**Online Appendix: Supplementary Information for “Political Campaign Ads on Facebook: Investigating the Effects of Incivility in Videos and User Comments on Affective Polarization and Mobilization”**

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**Appendix 1a. Copy of Preregistration:**

**As Predicted: *“Social Media Political Campaign Ads in West Bengal, India – 2021”* (#61516)**

**Created:**        03/22/2021 07:40 AM (PT)

This study received IRB approval at the authors university [Redacted for peer review].

**1) Have any data been collected for this study already?**  
No, no data have been collected for this study yet.  
  
**2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?**  
H1. Participants who view unfavorable ads [ads by rival candidate/party whom they do not support; as a function of respondent party ID and ad source] will   
a) evaluate ads more negatively and interact with them more,  
b) exhibit greater attitude backfiring,   
c) get mobilized more (vote intention) compared to participants who view unfavorable   
ads attacking their own candidate.  
Among BJP supporters: C1-4 > C5-8  
Among TMC supporters: C5-8 > C1-4  
H2. Participants who view uncivil ads, as opposed to civil ads, will exhibit greater attitudinal, emotional, and intentional/behavioral changes than those viewing civil ads.   
C3, C4, C7, C8 > C1, C2, C5, C6  
H3. Incivility of the ad will moderate the effect between unfavorable ads and out-party hostility/mobilization. Those who view out-party uncivil ad will be more extreme in their attitudes  
Among BJP supporters: C7, C8 > C5, C6  
Among TMC supporters: C3, C4, > C1, C2  
H4. Civility of comments will moderate the relationship between civility of ads and outcome variables (H2 and H3). The presence of uncivil comments will increase the effect of incivility in ads on out-party hostility and mobilization.  
Among BJP supporters: C7 < C8; C5 < C6  
Among TMC supporters: C3 < C4, > C1 < C2  
H5. We expect that uncivil ads and comments will lead to polarization of views of both parties' supporters (non-heterogenous effects), that is C3, C4, C7, C8 > C1, C2, C5, C6 across both BJP and TMC respondents.  
H6. Those with greater political interest, knowledge and issue involvement will exhibit greater differences among conditions (H1, H2, H3, H4), H5 across all outcome variables.  
  
**3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.**  
Due to space issues, not all details of the questionnaire (such as response options) are provided here. A full questionnaire is available in the following link: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tl4OSPeXgfzGNaFy5jUV2RkowCVNSSFHfLidOiadDlU/edit?usp=sharing   
List of key outcome variables:  
[Q\_ AFFECTIVE\_POLARIZATION\_13] – Rating scale slider  
[Q\_ POST\_EVALUATION\_14] How informative do you find this post about the West Bengal assembly elections?  
[Q\_ POST\_COMMENTS\_15] How likely are you to read other comments on this post?  
[Q\_ POST\_REPLY\_16] How likely are you to reply to this comment seen in the post?  
[Q\_SHARING\_INTENTION\_17] How likely is it that you will share this post with friends and family in the following medium  
[Q\_ EMOTION \_18] To what extent do you feel the following emotions after reading this Facebook post?   
[Q\_SEMANTIC\_DIFFERENTIAL\_19] After reading the story, how do you rate it in terms of the following. E.g. Untrustworthy…Trustworthy  
[Q\_INTENTION\_VOTE\_20] How likely is it that you will vote in the coming West Bengal assembly election   
[Q\_INTENTION\_VOTE\_21] How likely is it that you will cast your vote to one of the following political parties in the coming West Bengal assembly election ?   
[Q\_INTENTION\_VOLUNTEER\_22] How likely is it that you'll volunteer to campaign for your favourite political party in the coming West Bengal assembly election  
[Q\_INTENTION\_POLITICAL PARTICIPATION\_23] How likely is it, in general, that you'll participate in the following activities in the coming West Bengal assembly election for the following political parties. e.g. I intend to collect donation BJP vs TMC  
  
**4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?**  
8 conditions in total: 2 by 2 by 2: ad source (political campaign, BJP vs TMC) X civility of post (civil vs uncivil) X civility of comments on Facebook (civil vs uncivil):  
C1. BJP, civil post, civil comment  
C2. BJP, civil post, uncivil comment  
C3. BJP, uncivil post, civil comment  
C4. BJP, uncivil post, uncivil comment  
C5. TMC, civil post, civil comment  
C6. TMC, civil post, uncivil comment  
C7. TMC, uncivil post, civil comment  
C8. TMC, uncivil post, uncivil comment  
Each respondent will be randomly assigned, N=125 per condition.  
Equal number (N=62) of BJP and TMC supporting respondents will be assigned to each condition.  
  
**5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.**  
The analysis will be conducted with ANCOVA – analysis of covariance and general linear models. We will examine the main effects and interactions controlling for a set of demographic variables. We will also examine the moderating effect of party identification and political involvement.  
  
**6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.**  
Individuals who (A) fail the three attention checks in the survey prior to the experimental module and (B) fail the exposure (audio-visual) check and C) fail the manipulation check substantively after the viewing of the experimental message will be excluded from the analysis. The manipulation check will be analyzed in aggregate, but participants who fail it completely will be removed from analyses as robustness check.  
  
**7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size?  
No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.**  
1000 respondents will be randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions, hence there will be approximately 125 respondents in each condition.  
  
**8) Anything else you would like to pre-register?   
(e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)**  
Permanent Link to the Experimental Videos:  
https://mynbox.nus.edu.sg/u/zYmGKLCJhjTfiYY4/7ef7bd6f-2ee7-4eaa-a167-12d3dfa3788b?l  
Survey Instrument / List of Questions with Details: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Tl4OSPeXgfzGNaFy5jUV2RkowCVNSSFHfLidOiadDlU/edit?usp=sharing

Deviations from Preregistration

1. Hypotheses are re-numbered in the context of paper based on their theoretical presentation order, not based on the preregistration order.
2. Some statements were not clear in the preregistration, such as the H2b which refers to backfiring effect.
3. Political interest moderation was not included in the main paper, but is included in Appendix (5 & 6) for our main models.
4. Issue involvement as mentioned in H6 was not included in the main paper.
5. The outcome measures, as seen in Item 3 below, include some political participation questions; these political participation questions have been first averaged into an index and then analyzed in the paper. This was not clarified in the preregistration.
6. As reported in the paper, we had a display logic with two manipulation check questions, since those questions were not used and no participants were dropped based on them. Still, we utilized one manipulation check question, which indicated that manipulation worked.
7. Instead of using the composite variable of in-party and out-party ad exposure as predictors, we used interactions (which is the same thing), so that it is consistent across different analyses because the use of compositive variable was not optimal in all models.

**Appendix 1b**

**The empirical context**

In an intense attack campaign, the BJP organized several rallies and road shows with at least one union minister and other party leaders present in West Bengal every day to mobilize support. Prime Minister Narendra Modi held seven campaign rallies in the state while the home minister Amit Shah conducted more than 40 rallies. During campaign rallies, there were several barbed exchanges between BJP and TMC leaders. In an attempt to ridicule Mamata Banerjee, the prime minister himself made mocking – and allegedly sexist - allusions by calling her didi’o didi (George, 2021). While didi’o didi in local language meant elder sister, the way it was invoked by Prime Minister Modi denoted disdain and disrespect towards women (George, 2021). Similarly, the BJP state president, Dilip Ghosh in a campaign speech asked the chief minister to wear Bermudas and not saris if she wanted to show her legs (George, 2021). This misogynist and uncivil remark came after Mamata Banerjee fractured her leg in an accident during the campaign trail, following which she moved around in a wheelchair with her plastered leg clearly visible. While the BJP accused her of using the accident to mobilize the sympathy vote, Mamata Banerjee attacked the BJP by calling it a party of Tolabaaz (“extortionist and feudal landlords”) and Bohiragoto (outsider). Prime Minister Modi’s remark of didi’o didi was projected by TMC leaders as a catcall, and they used the local Bengali phrase “rock-er chhele” to highlight the sexist nature of the remark. “Rock-er chhele” in Bengali means street-side loafers sitting on a wall and teasing women passers-by. These exchanges of personal attacks further polarized the campaigns, which potentially elicited affectively charged reactions from the voters.

**Appendix 2a. Manipulation Check and Descriptive Statistics for Randomization**

**Manipulation Check**

Manipulation check ensured participants get sufficient time to watch videos; this is done by enforcing a minimum exposure period of about 70 seconds, under which respondents are prohibited from proceeding to the next question in the survey. The result of a *t*-test provides evidence for the successful manipulation of the treatment: participants assigned to the uncivil conditions found the ads to be more uncivil (*t* (966.2) = 5.490, *p* <.001) than those in the civil conditions. In addition, additional checking was performed for the credibility of the stimuli with respect to the dimensions of trustworthiness, interestingness, informativeness and objectivity. Participants across all eight experimental conditions rated relatively high on the four measures, providing further evidence for successful administration of the treatment. Additional checks were implemented to determine if there are any significant differences across the experimental conditions due to participant’s demographics and we concluded that random assignment was successful as there were no significant differences in the demographic composition across the eight groups defined by the experimental conditions (See Table A2).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A1. Experimental Conditions** | | |
| **Condition** | **Experimental Condition** | **N** |
| C1 | BJP, civil post, civil comment | 119 |
| C2 | BJP, civil post, uncivil comment | 120 |
| C3 | BJP, uncivil post, civil comment | 122 |
| C4 | BJP, uncivil post, uncivil comment | 124 |
| C5 | TMC, civil post, civil comment | 124 |
| C6 | TMC, civil post, uncivil comment | 124 |
| C7 | TMC, uncivil post, civil comment | 120 |
| C8 | TMC, uncivil post, uncivil comment | 121 |
| **Note.** We decided not to have a control condition since we are not interested in differences from a baseline campaign video that is neither civil or uncivil, or neither coming from BJP or TMC, as it would be ecologically invalid, because there would no campaign ad without a source or levels of (in)civility. | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A2.** Descriptive Statistics for Randomization in Experimental Conditions | | | | | | | | | |
|  | **Experimental Conditions** | | | | | | | | **N** |
|  | **C1** | **C2** | **C3** | **C4** | **C5** | **C6** | **C7** | **C8** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Gender** | | | | | | | |  |
| Male | 57% | 54.20% | 52.50% | 54.80% | 54.80% | 56% | 54.20% | 57% | 537 |
| Female | 43% | 45.80% | 47.50% | 45.20% | 45.20% | 44% | 45.80% | 43% | 437 |
| N | 119 | 120 | 122 | 124 | 124 | 124 | 120 | 121 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Age** | | | | | | | |  |
| 18-24 | 32.80% | 39.20% | 34.40% | 27.40% | 28% | 33.10% | 32.50% | 39.70% | 325 |
| 25-34 | 32.80% | 33.30% | 41.00% | 38.70% | 43% | 36.30% | 45.80% | 32.20% | 369 |
| 35-44 | 21.00% | 17.50% | 16.40% | 20.20% | 15% | 16.10% | 12.50% | 17.40% | 165 |
| 45+ | 13.40% | 10.00% | 8.20% | 13.70% | 15% | 14.50% | 9.20% | 10.70% | 115 |
| N | 119 | 120 | 122 | 124 | 124 | 124 | 120 | 121 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Education** | | | | | | | |  |
| At most High School pass (SSC/HSC) | 17.80% | 10.80% | 18.90% | 19.50% | 16.94% | 13.80% | 14.30% | 18.30% | 158 |
| Diploma or college certificate but not a graduate | 9.30% | 15.80% | 9.00% | 11.40% | 11.29% | 7.30% | 16.00% | 15.80% | 116 |
| Graduate or Post Graduate General (B.A., M. A., B Com, BSC etc.) | 48.30% | 51.70% | 48.40% | 46.30% | 54.03% | 61.00% | 47.90% | 41.70% | 484 |
| Graduate or Post Graduate Professional (MBA, MD, PhD etc.) | 24.60% | 21.70% | 23.80% | 22.80% | 17.74% | 17.90% | 21.80% | 24.20% | 211 |
| N | 118 | 120 | 122 | 123 | 124 | 123 | 119 | 120 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Income** | | | | | | | |  |
| Less than 10,000 | 30.09% | 19.13% | 22.81% | 20.40% | 20.00% | 24.35% | 19.80% | 26.55% | 210 |
| 10,001 to 30,000 | 22.12% | 20.87% | 25.44% | 23.00% | 23.30% | 26.09% | 32.80% | 25.66% | 229 |
| 30,001 to 75,000 | 30.97% | 31.30% | 23.68% | 28.30% | 30.00% | 26.96% | 27.60% | 20.35% | 252 |
| 75,001 to 200,000 | 13.27% | 20.00% | 17.54% | 13.30% | 17.50% | 12.17% | 12.90% | 18.58% | 144 |
| 200,001 to 500,000 | 3.54% | 6.96% | 3.51% | 9.70% | 7.50% | 6.09% | 4.30% | 5.31% | 54 |
| 500,001 or above | 0.00% | 1.74% | 7.02% | 5.30% | 1.70% | 4.35% | 2.60% | 3.54% | 30 |
| N | 113 | 115 | 114 | 113 | 120 | 115 | 116 | 113 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Note.** The figures presented for income is in terms of INR. | | | | | | | | | |

**Appendix 2b. Study Design**

Descriptive information of the stimuli used in each experimental condition is provided in this section. Table 4 below shows all eight experimental conditions used in our study, as well as the number of respondents assigned to each condition. Each stimuli comprises multiple elements: the Facebook user account, the campaign advertisement, the text accompanying each Facebook post, the reactions registered for the post, the first comment posted in response to the post and finally, the reactions registered for this first comment. These elements were manipulated using professional video/photo editing software depending on the experimental condition under consideration. To determine an adequate sample size for the experimental groups, a power analysis for both factorial ANCOVA and generalized linear regression models based on Cohen’s *f* and , respectively, were carried out using the G\*Power software (Faul et al., 2009). We adopt a conservative approach by using 0.1 and 0.02 as the estimate for the Cohen’s *f* and effect size, respectively, as suggested by Cohen (1988) for small effect sizes. The results of the power analysis for ANOVA to test the significance of an interaction effect between the three treatment factors at the 0.05 level with 0.8 power suggest that the total number of respondents should be at least 787 across all conditions; therefore, implying that within each condition, the number of respondents should be at least 99. For the generalized linear regression model, the results suggest that the total sample size should be at least 904; therefore, each condition should have at least 113 respondents. Taken together, the number of respondents should be at least 113 in each condition for both sample size requirements to be satisfied.  Since our final sample size for each condition was between 119 to 124, our sample is deemed to have satisfied both the minimum sample size requirements.

Before participating in the experiment (and after obtaining informed consent), the respondents were asked a series of questions to elicit their party identification, ideological leaning, political knowledge, political self-efficacy, demographic characteristics and media use. Based on their party identification, the respondents were randomly assigned to one of eight experimental conditions listed in Table 1. The stimuli are administered by showing the participants a video containing a standard Facebook post comprising two key elements which differ depending on the experimental condition in consideration: a campaign advertisement and a user comment beneath the video. While the former could differ in terms of both civility and party affiliation, the latter differs only in terms of its civility. The assignment was done in a manner so as to ensure that each experimental condition contains an equal distribution of BJP and TMC supporters. After administering the treatment, participants answered various manipulation checks and outcome questions, following which they were debriefed about the nature of the study. While the original campaign ads were shown in the local language, respondents answered the questions in English. This is because our respondents were proficient in both the local language (Bengali) and English.

The civil campaign video advertisements used mainly focused on promoting the party’s achievements whereas uncivil campaign video advertisements focused on attacking the other party in a manner that included the use of derogatory remarks. Uncivil campaign advertisements were chosen based on their intent as well as tone of delivery. Elements such as mockery, humiliation, debasement and slander were key criteria used in the identification of such campaign advertisements. Additionally, contextual clues (such as the number of users registering certain emojis as well as the comments under the videos itself) within the original Facebook post (from which the advertisement was sourced from) are taken into account when making this determination. Similarly, we used original comments sourced from each of the eight videos; the original comments pertaining to each of the eight videos were assessed for the presence/absence of any uncivil elements based on criteria similar to that as employed above (in the case of campaign advertisements) and those deemed to satisfy our basic requirements (uniformity in terms of length as well as intensity of tone implied) were selected as treatments to use in the study. Further details for each of the eight videos can be found below.

* **C1**: BJP, civil post, civil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 15 seconds  C1: In this ad, the narrator is mobilizing people to vote for the BJP with the hope of real change with an aim to build the ideal golden West Bengal.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=1383603598650254*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=1383603598650254) |

*Reactions for post*: Love , Like, Haha

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| বিজেপি লড়ছে, বিজেপি লড়বে, বিজেপি গড়বে সোনার বাংলা। বাঘের বাচ্চা আমাদের নেতা দিলীপ ঘোষ জিন্দাবাদ। নরেন্দ্র মোদী জিন্দাবাদ। অমিত শাহজি জিন্দাবাদ। জয় শ্রী রাম। জয় জয় শ্রী রাম। | BJP is fighting and shall continue to fight. to fight, BJP will build Golden Bengal. Golden Bengal. Tiger's Son Dilip Ghosh long live. Tiger's Son Dilip Ghosh Long Live. Narendra Modi Long Live. Amit Shahji Long Live. Jay Shree Ram |

*Reactions for comments*: Love and Like reactions; total count = 11

* **C2**: BJP, civil post, uncivil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 20 seconds  C2: In this ad, a song about building the ideal golden West Bengal plays in the background while showing glimpses of BJP support in the state.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=713718242579081*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=713718242579081) |

*Reactions for post*: Like, Haha and Angry

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| এই কাটাগুলো আমাদের জানে না, সব লুঙ্গি পড়া হারামিগুলোকে তাড়াবো আমরা ক্ষমতায় এলে। উত্তর প্রদেশে যেরকম যোগীজি করছে, এখানে আমাদের দিলীপ দা সব কটাকে বুঝে নেবে। NRC হবে। জয় শ্রী রাম। | These circumsided donot know us. All these Lungi- wearing bastards will be thrown out once we come to power. The way Yogi has done in Uttar Pradesh, Dilip da will do it in Bengal. We will see to it. Joy shree Ra. Shree Ram |

*Reactions for comments*: Haha and Angry reactions; total count = 11

* **C3**: BJP, uncivil post, civil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 8 seconds  C3: In this ad, a song mocking the incumbent party (TMC) is played with lyrics that refer to the supposed decline of law and order and increased corruption in West Bengal, while showing visuals that fit this narrative.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=876670299811818*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=876670299811818) |

*Reactions for post*: Like, Haha and Angry

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| পিসির পায়ে হওয়াই চটি। ভাই ভাইপো রা সব কোটিপতি।সবাই জানে।নতুন করে র জানাবেন না। তোলাবাজ ভাইপো তোর ব্যবস্থা করবে আমাদের দিলীপ দা । | Pishi feet wears flip-flops. All her brothers and nephews are Crorepatis. Everybody knows. There is nothing new to know Extortionist Nephew (Bhaipo), you will be brought to justice by Dilip da. |

*Reactions for comments*: Haha and Angry reactions; total count = 11

* **C4**: BJP, uncivil post, uncivil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 2 seconds  C4: This ad is a parody of a popular TV ad which conveys the message that the BJP is a germ fighting force that can get rid of the existing evils in Bengal society.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=1509692215894563*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=1509692215894563) |

*Reactions for post*: Love , Like, Haha

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| মানুষ আছেন সঙ্গে, বিজেপি আসছে বঙ্গে। বিজেপির হাত ধরে আসল পরিবর্তন আসবে বাংলায়। হাজার হাজার মানুষ রোজ যুক্ত হচ্ছে। জয় শ্রী রাম। ভারতমাতা কি জয়। | People are with us. In Bengal BJP is coming. Real Paribartan (change) will come to Bengal through BJP's hands. Thousands of people are joining hands. Joy Shree Ram. Bharat Mata ki Jai. |

*Reactions for comments*: Love and Like reactions; total count = 11

* **C5**: TMC, civil post, civil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 58 seconds  C5: In this ad, the narrator talks about the supposed positive changes that have been brought about in West Bengal under TMC rule, while showing visuals that fit this narrative.  *Original Video Link:* <https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=390805611993782> |

*Reactions for post*: Love , Like, Haha

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| খেলা হবে, খেলা হবে, ২ মে খেলা হবে। এবার বাংলায় হ্যাট্রিক করবে দিদিমনি, কেউ আটকাতে পারবে না। আবার প্রমান হবে বাংলা নিজের মেয়েকে চায়। জয় হিন্দ, জয় বাংলা। | Khele Hobe ( Game on!), Game on, we will play on 2nd May. Did will score hatrick this time, nobody will be able to stop. Again it will proved that bengal wants her daughter. Jai Hind, Jai bangla. |

*Reactions for comments*: Love and Like reactions; total count = 11

* **C6**: TMC, civil post, uncivil comment ()

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** | | |
| *Reactions for post*: Like, Haha and Angry | | *Video Length:* 1 minute 11 seconds  C6: In this ad, a song celebrating TMC leader Mamata Banerjee is played while showing glimpses of TMC support in West Bengal.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=2793044577624239*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=2793044577624239) | | |
| **User Comment** | | |
| **Actual Comment** | | **English Translation** |
| দাঙ্গাবাজ বিজেপি দলের খুনি প্রধানমন্ত্রী আজকে মেদিনীপুরের মাটিতে দাড়িয়ে হিন্দু-মুসলিম ভাতৃত্ব বোধে বিষ ঢালার চেষ্টা করল। প্রতিবাদ করুন, প্রতিরোধ করুন। জনগণের নেত্রী মমতা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় পাশে থাকুন। | | Riot-mongering BJP's murderer Modi, killer PM Modi . Modi came to Medinipur to spread poison and destroy the Hindu-Muslim fraternity. Protest and resist. Stay with people's leader Mamata banerjee |

*Reactions for comments*: Haha and Angry reactions; total count = 11

* **C7**: TMC, uncivil post, civil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 13 seconds  C7: This ad shows a speech being delivered by TMC leader Mamata Banerjee where she is insulting and threatening the BJP and their leaders  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=216802053128441*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=216802053128441) |

*Reactions for post*: Love , Like, Haha

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| দিদির অঙ্গীকার করছেন এই পশ্চিমবঙ্গ র জন্য আমরা ও অঙ্গীকার করছি মানুষের কল্যাণ হোক সেই দিদির সঙ্গে। জয় হিন্দ, জয় বাংলা। | Didi has pledged and so have we pledged that Bengal should prosper under Didi. Jai Hind, Jai Bangla. |

*Reactions for comments*: Love and Like reactions; total count = 11

* **C8**: TMC, uncivil post, uncivil comment ()

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Facebook Post** | **Campaign Video Thumbnail Sheet** |
|  | *Video Length:* 1 minute 21 seconds  C8: This ad shows a speech being delivered by TMC leader Mamata Banerjee where she is mocking and criticizing the BJP's and Narendra Modi's handling of Covid in India.  *Original Video Link:* [*https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=3496228673815756*](https://www.facebook.com/ads/library/?id=3496228673815756) |

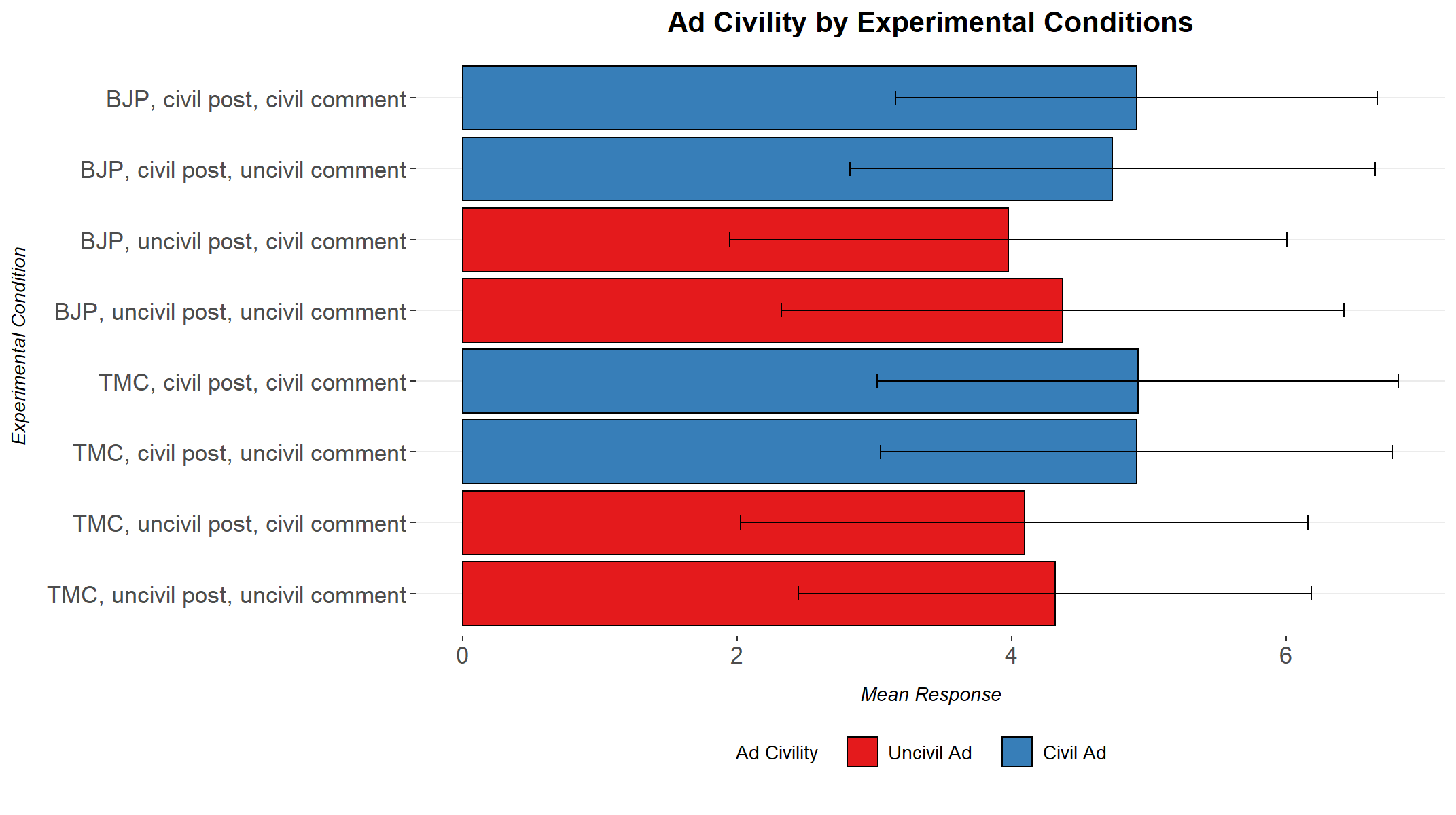
*Reactions for post*: Like, Haha and Angry

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **User Comment** | |
| **Actual Comment** | **English Translation** |
| বিড়াল ডাকে মিয়াউ মিয়াউ,  কুকুর ডাকে ঘেউ, কোকেনখোর বিজেপিকে ভোট দেবে না কেউ। মমতা বন্দ্যোপাধ্যায় জিন্দাবাদ। জয় বাংলা । | The cat murmurs meow meow, the dog barks gheow gheow, don’t vote for cocaine-addicted BJP. Jai bangla. Mamata Banerjee Long Live. |

*Reactions for comments*: Haha and Angry reactions; total count = 11

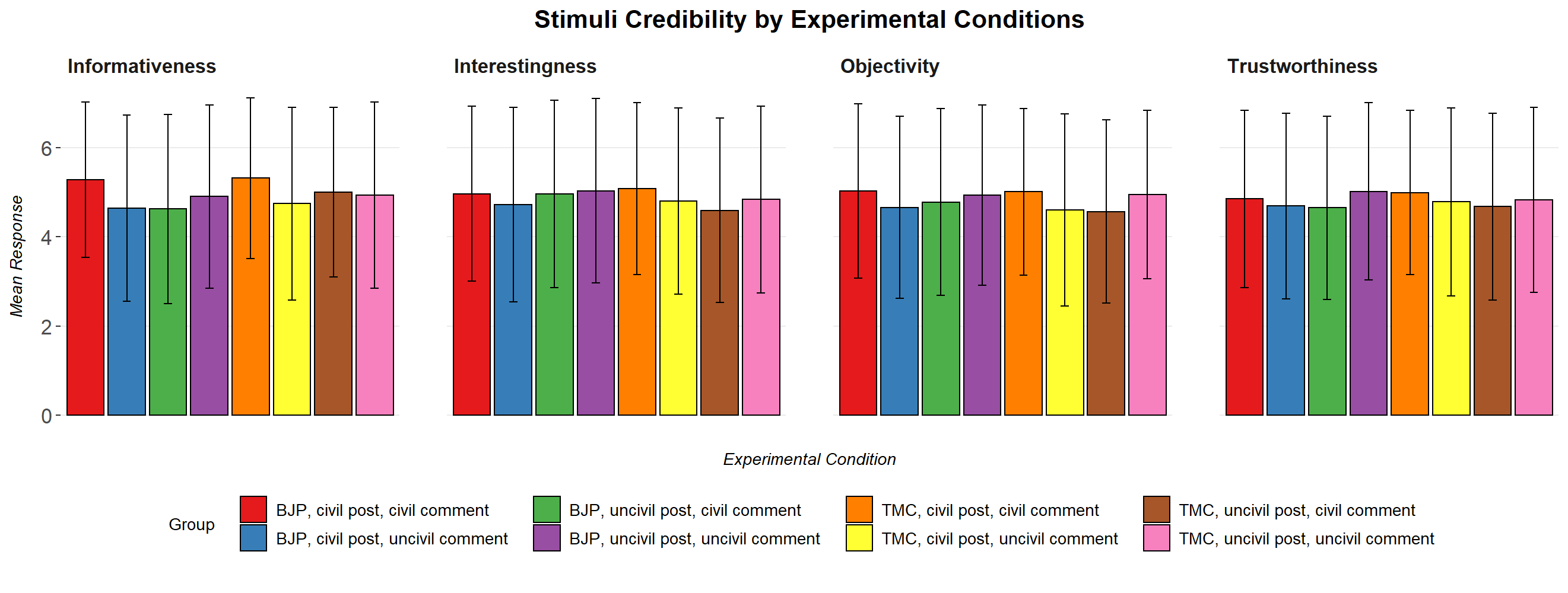
**Appendix 2c. Manipulation check**

After administration of the treatment, the respondents were asked: “Thinking back to the video that you just watched, how civil did you find the language in these ads?” The scale employed was a 7-point semantic differential scale, with =Uncivil and =Civil. Figure 5 below shows that participants assigned to experimental conditions with an associated uncivil video post consistently rate it lower on the civility score, on average, as compared to participants assigned to experimental conditions with an associated civil video post. As pointed out in the main paper, a -test conducted for ad incivility found that these differences are statistically significant . Taken together, these provide evidence for the successful manipulation for this treatment. Our initial study design also incorporated two additional manipulation checks on attention to emotional reactions and user comments to the main post. However, these turned out to be not testable because those questions were administered using an incorrect display logic by the survey company and ultimately were not answered by all respondents within the sample. As such, their use as manipulation check questions are not warranted.

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**Figure 5. Ad Civility by Experimental Conditions.**

To ensure the proper administration of the treatment as intended in our study design, a supplementary manipulation check was conducted with respect to the credibility of the stimuli in the perspective of the study participants, which is seen as a vital factor for respondents to believe in the stimuli. After administering the treatment, the respondents were asked to evaluate the credibility of the stimuli using a 7-point semantic differential scale: “After reading the story, how do you rate it in terms of the following?” Dimensions of credibility considered include trustworthiness, interestingness, informativeness and objectivity. As Figure 6 shows, participants across all eight experimental conditions rated relatively high on the four measures: in all cases, the observed mean response in each category lies above the mid-point of the scale (i.e., 3.5).



**Figure 6. Stimuli Credibility by Experimental Conditions.**

**Appendix 3. Dependent variables used in the model**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A3. Feeling thermometer scale**  (0=Unfavourable, 50=Favourable/Warm, 100=Highly Favourable) | | | | | |
|  |  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | **min** | **max** |
| Leader | Narendra Modi | 62.32 | 33.89 | 0 | 100 |
| Mamata Banerjee | 60.19 | 32.79 | 0 | 100 |
| Party | Bharatiya Janata Party(BJP) | 58.62 | 33.53 | 0 | 100 |
| All India Trinamool Congress(TMC) | 56.57 | 32.69 | 0 | 100 |

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| **Table A4. Indices of Positive and Negative Emotions** | | | | | |
| Positive emotions (α=.87) | | | Negative emotions (α=.93) | | |
| **Variables** | ***M*** | ***SD*** | **Variables** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| Happiness | 3.4 | 2.1 | Anger | 3.0 | 2.1 |
| Enthusiasm | 3.4 | 2.2 | Fear | 2.8 | 2.0 |
| Hope | 3.3 | 2.1 | Disgust | 3.2 | 2.2 |
| Proud | 3.3 | 2.1 | Sad | 2.9 | 2.0 |
|  |  |  | Worry | 2.9 | 2.0 |

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| **Table A5. Dependent Variables: Political Mobilization**  (5-points scale; 1=Not at all likely, 5=Extremely likely) | | | | |
|  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***Scale*** |
| Turnout Intention | 3.95 | 1.31 | 5-points scale |
| Vote intention BJP | 2.64 | 1.23 | 5-points scale |
| Vote intention TMC | 2.63 | 1.20 | 5-points scale |
|  | | | | |
| **Indices of General Political Participation (α=.78)**  (5-points scale; 1=Not at all likely, 5=Extremely likely) | | | | |
|  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***Scale*** |
| I intend to discuss politics with my family and friends | 3.19 | 1.38 | 5-points scale |
| I intend to take part in political demonstration | 2.32 | 1.38 | 5-points scale |
| I intend to sign online petition | 2.49 | 1.43 | 5-points scale |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A6. Directional Political Participation Index**  (5-points scale; 1=Not at all likely, 5=Extremely likely) | | | | |
|  | **BJP (α=.94 )** | | **TMC (α=.95)** | |
|  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| I intend to collect donation | 2.2 | 1.4 | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| I intend to discuss politics with my family and friends | 3 | 1.4 | 2.8 | 1.5 |
| I intend to share political articles on social media | 2.5 | 1.4 | 2.4 | 1.4 |
| I intend to donate money | 2.2 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 1.4 |
| I intend to participate in a political rally | 2.3 | 1.4 | 2.3 | 1.5 |
| I intend to attend Mohalla sabha/town hall meeting | 2.3 | 1.4 | 2.2 | 1.4 |
| I intend to participate in door-to-door canvassing | 2.1 | 1.4 | 2.1 | 1.4 |
| I intend to mobilize support on WhatsApp | 2.5 | 1.4 | 2.4 | 1.5 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A7. Post Engagement**  (5-points scale; 1=Not at all likely, 5=Extremely likely) | | | | |
|  |  | ***M*** | ***SD*** | **α** |
| Intention to reply/comment | How likely are you to reply to this comment seen in the post? | 2.60 | 1.39 | - |
| Intention to share on SM |  | 2.68 | 1.51 | 0.92 |
|  | How likely is it that you will share this video with friends and family in the following medium: WhatsApp | 2.68 | 1.51 | - |
|  | How likely is it that you will share this video with friends and family in the following medium: Facebook | 2.60 | 1.50 | - |
|  | How likely is it that you will share this video with friends and family in the following medium: Twitter | 2.27 | 1.42 | - |
|  | How likely is it that you will share this video with friends and family in the following medium: Instagram | 1.42 | 1.4 | - |
| Intention to share via FTF | How likely is it that you will share this video with friends and family in the following medium: Face\_to\_Face | 2.7 | 1.5 | - |

**Appendix 4. Covariates Used in the Models**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A8. Self-efficacy composite indices (α=.74)**  (5-points scale; 1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree) | | | |
|  | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
| I know where to get information about a public service when I need it | 3.6 | 1.2 |
| I think I am better informed about politics and government than most people | 3.4 | 1.2 |
| People like me don’t have a say in what the government does | 3.1 | 1.3 |
| I don’t think public officials care much about what people like me think | 3.3 | 1.2 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Table A9. Political knowledge composite indices (α=.53)** | | |
|  | TRUE % | FALSE % |
| There are 272 members in West Bengal state assembly | 48 | 52 |
| India has a Presidential form of government | 49 | 51 |
| The duration of Indian Parliament is 4 years | 69 | 31 |
| The duration of state legislature is 5 years | 90 | 10 |
| National Register of Citizens (NRC) has been implemented in West Bengal | 61 | 39 |
| Jagdeep Dhankhar is the Governor of West Bengal | 77 | 23 |

**Rerences**

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