' impact on the propagation of false information
- ➢ Confirmation bias and echo chambers in the consumption of fake news

➤ Technological developments that allow for complex manipulation methods (like deep fakes)

➤ Media literacy is essential for utilizing and comprehending digital platforms.

Interviewee 2. Name: Ashish Saikat

Main themes regarding the second interview answers

➤ Spreading intentionally deceptive or inaccurate data as news is known as fake news.

➤ Social media influence: Websites on social networks serve as conduits for quickly disseminating news, including false information.

➤ Insufficient Fact-Checking Tools: social media needs the tools to check the content's veracity effectively.

➤ Enhancing critical thinking and scepticism of news sources are fundamental to media literacy.

➤ Understanding methods for information manipulation, such as deceptive headlines and selective editing, is called "media manipulation tactics."

➤ Digital literacy is navigating the online environment and identifying sponsored content, filter bubbles, and algorithms.

➤ Emphasizing the importance of delivering accurate and reliable information is education for responsible media use.

➤ Practices for fact-checking include consulting reliable sources, analyzing facts, and assessing the veracity of claims.

➤ Understanding the manufacturing and dissemination processes will help you spot propaganda and false information.

➤ Political Opinions and Cultural Values: How ideologies and cultural values affect people's susceptibility to fake news.

Interviewee 3. Name: Professor Dr. A. A. M. S. Arefin Siddique

Main themes regarding the third interview answers

➤ Media illiteracy makes people more susceptible to erroneous information.

➤ Assistance is required for determining accuracy and integrity.

➤ Confirmation bias makes judgement less objective.

➤ Limited understanding of tricksters' tactics.

➤ Verifying sources and using critical thinking are essential.

➤ Fact-checking is important.

- ➢ Recognizing media bias.
- ➢ Recognizing the function of algorithms.
- ➢ Assessing the reliability of sources.
- ➢ A tool for empowerment: media literacy.

Interviewee 4. Name: Lutfor Rahman Himel

Main themes regarding the fourth interview answers

- ➢ News websites that are fake or of poor quality are frequently used to distribute fake news.
- ➢ These websites concentrate on producing newsworthy content to establish credibility.
- ➢ To trick viewers, fake news websites frequently mimic well-known news sources.
- ➢ The objective is to present the false information as reliable and trustworthy.
- ➢ Deliberate fake news is produced and posted on social media sites like Facebook[156], Twitter[157], or Instagram[158].
- ➢ The goal is to increase involvement as much as possible.
- ➢ Spreading fake news is frequently done for financial gain or to harm people's or organizations' reputations.
- ➢ A convenient medium for the quick spread of false information is social media.
- ➢ Social media's ability to spread quickly can increase the effectiveness and reach of false information.
- ➢ To prevent being duped by false information, it is necessary to be sceptical of any information you acquire from unreliable or questionable sources.

Interviewee 5. Name: Sahos Mustafiz

Main themes regarding the fifth interview answers

- ➢ Technological advancements and knowledge accessibility.
- ➢ Information overload and the requirement for media literacy.
- ➢ Recognizing reliable sources from suspected ones.

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[156] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[157] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.
[158] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

- ➢ Knowledge of the media, the capacity to discriminate between real and fake news, socio-cultural background, and demographics impact people's belief in fake news.
- ➢ Governments, technology companies, and social media platforms all took steps to counteract fake news.
- ➢ The value of verifying information and using caution when consuming it.
- ➢ Correct information being changed to fit a specific narrative or goal.
- ➢ Intentional fabrication of information to influence the reader's opinion.
- ➢ The importance of using critical reasoning and fact-checking when dealing with false information.

Interviewee 6. Name: Neon Motiul

Main themes regarding the sixth interview answers

- ➢ Media literacy is essential for identifying accurate fraudulent information by critically analyzing and evaluating media reports.
- ➢ Understanding the media can help someone distinguish between false and accurate news.
- ➢ Despite abundant information, the media adheres to a set of norms and practices that help search for the truth.
- ➢ False vs accurate information can be distinguished in news stories by having a basic understanding of the media.
- ➢ Confidence in Fake News: Learning to spot fake news reduces trust in unreliable information.
- ➢ Finding bogus news piques curiosity, prompting people to look for trustworthy information.
- ➢ Detecting fake news encourages awareness of and caution around unreliable information.
- ➢ Reducing the Prevalence of Fake News: Media literacy and analytical thinking are intended to reduce the prevalence of fake news.
- ➢ Reports should be critically analyzed to guarantee that accurate information is being spread.
- ➢ Truth in Media: Finding the truth among all the available information is crucial.
- ➢ Increasing Confidence: Media literacy increases trust in the credibility of news sources.
- ➢ A well-informed society and informed citizenship are promoted by media literacy.

Experts understand that media literacy plays a vital role in developing critical thinking skills when making informed decisions in the conduct of public discourse and gaining the ability to navigate the media environment. Incorporating media literacy education into formal and informal contexts is important so that people can learn to critically evaluate media content, verify information, and acquire healthy news consumption habits through schools, educational institutions, and community organizations. Early media literacy training can help people develop lifelong abilities that will help them successfully navigate the country's complex media landscape. This enables educated Bangladeshis to make informed decisions, participate effectively in society and navigate the vast flow of media messages.

Following are some ideas to combat false news issues and advance media literacy: include media literacy instruction in all levels of school curricula, from kindergarten to higher education; create media literacy training programs for teachers to improve their capacity to impart skills in media analysis and critical thinking; hold workshops and seminars on media literacy to assist parents and other adults with children's media use; create educational campaigns encouraging media literacy and fact-checking in partnership with media organizations.

Include media literacy components in programs for journalists' and media professionals' professional development; encourage fact-checkers and media literacy organizations to work together on efforts to expose misleading information and advance honest reporting; provide information and tools that make fact-checking and source verification easier, such as internet platforms and mobile apps; to provide the public with media literacy resources and programs, encourage collaborations between media literacy organizations and libraries.

Integrate media literacy instruction into digital citizenship programs to teach people how to behave responsibly online and critically analyze online content; engage social media platforms to promote fact-checking tools on their platforms and give media literacy programs a top priority; create media literacy initiatives targeting specific groups, such as elders, immigrants, or underserved neighborhoods.

Develop algorithms in partnership with IT firms that prioritize trustworthy and accurate sources in news feeds and search results; in order to promote participation and engagement among students and the wider public, organize media literacy contests and activities as well as engage grassroots efforts community organizations to reach various demographics; establish collaborations with academic institutions to share best practices and

guarantee equal access to media education for underprivileged communities; encourage cross-border partnerships and knowledge exchange to create international standards for media literacy instruction; organize public service announcements to encourage media literacy and critical thinking via creating certifications to acknowledge people's mastery of the subject; to earn the public's trust, encourage media outlets to be open about their editorial and fact-checking practices; by putting these ideas into practice, we can all work to improve media literacy, stop the spread of false information, and build a culture that values knowledge and critical thought.

CONCLUSION ON CHAPTER 3

All social classes in Bangladesh must receive media literacy training, particularly given the digital era and the prevalence of deep fake technology. It is essential to cultivate critical thinking abilities and recognize the legitimacy of media content to stop the spread of false information and fake news. Therefore, fact-checking applications must be more accessible for Bangladesh's typical internet users to access and utilize.

Therefore, it is necessary to increase fact-checking knowledge and media literacy skills through extensive education. It will also help to halt the dissemination of incorrect and distorted information that has led to disputes and violence against minority communities. The difficulty has prompted social media sites to update policies to thwart fake content.

In critical situations like the Ramu violence in 2012, the Delhi riots in 2020, and the Rohingya violence in 2017, measures have been taken to lessen the impact of false information. In Bangladesh, fake news has negatively impacted rural and urban citizens' views, habits, and communal cohesion. Notably, during the COVID-19 outbreak, fact-checking organizations were successful in spotting and dispelling misleading information, rumors, and fake news.

Despite this progress, fact-checking still needs to be done for many people in Bangladesh. Fighting against false information and fake news in Bangladesh is only possible with media literacy instruction backed by efficient fact-checking tools and organizations. A more educated and resilient society will be produced if efforts increase accessibility, education, and awareness. There is considerable agreement on numerous important issues when expert perspectives on media literacy and false news are compared.

The first is a general understanding of the severe threat of fake news in today's information-rich culture. It is believed that the spread of incorrect information threatens public knowledge and civic debate. The experts agree that media literacy is essential for addressing

and reducing the spread of false information. They stress how better media literate people can distinguish between reliable and false information.

People who are media literate are better able to assess the accuracy of news reports, evaluate the credibility of news sources, and recognize the tricks used to spread false information. The experts also agree that people who are less media literate are more likely to share and believe fake information. People with poor media literacy may need help critically assessing information, judging news sources' reliability, and avoiding confirmation bias. Because of these factors, they are more susceptible to the effects of fake news.

There is also unanimity on the significance of fact-checking and information verification. By analyzing online content and using fact-checking techniques, the experts emphasize the importance of digital literacy in assisting people in identifying and avoiding false information.

They underline how adept users of digital literacy are at navigating the complexity of the online information environment. Additionally, the experts stress the value of educational initiatives in promoting media literacy and lowering the acceptance of untrue information. They emphasize educating students in critical thinking, source evaluation, fact-checking techniques, and media literacy. The ability to critically assess information sources and distinguish between reliable and false information has been demonstrated to be a benefit of these interventions.

Experts also understand how social media platforms shape people's ideas and make them more vulnerable to false information. They draw attention to how algorithmic biases, echo chambers, and disinformation all contribute to the propagation of erroneous information. In order to teach media literacy and create ways to counter the effects of fake news on society, it is essential to understand these processes.

Even though each expert's specific studies and research may differ from the others, there is general agreement that media literacy education is crucial for preventing fake news, developing critical thinking abilities, and encouraging responsible media consumption in the current digital era.

Media literacy enables people to make educated choices, engage fully in society, and contribute to a more selective and robust public dialogue by giving them the skills to navigate the media world. Moreover, the subject research data and findings also support the previous research evidence. In this regard, the research findings of this study are shown in a concise view below to support the research problems and hypothesis.

There is a clear link between media literacy and acceptance of false information: ehe capacity to access, scrutinize, assess, and produce media information is known as media

literacy; media literacy influences people's views and behaviors related to news consumption; according to studies, those more media literate are more likely to critically evaluate information, identify false information, and form informed judgments on the integrity of news sources.

On the other hand, those who are less media literate are more likely to accept and spread misleading information; they might be unable to distinguish between facts and opinions, assess the reliability of sources, or recognize biases and propagandist techniques in media content; as a result, people are more prone to accept erroneous information at face value, which can adversely affect the general public's perception, decision-making, and general well-being.

While the value of social media as a source of knowledge is constantly growing: 74% and 68% of people use Twitter[159] and Facebook[160] for information, society should promote media literacy to lessen the effects of fake news and its spread while fostering more informed and resilient individuals.

It was found that over half of respondents rely on Facebook[161] as their main source of political information (25.9%), health news (12.4%), entertainment (11.7%), crime (6.7%) and communalism (7.8%), where the ratio of fakes with negative connotations is 10 times higher than fakes with positive connotations. An analysis of 282 fake news shows that 135 or (47.9%) is from Facebook[162], 41 (14.5%) - YouTube, 31 (11%) - Instagram[163], 19 (6.7%) came from local network, as well as Internet media spread 33 (11.7%), and 23 (8.2%) distributed from other sources and rumours relayed in the mosque.

The country currently ranks 128th in the world in terms of literacy rate, with 44% and 24% of Bangladesh's population aged 15 to 24 still required to have a secondary level of education. Therefore, modern criteria for verifying facts are needed to predict the cognitive, emotional and behavioural reactions of Bangladeshi media users.

These recommendations are based on 6 in-depth interviews with experts from the Press Institute of Bangladesh-PIB, Independent Television, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS),

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[163] Instagram is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

TheReport.live and Daily Ajker Patrika, confirming the scientific hypothesis of a direct relationship between the level of media literacy and belief in fake news: users with a low level of media literacy are more tend to share false information, and they also get lost in the digital environment.

Educational programs aimed at increasing media literacy and reducing the prevalence of misinformation should focus on the student community, which is most open to introducing fact-checking and measuring media literacy as a result of their studies.

Quantitative and qualitative research methods collected data from 441 respondents in April-May 2022 using Google Docs and included demographic information, questions about media literacy, belief in fake news, media consumption habits, and formal education or training in media literacy of the total sample, 249 respondents (56.5%) stated that they lack knowledge in identifying fake news, 113 (25.6%) respondents noted that they were "rather confident" in detecting fake news, 65 (14.7%) respondents said they were "confident" in detecting fake news, and only 14 people, approximately 6.3% of respondents, expressed "high confidence" in detecting false information. 3% of master's degree holders actively demonstrated their education in this area, while 97% of respondents were not involved in even formal education or training.

If every second respondent (50.3%) encountered fake news, then a quarter of respondents (24.3%) did not even notice them, and every fifth (19.9%) willingly spread it. 45.1% of respondents named "social networks" as their main source of news, with 29.3% spending "1 to 3 hours" per day viewing news content, and 2.9% spending "3 to 5 hours".

Five important conclusions can be drawn from the survey data on respondents' perceptions of the veracity of fake news articles: 48.3% of respondents said they never considered fake news to be true, demonstrating high suspicion and critical thinking; 21.5% of respondents sometimes see truthfulness in fakes, 10.2% accept fake news as the real state of affairs, and, finally, 19.9% deny accepting unverified information.

90% said that media literacy training had a significant impact on their ability to recognize fake news (60% were completely convinced of this, and 30% were partially convinced, with 10% denying a cause-and-effect relationship between training and practice).

A significant portion of respondents (68.3%) believe that increased media literacy leads to decreased trust in fake news, while 8.2% of respondents do not believe that higher media literacy skills will lead to decreased trust in fake news. In practice, the training significantly helped 8 out of 14 who completed the media literacy training. This result partly

explains the position of one in four respondents (23.6%), who stated a low correlation between the level of media literacy and trust in fake news.

The results showed that training significantly affects the ability of every second person who has completed courses or relevant programs to recognize deceptive content. Media literacy is needed to understand the content of digital platforms. Fact-checking practices must be continually improved to increase sensitivity to fake news.

CONCLUSIONS

Bangladesh's efforts to embrace digitalization and the country's transformation via social media. While digitalization has many positive effects, like more empowerment, better service delivery, and economic growth, some issues must be resolved. Utilizing social media's benefits while guaranteeing truth, accountability, and honest reporting in journalism will require striking a balance. The future of Bangladesh's digital revolution will depend on finding a balance between leveraging social media's benefits and maintaining truth, accountability, and ethical reporting in journalism. The country currently ranks 128th in the world in terms of literacy rate, with 44% and 24% of Bangladesh's population aged 15 to 24 still required to have a secondary level of education. In these circumstances, information about media literacy must spread across all social classes. As to the purpose of the study to analyse the existing concepts of media literacy, to identify emerging tendencies and existing trends in the spread of fakes in order to develop general recommendations for countering false information in Bangladesh we state that**:**

1. Study the prerequisites for the emergence and functioning of fake news in the media system of Bangladesh was successfully completed as well as the features of the process of digitalization of national media after the country gained independence were identified. The main highlights are the role of political structure and media fakes, economic structure and media, and the role of Bangladesh press in the economic scenario before and after independence. The intricate interactions influenced by social structure highlight the difficulties facing press freedom and freedom of expression and the importance of a thriving civil society for fostering media responsibility and ethical journalism. Besides, the role of media in process of transitioning to a new social order, social classes, and stratification in Bangladesh has been noticed, while special attention was paid to two significant aspect: the structure of government and governance and deceptive practices within political parties.

2. Prerequisites for the emergence and functioning of fake news in Bangladesh media mystem found its reflection in the pro-government websites disseminated misleading material without repercussion, while Bangladeshi government shut down news websites and blocked dissenting reporting sites. At the same time the role of social structure in the formation of a modern media system is very important. The state of the economy impacts various factors, including the flow of advertising money, the financial constraints media companies must deal with, access to technology, the impact on media content, and entrepreneurship. These issues affect the independence of the media, the diversity of viewpoints, and the long-term viability of alternative and independent media sources.

3. It is crucial to comprehend the interaction between the economic system and the media environment to assess the difficulties and opportunities the Bangladeshi media business faces. The role of Media in Transition to a New Social Order, Social Classes and Stratification partly explaines the causes of occurrence, features of functioning, the distribution channels used, as well as the results of the impact of fakes on media users in Bangladesh. The modern media landscape of Bangladesh is implicit in the practice of creating and disseminating fake news, as a legacy of the recent colonial past. Current scientific research in the field of media literacy of media consumption confirms that the transition of national media to the digital requires new training programs that take into account national mentality to verify published information in the context of Bangladesh's digital identity in the framework of a low level of overall literacy, where destructive fake news channels reached half of the country's population impacting on a modern Bangladeshi society, especially the younger generation.

4. National media economy as the foundation for media independence focuses on Bangladesh's economic system. Understanding the organization of government is crucial for comprehending political power dynamics while addressing deceptive practices is essential for fostering transparency and accountability in the political landscape. The digitalization process of Bangladesh media attaining inclusive and comprehensive development through the idea of a «Digital Bangladesh», seeks to use technology for societal improvement. After independence, the press remained a crucial source of information, examining governmental policies, business reporting, and economic trends. The media has been essential in influencing the corporate envnationalironment, raising public awareness, drawing attention to injustices, assessing policies, and promoting public debate on economic matters. Investigative media reveals financial irregularities and wrongdoing, while a number of media improved financial literacy, enabling people to make more informed decisions. In Bangladesh, the press has generally aided in developing financial literacy, educating people to make wise financial decisions, and promoting public discussion of economic issues.

5. The government has implemented policies to improve digital media platforms and guarantee media accessibility for all residents because it recognizes the significance of the media in forming public opinion and sharing information. Development of fake news and its impact on social media described in the case of fakes impact on social media. The evolution of press in Bangladesh before and after the 1971 Liberation War, radio and television broadcasting development, and the freedom of press and media relations are discussed as part of the fake's ecosystem. Based on a wide range of sources and taking into account expert assessments, key parameters of the relationship between the state of media literacy and the

public's trust in false information published on social networks have been identified. Nearly 1,000 journalists have lost their jobs or are not being paid in the months after the country's breakout of the pandemic. The media in Bangladesh has seen several changes in terms of organization, content, use, and ownership since the 1990s when the democratic period started.

6. Over the last 20 years, Bangladesh's media has seen substantial expansion. However, the two major political parties in power have pledged to grant the state-owned media autonomy or complete control of the press. The freedom of the press in Bangladesh has been a topic of concern for years, with restrictive laws such as the ICT Act and the Official Secrets Act being criticized for stifling press freedom and free speech in social media, four government-run television networks, 45 approved private television channels, Bangladesh Television (BTV) as well as in 28 approved private FM radios, and Bangladesh Betar holding which runs 35 FM stations and 14 regional radio stations.

7. Freedom of the press during COVID-19 pandemic considered as significantly important factor which impacted the media sector, with only 86 newspapers remaining operational as of 2 July 2020, while 254 publications had shut down. Radical Islamists have been attacking journalists since 1992, having seen a surge in power since 2013, and in 2016. New restrictions were introduced under the country's laws in a situation where 50 million people, or more than 29% of the population, actively use main social networks. The concentration of media ownership in Bangladesh among a few people or organizations with political allegiances has led to little diversity of opinions and skewed reporting. The prevalence of false information and disinformation in the Bangladeshi media environment has recently increased, leading to the emergence of a so-called "Fake Ecosystem" that has made 40 % of the population dependent on fake news in metropolitan areas where a third of the population of 172 million as of January 2023 are young people aged 13 to 44 years old.

8. Social media's accessibility has given underrepresented groups a more prominent voice, highlighting their experiences and bringing attention to various social, political, and environmental issues. Blogging and online activism first emerged in Bangladesh in the mid-2000s, changing media consumption trends: 66.94 million internet users, with internet penetration at 38.9% in 2023. Finally, four types of online activities have emerged. journalism: social networks themselves, independent online newspapers, online newspapers with significant investments from oligarchs and online versions of printed newspapers. In addition, there has been a sharp rise in digital journalism due to the widespread use of smartphones and the Internet. Vlogs, podcasts, and live streaming are becoming more popular. Important contributors include Prothom Alo, The Daily Star, Dhaka Tribune and Somoy TV and their

real-time reporting has decentralized the news ecosystem of Bangladesh. Citizens were provided with a new platform for exchanging news of varying degrees, expressing their ideas and participating in public discussions.

9. The impact of social networks on a new journalism depicts the impact of social media on digitization which significantly changed journalism practice. Social media platforms have become potent instruments that have changed journalism practices by opening new channels for disseminating information and citizen participation and engagement. The emergence of social media has decentralized Bangladesh's news ecosystem and allowed people to actively participate in setting the news agenda. It has given citizens a forum to exchange news, voice their ideas, and participate in public conversation giving underrepresented groups a more prominent voice, highlighting their experiences and bringing attention to various social, political, and environmental issues. Blogging and online activism first emerged in Bangladesh in the mid-2000s, changing media consumption trends: 66.94 million internet users, with internet penetration at 38.9% 2023.

10. The Impact of Media Literacy on Countering Fake News in Bangladesh is considered from the angle of how Media literacy enables people to make educated choices, engage fully in society, and contribute to a more selective and robust public dialogue by giving them the skills to navigate the media world. Critical concepts on distinct types of literacies include Information Literacy, Media Literacy, Computer Literacy, and Digital Literacy as well. In the history of technology's impact on literacy, digital technology is the most recent notable advancement. The Bangladesh Centre for Development Journalism and Communication (BCDJC) was founded in 2002 and quickly became one of the leading groups promoting media literacy nationwide.

11. Over time, literacy has evolved from focusing mainly on technical skills to a more holistic perspective that considers language proficiency, numeracy, and social behaviors. The value of social media as a source of knowledge is constantly growing: 74% and 68% of people use Twitter[164] and Facebook[165] for information. It was found that over half of respondents rely on Facebook[166] as their main source of political information (25.9%), health news (12.4%), entertainment (11.7%), crime (6.7%) and communalism (7.8%), where the ratio of fakes with

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negative connotations is 10 times higher than fakes with positive connotations. An analysis of 282 fake news shows that almost a half is from Facebook[167], 14.5% came from YouTube, 11% came from Instagram[168], 6.7% came from local network, as well as Internet media spread 11.7%, and 8.2% is distributed from other sources and rumors relayed in the mosque. The examining of 11 cases of violence and deaths due to widespread fakes in the period 2012-2022 distributed under the headings proved that there are still challenges to promoting media literacy in Bangladesh because of politicized media environment.

12. Social media literacy involves social media platforms wisely and efficiently to counter potential threats: BD Fact Check, Jacchai, and Fact Watch and others categorized as online media outlets. These businesses primarily validate statements made on social media. The idea that media illiteracy tells on the Bangladeshi mentality in the perception and consumption of information is being proved in the context of new media leading to both changes in media consumption habits and lifestyles in rural areas of the country with 60% of the country's population. It destroys not only the traditional way of life, but also ruins ideas about social justice, which have resulted in numerous cases of mass deaths on religious grounds and in intercommunal clashes during the study period 2012-2022, demonstrating in practice the mechanism for converting fake news into violence.

13. The country's modern media landscape, rooted in its recent colonial past, implicitly believes in the dissemination of local news, including false information that leads to destructive consequences. Villagers rely on their cultural myths, religious beliefs and sensitivity to social justice. In addition, they often complained about being deceived by materials reflecting these ideals, and shared this knowledge by talking to their friends and relatives. Study on "Bengali Fake News Detection" developed a data mining method to distinguish between fake and accurate news categorizing Bengali false news in the context of South Asia. Additionally, a web interface based on the classifier was built to determine whether a news story was written in Bengali and whether it was authentic. With a random classifier, the findings demonstrate that the classification model has an accuracy of 85%. In these circumstances, information about media literacy must spread across all social classes for predicting the cognitive, emotional and behavioural reactions of Bangladeshi media users.

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14. Based on modern practices of traditional and new media, explore the digital media environment and the characteristics of the socio-demographic structure of media content consumers in Bangladesh we determined the relationship between digitalization processes, the development of national journalism and the level of media literacy as a system countering fake news in Bangladesh to develop evaluation criteria and principles for mediametric measurements of the influence of media literacy on countering fakes. These recommendations were proved by 6 in-depth interviews with experts from the Press Institute of Bangladesh-PIB, Independent Television, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), TheReport.live, Daily Anandabazar and Daily Ajker Patrika, confirming the scientific hypothesis of a direct relationship between the level of media literacy and belief in fake news: users with a low level of media literacy are more tend to share false information.

15. For providing the analysis of the Interrelationship Between Media Literacy and Believing in Fake News in Bangladesh we rely on the quantitative and qualitative research methods collected data from 441 respondents out of 500 distributed questionnaires tin April-May 2022 using Google Docs which included demographic information, questions about media literacy, belief in fake news, media consumption habits, and formal education or training in media literacy, etc. Every second respondent (56.5%) stated that he lacks knowledge in identifying fake news, while 25% of respondents were "rather confident" in detecting fake news. At the same time 14.7% respondents said they were "confident" in detecting fake news, and only 14 people, approximately 6.3% of respondents, expressed "high confidence" in detecting false information. 3% of master's degree holders actively demonstrated their education in this area, while 97% of respondents were not in any way involved in even formal education or training in media literacy. If every second respondent (50.3%) encountered fake news, then a quarter of respondents (24.3%) did not even notice them, and every fifth (19.9%) willingly spread it. It is very essential that 45.1% of respondents named "social networks" as their main source of news while 29.3% of respondents spend "1 to 3 hours" per day viewing news content, and 2.9% spending "3 to 5 hours".

16. Five important conclusions can be drawn from the survey data on respondents' perceptions of the veracity of fake news articles: 48.3% of respondents said they never considered fake news to be true, demonstrating high suspicion and critical thinking; 21.5% of respondents sometimes see truthfulness in fakes, 10.2% accept fake news as the real state of affairs, and, finally, 19.9% deny accepting unverified information. 90% said that media literacy training had a significant impact on their ability to recognize fake news (60% were completely convinced of that and 30% were partially convinced, with 10% denying a cause-

and-effect relationship between training and practice). The study's findings support the importance of media literacy and critical thinking skills in combating misinformation and justify the need for education and media awareness initiatives. A significant portion of respondents (68.3%) believe that increased media literacy leads to decreased trust in fake news, while 8.2% of respondents do not believe that higher media literacy skills will lead to decreased trust in fake news. In practice, the training significantly helped 8 out of 14 who completed the media literacy training. This result partly explains the position of a large grope of respondents (23.6%), who stated a low correlation between the level of media literacy and trust in fake news.

17. The results showed that training significantly affects the ability of every second person who has completed courses or relevant programs to recognize deceptive content. Media literacy is needed to understand the content of digital platforms. Fact-checking practices must be continually improved to increase sensitivity to fake news. The put forwaed research hypothesis is that a high level of media literacy can significantly counter the emergence and spread of fake news with timely diagnosis of disseminated false information as a threat to information security, while government cooperation with professional journalistic communities can contribute to the development of digital literacy programs for the population as part of achieving the sustainable development goals of Bangladesh, was proved.

18. The emergence of social media platforms has transformed the journalism industry in Bangladesh, fostering a decentralized news ecosystem and giving citizen journalists greater authority. Traditional media organizations have been forced to change, interacting with readers on social media and rethinking how they consume news because of the decentralization of the news ecosystem and the increase in public interaction. As it is seen the proliferation of fake news and misinformation, financial restrictions on conventional media institutions and the requirement to balance the benefits and drawbacks of social media while respecting journalistic standards have all emerged as difficulties. Developing critical thinking skills through media literacy aids people in recognizing reliable information from false narratives. In the end, media literacy is crucial in fostering a healthy information ecosystem, upholding the integrity of public discourse, and protecting people's and society's well-being in the digital age. Journalists, educators, legislators, and stakeholders must work together to develop a population that is media literate and capable of navigating the complex and quickly changing media ecosystem.

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Figure 1. Bangladesh on World Map. *Source :*

https://www.mapsofworld.com/bangladesh/bangladesh-location-map.html

Figure 2: Religious belief of population of Bangladesh (created by author)

Figure 3: GDP Growth of Bangladesh (Asian Development Bank, 2023)

Figure 4. Ramu Violence, 2012. (Source : ABC News)

Figure 5. Sayeedi Rumor, 2013. (*Source: The Business Standard, 2020)*
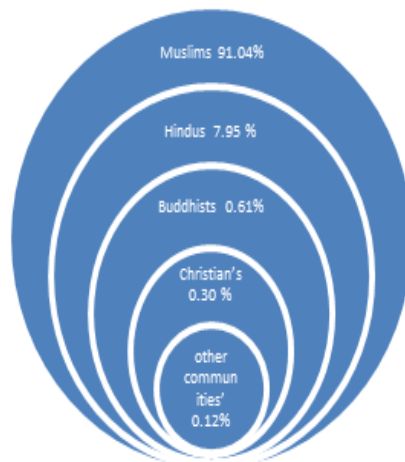
Figure 6. Attack on Homna Hindu village, 2014. (*Source: BDnews24.com, 2014)*

Figure 7. Stock market fake news, 2015. (*Source: BBC Bangla, 2015)*

Figure 8. Nasirnagar Case, 2016. (*Source: BBC Bangla, 2016)*

Figure 9. Gangachara Case, 2017. (*Source: BBC Bangla, 2017)*

Figure 10. Tarek Rahman and Oxford debate, 2018. (*Source: DW Bangla, 2018)*

Figure 11. Padma Bridge and kidnapping children, 2019. (*Source: BDnews24.com, 2019)*

Figure 12. Burimari case, 2020. (*Source: Bangla News24.com, 2020)*

Figure 13. Ramnathpur case, 2021. (*Source:* DW *Bangla, 2021)*

Figure 14. Mashrafe's 510 crore wealth controversy, 2022. (*Source: Rumor Scanner, 2022)*

Figure 15. Three million people were martyred in the 1971 Liberation war - this information was first published in the Soviet national daily Pravda on January 2, 1972. However, much fake news and rumors about the number of casualties were spread at that time. (Source: Daily Asian Age, 2019)

Over 30 lakh killed by Pak forces ---Pravda

MOSCOW, Jan. 4 (ENA): The Communist Party newspaper Pravda has reported that over 30 lakh persons were killed throughout Bangladesh by the Pakistan occupation forces during the last nine months.

Quoting its special correspondent stationed in Dacca the paper said that the Pakistan military forces immediately before their surrender to Mukti Bahinis and the allied forces, had killed about 800 intellectuals in the capital city of Bangladesh alone.

The paper also criticised the pro-Pakistan stand taken by the European countries and the United States in the recent Indo-Pak war.

snid, Atiqur Rahman, Farhad Rahman, Rehana Akhtar, Mahbuba Haider and others.

Observance of 'Mujib Day' discussed

A meeting of the Presidents and Secretaries of the Union Awami League units under Dacca Nagar Awami League was held yesterday in the office of Dacca Nagar Awami League, reports BPI.

Mr. Anwar Choudhury, Vice President of Dacca Nagar Awami League, presided over the meeting and Gazi Golam Mostafa, Secretary Dacca Nagar A.L, and others took part in the discussion regarding various problems including observation of "Mujib Day" and maintaining peace and tranquillity in the city.

Soviet Pravda newspaper about Bangladesh tragedy.

Appendix B : Survey Questions

Section 1 : Demographic Information

What is your gender?

What is your age?

What is your educational background?

Which university is you currently enrolled in?

What is your Division of Residence?

Section 2: Media Literacy

6. How would you rate your overall media literacy skills?

(1 = Very low, 2 = low, 3 = High, 4 = Very high)

7. How confident are you in your ability to identify fake news?

(1 = Not confident, 2 = fairly confident, 3 = confident, 4 = Very confident)

8. Which of the following sources do you trust for accurate news information? (Select all that apply)

a. Traditional news outlets (e.g., newspapers, television)

b. Social media platforms (e.g., Facebook[176], Twitter[177])

c. Online news websites

d. Academic journals and research publications

e. Friends and family

f. Other (please specify)

Section 3: Belief in Fake News

9. Have you ever encountered news articles or information that you later discovered to be false or misleading?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Not sure

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[176] Facebook is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

[177] Twitter is an organization whose activities are prohibited on the territory of the Russian Federation on the grounds of carrying out extremist activities.

10. How often do you encounter news articles that you suspect might be fake?

a. Frequently

b. Occasionally

c. Rarely

d. Never

11. When you come across a news article that you suspect might be fake, what actions do you usually take? (Select all that apply)

a. Share it on social media without verifying

b. Ignore it and move on

c. Conduct further research to verify its authenticity

d. Seek information from trusted sources

e. Report it as fake news on the platform

f. Other (please specify)

Section 4: Media Consumption Habits

12. On average, how much time do you spend consuming news content each day?

a. Less than 15 minutes

b. 15 minutes to 1 hour

c. 1 to 3 hours

d. 3 to 5 hours

e. More than 5 hours

13. Which types of media do you primarily rely on for news consumption? (Select all that apply)

a. Television

b. Print newspapers/magazines

c. Online news websites

d. Social media platforms

e. Radio

f. Other (please specify)

Section 5: Belief in Fake News and Media Literacy

14. How often do you believe fake news articles to be true?

a. Frequently

b. Occasionally

c. Rarely

d. Never

15. Do you think having higher media literacy skills helps in reducing belief in fake news?

a. Yes

b. No

c. Not sure

Section 6: Additional Questions

16. Have you received any formal education or training in media literacy?

a. Yes

b. No

17. If yes, how has this education or training impacted your ability to identify fake news?

a. Greatly improved

b. Somewhat improved

c. No significant impact

d. Not applicable (if answered 'No' in question 15)

(Thank you for your participation! Your responses will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only)

Appendix C: Data Analysis Results

1. Gender

	Percent	Total
Male	47.8%	211
Female	52.2%	230

2. Ages

	Percent	Total
17-22	70.5%	311
23-28	28.1%	124
28-33	1.4%	6

3. Education

	Percent	**Total**
College	58.5%	258
Bachelor Degree	39.7%	175
Master degree	1.8%	8

4. University

	Percent	**Total**
Dhaka University	20.8%	92
Chittagong University	18.1%	80
Rajshahi University	17%	75
Barisal University	13.8%	61
Khulna University	9.3%	41
Shahjalal Science and Technology University	6.3%	28
Jatiya Kabi Kazi Nazrul Islam University	6.3%	28
Rangpur University	8.2%	36

5. Location

Division of Bangladesh	**Total**		**Division of Bangladesh**	**Total**
Dhaka	92		Khulna	41
Chittagong	80		Sylhet	28

Rajshahi	75		Mymensingh	28
Barisal	61		Rangpur	36

6. How would you rate your overall media literacy skills?

	Percent	Total
Very low	56.9%	251
Low	25.2%	111
High	15.9%	70
Very high	2%	9

7. How confident you are in your ability to identify fake news?

	Percent	Total
Not confident	56.5%	249
Fairly confident	25.6%	113
Confident	14.7%	65
Very confident	6.3%	14

8. Which sources trust for accurate news information?

	Percent	Total
Traditional news outlets (e.g., newspapers, television)	54.4%	240
Social media platforms	8.39%	37
Online news websites	26%	115
Academic journals and research publications	9%	40
Friends and family	1.6%	7
Other (please specify)	0.5%	2

9. **Have you ever encountered news articles or information you later discovered to be false or misleading?**

	Percent	Total
Yes	50.3%	222
No	24.3%	107
Not sure	25.4%	112

10. How often do you encounter news articles that you suspect might be fake?

	Percent	Total
Frequently	10.4%	46
Occasionally	42.9%	189
Rarely	45.6%	201
Never	1.1%	5

11. When you come across a news article that you suspect might be fake, what actions do you usually take?

	Percent	Total
Share it on social media without verifying	19.9%	88
Ignore it and move on	23.4%	103
Conduct further research to verify its authenticity	15.2%	67
Seek information from trusted sources	25.4%	112
Report it as fake news on the platform	15.9%	7
Other	0.2%	1

12. On average, how much time do you spend consuming news content each day?

	Percent	Total
Less than 15 minutes	20.6%	91
15 minutes to 1 hour	45.1%	199
1 to 3 hours	29.3%	129
3 to 5 hours	2.9%	13
More than 5 hours	2.09%	9

13. Which types of media do you primarily rely on for news consumption?

	Percent	Total
Television	12.6%	56
Print newspapers/magazines	11.1%	49
Online news websites	25.4%	112
Social media platforms	45.1%	199

| Radio | 4.8% | 21 |
| Other | 0.9% | 4 |

14. How often do you believe fake news articles to be true?

	Percent	Total
Frequently	10.2%	45
Occasionally	21.5%	95
Rarely	19.9%	88
Never	48.3%	213

15. Do you think having higher media literacy skills helps in reducing belief in fake news?

	Percent	Total
Yes	68.3%	301
No	8.2%	36
Not sure	23.6%	104

16. Have you received any formal education or training in media literacy?

	Percent	Total
Yes	2.9%	13
No	97.05%	428

17. If yes, how has this education or training impacted your ability to identify fake news?

	Percent	Total
Greatly improved	61.5%	8
Somewhat improved	30.8%	4
No significant impact	7.7%	1
Not applicable (if answered 'No' in question 15)		

Appendix D: Experts Interview

Interviewee 1

Name: Zafar Wazed			
Affiliation/Designation: Director General, Press Institute Bangladesh-PIB			
Interview date and place: 18 May 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh.			
Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	**A 1**	False or deceptive material reported as real news is known as fake news and can have detrimental effects. Fact-checking organizations, media literacy initiatives, and raising awareness are crucial to combat it. Those with evil intentions might start from scratch to produce fake news. They could make up stories, statements, or incidents to mislead readers. Writing essays, making photographs, or making movies that seem authentic are all ways to accomplish this. Without adequate verification or fact-checking, misinterpretation and misrepresentation of the facts can propagate accidentally through a network of sources. Confirmation bias and echo chambers can disseminate fake news by generating inaccurate or misleading information.
Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?	**A 2**	A person's propensity to believe fake news is strongly influenced by their media literacy level. Accessing, analyzing, evaluating, and critically interpreting media messages and information are all parts of media literacy. Highly media-literate people can better analyze the data, locate trustworthy sources, and distinguish between reputable news and false information. By evaluating the reliability and objectivity of news sources, media literacy promotes people to acquire critical thinking abilities. It teaches people to spot red flags like click bait headlines

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			or sensationalized content and cross-reference information from other sources, look for trustworthy journalistic procedures, and verify the accuracy of information. This lessens the possibility of believing false information.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	**A 3**	Reduced acceptance of fake news can be significantly influenced by primary and mass media education on information, communication, and media. People can better distinguish between trustworthy and false information when given the tools and knowledge needed to analyze data critically.
Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?	**A 4**	Media literacy encourages emotional and cognitive control, assisting people in regulating their impulsive reactions to breaking news. Sensational headlines, clickbait, and emotionally charged information are less likely to influence them. Media literacy includes social media and digital platforms, where false information can spread quickly. Digitally literate people know the algorithms, filters, echo chambers, and deceptive practices employed on digital platforms, which helps them traverse the online environment more efficiently.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?	**A 5**	Social media platforms, which have become essential sources of false information, may be used and experienced differently by various demographic groups. According to studies, heavy social media users may be more susceptible to fake news because of the echo chamber effect and algorithmic biases confirming their ideas. This is true regardless of their demographic makeup.

Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news?	A 6	The employment of advanced manipulation techniques, such as deep fakes and algorithmic micro targeting, has also been made easier by technological improvements. Deep fakes are manufactured media that effectively portray people saying or doing things they have never done, making it difficult to distinguish between them. Individuals can receive customized content through algorithmic micro targeting, which may reinforce their prejudices or shape their ideas. To prevent being duped by fake news, media literacy skills are essential for identifying and comprehending these manipulation strategies.

Interviewee 2

Name: Ashish Saikat			
Affiliation/Designation: Chief News Editor, Independent Television			
Interview date and place: 12 May 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh.			
Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	A 1	False information purposefully presented as news is known as fake news. It often entails disseminating incorrect or misleading information via various media outlets, such as social media, websites, news articles, or videos. Some fake news is produced to make fun of or satirize something. These articles or stories could have made-up details, exaggerated assertions, or ridiculous scenarios. Although they frequently have a humorous or social commentary motive, unwary readers may mistake them for actual news. Social media platforms offer a quick and extensive network for the spread of news and information. However, because of the speed at which information disseminates and the

				absence of fact-checking tools, they can also reinforce false information. Fake news can be used in phishing scams to trick victims into divulging personal information.
Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?	**A 2**		A higher level of media literacy increases the likelihood that someone will approach the news skeptically, actively question the reliability of sources, and look for supporting evidence before accepting it as fact. They typically have a deeper understanding of the tactics and procedures employed in media manipulation, such as false headlines, selective editing, or online misinformation campaigns. Media literacy instructs people on how to use tactics like misinformation, propaganda, selective editing, and emotional appeals to manipulate and deceive audiences through fake news. It also includes knowledge of digital literacy concepts like algorithms, sponsored content recognition, echo chamber effects, and filter bubbles. Digital literacy helps people traverse the sea of information more efficiently, spotting possible fake news sources and lowering their vulnerability to manipulation.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	**A 3**		Education can encourage the moral and responsible use of media by highlighting the value of disseminating correct and verifiable information. Individuals can be deterred from such behaviors by learning about the adverse effects of distributing false information. Understanding media bias can make people more adept at deciphering media narratives and less susceptible to being duped by inaccurate information.

Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?	A 4	People who are familiar with the media are aware of the value of fact-checking. They actively evaluate the accuracy of information by consulting reputable fact-checking groups, comparing data from different sources, and carefully examining assertions before accepting them as genuine. Recognizing bias and manipulation requires thoroughly understanding the media's production and distribution processes. People who are media literate are familiar with the methods and strategies used to reframe narratives, spin tales, and produce persuasive content, making them capable of spotting possible propaganda or misinformation.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?	A 5	An individual's susceptibility to fake news can be significantly influenced by their political affiliation and cultural values and conventions. Those who belong to a particular political group may be more prone to believe and spread fake news that supports their views because people tend to be more tolerant of information that helps their preexisting opinions and biases. Religious convictions, social mores, and community values are cultural elements that can affect how people perceive information and how susceptible they are to false information.
Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news?	A 6	Social media algorithms frequently produce filter bubbles and echo chambers, which prioritize content based on user preferences and browsing history. Individuals are generally exposed to material consistent with their preexisting views and viewpoints in these tailored online environments. This tendency can increase confirmation bias,

			make it more difficult to critically assess and disprove erroneous information, and improve people's propensity to trust in misleading information.

Interviewee 3

Name: Professor Dr. A A M S Arefin Siddique			
Affiliation/Designation: Chairman, Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS)			
Interview date and place: 11 March 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh.			
Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	**A 1**	Sensational headlines, misrepresented data, edited photos or videos, or whole-created articles are examples of fake news' various guises. It frequently takes advantage of people's emotions, prejudices, or previous conceptions to elicit a strong response or sway public opinion. Impersonation, in which someone pretends to be someone else or makes false social media accounts or websites that look like reliable sources, can produce fake news. They could disseminate misleading information while projecting an air of authority, deceiving people into accepting their claims. People who lack adequate media literacy abilities may be more susceptible to false information. People may unintentionally spread or accept erroneous information without the capacity to assess sources, verify information, and identify bias critically.
Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it	**A 2**	On the other hand, people with lower levels of media literacy might need help assessing the integrity and correctness of the material they come across. They might be more prone to confirmation bias, which causes people to believe information even if it contradicts their preexisting ideas. They may also be less

	have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?		aware of the numerous strategies used to disseminate inaccurate information, which leaves them more open to believing false or deceptive claims. People who are media literate are urged to verify the information before taking it at its value. Verifying assertions, looking for supporting data and relying on reliable sources are all part of fact-checking. People can lessen their susceptibility to believing false information by fact-checking to find errors, misinformation, and disinformation.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	A 3	Education can help people discriminate between accurate and fraudulent information by instructing them in fact-checking methods and tools. It can highlight the value of using trustworthy sources, fact-checking, and cross-referencing data before assuming it is accurate. Reputable fact-checking groups and internet resources are good places to learn fact-checking techniques.
Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?	A 4	Media-savvy people are adept at determining the dependability and authenticity of news sources. They can find reliable sources by looking at things like journalistic standards, reputation, subject matter expertise, and potential biases. By encouraging critical thinking abilities, media literacy empowers people to assess and challenge the information offered. They are more inclined to evaluate the data, consider opposing perspectives, and scan news items for contradictions or logical errors.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural	A 5	According to research, higher-educated people are more skeptical and can better analyze information critically. They might have

	factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?		acquired media literacy and critical thinking abilities, which enable them to distinguish between trustworthy sources and fake news. Low socioeconomic status individuals may need more access to reliable educational and informational resources, leaving them more open to false information.
Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news?	**A 6**	The quick distribution of information is facilitated by social media platforms, frequently without extensive fact-checking or verification. Before corrections or debunking occur, fake news can quickly become viral and reach a large audience. Without media literacy, people may be more likely to accept and spread misleading information without questioning its veracity.

Interviewee 4

Name: Lutfor Rahman Himel			
Affiliation/Designation: Editor, TheReport.live			
Interview date and place: 18 May 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh.			
Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	**A 1**	Fake news means false or inaccurate information-based or misleading information presented as news. It can be deliberately created or the result of an error, mistake, or misinterpretation. Fake news is often spread through the use of counterfeit or low-quality news websites, which, to gain credibility; specialize in creating attention-grabbing information, which often impersonates well-known news sources. Deliberate fake news is created and posted on network to generate as much engagement as possible, usually to increase financial gain or damage the reputation of a person or entity.

Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?	A 2	Yes, of course! Media literacy would be helpful in this context boldly. Media literacy and fact-checking can significantly curb fake news flows. More is needed to address the problem. Media educators must frame the issue more broadly and join forces with those calling for media reform. Also, media literacy training increases individuals' doubt about the media's content. The existence of individuals with high media literacy levels leads to an increase in media quality because such individuals require more realistic messages at a higher rate.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	A 3	Yes, undoubtedly! Primary and Mass Education on media can reduce belief in fake news significantly. Media and information literacy empower people to think critically about facts and information. They are using digital tools to find out the reality.
Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?	A 4	Typically social media users with low digital literacy, who lack fluency with basic technological concepts related to the internet—are more likely to fall for online misinformation or fake news. Specific skills and Competencies for digital media literacy can be classified according to four main principles: (1) Access, (2) Use, (3) Understand and (4) Engage. Note that 'Access' can be considered a precondition of digital media literacy, as it is impossible to be media literate without affordable and reliable internet access.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural	A 5	Yes. I think an individual's demographic and socio-cultural factors influence that

	factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?		individual's belief in fake news. Key factors influencing the acceptance of fake news: Firstly, message characteristics—such as belief consistency and presentation cues—can drive people's belief in misinformation. Secondly, susceptibility to fake news can be determined by individual factors, including people's cognitive styles, predispositions, and differences in communication and information literacy.
Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news?	**A 6**	In this digital era, the Internet made disseminating news faster, allowing users to access information within seconds. The most significant leap in evolution was the introduction of social media, which dramatically changed how we obtain news. The Technology and Information Literacy capability focuses on researching, collecting, managing, transforming, and exchanging information using technologies such as web browsers, email, word processing, and related software.

Interviewee 5

Name: Sahos Mustafiz			
Affiliation/Designation: Specialist- Factcheck at Daily Ajker Patrika			
Interview date and place: 18 March 2022, Dhaka, Bangladesh.			
Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	**A 1**	Governments, technology firms, and social media platforms have all taken action to combat fake news, including putting in place algorithms to find and hide bogus material. People should examine the facts and be cautious when reading the information. Sometimes accurate information or news items are altered to fit a particular narrative or objective to create false news. Facts may be

			deliberately ignored, inflated, or taken out of context to sway the reader's view. Individuals or organizations with predetermined intentions may intentionally manufacture and disseminate fake news to sway public opinion or further their objectives. Readers must know the satirical intent and may mistake satire or parody for factual information.
Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?	**A 2**	It's crucial to remember that even those with high reading levels can be duped, so more than media literacy is needed to be a safe shield against fake news. On the other hand, a higher level of media literacy improves one's capacity for identifying and evaluating misleading information, lowering one's propensity to believe in it. People with media literacy are more equipped to use information critically and actively. It gives them the tools to assess sources, exercise critical thinking, and spot fake news. By fostering media literacy, people can significantly lessen their propensity to believe false information and make better-informed judgments.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	**A 3**	Education might include media literacy and critical thinking abilities to assist students in analyzing, interpreting, and evaluating media messages. Managing information and spotting biases or false information is part of media literacy. People who engage in critical thinking are less likely to take incorrect details at face value because it promotes skepticism and evidence-based reasoning.
Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's	**A 4**	Media literacy substantially influences a person's ability to distinguish between true

	ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?		and false news. Media literacy is the ability to access, interpret, assess, and critically comprehend media messages. It entails understanding the processes utilized in media production and the intended audience, goals, and biases. Higher media literate people can better distinguish between true and false news because they know and can analyze information. They are likelier to assess the reliability and accuracy of news sources with knowledge and are less prone to be duped by false information.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?	**A 5**	A person's socio-cultural background and demographic characteristics might affect whether they believe in fake news. People's backgrounds, education, social environments, and cultural norms are only a few of the variables that influence their attitudes and opinions.
Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news?	**A 6**	Thanks to technological improvements, access to and sharing knowledge has become more straightforward through social media platforms. However, this accessibility has also resulted in an overabundance of information, making it difficult for people to distinguish between trustworthy and dubious sources. Media literacy skills become essential to navigate this deluge of data and locate reliable sources.

Interviewee 6

Name: Neon Motiul
Affiliation/Designation: Chief News Editor, Daily Anandabazar
Interview date and place: May 10, 2022. Dhaka, Bangladesh

Q 1	What do you think about fake news? How does fake news generate/created, and posted? How does fake news come to exist? How does fake news spread (so rapidly)?	A 1	Fake news is written with false, misleading and objectively misleading information. Most news stories create mental illusions about reality, making the reader feel at once. Fake news is spread or published based on false or fictitious information for specific political purposes. In addition, fake news is spread or posted by individuals or groups. But sometimes fake news is created due to a lack of accurate information, anger, or deprivation. In other words, what people do not get or are deprived of in reality, there is a psychological desire to try to get it in their imagination, and fake news is created. Fake news has an exciting edge; every reader is curious about critical information. Misinformation spreads quickly because of unsatisfied curiosity.
Q 2	Does the media literacy level play a role in believing in fake news? If yes, how does media literacy influence an individual's susceptibility to believing fake news, and what impact does it have on their susceptibility to believing fake news?	A 2	Yes, high or low perceptions of the media influence belief in fake news. A proper understanding of the media creates a barrier to the spread of fake news. And if there is no adequate knowledge about the role of the media, it is no longer possible to take precautions in publishing fake news. The correct understanding of the media can tell which accurate or factual news is and which is misleading or false. Individual perceptions of the media, therefore, have particular implications for creating, disseminating, publishing or delivering fake news.
Q 3	Does primary and mass education on media, information and communication reduce belief in fake news?	A 3	Of course, essential or basic knowledge or understanding of communication, information and mass media can reduce belief in fake news. The ability or ability to analyze or verify the

			report published in the media plays a significant role in lowering confidence in fake.
Q 4	How does the level of media literacy affect an individual's ability to discern between real and fake news? Are there specific skills or competencies within media literacy that are particularly effective in reducing belief in fake news?	**A 4**	A good understanding of mass media plays a vital role in distinguishing between news based on correct or false information and communication based on incorrect information. The word written in the media has a specific rule or method. The method creates the concept of finding and analyzing the truth from the ocean of information. Which also makes clear concepts or knowledge about mass media? To understand what is accurate and false information in the news served. The ability to catch or identify fake news ultimately creates awareness or caution about fake news. This is how curiosity is made in searching for the correct information. This ultimately reduces fake news.
Q 5	Do you think an individual's demographic or socio-cultural factors influence that individual's belief in fake news?	**A 5**	Yes, a country's society, state, population or sociocultural conditions or factors greatly influence the belief in fake news. Because sociocultural factors, in many cases, hinder the creation of correct ideas about mass media. When a population is deprived or disadvantaged in accessing factual information, they may gravitate towards news that contains the desired information. This ultimately creates an environment for fake news. But just as sociocultural factors affect the environment for creating fake news, they also affect the word written based on the accurate information the media provides.
Q 6	How do technological advancements and the proliferation of social media platforms influence	**A 6**	Just as the fantastic advances in technology and the proliferation of social media have created the risk of fake news and rapid dissemination, so too has the opportunity to develop a

| | the relationship between media literacy and belief in fake news? | | transparent and accurate understanding of the media. The awareness about the fake news created or created, especially for the benefit of individuals or groups, is increasing through social media. The wide spread of mass media can also play a role in the space of correct information. As a result, the opportunity to create a clear and accurate understanding of the mass media is increasing.
The idea that accurate information media ultimately prioritizes the general public's right to accurate information continues to enrich media knowledge. The knowledge that is helping identifies and identify fake news. That is creating obstacles in the rapid spread of fake news. |