

Demographic Effects on TV News Credibility: Perceptions in Bangladesh

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Abstract

There has been an enormous growth of TV channels in Bangladesh. As a result, TV news has become very popular among other programs. This study attempted to explore the variations in the perceived credibility of TV news in Bangladesh and how the joint distribution of constructs explaining credibility is affected by different demographic groups. The study concludes that gender and education level significantly impact overall credibility perceptions.

Keywords

Credibility, demographic, gender, trustworthiness, television, Bangladesh

Introduction

Television (TV) is a popular medium all over the world. Its impact on modern society is substantial, providing alternative viewpoints, public education, and opportunities to improve people's lives. For developing countries like Bangladesh, TV can play an important societal role. Before 1997, the state-owned Bangladesh Television (BTV) was the only TV channel; the extent of government controls in its affairs raised many questions about the credibility of its content. In 1997, the Government of Bangladesh began issuing permission for private TV channels to operate in the country. As a result, news programs and talk shows have become very popular with steady increases in the number of TV channels. According to Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC, 2019),

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there are currently 44 television channels, 28 FM and 32 community radio stations, 1,187 daily newspapers, and more than 100 online news portals approved by the Ministry of Information Bangladesh.

Understanding public perception towards news and the media's credibility is relatively tricky, and it depends on an array of factors. Therefore, the Credible Brand Model (CBM) theory was considered to examine the effects of demographics (Oyediji, 2010). This two-stage process (explained subsequently) is expected to account for differences in credibility perceptions due to demographic differences. For example, higher levels of education may affect the worldview of a particular audience, causing variation in the perceived credibility of the news.

This study examines how different demographic groups perceive TV news credibility and related factors. For example, some groups may see themselves as being excluded because of their socio-economic status and feel devalued in terms of information needs, that is, some people's worldviews due to demographic differences might vary. Among such groups, credibility perceptions of the media, especially TV news, are likely to be low. Therefore, it may be helpful to investigate their perceptions. Appropriate measures may then be devised to reinforce their credibility perceptions and credibility congruence if there is divergence. This would also allow the news industry to grow and play an essential societal role by bringing tangible benefits to the excluded groups. We focus on three demographic characteristics—gender, age and education. The following research questions guided the study:

1. Does the perceived credibility of TV news in Bangladesh vary due to demographic factors?
2. How is the simultaneous variation in the joint distribution of perceptions towards TV news credibility affected by demographic determinants in Bangladesh?
3. How is the simultaneous variation in the joint distribution of perceptions towards TV news credibility affected by demographic determinants in Bangladesh? As the audience's worldview is likely to affect the perceptions of TV news credibility simultaneously, credibility constructs should vary simultaneously based on their demographics. Therefore, this question addresses the concept of simultaneous variations in perception towards TV news credibility constructs (see measurement section for further details).

The study finds that the perceived credibility of TV news is affected by different demographic determinants, that is, gender and education levels. The credibility congruence towards TV news differs for male and female audiences, indicating that male and female audiences are more likely to have different worldviews. Moreover, perceived credibility towards TV news varies for audiences with varying levels of education, indicating that ideological incongruence is expected to occur for audiences with different education levels. However, credibility congruence towards TV news is similar across all audiences from different age groups. This study also investigated the simultaneous variations among credibility constructs and identified that only education level affects the simultaneous

perception towards credibility constructs. The simultaneous variations evident in this study may aid future researchers in investigating the influences of education on worldviews or credibility incongruence.

The Concept of Credibility

Credibility in the media industry is a vital asset. In an era of information overload, with different sources of information competing for audience attention, perceptions of credibility can influence audience choice of source, influencing their attitudes and behaviour. Credibility as a concept can be traced back to ancient Greece, where it was used to study persuasion techniques. Over time the introduction of radio, television, and the Internet has guided the evolution of credibility studies in modern times (Vilčeková, 2015). Modern-day credibility research dates back to the early 1950s with the seminal work of Hovland and Weiss (1951). Their research focused on source credibility, conceptualising how a communicator is perceived as a source of valid assertions (i.e., expertise) and the degree of confidence in the communicator's intent to communicate the assertions considered most valid (i.e., trustworthiness). However, the early research did not clarify how various factors fit into the credibility concept. According to some researchers, the composition of credibility dimensions has been inconsistent across studies (Graziano & McGrath, 1986; Kiousis, 2001), introducing difficulties in measuring the concept.

There have also been suggestions to discern clearly between source credibility, medium credibility and message credibility. Source credibility pertains to examining different communicator characteristics where a communicator can be an individual, group, or organisation (Kiousis, 2001). Medium credibility focuses on the channel through which content is delivered (e.g., TV, newspaper, Internet, etc.). Finally, message credibility refers to the credibility of the messages carried by a medium or a particular source. Credibility, thus, refers to the objective and subjective components of the believability of a source, medium or message.

The most common components of media credibility used in past studies include believability, accuracy, fairness, lack of bias, completeness, depth, and trustworthiness (Flanagin & Metzger, 2001; Johnson & Kaye, 2000). Abdullah et al. (2002) conducted an exploratory study on the components of credibility of news from newspapers, television, and online sites using a variation of Gaziano and McGrath's (1986) credibility scale. In their research, TV news credibility was found to have two main components—fairness and currency, where the currency is the degree to which the information is up to date.

Over the years, the concept of credibility has been assessed via constructs of believability, trustworthiness, truthfulness, objectivity, and reliability (Hilligoss & Rieh, 2008). One report (Pew Research Center, 2012) showed that believability, 'media's accuracy, fairness and other aspects of performance', have seen a long-term decline across all forms of media (cable news, broadcast, and print media). Traditionally, research involving media credibility tends to

follow two broad paths — medium credibility (medium of sharing the information) and source credibility (actual origin of the information), according to Golan and Baker (2012).

We depict TV news credibility by operationalising it on 7-point Likert scales using the following items— (a) I can depend on the information provided by the news of that TV channel; (b) I think the news provided by the TV channel is trustworthy; (c) I think the TV channel's information is credible; and (d) I would recommend others to watch the news of this TV channel. The last item was included as a measure because it was felt that if one finds a medium credible, they would feel confident enough to recommend it. We also found through exploratory research that factors such as objectivity of TV news, its social role, independence of news, and perceived expertise are closely related to the concept of credibility; hence differences in demographic characteristics on these factors were also examined in the context of TV news in Bangladesh.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical underpinnings of this research are built on an emerging framework called the Credible Brand Model (CBM) (Oyedeji, 2010). This model explains 'the process by which media audience makes credibility judgments about news messages'. Drawing upon consumer branding, mass communication, and political science theories, CBM tries to explain the credibility process in the news media. The central idea here is that the formation of message and media credibility perceptions are not unidimensional— but rather multidimensional — and are influenced by the audience's context and history as much as the media/news providers' context and history. According to CBM, the audience's perception of news credibility evolves in two stages. In the first stage, news credibility goes through an ideological congruency test; in the second stage, news credibility goes through a brand equity test (Oyedeji, 2008). Viewing news delivery and news consumption as a transactional communication model, we posit that both parties come into the 'marketplace' with an existing history and worldviews. CBM proposes that audiences have a higher level of positive connection with media outlets if both share a similar worldview and consider those media outlets more credible, that is, ideological congruency matters when someone attempts to explain credibility. This study posits that ideological congruency varies among different people and depends on demographic characteristics. Thus, ideological congruence may differ between audience groups. The question, therefore, is whether demographic characteristics representing different groups affect the ideological congruence of the audience, which in turn may affect the perceived level of TV news credibility and its explanatory factors. We use the worldviews of our research participants using demographic factors as determinants of those views and try to investigate how the perceived credibility of TV news and its factors vary across different demographic groups.

Demographics and Credibility

Scientific studies on media credibility are few and far- between in Bangladesh. Research on relating demographic characteristics to credibility perceptions regarding TV news in other parts of the world is also surprisingly limited. However, several demographic characteristics of media users such as gender, age, income, and education have been considered essential predictors of media credibility (see Fisher, 2016; Golan & Baker, 2012; Vilčeková, 2015; Shim et al., 2015). The ideological congruence perspective can play an important role here. Thus, female, younger, lower-income, and less educated news consumers tend to evaluate the media as more credible than male, older, higher income, more educated audiences who are more likely to be critical of the media (Bucy, 2003; Vilčeková, 2015); the difference may be attributable to ideological incongruence.

Whitney's (1985) study showed that some people are particularly critical of the media. These people usually represent the high end of the socio-economic spectrum, characterised by higher education, incomes, media use, knowledge, and personal experience with the media. This group tends to scrutinise newspaper articles carefully and probably perceives that quality newspapers are more credible than other media.

Westley and Severin (1964) conducted a comprehensive analysis of channel credibility across different media outlets. They found that certain demographic variables, such as education and age, mediate people's perceptions of channel credibility. Another study conducted by Gunther (1992) also led to similar findings. Our study focuses on TV news credibility. Unfortunately, not much research is available on this topic from a demographic perspective.

Gender

An important question is whether there is a difference along gender lines regarding media credibility? There seems to be a consensus that men tend to find media less credible than women (see, Choi et al., 2006; Eveland Jr & Shah, 2003; Johnson & Kay, 2002). Similar results were found in Slovakia, where a media credibility study found that 'women are more likely to trust Slovak media than men' (Vilčeková, 2015, p. 623). However, Shim et al. (2015) found that women negatively associated media credibility with domestic television, international television, and the Internet. Marin (1996) looked into the perceptions of urban Hispanic groups on channels/sources of information about cigarette smoking, including television commercials and news. The results showed that women tend to assign more credibility to television commercials (84.1%) and television news (87.3%) than men (73.8% on commercials and 75.9% on the news). Research on audience perceptions of news credibility found that more men tended to trust print/newspaper media than any other type of media content (being of high SES and urban). In contrast, women tended to assign a high level of trust to television media/news (low SES and rural) (see Greenberg, 1966; Westley & Severin, 1964).

In the Westley and Severin (1964) study, women found television media more credible (44.9%), whereas 37.5% of the male respondents did so. On the other hand, men tended to emphasise newspaper media (41.5%) in the same study. Another essential factor in gender on media preferences is conflicting information/news reports. Carter and Greenberg (1965) found that in cases of conflicting reports from multiple media, both male and female respondents found television the most credible source of information — over newspapers and radio channels. A staggering 60% of the female respondents in the study and 49% of the male respondents felt television to be the most credible medium. Carter and Greenberg (1965) hypothesised that this difference could be explained by the visual factors associated with television lacking other forms of information sharing. Thus, overall, gender appears to be associated with the credit rating of television: females had higher credibility perceptions than did males. However, these findings have not been tested or corroborated in developing countries like Bangladesh, especially TV news.

Age

In contrast to gender, age plays a more complicated role as a demographic factor concerning television media credibility. Research has shown that younger people tend to consider mass media/television more credible than older generations (Bucy, 2013; Johnson & Kaye, 2010; Shim et al., 2015). However, other studies have reported the opposite (Vilčeková, 2015). For example, in a Wisconsin Survey Research Laboratory survey, 1,057 people responded to media credibility later analysed and published by Westley and Severin (1964). The results showed that among respondents in all age categories (from 20 to 60+) television media was trusted over any other media, such as newspaper and radio. A little over 42% of the younger audiences in their 20s and 30s found television the most trustworthy medium and thus most credible.

Interestingly, people who are 60 years or older tend to trust the oldest medium (newspaper) the least and television the most. But, again, in terms of audience preferences during conflicting news reports, Carter and Greenberg (1965) found that the audience from all surveyed age categories, straight away, considered television reports as the most credible among all media outlets. Of the respondents, 60% aged up to 29 years found television the most credible source, followed by an average of 56% of everyone aged above 29 years.

Guo et al. (2010) conducted a survey on local newspapers among 2,025 Hong Kong residents and found that younger respondents perceive elite/quality newspapers to be more credible. According to another study, younger news audiences regard online and TV news as more credible than older audiences across five dimensions (Bucy, 2003). A similar finding was made by Choi et al. (2006), who found that age was positively correlated to the perception of television credibility while education was negatively correlated. Gender was mildly associated with the credibility ratings of television. Females had higher credibility perceptions than did males. These findings have not been tested or corroborated in developing countries like Bangladesh.

Education

Education as a demographic factor appears to be negatively related to television news credibility (Carter & Greenberg, 1965; Gaziano & MacGrath, 1987; Westley & Severin, 1964). A Gallup survey revealed that Americans with higher education have lower confidence in television news (Heyes, 2013). Similar findings were reported by Vilčeková (2015) — the lower the education, the higher the level of trust in the media. According to Golan and Kiouisis (2010), Mulder (1981) found that ‘older, more educated individuals tended to judge the media as less credible than did younger, less educated audiences’ (p. 86). So, age and education, combined, appear to influence media credibility negatively. With higher levels of education, more people tend to consider television as a less credible source of information. Those who attended some colleges viewed newspapers as more credible than television or radio as news media. Westley and Severin (1964) found that almost 47% of the respondents with at least some college education relied on newspapers as more accurate and trustworthy, as opposed to 31% who accepted television news credibility. The acceptance rates for television information increased to 43.3% for respondents who had at least some high school education and 46.4% who had an eighth grade or less level of education. Westley and Severin (1964, p. 327) stated that the relationship between education level and media credibility ‘is one of the strongest and most consistent in the entire study’. This may also go along with another finding from the same study that people who reside in rural areas and have less access to higher education seem to prefer television news over any other form of information sharing medium. As such, ‘rural residence’ is a strong ‘predictor of a greater trust in television’ (p. 330).

Carter and Greenberg (1965) showed that in times of conflicting news reports, irrespective of education levels, as mentioned above, all categories of the respondent pool preferred television news over any other forms of news medium. Of the respondents, 60% who had less than 12 years of education considered television the more credible source than other conflicting source mediums. The second preferred medium was newspapers at 23%. An average of 54% of people who had more than 12 years of education and some college education relied on television credibility, and 55% of college graduates considered television reports as credible during times of conflicting reports from multiple sources. Similar findings were reported by Choi et al. (2006), Guo et al. (2010) and (Bucy 2003). Overall, higher levels of education are negatively correlated with media credibility, and less informed people rate television news more credible (Gaziano & McGrath, 1987).

Methodology

Research on source credibility has not been conducted systematically or sustainably in Bangladesh. Thus, insights were obtained from research conducted in other countries to develop a conceptual model appropriate for Bangladesh. In addition, researchers familiar with the communication environment in Bangladesh were asked to reflect on and suggest factors that would enhance the credibility of

TV news. In this regard, O'Reilly (2007) and Gabbott and Hogg (1998) stress the importance of active participation of the cognoscenti in defining model parameters. Combining secondary research with insights from the researchers resulted in the two hypotheses to be tested, with their informational, developmental, and democratisation implications.

Measurement

Multiple items were used to measure the constructs developed or borrowed from past research and adapted to the context. Opinions of researchers were first sought to establish the face validity of the items measuring a construct. Final data were subjected to reliability analysis and factor analysis, resulting in satisfactory coefficient alpha values and an expected factor structure. Each construct in the model was measured using four items (See Appendix for item details of each construct).

The construct, TV news credibility, was defined as the quality or power of inspiring belief. Trustworthiness is an integral component of credibility (Barlow & Bakir, 2007; Waisbord, 2006; McQuil, 2005). For Waisbord (2006), trust is a relational process between journalists and the audience, a pact or contract between news producers and consumers. Dependability was introduced as a measure of credibility because of the idea that 'Trust indicates a positive belief about the perceived reliability, dependability, and confidence characteristics of a person, object, or process' (Tseng & Fogg, 1999). A third measure was credibility itself, the focus of the study. Finally, we included a new measure, recommendation, because when a person finds a source or medium credible, they would feel confident about recommending it. Moreover, the study measured four constructs, that is, independence, social role, objectivity, and expertise of TV news, which are subsequently explained in this section.

Independence of TV news was defined as a TV channel's freedom from the influence of various stakeholders. It was operationalised as the channel producing news free from political bias, from owners' influence, from the interest of its shareholders/partners, and not having politically motivated reporters.

The social Role was defined as a TV channel's perceived role in raising the awareness and social consciousness of the viewers. It was operationalised in terms of the TV channel playing an essential role in improving society, solving political, social, and economic problems, building awareness of the dominant issues, and campaigning for the right social causes.

Objectivity was defined as judgment based on observable phenomena and uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices. Operationally, four items were selected to reflect objectivity—TV news presents facts, provides precise and in-depth information, and information from a reliable source.

Expertise was defined as skill or knowledge in a particular field (TV news reporting). It was operationalised as skilled reporting, with TV news providing immediate information and regular updates to an evolving situation and doing so expertly.

The audio–visual quality of TV news was defined in terms of attractiveness and sound quality of the news presentation and operationalised as the provision of attractive animation, graphics, colour, designs, and sound quality.

Questionnaire Design and Pre-testing

A preliminary questionnaire was first developed in English based on the literature review and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire was constructed using 7-point Likert scales. It was translated into Bengali and retranslated for clarity, conciseness, and objectivity. The questionnaire's wording, format, and length were adjusted after being repeatedly pre-tested on a small set of randomly selected respondents.

Sampling and Data Collection

Data were collected from Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, which is the seventh-largest nation in terms of population. The City has been termed a megacity, ranking eighth in the urban agglomeration, and is projected to become the third largest by 2020 (World Bank, 2010). With population growth at 6%, Dhaka has expanded from 73 sq. km. in 1951 to 305.47 sq. km. at present (Dhaka City Corporation, 2020), with roughly 300,000–400,000 migrants pouring into the city each year from the rural areas (World Bank, 2007). The literacy rate is 65.3%, increasing (Hasan, 2010), while about 28% is poor (World Bank, 2007). In addition, about 40% of the population is unproductive (ages 0–14 and >60), resulting in a high dependency burden on the working population (Hossain, 2008).

To select a representative sample, multistage cluster sampling was used. Ten police stations (each considered a cluster) were selected randomly from Dhaka's 27 metropolitan police stations. From each cluster, one ward (the next level of administration) was selected randomly, and from each ward, thirty households were selected purposively (in the absence of lists), requiring TV ownership. Responses were solicited from the head of the household. The next available adult person was selected as a replacement. There was no attempt to identify the respondents who were guaranteed anonymity to provide unbiased responses. According to the research protocol, respondents were offered to withdraw from the study at any point.

Data were collected from 300 respondents via face-to-face interviews. Before the interview, the field interviewers explained the study and asked the interviewee to self-administer the questionnaire; occasionally, the interviewers filled out the questionnaire based on respondents' verbal responses.

Respondent Profile

The sample that was drawn yielded the following characteristics. There were 184 male respondents and 107 female respondents. On age, there were four categories:

72 were in the 18–23 category, 128 in the 24–35 category, 68 in the 36–50 category, and 23 in the 50+ category. On education, the categories were as follows: primary (9), secondary (27), higher secondary (64), bachelors (123) and masters (68). Given the small number of respondents in the ‘primary’ category, it was merged with the next level.

Analysis

First, frequency distributions were obtained to check for data entry errors and descriptive statistics. Then, *t*-tests and One-way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) were applied to test for significant differences in overall credibility perceptions and its explanatory constructs, that is, perceptions on independence, social role, objectivity, and expertise of TV news (Andaleeb et al., 2012). ANOVA provides a statistical test of whether or not the means of several groups are all equal and therefore generalises *t*-tests to more than two groups. With ANOVA, significant differences were sought using Tukey’s test to determine whether and which demographic groups were different from the others. Tukey’s test is a single-step multiple comparison procedure and is usually used with ANOVA for post-hoc hypothesis testing.

Furthermore, Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was applied to understand how common perceptions of the constructs associated with credibility differ for different individuals. Belonging to the Generalized Linear Model (GLM) family, MANOVA may be applied to understand the change in several response variables analysed simultaneously against each treatment (Warne, 2014). To test for differences among different demographic groups, Wilk’s Lambda (Λ) test statistics was applied in this study. Wilk’s Lambda test function identifies any difference in the mean vectors for a set of response variables due to a specific independent variable. For this study, the four constructs associated with credibility, that is, independence, social role, objectivity, and expertise, were considered the response variables, and all other demographic subgroups were considered explanatory variables. Thus, the following hypothesis was tested:

$$H_0 = \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{IN}^1 \\ \mu_{SR}^1 \\ \mu_{OB}^1 \\ \mu_{EX}^1 \end{bmatrix} = \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{IN}^2 \\ \mu_{SR}^2 \\ \mu_{OB}^2 \\ \mu_{EX}^2 \end{bmatrix} = \dots = \begin{bmatrix} \mu_{IN}^k \\ \mu_{SR}^k \\ \mu_{OB}^k \\ \mu_{EX}^k \end{bmatrix}$$

Where,

μ_{IN}^j = population mean of perceived independence of TV news for a specific demographic sub-group. The demographic sub-group has total *k* categories, that is, *J* = 1, 2, 3, ..., *k*.

μ_{SR}^j = population mean of the perceived social role of TV news for a specific demographic sub-group. The demographic sub-group has total *k* categories, that is, *J* = 1, 2, 3, ..., *k*.

Table 1. Perceived Differences in Credibility Along with Demographic Characteristics.

Independent Variable		Dependent Variable: Credibility of TV News in Bangladesh					
		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Test Applied	Test Value.	Sig
Gender	Male	183	5.35	1.18	Independent sample t-test	$t_{287} = 2.24$	0.026*
	Female	106	5.67	1.14			
Age (in years)	18–23	71	5.35	1.27	Test of analysis of variance	$F_{3,285} = 0.93$	0.42
	24–35	127	5.44	1.04			
	36–50	68	5.67	1.30			
	50+	23	5.52	1.17			
Education level	Primary/secondary	36	5.88	0.91	Test of analysis of variance	$F_{3,285} = 2.81$	0.04*
	Higher secondary	64	5.61	1.33			
	Bachelors	121	5.29	1.19			
	Masters	68	5.47	1.07			

Source: The authors.

Note: *Significant at 0.05 level of significance.

μ_{OB}^j = population mean of perceived objectivity of TV news for a specific demographic sub-group. The demographic sub-group has total k categories, that is, $J = 1, 2, 3, \dots, k$.

μ_{EX}^j = population mean of perceived expertise of TV news for a specific demographic sub-group. The demographic sub-group has total k categories, that is, $J = 1, 2, 3, \dots, k$.

Results from the analysis are explained in Table 1.

From the independent sample *t*-test (Table 1), it was found that there is a significant difference in the credibility of TV news due to gender. This supports earlier research in other countries: female residents in Bangladesh perceive that TV news is more credible than male residents. Respondents' education level also affects credibility perceptions: those with higher education levels saw TV news as less credible. Interestingly, we found no significant difference in credibility perceptions of TV news for different age categories of respondents.

The study also attempted to compare multivariate sample means involving constructs associated with credibility, that is, Independence, Social role, Objectivity, and Expertise of TV news in Bangladesh. These variables served as dependent variables against each explanatory variable, that is, age, gender and education. The results from MANOVA are shown in Table 2.

The four commonly tested statistics, that is, Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, and Roy's Largest Root, are used to understand variability and differences in means, considering the combination of dependent variables. However, these four test statistics have different advantages for different situations. Hence, all four test values were presented in this study.

Table 2. MANOVA Test Results Comparing Multivariate Means.

Independent Variables	Statistic	Value	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared η^2	Observed Power
Age	Pillai's trace	0.05	1.29	0.22	0.02	0.74
	Wilks' lambda	0.95	1.30	0.22	0.02	0.67
	Hotelling's trace	0.06	1.30	0.22	0.02	0.74
	Roy's largest root	0.04	2.77	0.03	0.04	0.76
Gender	Pillai's trace	0.02	1.71	0.15	0.02	0.52
	Wilks' lambda	0.98	1.71	0.15	0.02	0.52
	Hotelling's trace	0.02	1.71	0.15	0.02	0.52
	Roy's largest root	0.02	1.71	0.15	0.02	0.52
Education level	Pillai's trace	0.09	2.21	0.01**	0.03	0.95
	Wilks' lambda	0.91	2.22	0.01**	0.03	0.92
	Hotelling's trace	0.09	2.22	0.01**	0.03	0.95
	Roy's largest root	0.06	4.61	0.00**	0.06	0.94

Source: The authors.

Note: **significant at 0.01 level of significance.

A one-way MANOVA revealed that the vectors of means of the four dependent variables (DV's), that is, Independence, Social Role, Expertise, and Objectivity of TV news in Bangladesh, are significantly different for different education levels of the respondents. From the MANOVA analysis, a significant multivariate main effect for education level is evident with Wilks' $\lambda = .91$, $F(12, 749) = 2.22$, $p < .01$, partial eta squared = .03, and the power to detect the effect was .92. Hence, Independence, Social Role, Expertise and Objectivity (that are associated with credibility perceptions) are simultaneously affected by viewers' education level. On the other hand, age and gender produced no significant effects (i.e., differences).

Individual ANOVA tests (tests of between-subject effects) were also conducted by considering Independence, Social role, Objectivity, and Expertise as dependent variables and each demographic characteristic as the independent variable (i.e., Education level, age group, and gender). The tests of between-subject effect results show that again education again affects the independence of TV news. The ANOVA results are given in Table 3.

Interestingly, for the other demographic characteristics, shown in Tables 4 and 5, there was no significant effect on the perceived level of Independence, Social Role, Objectivity, and Expertise of TV news in Bangladesh.

Conclusion

TV is an essential medium for connecting with the public, and its impact is quite profound. While the audience generally expects TV news to be credible, recent

Table 3. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Independence, Social Role, Objectivity and Expertise vs. Education Level.

Source	Dependent Variables	Type III Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
Corrected model	Independence	30.051	3.00	10.02	6.02	0.00**	0.06	0.96
	Social role	4.322	3.00	1.44	1.49	0.22	0.02	0.39
	Objectivity	2.684	3.00	0.89	0.77	0.51	0.01	0.21
	Expertise	4.445	3.00	1.48	1.33	0.26	0.01	0.35
Intercept	Independence	3,793.33	1.00	3,793.33	2,277.87	0.00	0.89	1.00
	Social role	8,460.96	1.00	8,460.96	8,729.68	0.00**	0.97	1.00
	Objectivity	6,541.98	1.00	6,541.98	5,593.63	0.00**	0.95	1.00
	Expertise	7,578.96	1.00	7,578.96	6,815.05	0.00**	0.96	1.00
Education level	Independence	30.05	3.00	10.02	6.02	0.00**	0.06	0.96
	Social role	4.32	3.00	1.44	1.49	0.22	0.02	0.39
	Objectivity	2.68	3.00	0.89	0.77	0.51	0.01	0.21
	Expertise	4.45	3.00	1.48	1.33	0.26	0.01	0.35
Error	Independence	476.28	286.00	1.67				
	Social role	277.20	286.00	0.97				
	Objectivity	334.49	286.00	1.17				
	Expertise	318.06	286.00	1.11				

Source: The authors.

Note: **Significant at 0.01 level of significance.

Table 4 . Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Independence, Social Role, Objectivity and Expertise vs. Gender.

Source	Dependent Vari- ables	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	<i>f</i>	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
Corrected model	Independence	2.338	1	2.338	1.336	0.249	0.005	0.211
	Social role	.118	1	0.118	0.121	0.729	0.000	0.064
	Objectivity	.230	1	0.230	0.196	0.658	0.001	0.073
	Expertise	5.531	1	5.531	5.025	0.026	0.017	0.608
Intercept	Independence	4,051.665	1	4,051.665	2,315.292	0.000 ^{***}	0.889	1.000
	Social role	9,336.729	1	9,336.729	9,555.710	0.000 ^{***}	0.971	1.000
	Objectivity	7,207.226	1	7,207.226	6,160.329	0.000 ^{***}	0.955	1.000
	Expertise	8,428.010	1	8,428.010	7,657.648	0.000 ^{***}	0.964	1.000
Gender	Independence	2.338	1	2.338	1.336	0.249	0.005	0.211
	Social role	0.118	1	0.118	0.121	0.729	0.000	0.064
	Objectivity	0.230	1	0.230	0.196	0.658	0.001	0.073
	Expertise	5.531	1	5.531	5.025	0.026	0.017	0.608
Error	Independence	503.988	288	1.750				
	Social role	281.400	288	0.977				
	Objectivity	336.943	288	1.170				
	Expertise	316.973	288	1.101				

Source: The authors.

Note: ***Significant at 0.01 level of significance.

Table 5 . Tests of Between-Subjects Effects for Independence, Social Role, Objectivity and Expertise vs Age.

Source	Dependent Vari- ables	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared	Observed Power
Corrected model	Independence	8.568	3	2.856	1.641	0.180	0.017	0.429
	Social role	5.128	3	1.709	1.769	0.153	0.018	0.459
	Objectivity	2.361	3	0.787	0.672	0.570	0.007	0.191
	Expertise	5.421	3	1.807	1.630	0.183	0.017	0.426
Intercept	Independence	2,998.063	1	2,998.063	1,722.613	0.000**	0.858	1.000
	Social role	6,824.601	1	6,824.601	7,061.905	0.000**	0.961	1.000
	Objectivity	5,303.554	1	5,303.554	4,530.349	0.000**	0.941	1.000
	Expertise	6,045.151	1	6,045.151	5,452.567	0.000**	0.950	1.000
Age	Independence	8.568	3	2.856	1.641	0.180	0.017	0.429
	Social role	5.128	3	1.709	1.769	0.153	0.018	0.459
	Objectivity	2.361	3	0.787	0.672	0.570	0.007	0.191
	Expertise	5.421	3	1.807	1.630	0.183	0.017	0.426
Error	Independence	497.759	286	1.740				
	Social role	276.389	286	0.966				
	Objectivity	334.812	286	1.171				
	Expertise	317.082	286	1.109				

Source: The authors.

Note: **Significant at 0.01 level of significance.

surveys show a gradual decline of media credibility in Western countries with a commensurate rise in audience scepticism. Almost one-third of all Americans believe that news media are 'immoral' (32%), 'often inaccurate' (53%), and 'biased' (55%) (Pew Research Center, 2007). The current study indicates that similar to other countries, demographic categories of gender and education affect the perceived credibility of TV news, but not age. Specifically, this study indicates that females see TV news as more credible than males. As more women take up employment in Bangladesh, the credibility of TV news to them is likely to change because of greater exposure to outside opinions. It would be interesting to examine in the future whether, as more women join the workplace and are exposed to outside opinions, they might also become more sceptical of TV news. In that event, TV news will have to find ways to engender greater credibility perceptions among both genders in the future.

An examination of the means shows at the lower educational level, the audience perceives TV news as more credible than those with a bachelor's degree. All other differences were non-significant. With greater realisation of the value of education and its pursuit in more significant numbers, it will become essential to TV news producers to ensure that the information they provide is credible to an increasingly discerning population. Additionally, with the wide dissemination of news via the Internet, and intense competition among the news channels via satellite services/cable television, the need for TV news producers to evaluate their news has never been more important. As a country with high political awareness, credibility lines are drawn based on political beliefs, news channels and producers need to negotiate and balance their views on the ideas they are promoting.

We offer two conjectures for our findings: First, the credibility congruence across different demographic groups in Bangladesh has similar worldviews for different age groups, but credibility incongruence is evident for audiences with different genders and education levels. Second, the population in Bangladesh is very homogeneous compared to the more diverse populations of other countries. Bangladesh is a leading example of ethnic homogeneity. Over 98% of the people speak Bangla (also known as Bengali) as their mother tongue and are Bengalis by nationality (Heitzman & Worden, 1989). Bangladeshis identify themselves very closely with their language, and they have a vibrant cultural heritage in music, poetry, literature, and social activism that act as a solid national unifier. This can be easily contrasted with neighbouring India, which hosts 72% Indo-Aryans, 25% Dravidians, and 3% others (U. S. Department of State, 2011). Indian national census does not recognise ethnic groups, but one estimate accounted for about 2000 ethnic groups cohabiting in India (U. S. Department of State, 2011). Even though the demographic similarity is more evident in Bangladesh, the study finds gender and education level affect credibility towards TV news. Furthermore, joint distributions of perceptions towards credibility constructs, that is, independence, social role, expertise, and objectivity, vary significantly with different education levels.

Connecting with our theoretical framework of the Credible Brand Model (CBM), we note that audiences of news media (consumers) tend to credit news

vendors with more credibility if they are in close alignment with their worldviews. If the research subjects are more educated and exposed to the world’s complexities, they tend to be more sceptical about any given news source. This, in turn, makes them more sceptical about the perceptions of the news media’s credibility. The opposite also holds in terms of lower levels of education. We see this along gender lines where women’s worldviews directly affect their credibility perception of the news media. Therefore, CBM appears to be directly linked with the social and cultural context/history of the cultural insiders consuming the news and assessing their credibility. Hence, the ideological congruence aspect of CBM may explain the lack of significant differences across demographic characteristics of audiences within age groups, given their homogenous nature. Further research may lead to identifying more detailed dependency structures of the ideological congruence test of CBM.

Our study is limited because it was conducted in Dhaka City and may not reflect the audience’s perceptions of other areas in Bangladesh. For example, further research could reflect audience perceptions from semi-urban areas. In addition, religiosity and political leanings may also reveal interesting patterns concerning TV news credibility. Overall, we found an acute shortage of literature regarding television news media credibility, especially from a demographic perspective and in the backdrop of a developing country such as Bangladesh. The available studies, however, were discussed. Thus, our research attempted to address this critical knowledge gap, creating new spaces for further engagement in this area. This study is also a preliminary effort to assess how demographic factors affect different credibility factors related to the news. Additional studies ought to provide deeper insights into the role of demographics in Bangladesh to explain TV news credibility perceptions.

Appendix

Measurement Items for Independence, Social Role, Objectivity and Expertise.

Construct	Items
Independence	News of the TV channel is free from its owners’ influence.
	The TV channel’s news serves the interests of its shareholders/partners.
	TV news presented by the news channel is free from political bias.
	TV news reporters are not politically motivated.
Social role	TV channels’ news plays a vital role in improving society.
	TV news builds awareness of the dominant issues.
	TV news contributes to solving political, social, economic problems.
	TV news campaigns for the right social causes.

Construct	Items
Objectivity	TV channels' news presents information from reliable sources. TV channels' news provides precise information. TV channel's news presents facts. TV channel's news presents in-depth information.
Expertise	TV channels' news provides regular updates to an evolving situation. TV channels' news provides immediate information. TV channel's news reporters are experts in reporting. TV channel's news presents skilled reporting.

Source: The authors.

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