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Measuring Political Participation in Bangladesh

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to all Bangladeshi people who have been injured, killed, or forcefully disappeared due to Bangladesh's authoritarian regime over the last fifteen (2009-2023) years.

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Abstract

Political participation is one of the fundamental driving forces of democracy. While traditionally it was only voting and party campaigning, nowadays it goes beyond all of the primary forms of participation and sometimes private actions, for instance, writing a critic against the ruling party on social media or chatting with friends regarding the new policy taken by the prime minister also considered as a form of political participation. In the case of Bangladesh, studies regarding political participation mostly assessed depending on the voting turnout. This study, therefore, focuses on measuring the level of political participation in Bangladesh beyond voting. This research then tries to determine ‘what’ factors explain political participation in Bangladesh? This study has adopted the civic voluntarism/ social resource and cultural motivation approach, the modernist approach, and mobilizing agency approach. Based on these approaches, this study developed four explanatory variables: trust, performance, discrimination, and corruption. In addition to that, this research also uses various socio-demographic variables to explain how that variate political participation. The study used data collected by the Government and Trust Survey (GTS) in 2020 in Bangladesh and managed by the University of Bergen and North South University, funded by the Norwegian Research Council. The findings show that the level of political participation in Bangladesh is very low (20%), excluding vote, and citizens' involvement in one action tends to influence them to engage in other activities, except refusing to pay tax. Twenty percent (25%) of people participated in modern/informal forms, and the other eighty percent 75% were active in formal/conventional forms of participation. The civic voluntarism model most successfully explained different variables, and the modernist approach did it partially, where mobilizing agency theory failed to explain. Whereas trust, performance and corruption can explain political participation in Bangladesh along with different socio-demographic factors. Higher trust and performance perception leads to less participation, and less corruption perception influences higher participation. In terms of socio-demography, more education derives toward more participation, whereas higher religiosity leads to less participation.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Rationale of the Study

According to Verba et al. 1995, ‘participation is at the heart of democracy’; a developing nation struggling to maintain its journey in the pathway of democracy like Bangladesh, with a population of more than 160 million, always has a vital role in citizen participation (p.1). This study is about citizens’ political participation in Bangladesh and what explains it. Political participation has been a vastly contested idea from the beginning of the journey of democracy, yet conceptually not certain. Traditionally it was primarily taken as electoral participation and then supporting and working for any political party (i.e., Verba & Nie 1972). Nowadays, it refers to any form of direct or indirect activity by the private citizen toward influencing government decisions or political system, working voluntarily to resolve any form of social or communal problem as well (Norris, 2002). As a whole, measuring the political participation of single or multiple countries is a continuous part of the discourse of political participation. Basically, the results of these studies influence the continuous expansion of the conceptualization of political participation. Primary studies on measuring political participation were mostly identical from electoral towards a new form of political participation, and they were primarily based on different European cross-national studies (i.e., Barnes, Kaase, et al., 1979; Verba, Nie, & Kim, 1978; Milbarth & Goel, 1978; Milbrath, 1981.). Similarly, in modern days, these studies are mainly evolving and integrating various creative or latent forms of political activity, such as Teorell et al. (2007); Theocharis and van Deth (2018). Thus, very few studies try to measure the overall political participation of South Asian countries in a broader and more inclusive sense of political participation. This has motivated this study to measure political participation in Bangladesh and what factors explain it.

In terms of political participation in Bangladesh, there are multiple studies on this. Still, they are mainly based on the traditional or primary form of political participation going through different approaches and lenses, for instance, women’s participation (i.e., Khan et al., 2006; Panday, 2008; Panday, 2013, Schuler et al. 1., 2010), minority participation (Siddique et al. 1. 2014), gender (Hossain et al., 2005), regional participation (Banks, 2008, Chowdhury, & Aktaruzzaman, 2016), etc. In addition, Baldersheim and Jamil (2001) assesses the regional variance of electoral participation, and Makhdum et al. (2022) investigate participation in local governance; hence, while there are not many studies that assess specifically participation as a

whole, particularly in modern technological phenomena whereas political participation expands its borders towards most forms of participation. Thus, this study finds it ideal for diving into the measurement of political participation through an expanded and wider lens of definition (i.e., Norris 2002, Van Deth J. W., 2001) and approaches (civic voluntarism, modernist, mobilizing agency).

In addition to such a point of view, Bangladeshi citizens have long been actively involved in conventional or traditional forms of political participation, such as voting and supporting political parties, even during the British Colonial era and the Pakistan period. However, due to the ongoing weakening or backsliding of democracy since 2009, there has been a change in the pattern of people's primary political participation (Sarker & Nawaz, 2019), and Freedom House lists Bangladesh as a partly free nation (Freedom House, 2019)¹. In contrast, Bangladeshi citizens participate in a variety of civic engagement activities that are today regarded as innovative forms of political participation, such as posting thoughts on social or political issues on social media or discussing ideas at frequent social gatherings (i.e. while travelling in the bus, chatting with others while drinking tea in a tea stall). Therefore, this study will be able to bring a great deal of empirical evidence to investigate the actual scenario of political participation in Bangladesh during the era of democratic backsliding.

1.2 Problem Statement

The majority of scholars agree that voting in elections is the most significant and traditional form of participation and that it also serves as the primary mode in other forms of participation (Teorell et al., 2007) (Milbrath, 1981) (Pateman, 2014). Aside from other contemporary phenomena on political participation, such as a different form of latent and civic participation, participation in the policy-making process, and different creative forms of activities, Bangladeshi citizens have consistently participated in large numbers in national elections. More specifically, since Bangladesh transitioned to electoral democracy in 1991 with a free, fair, and accepted election, since then voter turnout in every national election that has been held after every five years has increased steadily, from 52% in 1991 to 87.13% in 2008 (IPU database: BANGLADESH, election archives, 2022). However, since 2008, the nation has seen a democratic backslide under the control of the party in power now, i.e., Bangladesh Awami League (BAL), the most significant political party and one of the oldest in the history of

¹ [https://freedomhouse.org/explore-the-map?type=fofn&year=2022&country=BGD&status\[partly-free\]=partly-free](https://freedomhouse.org/explore-the-map?type=fofn&year=2022&country=BGD&status[partly-free]=partly-free)

Bangladesh (Riaz, 2021). As a result, all parties in the country and the international community did not acknowledge the elections in 2014 and 2018 as free, fair, and neutral. In 2014, the vote percentage was 20%, while in 2018, it was 80%, despite numerous allegations of vote rigging in various ways against the incumbent party, such as creating fear, disqualifying opposition through political cases and imprisonment, using the election commission, court, and security forces in a holistic approach, and so on (Riaz & Parvez, 2021). From that viewpoint, there is a reduction in citizen voting behaviour. However, this research wants to exclude voting in the form of participation as it is evident that the majority of the citizen are more or less engaged with elections and voting. One study identifies that more than 89% of the respondents voted in the national election of Bangladesh (Haque & Hossain, 2019).

Similarly, aside from voting, different academics identify numerous forms of political participation, some of which are frequently discussed, such as party activity, protest, community activity, and contacting or responding to government officials (Milbrath, 1981) (Van Deth, 2014) (Teorell et al., 2007). As Bangladesh has been dealing with a hybrid regime for many years, and one can easily realize the political atmosphere of the country and the state of various modes of participation. For example, extrajudicial killing and imprisonment of opposition activists and leaders, control of the media, a fearful political environment, and so on (Ali Riaz & Parvez, 2021) (Roth, 2018) (Siddiqui et al., 2018). Yet, like everywhere else in the globe, there are some exceptions, particularly among the younger generation who are using the internet (i.e., social networking, blogging, messaging) to speak out against various political and social issues. Then, eventually, this inspires them towards strong demonstration against the government in power, as in the case of the 2018 Quota movement and the Road Safety movement, which happened without any help from major political parties and totally based on social media outreach, something that has been extremely rare in the history of Bangladesh (Jackman, 2021). Traditional scholars claim that this is a manifestation of civic involvement as this is not a part of direct political discourse, while contemporary scholars have added that this is a type of political participation as well (i.e., Norris 2002, Van Deth J. W., 2001; Ekman & Amnå, 2012). Therefore, this paper raises the question of to what extent people are active in different forms of politics. Following that, one of the purposes of this research is to explore the effect of the current political scenario of Bangladesh on the people's personal level of political participation. This study also wants to assess different forms, i.e., traditional/formal, modern/informal (writing in social media) of political participation in Bangladesh.

Furthermore, in terms of participation in the policy process, Bangladesh's public administration has traditionally been chastised for corruption, discrimination, and inefficiency (Askvik & Jamil, 2013) cited in (Baniamin et al., 2020). Furthermore, public institutions in Bangladesh are elitist in nature, with allegations of personal favouritism and different forms of discrimination (Jamil & Askvik, 2015, p. 158). According to Van de Walle et al. (2008), failing to perform in the public sector weakens citizen trust in the government; hence, one might expect lesser participation, followed by lower trust and performance in Bangladesh understand an 'authoritative hegemonic government' (Ali Riaz & Parvez, 2021, p. 806). The question is whether trust and participation are connected or not. Trust in government and political engagement are always related to one another, as March & Olsen (1989) described. More specifically, whenever citizens are happy with the performance of the government and its institutions, trust in the government and the public sector seems to be high, influencing them to participate more in politics and policy processes. In contrast, dissatisfaction with government agencies' performance creates lesser trust, followed by low participation in the political system (Newton & Norris, 2000). As previously stated, governmental institutions in Bangladesh have come under fire for their inefficiency, which contributes to poor performance. Additionally, Askvik & Jamil (2013) discover that Bangladeshi public officials uphold personal interests, including bribery, nepotism, and a high degree of patron-client relationships. These are the critical barriers to overall formal links between the service provider and the recipient. As a result, Bangladesh's public service is underperforming and performing very poorly (Zafarullah & Huque, 2001). Therefore, the study comes up with a question, does the level of trust and performance have an impact on political participation in Bangladesh?

On the other hand, trust in Bangladesh's public institutions is paradoxical. Because of the inherent social and cultural orientation of South Asia, trust in governmental institutions is extremely strong among the wider population, even when performance is so poor in several indicators (Askvik & Jamil, 2013). For instance, a recent survey reveals that Bangladeshi residents are generally satisfied with the government's Covid 19 management, despite the fact that there are several claims of government mismanagement (Jamil & Hossain, 2022). As a result, there is a puzzle between performance and trust in the public sector of Bangladesh. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the puzzle regarding Bangladeshi citizens' political participation by such variables as trust, performance, socio-demography, personal experience of corruption, and discrimination or exclusion from government officials or processes.

1.3 Research Question

As this research aims to examine the different puzzles and variations in the political participation of citizens in Bangladesh, this study has selected four independent variables which explain political participation in Bangladesh. These are trust, performance, corruption, and discrimination or social exclusion. In addition, sociodemographic variables such as age, gender, education, religion, occupation, and urban/rural cleavage will be examined as control variables. Consequently, the primary research questions are:

- What explains the variation in political participation in Bangladesh?

Following the main research question, this study has four sub/following research questions; are

- Does trust matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?
- Does performance of government matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?
- Does personal experience of discrimination matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?
- Does corruption of government officials matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?
- Which socio-demographic variables matter for political participation in Bangladesh?

1.4 Organization of Thesis

The first chapter of the study contains the fundamental discussion of the research problem and justification of the study, as well as the identification of research questions. The second chapter comprises a literature review that defines political participation, a theoretical framework, and lastly operationalization of the study. The third chapter explores methodological options, data collection and analysis methods, and research quality. The fourth chapter of the study includes data analysis and correlation (Pearson corr.) analysis between the study's various variables. Finally, the fifth chapter gives an inferential analysis to uncover causal explanations between explanatory and dependent variables, and the final chapter includes the major findings and future direction of the research.

Chapter 2: Conceptual Understanding and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to discuss conceptual issues, the theoretical framework, and the operationalization of variables. This thesis first focuses on the fundamental conceptualization of political participation. After that, it continues explaining political participation with its different modes and approaches. In other words, it discusses, "What explains political participation? Second, a theoretical framework is developed based on the discussion to guide this research.

2.2 Conceptual Understanding and Literature Review

2.2.1 What is Political Participation

There is no uniform definition of what defines political participation. All definitions and conceptualizations of political participation, from the traditional idea to the contemporary extended idea, are carried on with the developmental path of political science, particularly with democracy. Scholars have explored their discussion on the participatory characteristics of democracy for mass people, starting with the ancient 'famous speech of Pericles (432 BCE)' (Van Deth J. W., 2016, p. 350) and continuing through the modern social contract theory of Rousseau, participatory theory of J.S. Mill and Cole (Pateman, 1970), and so forth. Following that, the topic of contemporary political science and democracy is discussed using the term "political participation." This term is commonly used to refer as "electoral participation" in political science, even though there have been many developments in the conceptualization of political participation recently (Ekman & Amnå, 2012, p. 3).

Perhaps the most frequently referenced definition is that from Verba & Nie (1972), "which is political participation refers to those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take" (p.2). Political participation was also conceptualized by Huntington & Nelson (1976) as individual citizen action to influence governmental decision-making. The first to define political participation broadly and to include various contemporary activities like protesting, joining political parties, etc., was Verba & Nie (1972). Because according to Teorell et al. (2007), Milbrath's 1965 concept of political participation only included election or voting for government servants (p. 335). Similar to Verba & Nie (1972), Milbrath & Goel (1977), and Kashe & Marsh (1979), defined political participation similarly. Political participation is the

direct or indirect acts or activities that a citizen undertakes in order to freely affect the government and other forms of politics (cf. Ekman & Amn, 2020). In the late twentieth century, new and more expansive definitions of political participation started to enter the debate. This was due to the growth of various modern and innovative types of political activities (such as boycotts, strikes, and demonstrations). For example, Verba et al. (1995) defined political participation with wider room for inclusion, which describes activity by citizens to affect governmental decision-making (cf. Lamprianou, 2013). In addition, Brady (1999) defined political participation as “activity by ordinary citizens directed toward influencing some political outcomes” in order to allow more space for modern activities (cf. Teorell et al. 2007). Moving forward, Uhlaner (2001) explained political participation as the involvement of the general public in formulating government policy (cf. Lamprianou, 2013, p. 22).

Although citizens were using many contemporary activities to influence decision-making and the political system, they were unable to contribute to the general discussion of political participation due to the lack of a comprehensive definition (i.e., boycott, blogging, even absence in voting, attending to the call of the local administrative body, forwarding mail). One can easily determine that most of them support traditional forms of political participation, such as voting, demonstrating, joining political parties, and so on; this thesis will go into greater detail on this in the subsequent part of this chapter. Since then, Norris (2002) has expanded the definition of political participation also to include "any dimensions of social activity that are either designed directly to influence government agencies or policy process or indirectly to impact civil society or which attempt to alter systematic patterns of social behavior" (cf. Theocharis & van Deth, 2018, p. 142). Based on this description, one can now easily incorporate various types of citizens' creative participation while directly or indirectly affecting any process related to politics or public policy. Following Norris (2002), Teorell et al. (2007) likewise widely evaluated several recent inclusions of participation and provided nearly identical definitions.

However, as a study, this research follows the definition of political participation provided by Norris (2002), which stands as our dependent variable. Following his definition, this thesis takes into account that any form of citizen activity regarding a certain social, political, or governmental issue, which can have an impact on societal or governmental decision-making, whether it is direct or indirect, done by a single person or a group, everything refers to political participation. This study can encompass the majority of participatory actions to measure Bangladesh's overall political participation process under this broader definition. Furthermore,

this study also focuses on Ekman & Amn's (2020) conceptualization of political participation, where they also employ broader lenses like Norris (2002) and Van Deth J. W. (2001). To be more exact, they view various civic engagement activities and indirect participation in politics or society as a latent form of participation which can precisely explain the differences between indirect and manifest forms of political participation. This will be significant for this study in identifying the level of both unconventional and conventional forms of political participation in Bangladesh.

2.2.2 What explains Political Participation?

To explain political participation properly, this thesis discusses two points. They are, first, modes of political participation and, second, different approaches to political participation.

2.2.2.1 Modes of Political Participation

As Arnstein (1969) defines 'political participation as a categorical term for citizen power' (p. 216), this term has been defined in various ways throughout its academic history. Moving forward with the most classical Verba & Nie (1972) explanation, he describes four essential features of political participation; first, participation is a specific type of activity (i.e., voting); second, it is always voluntary and not enforced by the government, third, it is by the private citizen, in other words, participation is by the general public and not by politicians or government officials, and fourth, activity influences or directs toward politics. Even if it excluded other forms of contemporary (at the time) activity, for example, protest and support activities, etc., this explanation was used mainly by researchers (Milbrath, 1981, p. 198).

From that viewpoint, Milbrath (1981) developed different 'modes' of political participation, which are based on behaviour and orientation of participation in seven countries (p.200); modes refer to various form of citizen activities which shares the same characteristics (Theocharis & van Deth, 2018). Milbrath (1981) discussed six modes of participation which are: voting, party and campaign working, community activism, contacting officials, protesting, and communicating (p. 201-203). Voting, working for any political party, and protesting any government decision is easy to define. In terms of community activism, according to Milbrath (1981), community activists usually form a group or team to work on a certain problem, and then they discuss it with government officials. Similarly, contacting officials describes a private citizen directly contacting a government official over a minor issue. Last but not least, communication, which was a completely new style of participation, describes sharing information and speaking out about politics or the government to other people in the

community, in the media, or at a social event. Although Verba & Nie (1972) and Nie & Verba (1975) discuss those activities in different ways, in that sense, these were unconventional forms of political participation even though they are now largely accepted as conventional with the continuous journey of conceptualization. Other modes of participation, aside from voting, party campaigning, and protesting, were quite new at that time (Milbrath, 1981). Following that, other scholars developed roughly comparable types of modes with a few variations. For example, Parry et al. (1992) developed six modes while adding two new forms: political violence and direct action. Verba et al. (1995) categorized the majority of political activities into four modes: voting, contact, community, and campaign (J. W. Van Deth, 2001, pp. 7-8).

Moreover, Teorell et al. (2007) introduce a new typology to identify political participation in debate while they explain roughly five modes. This is similar to Verba & Nie and Brady's (voting, party activity, consumer participation, contacting, and protest activity) discussion. Their typology's four modes are almost identical to Verba et al. The categorization of Verba & Nie and Milbrath is limited to the conceptualization and division of the distinct types. After all, Teorell et al. 2007 divided the modes up into multiple mechanisms, such as vertically representational and extra-representational, targeted (contacting) and non-targeted (party and protest activity), voice-based (i.e., party activity) and exit-based (voting), etc. (Figure 2.1). Furthermore, Teorell et al. 2007 argue in consumer participation about private citizens' market behaviour based on their political interests, such as boycotting French or American products, which is a new type of mode based on the extra-representational form of participation. Additionally, due to the continuous expansion of political activities, they ignore to recognize the concept of conventional and unconventional forms of political participation. They show boycott as an example, which was unconventional during the time of Verba and Nie but is no longer an unconventional form of participation (Teorell et al., p.343, 2007).

		<i>Channel of expression</i>	
		<i>Representational</i>	<i>Extra-representational</i>
<i>Mechanism of influence</i>	Exit-based	Voting	Consumer participation
	Non-targeted:	Party activity	Protest activity
	Voice-based	Targeted: Contacting	

).

Figure 2.1. A typology of the modes of political participation (Teorell et al. p.341, 2007).

Following that, Torell et al. (2007)'s typology appears insufficient to incorporate various modern forms of citizen political behaviour. In this regard, van Deth's (2014) conceptual map deals with a wide range of traditional and modern forms or modes of political participation and activity. Van Deth (2014) categorizes all forms of definition into three divisions, which are further subdivided into four types of political participation, and explains some typical labels and modes of participation. To begin, he refers to classical forms of definition as minimalist definitions and refers to these as Political Participation-I, which encompasses conventional, formal, and institutional forms of participation. Elite-directed action is also possible. Voting, budget debates, party membership, and contact activities are just a few examples. Political Participation- II, on the other hand, encompasses nontraditional, non-institutional political participation and various types of political action, protest, and regular political activism. For example, signing a petition, protesting, painting a slogan, flashing mobs, etc. Political Participation - III is the second category in the targeted definition, comprising many civil and social participation types—for example, volunteering, working on a social issue, etc. Finally, Van Deth (2014) defined motivational definition as different interests and motivation-based political expression. Political participation-IV encompasses expressive political participation, individualized politics, collective action, political consumerism, boycotts, etc.

However, in order to investigate modern/informal/non-conventional and traditional/formal/conventional forms of participation in Bangladesh, the most prevalent five political activities were selected. Whereas four refers to traditional modes of political participation, such as protesting against the government, contacting officials, contacting newspapers or media, refusing to pay taxes, and writing about political and social issues on social media as a modern or informal type of political participation.

2.2.2.2 Approaches of Political Participation

There are several approaches to explaining political participation aside from talking about various forms of participation. Beginning with the *theories of modernization*, which are mostly drawn from the classical theories of Max Weber and Emile Durkheim (Norris, 2002, p. 20). It was ultimately developed by Inglehart, Bell, and Dalton, among others, who examined the new forms of political activities in Western democratic countries that were brought by the advancement of education, the raising of living standards, the development of services, and that bring a transition from industrial to post-industrial societies. Following that, this approach

holds that this improvement and advancement of opportunity has an impact on rising expectations and aspirations for participation in various policy-making processes through the activity of different social, communal, and interest group organizations. While the development of service and educational opportunities shows strong and consistent performance throughout many government service areas. Bell (1999), in particular, delves deeply into the economic and social transformations that old social structures have undergone as citizens move from traditional to industrialized and modern city life. While expanding access to contemporary sources of education, health, information, and entertainment, as well as increased employment opportunities for women, has changed citizen behavior toward greater awareness of rights and involvement. Additionally, Topf (1995) presented a longitudinal study and discovered an increase in political activity among young and educated citizens even beyond voting. Similarly to this, Dalton (1998) suggests that civic engagement and policy-oriented participation are growing due to a variety of recently established civic organizations and social groups. Moreover, a distinct phenomenology is developed by Inglehart (1997) on the growing social tendencies in Western nations. He demonstrates how educated youth are more interested in contemporary issues like the environment, gender equality, and human rights rather than more conventional issues with a prescriptive or exclusive nature.

Second, Powell (1986) and others developed an *institutional approach* that denotes the institutional framework for participation by the government. They discuss electoral laws, constitutional structures, and a country's entire party system to compare the differences in voter turnout in different countries. More specifically, the idea of overall political participation in a state is shaped by the political system and constitutional rights afforded to its citizens. They also include civic engagement as another factor influencing widespread participation or participatory activities. Thirdly, *organizational or agency theories* are illustrated by Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), who discuss the numerous functions of traditional organizations that mobilize people around civil society, such as various political parties, religious organizations, and labor unions. They also exert a significant influence on news organizations and volunteer organizations. Generally speaking, these organizations or agencies urge their members to get involved in various social or community networks and issues, which leads to involvement in politics or policy processes. According to Norris (2002), this category also includes Putnam's (1995) & Putnam (2000)'s theory, which emphasizes the importance of social capital. In this context, Putnam (1995) discusses strengthening social bonds and social trust as contributing factors to institutional or political trust, which in turn influences people to

engage in a variety of participatory activities. Lastly, *civic voluntarism*, also known as the social resource and cultural motivation approach. According to Verba et al. (1995), numerous social resources (i.e., education and socio-economic status) and motivational factors (i.e., interest in politics, amount of information, etc.) play a considerable role in directing people towards different forms of social, political, and civic activities. More specifically, This approach helps to explain the influence of various social distributive factors over the role of citizen interest and engagement in the political sphere. For example, they show how education nurtures people's attitude and creates civic understanding and practice that ultimately has an effect on political participation in society. Likewise, civic voluntarism indicates that a citizen's income and occupational status also provide different social resources, motivation, and practice, which can provide a great explanation for his or her personal civic or political expression (Norris, 2002); (Norris, 2009).

2.2.3 Political participation, Citizen Participation, and Civic Engagement: from multi-dimension towards a single one

According to Van Deth J. W. (2001), political participation is the study of everything related to any form of citizen participation impacting politics, states, and society. Then the topic of citizen participation and civic engagement might be brought up. So, what about these terms? Are all of these terms interchangeable? Are they related in any way? This section of the thesis attempts to provide an overview of these issues. To begin, citizen participation is a concept that is closely associated with democracy and the discourse of modern-day governance. As a result, it consists of a gradual pathway and complicated interconnection regarding the various aspects of government. While it is a major topic of democracy, it is also emerging as a new term with the discussion of new public administration and good governance.

Since the 1980s, while political participation as a theory has narrowly focused on some conventional participation with the state, at that time, moving forward towards decentralization and new institutionalization, in other words, institutional participation, citizen participation has been established as a distinct concept (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999). (Pandeya, 2015). Almond and Verba (1963) were the first to define citizen participation in a broader sense than traditional voting; it covers activities in which citizens influence government personnel and government decisions as well (Almond & Verba., 1963). Nonetheless, it is a nearly identical sort of definition as political participation. As it progresses toward more institutional participatory forms, citizen participation now refers to the relationship between citizens and public administration that is based on policy processes and public service delivery (Callahan,

2007). More specifically, it denotes private citizens' attitudes toward influencing policymakers, such as direct contact, involvement with various interest organizations, regular political consumerism and action, and so on (Dalton, 2004). Similarly, whereas traditional political participation does not investigate the direct influence at the national level, citizen participation at the local level might have a more visible and immediate impact on local administration (i.e., direct bureaucratic response to any kind of participation)(Sjoberget al., p. 341, 2017).

According to Berger (2009), civic participation encompasses anything from voting to doing charity for someone or supporting a political party (cf. Ekman & Amn, 2012). In reality, Putnam is mostly responsible for popularizing the concept of civic engagement. Putnam (1995) focuses on citizen engagement rather than political or civic identification. He even mentions reading newspapers, social networking, and his attitude toward various social organizations. More specifically, he attempts to tie to democracy and the market economy in some way (Ekman & Amn, 2012). Aside from that, Adler and Goggin explain civic engagement refers to very particular citizen actions such as community service, collective action, and so on. In addition, those collective actions result from the collaboration of private citizens to develop a particular circumstance for the wider population (Adler & Goggin, 2005, pp. 238-240).

As explained in the conceptualization journey of political participation, today, political participation refers to any form of private, social, or communal activity that is intended to have a direct impact on different government organizations and policy processes or that is intended to have an indirect effect on civil society or that attempt to change any form of social behavior (Norris, 2002). This study is in line with Norris' concept of political participation. As a result of this description, this study can draw a line between three terms: civic participation, citizen participation, and political participation. In terms of citizen participation, which is more closely associated with participatory public administration, one can easily identify it in the definition taken by this research, which includes political participation as any activity intended to have an impact on government organization and policy processes. In this conceptualization section, government organizations and policy processes might incorporate various forms of citizen participation, a ladder, and considerations taken for good governance and institutionalization. Similarly, different types of civic engagement can be included in political participation because Norris (2002) defines civic engagement as any form of social activity that tries to alter any kind of social behavior, includes most civic engagement in modern society, such as reading newspapers, blogging, sharing thoughts with others online and offline, working on any type of community problem, and so on.

2.3 Operationalisation of the Variables

2.3.1 Dependent Variable

Political participation is identified as the dependent variable in this study. As mentioned earlier, this term is defined in various ways and has a continuous expansion and transformation as well. The most classical and often cited definition of political participation is given by Verba and Nie (1972). In their view, it indicates any actions taken by private persons that are specifically directed at influencing the choice of public officials and the decisions they make (Verba & Nie, 1972, p.2). Following this definition, plenty of other explanations emerged over time. To discuss different forms of participation, it started from only voting and now includes everything which has an impact on society regarding politics or government. As Van Deth J. W. (2001) states, it is the study of everything related to any form of citizen participation impacting politics, state, and society. According to the essential conceptual understanding presented earlier in this chapter, this study adheres to Norris' (2002) conceptualization of political participation, in which he incorporates Putnam's (1995) discussion of social capital, civic engagement, and public interest in various social and political issues that influence citizen political participation today. According to Norris (2002), political participation denotes any form of private, social, or communal activity intended to directly or indirectly impact different government organizations, policy processes, or civil society or attempt to change any social behaviour. However, following Martin and van Deth (2007) 's method of measuring political participation, which is regarding identifying self-reported political acts, this research tries to measure political participation by asking a question presenting a list of political actions. The options include both traditional or formal forms and informal or modern forms. The question is, 'Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you have done any of these things during the past year'. Options are: a) Joined others (like political workers) in your community to request some actions from govt., b) Contacted the media (calling a radio/TV program or writing a letter to a newspaper, etc., c) Writing in Social media d) Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint e) Refused to pay a tax/fee to govt.? Answers alternatives vary in four scales: "Never done" is coded as "1", "Once" is coded as "2", "More than once" is coded as "3", and "Don't know" dropped from the analysis. Additionally, it determines the minimal kinds of political engagement or latent forms of political involvement, as defined by Ekman & Amn (2012). For example, writing on social media or writing in a newspaper is typically a pre-form of conventional political participation.

2.3.2 Independent Variables

Trust

Trust has a multidimensional meaning and role in political science, from the individual to the social and governmental levels. At the individual or interpersonal level, trust is conceptualized as personal honesty, truthfulness, benevolence, and predictability (Kim, 2005a) cited from (Jamil & Askvik, 2015, p.158). Similarly, on the collective level, it has two dimensions such as institutional and social trust. Institutional trust indicates people's satisfaction, reliance, and belief in government institutions. More specifically, it "reflects the actual experiences of people in terms of how public policies are implemented and what kind of services are delivered" (Askvik, 2008, p.517). Social trust is associated with the idea of social capital forwarded by Putnam (1993), and the concept of social capital theory consists of two elements mainly, first, voluntary engagement of citizens to build a social network and second, interpersonal trust between a citizen (Kim, 2005b) cf. (Jamil & Askvik, 2015, p.160). Additionally, some argue that social trust indicates generalized trust in a society where everyone can be trusted and citizens are confident about the overall society and political system (Jamil & Askvik, 2015).

This research considers both social or generalized and institutional trust to determine the relationship between trust and political participation. This study finds that trust has a major impact on political participation, supporting the argument forwarded by mobilizing agency theorists that social capital influences citizens for both social trust and overall trust in the government and political system as well (Norris, 2002; Putnam, 1995). Numerous studies examine the connection between political participation and trust in the government, which primarily derives from a positive relationship between these two. For instance, Goldfinch et al. (2009) argue that higher levels of trust in various government departments can increase the level of participation in politics (see, for example, Carter and Belanger, 2005; Tolbert & Mossberger, 2006; Welch, Hinnant, and Moon 2005) (p.338). Other studies also found that trust has a similar impact on different modes of political participation (e.g., Gibson, 2001; Mishler & Rose, 2005; Neilson & Paxton, 2010; Kim, 2014). Additionally, Suh's (2013) analysis of a cross-national study reveals a flawed relationship between political engagement and general trust in the government. Most of these studies suggest that a higher level of trust in different government institutions creates an overall positive environment in the whole political system. That can influence citizens to actively participate in different forms of political participation as they are satisfied and confident about governmental organizations. They also will feel more

attached to the political sphere because of higher trust and are more inclined to different activities for various reasons, such as rallying to change a government policy, participating in a government dialogue, and calling officials or neighbours to solve a problem, civic problem, etc. Furthermore, in his book 'Trust, Creation of Virtue, and Prosperity,' Fukuyama (1995) argues that in societies where social trust is high among citizens, trust in democratic institutions will be increased as well, and individuals will participate more actively in politics and various forms of civil activities. That argument is also followed by Putnam (2000) in his book named 'Bowling Alone.' In the case of Bangladesh, Sarker & Islam (2017) identify a positive relationship between social trust and political participation in a cross-section study in a sub-district of north-eastern Bangladesh. Even though it only examined social trust, while this study takes both social and institutional trust, it indicates the majority views on the discourse of trust and political participation.

Contrarily, some studies found the opposite, more particularly that having less faith in the government could encourage individuals to engage more to influence policy or decision-making for the betterment of society (Avery, 2006). He tries to find the level of mistrust based on racial distinction and identifies the increased level of participation among African American citizens. Additionally, Rosenstone & Hansen (1993) conclude in their book 'Mobilization, participation, and Democracy in America,' "trusting citizens are not more likely to vote, not more likely to engage in campaign activities and not more likely to be interested in political campaigns or governmental affairs" (p. 150). It contradicts the assumption and the result of different other studies that established a strong argument that higher trust influences political participation. In a similar pattern, Levi & Stoker (2000) concludes that mistrust of government can be assessed as dissatisfaction with the incumbent political party, not with the overall political system.

To determine the level of trust of the citizen of Bangladesh, this study employs two questions, the first one for social or generalized trust and the second one for institutional trust. The first question is: 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you must be very careful in dealing with people?' Answers are collected on two scales where 1 for 'Most people can be trusted,' and 2 for 'Need to be careful in dealing with people'.. second, citizens are asked to evaluate their level of confidence in a number of public institutions on a 4-point scale, whereas '1' for 'not at all' and '4' for a great deal of confidence. These public institutions are a) Parliament, b) the Central Government, c) Civil Service, d) Political Parties,

and e) the police. However, based on the discussion above, hypotheses for this study can be drawn as follows:

Hypothesis 1a: *the higher citizens' trust in the society, the more political participation.*

The reason behind drawing this hypothesis consists of multiple arguments. First, as mobilizing agency theorists, in other words, classical studies in this regard (i.e., Putnam 1995; Norris, 2002) argue about a positive relationship between overall trust in government and political participation. Second, a recent study (Sarkar & Islam, 2017) suggests that increased social trust helps to boost political engagement in Bangladesh. As this thesis wants to assess both generalized and institutional trust, hence, this study believes that higher citizen trust will influence more involvement in politics. Overall, this study believes as trust helps to create more confidence in the government and political system, positive influence over citizens about different decisions of the government, effective policy making, and political stability. Thus it will create more political participation in society.

On the contrary, some argue that more trust does not lead to increased political activity, such as voting, campaigning, and protesting (Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). Similarly, in some societies, the reduced trust might lead to increased citizen participation in the political system (Avery, 2006). Specifically, in the case of Bangladesh and South Asia, numerous studies indicate a mismatch between trust in institutions and their performance. Most indicators show that the performance of the public sector and government institutions in Bangladesh and Nepal is not satisfactory, despite the fact that people sometimes believe those are performing well, and they mostly have a higher level of trust in the government (Askvik & Jamil, 2013) (Baniamin, 2020) (Jamil & Askvik, 2015). This suggests that, due to cultural differences, South Asia has some degree of unpredictability and exception in democratic expression. Therefore, this research wants to develop an alternative hypothesis for understanding political participation based on trust. That is following

Hypothesis 1b: *The higher citizens' trust in the society, the less will be the political participation.*

Performance

From a theoretical perspective, according to Jung (2011), “performance is the actual achievement of a unit relative to its intended achievements, such as the attainment of goals and objectives.”. cited by (Andersen et al., 2016, p.852). Practically there are many ways to

evaluate an organization's performance. For example, determining service quality, service delivery processes, service efficiency and effectiveness, and so on (Baniamin et al., 2020). However, when it comes to assessing the performance of the public sector, citizen satisfaction or perception of the citizen plays an important role (Jamil & Askvik, 2015). The study of political participation shares a comparable discourse with that of trust and the performance of the government, and these concepts can be conceptualized together because they are so closely related in many aspects. Moreover, this study can use performance from various political participation approaches. Modernization theorists argue that the growth of a country's national service sector contributes to increased participation in other contemporary social trends (e.g., Bell, 1999; Dalton, 1998; Norris, 2002). Fundamentally, that motivates this study's discussion of government performance in several areas and its effect on citizens' participation in politics and society. Similarly, other approaches illuminate political participation from the perspective of state structure or institutionalism exist for researchers who use this perspective. The constitutional framework strongly influences political participation, the overall electoral and political system, the degree of pluralism, corporatism in the collaboration of interest groups, and the general environment for political and civil rights. Also, they discuss the judicial system and the citizen's organizational structure (i.e., Crewe 1981; Flickinger & Studlar, 1992; Franklin, 1996) cf. (Norris, 2002). Nonetheless, the institutions connected to the political and electoral systems are the ones that are most frequently discussed. However, the research in this study concentrates on the performance of the government organizations or the whole service delivery system, as the modernization method suggests. Also, studies have shown a high correlation between a citizen's political participation and the performance of the public sector. Nekola (2006) compiles and examines samples from more than a hundred nations to determine how government service delivery efficacy, or overall performance, affects political and civic participation and discovers a high correlation between the two. There is also an academic study that focuses on participation in decision-making, performance, satisfaction, and trust. The performance and participation in decision-making with other general and structural characteristics, such as trust, satisfaction, and so forth, were found to have a substantial positive association, despite the fact that this study only examined one area of public service (healthcare) in Israel. (Mizrahi et. all, 2009, p.7).

Hence, the important question that needs to be addressed here is how this performance affects people's actions in politics. Most of the previous research contends that when individuals are satisfied with the service delivery of government institutions, they are more likely to trust the

government and politics. The satisfaction level with the quality of service or effectiveness of service is mostly correlated with the level of trust in the government (Baniamin et al., 2020). As previously stated in this study, higher trust in society and government leads citizens to become more active in civil and political responsibilities. To dive into the context of South Asia, Moinul et al. (2017) show that good governance is positively correlated with political activism in Bangladesh. While the level of quality, effectiveness, efficiency, and accountability of the public sector is frequently used to determine good governance (Khan, 2015), performance is also frequently measured using some of these features. That indicates the majority view of the current discourse, which suggests that good performance will influence people to participate more in civic activities. Furthermore, one study looks at the quality of service delivery, people's perceptions, and activism on political matters in Pakistan (Woodet al., 2020). As this study argued earlier, they also find that better service delivery leads to more trust and political engagement.

However, performance as an independent variable is based on two groups of variables. First, satisfaction with public services is evaluated based on the level of satisfaction from 1, "very bad," to 5, "very good," and The question is, 'How would you describe the development of the following services over the last five years?' These are (a total of 22 services): a) Public School b) Private school c) Public college d) Private college e) Public university f) Private university g) Health care in public hospital h) Health care in private hospital i) Social security (health, insurance, etc.) j) Maintenance of law and order k) Electricity supply l) Energy supply (gas, firewood, kerosene, etc.) m) Garbage removal n) Maintenance and construction of roads o) Maintenance of culverts/ bridges p) Water supply q) Sewage and local sanitation r) Public transport s) Banking service t) Internet and ICT accessibility and IT service u) Agricultural extension services (seeds, new technology, fertilizer, etc.) v) Animal health care services (Animal Husbandry).

Second, the citizens are asked to evaluate the policy performance of the government. The question was: How well the Bangladeshi government has succeeded in the following areas: a) Reducing poverty, b) Checking crime (e.g., drug control,) c) Ensuring peoples' safety and security, d) Generating employment, e) Checking pollution and environmental hazard f) Mitigating climate change g) Checking corruption h) Controlling human trafficking i) Human resource development for overseas employment j) Labour welfare k) Improving the general economic situation i) Improving gender equality/ women empowerment. Whereas '5' is coded as 'succeeded very well' and '1' for 'did not succeed at all.' However, based on the discussion

above, this study can draw a hypothesis for the performance of the public sector and political participation in Bangladesh, which is:

Hypothesis 2: *The more citizens are satisfied with policy performance, the higher will be the political participation.*

From the discussion above, the study has some basic arguments to justify this hypothesis. First, two major approaches (i.e., modernist and institutionalist approach) of political participation suggest satisfaction with government service, and good public sector performance helps people to get the motivation to join political activities. Following that notion, this study has drawn the current hypothesis. Second, multiple studies also suggest that when the government's performance improves, citizens' satisfaction also increases, influencing people to participate in political and civic engagement actively (Nekola, 2006; Mizrahi et al., 2009). Because government institutions tend to be more trusted when people are happy with their service delivery, therefore, this study considers that more satisfaction in policy output will derive more political participation. Third, there is a common intertwined view in the political science discourse that if the public sector's performance increases, then the citizen's trust also increases (Benjamin et al., 2020; Norris & Newton, 2000). As this research has taken the notion of a positive relationship between trust and political participation, the performance also follows the same lineage.

Discrimination

Discrimination is drawing a distinction by judging or acting in favour or against a person or group based on various sociocultural or biological identifiers, such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, and so on (Oskooii, 2016, p.615). This study specifically did not uncover any approach that could be utilized to explain political activism in relation to discrimination directly. Nonetheless, considering the debate and critical points of the civic voluntarism model, it is possible to proceed with this variable to examine how it relates to political participation. In their title "Voice and Equality: Civic Volunteerism in American Politics," Verba et al. (1995) discuss resource and motivating elements like time, money, and networks for political participation. They also discuss the various types of political rights and interests that are unequal and how it affects citizens' perceptions of and engagement in politics and society. Similarly, they examine the influence of different social institutions, such as schools, churches, and volunteer organizations, on their political and civic involvement from an early age. Because these experiences have a significant impact on a citizen's psychology right from the

start, from a similar view, this study can bring personal experiences of discrimination and its effect on the mindset of the citizen. A sense of resource disparity, poverty, and personal experiences with discrimination, according to the model, can make citizens feel depressed and socially rejected, which has an impact on their political and community actions. Thus, this study wants to find out how that influences people, whether it increases political participation or decreases.

However, several studies specifically address the influence of discrimination on citizen actions connected to political participation. Studies indicate a mixed effect of personal experience of discrimination on the number of people who participate in politics. In a comparison between Whites and Hispanics in the USA, Marsh & Ramrez (2019) found that an increased number of political activity among White persons was caused by fear related to discrimination. Historically, numerous additional research has backed up the notion that discrimination against immigrants has resulted in higher participation rates (i.e., Verba & Nie, 1972; Stokes, 2003; Dawson, 1994). Study shows that a sense of discrimination motivates more participation in the mixed neighbourhood between Jewish and Arab citizens in Israel, whereas Druze and Christian citizens have not participated enough from the same sense of discrimination; in other words, a minority among the minority are not participating sufficient (Beeri & Saad, 2014). From these overviews, it seems clear that in democratic countries and environments, personal experience of discrimination creates more participation among a certain group of people, and they move forward to eradicate those discriminatory policies and actions from society. In contrast, a great significance of research indicates the opposite of this notion. They contend that any discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, race, and so on can result in feelings of mistrust and deprivation toward the government and society, which may discourage people from engaging in political and social activities (i.e., Kolody & Vega, 2000; Prigerson, & Mazure, 2000; Smith & Betz, 2002). Yet, most of these studies are based on social and political psychological discourse.

Likewise, according to Oskooii (2016), Muslims in America after 9/11 who are viewed suspiciously, called harassing names, physically attacked or intimidated, or feel socially alienated have a lower level of political participation. Those who have experienced political discrimination, such as being mistreated in the airport security line, have a higher level of political participation. Conversely, studies in South Asia indicate that discrimination primarily causes alienation and distrust among discriminated groups, making them less active in political and civic activities. In her research, Khanna (2009) believes that widespread social and

systematic discrimination against women in India causes them to participate less than their counterparts, even though numerous initiatives have been taken to establish gender equality. In Pakistan, a study found that due to long-standing exclusion and discrimination, the inhabitants of Gilgit-Baltistan are less politically and socially involved (Howe & Hunzai, 2019). Similarly, Sifat and Shafi (2021) examined the social and political marginalization of hijra (third-gender) people in Dhaka, Bangladesh. They also discovered that systematic discrimination caused these groups of people to be less active in all aspects of societal participation, such as education, representation, voting, health care, and so on. In many circumstances, they do not even have the right to participate.

However, exclusion has a complex impact on people's actions and behaviour, and it becomes clear after a multifaceted discussion of discrimination and its effects. In relation to political participation, sometimes it depends on the degree of exclusion and longevity. Often, it depends on the overall political environment of a country, the number of opportunities provided, the actions taken to erase discrimination, the level of social awareness raised, etc. In addition to that, the sense of citizen also plays an important role and eventually depends on different other social factors, for instance, education, employment, socio-economic status, etc. (Wolfinger & Rosenstone, 1980). Similar factors have also been used in this study as control variables.

To find out the personal experience of discrimination or exclusion of the citizen of Bangladesh, respondents were asked to answer a question based on one year time span, and that is: 'In the past year, how often, if at all, have you personally been discriminated against based on any of the following': to answer this question six options are given based on the different identity of the people; a) Your gender b) Your religion c) Your ethnicity d) Your district/region e) Any disability you might have and f) Political affiliation. There are four answer alternatives, where '1' means 'Never,' '2' for 'Once/Twice,' and '4' for 'many times.' This study wants to draw two separate hypotheses for discrimination in relation to political participation depending on the discussion mentioned above, which are,

Hypothesis 3a: *The more discrimination in their personal life, the less will be citizens' political participation.*

Hypothesis 3b: *The more discrimination in their personal life, the more will be citizens' political participation.*

The primary reason for these two contradicting hypotheses can be understood clearly from the previous explanation. To summarize, research on discrimination based on various forms of

socio-ethnic characteristics in relation to political participation suggests that it can cause anger, frustration, deprivation, and a sense of discrimination, which motivates people to participate more in various political and social activities (i.e., Beerli & Saad, 2014; Marsh & Ramirez, 2019; Verba & Nie, 1972; Stokes, 2003; Dawson, 1994). In contrast, there are several cases that explain decreased political engagement as a result of long-term and systematic discrimination and social marginalization. Particularly in a regional context, studies show the complete opposite of the study's primary hypothesis, which suggests that discrimination will lead to more participation (i.e., Howe & Hunzai, 2019; Khanna, 2009; Kolody & Vega, 2000; Prigerson & Mazure, 2000; Sifat & Shafi, 2021; Smith & Betz, 2002). Although this study has taken both contradictory hypotheses because it is a study that will measure Bangladesh as a whole and as a country, the majority of Bangladeshis are from nearly the same ethnic and religious background (Bengali 98%,² Muslim 91.04%³), which can have an impact on the result of the study.

Corruption

Defining corruption has a variety of ways, depending on the viewpoints of different organizations and researchers. Broadly, according to the World Bank, corruption is 'the abuse of public office for private gain—covering a wide range of behaviour, from bribery to theft of public funds' (Anticorruption fact sheet, 2020). In other words, corruption can be defined as abusing or misusing the authority of government officials in exchange for money, a position in public service, or political support (Kochanek, 2010, p.365). As the civic voluntarism model is used for explaining discrimination in regard to political participation, in a similar view, this can be explained through the civic voluntarism model of political participation. Because as like as discrimination, corruption also has a serious effect on the attitude of a citizen regarding civic and political involvement. Similarly, following discrimination, a contrary notion of discussion exists among scholars concerning the influence of corruption over the political participation of mass people.

On the one hand, as the majority view of this discourse suggests, Olsson (2014) analyses data from a survey carried out in 33 countries and finds a strong correlation between political participation and overall perceptions of corruption in the country. In other words, corruption has a negative psychological impact on citizens, discouraging them from participating in non-

² <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/ethnic-population-2022-census-real-picture-not-reflected-3090941>

³ <https://www.dhakatribune.com/bangladesh/2022/07/27/bangladeshs-population-size-now-1651-million>

institutionalized political participation. He divides the participation variables into three different categories: institutionalized participation, non-institutionalized participation, and voter turnout; only institutional participation has no impact on corruption, other two categories are negatively correlated with corruption. There are similar studies that suggest the same direction of influence over people's perception and activities regarding politics (i.e., McCann and Dominguez, 1996; Kostadinova, 2009) cf. (Stockemer, 2013). Apart from the experimental study, there is a strong argument behind this, as Milbrath (1965) discusses the motivation of giving input into the political system, which states self-abilities to take action into the political system and influences to bring a new policy output. When someone is watching or experiencing corruption regularly, that creates less confidence among the citizen about the whole process of politics and drives them to be less attached to everything. cf. (Olsson, 2014). Wagner et al. II. (2009) also argued about corruption and how that influence causes lower trust in society over political parties and motivates citizens to detach from politics. cf. (Stockemer, 2013). On the other hand, according to an empirical study by Kostadinova & Kmetty (2019) in Hungary, real-life experiences with any form of bribery, corruption, and the perception of widespread corruption in the system, essentially encourage people to participate in various political activities for change. Although numerous studies support this position, it is primarily a minority view when it comes to correlating corruption with political participation (i.e., Matthew, Winters & Rebecca, 2013; Schopflin, 2013). These studies suggest that widespread corruption can incite resentment and rage among many communities. Thus, they may become more involved in the political systems, sometimes by protesting in the streets and other times by casting votes or writing in social, news, and print media. Moreover, Mihail and Sergiu (2012) contend that a massive amount of public sector corruption only affects the ruling party or government when it comes to weakening public trust. They will be more inclined to protest and cast ballots in numbers in order to punish that party.

Additionally, examining corruption and its impact on political involvement reveals a complex phenomenon. As South Asia has been one of the most corrupt regions for a long time, there are multidimensional and long-term effects of corruption on the perception and practices of people regarding politics. Although maybe it is not directly regarding voting or protesting, studies show that continuous corruption of political leaders and government officials alienated general politics from most of the educated people in South Asia. In terms of representation, the business class is mostly dominating politics because of their capability of muscle power and dealing accordingly with overall corrupt behaviours. Moreover, as a whole, the political sphere has

been criminalized by the mafia and politically backed criminals. Therefore, educated people have been detached from these activities in terms of expression and engaging in political activities (Jamil et al., 2013) (Kochanek, 2010).

However, to investigate the corruption experience, people were asked two questions. The first one is a five scales question where '1' means None and '5' for 'Everyone' The question is: What is your opinion about the following questions? Answers are taken in 2 types of options, which indicate to government/public officials a) How many politicians are involved in corruption? b) How many civil servants are involved in corruption? The second one refers to overall personal experience. The question is: 'In recent years, have you or has anyone from your family been hinted at or asked by public officials about paying bribes to do a job or get a business done?' Answers varied from '1' meaning 'Never' and '5' for 'Very often' following the subsequent numbers and options.

Hypothesis 4: *The more corruption in public agencies as perceived by the citizens, the less will be political participation.*

Nevertheless, the majority opinion of the corruption discourse and how it affects citizens' political activities have been taken into consideration in this study because the civic voluntarism model does not provide any explicit direction in the case of corruption or related societal or personal experience. Additionally, Milbrath (1965) argues about citizen trust, confidence, and ability to act to change the political system. Massive corruption in the public sector has been a widespread scenario for citizens for a long time in Bangladesh (Askvik & Jamil, 2013). In addition to that, as discussed above, the overall context of South Asia and Bangladesh has a depressive impact on people. This can bring a sense of mistrust and lower confidence about the entire system of governance and politics, which can ultimately decrease political participation. From these perspectives, more corruption experienced by citizens will lead them to be less active in the political participation process in Bangladesh.

Socio-demographic variables

According to the civic voluntarism/social resource and cultural motivation model, gender, age, educational achievement, occupational status, and other factors significantly impact people's motivation for political activity. For this reason, the study chooses multiple socio-demographic indicators as independent variables (Norris, 2009). This study uses the same methodology as earlier studies that have combined them into a single variable (e.g., Downs, 1957; Verba &

Nie; 1972; Verba, Nie & Kim; 1978) cf. (Wolfinger & Steven, 1980). The social factors that influence people's motivation to vote are examined by Wolfinger & Steven (1980), who find that education is one of the most predictive factors of political participation. According to Burns et al. (2001), a citizen's access to resources like money, time, and other civic skills is largely dependent on their family status, line of work, and other social organizations. These resources then enable them to participate in a variety of social and political activities. Also, because of how those resources are divided socially, it is easier to understand several other demographic aspects of political participation, such as gender, race, and age. (Norris, 2002, p.29) In light of this, six socio-demographic factors—including gender, age, religion, education, occupation, and the distinction between rural and urban areas (rural/urban cleavage) are chosen for this study to examine their effects on the general political participation process of citizens of Bangladesh.

Gender

According to various studies, political participation varies by gender, as well as other variables such as identity and social cleavage. Primary research on political participation found that women generally participated less than men. For example, Wolfinger and Steven (1980) found that women in the United States were 2% less likely than men to vote in 1972 when other major variables, such as education, age, and money, were controlled. In contrast, in similar circumstances, female voters began to vote more than male voters over time. According to Leighley and Nagler (1992b), women were more likely to vote than men in the 1984 American election. In their following study, they reviewed election data from 1972 to 2008 and discovered that if other variables were controlled, the female proportion of voting increased by 4% more than the male percentage from 1984 to 2008 (Leighley & Nagler, 2013, p.74). Moving forward with Leighley and Nagler's explanation, it is clear that women's voting involvement has increased to the point where it currently outnumbers men in the United States if other social features are similar. Despite that, generally, there are also significant differences in voting percentages between men and women in the United States. However, numerous studies on political participation in different Western countries show that there continues to exist a significant gender disparity. More specifically, women are less likely than men to engage in most forms of political activities (e.g., Dalton 2008; Gallego, 2007; Norris, 2002; Paxton et al., 2007); cited from (Coffé & Bolzendahl, 2010, p.318). The gap in political participation between men and women results from several factors. Especially one study revealed that fewer

women participate in politics because they have less political knowledge and interest (Verba et al., 1997). According to multiple studies concerning social dynamics and the process of gender socialization, women have less access to social resources related to politics, for instance, political information and political interest (Burns, 2007; Veba et al., 1997). Women are socialized to be law-abiding, passive, and private, whereas men are established toward leadership, public positions, self-regulation, etc. (Coffé & Bolzendahl, 2010, p. 320), which might greatly influence women toward reduced participation in various political activities.

In the case of Bangladesh, a study by Haque & Hossain (2019) revealed that female and male participation in politics is, respectively, 87% and 92% among respondents, with females being slightly lower than their male counterparts. In addition, women participate slightly more in voting (88.4%) than in other forms of group activity, such as protesting, attending rallies, or running for office, where men predominate (p.135). Similar to this pattern, a study reveals significant differences between male and female voters in Khulna City (One of the largest cities in Bangladesh) when it comes to other political behaviours like discussing politics, attending party meetings, etc. For instance, only nine per cent of men stated they never acquire political information, compared to 27.8% of women who answered the same. Similarly, when it involves speaking or debating politics, 6.8 per cent of male respondents said they never did so, compared to 27.5% of female respondents (Ahmed et al., 2020). However, according to the discussion presented above, the hypothesis of the study in this regard is as follows:

Hypothesis 5a: *Political participation will most likely be less among female respondents.*

This hypothesis was developed for two main reasons. According to the findings mentioned above, excluding a few developed and more democratic nations, female involvement is lower in most countries than male participation. Second, studies in Bangladesh have pointed to the familiar pattern of gender roles in the political participation of the country; although women and men participate to nearly equal degrees in conventional activities, men outnumber women in contemporary forms of activities. Apart from that, it is completely incomparable to consider the context of Bangladesh and nations where women's voting percentages are higher than men's in different controlled empirical research. Because Bangladesh, like other South Asian countries, has been unable to determine a clear path toward a viable democratic sphere. Furthermore, women in Bangladesh remain far behind compared to modern Western countries in terms of education, employment, and various other social and cultural cleavages. Following these viewpoints, this research considers women less likely to participate in politics.

Age

Given that the civic voluntarism approach to political participation contends that age determines people's motivation for voting and other political actions, this study uses age as one of its six sociodemographic variables. Traditionally, primary studies on sociodemographic factors and voting show that (i.e., Flanigan and Zingale 1975; Milbrath & Goel, 1977; Nie, Verba & Kim 1974) older people tend to participate less in politics than younger people due to physical limitations brought on by old whereas middle-aged people appear to be the most engaged, regardless of gender. Although age has some apparent effects on voting behaviour, it is primarily influenced by other demographic characteristics like sex, marital status, level of education, and income (Wolfinger & Steven, 1980, p. 41). In contrast to that view, Leighley & Nagler (2013) show how different age groups voting have changed from 1972 to 2008 in the USA. Interestingly, over time old age groups (46-60 to 61-75; 46-60 to 76-84 years) have shown a gradual increase percentage of voting while all three young age groups (18-24 to 46-60; 24-30 to 46-60; 31-45 to 46-60 years) continues to decline. At the same time, the young age group who were 18-24 year group had an almost 20% decline in voting from 1972 to 2008 compared to the ages 46-60 years old group. Surprisingly, the old age group from 46-60 years has increased relatively more than any other age group who turned 76-84 years from 1972 to 2008 (Leighley & Nagler, 2013, p. 72). Therefore it is explicit that nowadays, older people have more voting percentage than young citizens. As this research has shown before, political participation was mostly regarded as voting. Hence, to concentrate on different forms of political activities, recent studies discovered some additional features relating to the different age groups as various forms of political participation have been reviewed over time. In their comparative analysis between Germany, France, and the UK, Melo & Stockemer (2014) discovered that older people are more inspired to traditional voting, while young people are more drawn to direct actions like protest, and people in the middle age category (34-65) are more attached to formal actions, such as signing petitions (p.33).

However, in terms of the context of developing nations, one study compared voting between Latin American, African, and East Asian countries. That study also found that the Middle age group (31-50 years) had the highest voting percentage compared to other age groups. For instance, in Africa and Latin America, they have had 89% turnout and 88% in Latin America (Bratton et al., 2006, p.7). Following a similar pattern to other parts of the world, middle-aged (41-60) and elderly (more than 60) citizens in Bangladesh are more politically active than young people, respectively 95%, 94%, and 84%. Contrary to the study of Melo and Stockemer

(2014), this study shows that middle-aged people are also more engaged in other forms of political activities as well which is referred to as 'High Participation' and that is 9.8% while young aged (youth) people have 8.7% (Haque & Hossain, 2019, p. 135). Following that, this study can develop a hypothesis regarding age and political participation, which is:

Hypothesis 5b: *Middle-aged people will be more likely to engage in different political activities.*

Or

Older people will be more likely to engage in different political activities.

However, to summarize the discussion above, two primary factors are behind this hypothesis's justification. First, as the majority view of this discourse recommended that middle-aged and older people are more active in various forms of political participation, this study also follows the same trend. Second, the research mentioned studies from Bangladesh and other parts of the developing world that examined different socio-demographic variables and their relation to political participation (Bratton et al., 2006; Haque & Hossain, 2019). They also suggest that young age people have less participation, whereas middle age and old age people are way ahead in Bangladesh. Therefore, this study also considers that the middle-aged group will be more likely to be active in various political and civic activities.

Religion

Many political participation approaches include the role of religion or religious organizations as motivators for citizens to engage in societal and political activities. According to the mobilizing agency theorist, strong religious ties serve as a link that helps people in that group develop social trust, which in turn can persuade them to act for the common good and engage in various forms of politics. Likewise, the civic voluntarism model discusses several socio-demographic characteristics, such as religion, which also have a significant impact on how citizens choose to engage in civic and political life (Norris, 2002). In order to evaluate religion's role as a motivator for civic participation, it is important to understand that research on political participation has considered religion from both the standpoint of religious behaviour and religious belief. Typically, research is based on religious behaviour measured by church attendance/religious practice. Other research has identified that church or religious attendance has positive relation toward different types of political participation (i.e., Beyerlein and Chaves, 2003; Jones-Correa & Leal, 2001) cf. (Driskell et al., 2008, p.296). The people who practice or attend church regularly are also more active in politics. However, a study by Driskell

et al. (2008) shows that church attendance/religious practice negatively correlates with political participation, whereas religious belief or self-identified religious person has a positive correlation with political engagement. Similarly, Omelicheva & Ahmed (2018) examine the impact of faith on politics in the USA and find out that membership in religious organizations has an influential role in different civic activities, for instance, signing petitions, participating in boycotts and demonstrations, voting intention and membership in political parties where religiously active participants are less engaged with social and political activities which are opposite of that studies hypothesis as well (p.12).

Hence, when it comes to the third world, study shows that people of faith are more likely to participate in voting compared to non-believers in East Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Moreover, to see the overall scenario of these regions, based on different religious followers, Buddhists have the highest rate of political engagement in East Asia, Protestants in Africa, and Catholics in Latin America. Muslims in Africa and Asia also have a similar mindset and percentage of participation in voting but less in other types of activities such as supporting parties, campaigning, contacting officials, etc. (Bratton et al., 2006, p.10). More particularly, in Bangladesh, there are few studies regarding this. According to one study explaining differences between political participation based on religion, people who identify as Christian have the highest percentage (93.3%) of participation in Bangladesh. Whereas it is 90.2% among Hindu people and Muslims have the lowest rate (88%) of participants, who are the majority in numbers (Haque & Hossain, 2019, p. 135).

However, to identify the religion of the people of Bangladesh questionnaire has five options, which are the following, a) Hindu, b) Muslim, c) Buddhist, d) Christian e) No religion. In a similar pattern, to understand the level of religiosity and its impact on political participation, respondents were asked to answer ten scales questions which are: Independently of whether you attend religious services (such as religious ceremonies, festivals, or going to Mosque/Mandir/Pagoda/Church) or not, would you say you are 'not religious at all' to 'very religious'? Answers are taken on a scale from 1 to 10. From the discussion given above, now this study wants to draw a hypothesis, which is:

Hypothesis 5c: *Religious people will be less likely to participate in political activity.*

This hypothesis is developed because several studies suggest that more church-going and self-identified religious people are less likely to participate in political activities (Driskell et al., 2008; Omelicheva & Ahmed, 2018). Even though those studies are from the USA, it includes

the most significant religious communities such as Evangelical, Hindu, Orthodox, Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Muslim (Omelicheva & Ahmed 2018. p.12). Therefore, this study assumes that a citizen's very religiosity will negatively impact his political activities.

Education

One of the key elements that affect people's motivation for civic and political participation is education. This is also explained by the different approaches to political participation. According to modernization theorists, the expansion of educational chances, along with other post-industrial opportunities in Western European nations, creates a new kind of political activity (Bell, 1999). In addition, the civic-voluntarism model implies that education is one of the main determinants to impact people's engagement, operationalizing other socio-demographic characteristics. Because it increases citizens' awareness and fosters the development of their civic and cognitive understanding (Wolfinger & Steven, 1980). More notably, numerous studies show that education develops knowledge and skills that encourage participation in civic and political activities (e.g., Lewis-Beck et al., 2008; Verba et al., 1995; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993); cf. (Persson, 2015, p. 689). Contrarily, some new research attempts to bring disagreement from various aspects and models even though they have not yet been established as the primary nature of the relationship between political activity and education. More specifically, they discuss beyond the direct causal effect of education and try to bring the discussion on alternative socialization processes and socio-economic status (i.g. Persson, 2015; Kam & Palmer, 2008).

Similarly, data from around the world no longer support the dominant idea of this discourse that education always influences participation in politics. According to one study, only Latin America has seen an increase in voting with increased levels of education, while East Asia has seen a decline. People with primary education have the highest rates of voting turnouts in African countries, not those with higher education (Bratton et al., 2006). In Bangladesh, it also follows the same trend; lower-educated people participate in politics at a higher rate (93%). However, most of their activities are restricted to voting, according to Haque & Hossain (2019). A citizen with a medium or higher level of education, on the other hand, participates at a rate of about 86% and 79%, respectively, even if these two categories of respondents are more active in two or more political activities, such as voting, protesting, running for office, etc. (Haque & Hossain, 2019, p.137).

However, to understand the educational qualification of the respondents, they were given eight options. It starts from 'illiterate' to 'master's degree or higher,' options are the following: a) Illiterate, b) Literate (those who can only sign without any formal education), c) Primary level (1-5 years) d) Lower secondary level (6-8) e) Secondary level (9-10) f) Higher secondary level (11-12) g) Graduate degree h) Master's degree or higher. This study intends to formulate a hypothesis based on the discussion described above, which is :

Hypothesis 5d: *Higher educated people will be more likely to be active in different forms of political activities.*

There is a strong rationale for this hypothesis, although many studies suggest that lower-educated people are also very active in political participation. In the case of developing countries, studies show that lower educated people are most active in voting, which they are mobilized through force or different forms of incentives by the government or political party. While people with higher levels of education usually consider the political environment more democratically and comprehensibly and occasionally will refrain from taking specific political actions as well. However, as mentioned above, the civic voluntarism approach suggests that more education will create more participation in civic and political activities, which is also supported by the majority view of the discourse regarding the relationship between these two (i.e., Verba et al. 1995; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993; Wolfinger & Steven, 1980; Persson, 2015). Following this argument, this study also found that in the case of Bangladesh, educated people are more engaged in different forms of politics rather than only voting, such as protesting, campaigning, and running for office (Haque & Hossain, 2019). Therefore, this study considers that higher educated people will be more active in various forms, i.e., conventional and unconventional political participation in Bangladesh.

Occupation

A fundamental determinant of a citizen's ability to participate in politics and society, just like all other social and distributive resources, is their occupation or occupational status. From Verba and Nie's explanation to Wolfinger and Steven's, all have explored the effect of occupation on people's involvement in civic and political activities, and this falls under the most frequently used approach in this thesis, the civic voluntarism model. This theory expands the opportunity for learning and participating in various forms of social mobilization and civic duty. It also holds that jobs and other distributive resources in society play an important role in this. These drives and activities also have an effect on various political actions (Burns et al.,

2001). More particularly, Wolfinger & Steven (1980) demonstrate that in the American election of 1972, professional and technical workers had a greater number of voters (86%), whereas agricultural managers came in second with 79% of voters. Following that, 75% of salespeople and clerks cast their ballots. On the other hand, voting turnout is low among blue-collar occupations, where skilled employees were 64%, non-domestic service workers were 63%, and unskilled-semi-skilled workers had 53% voting (p, 22). Besides, Pippa Norris demonstrates in his book “Democratic Phoenix Reinventing Political Activism” that political participation among federal employees is 80%, while people employed in the private sector have 83% of the voting, students and the unemployed have the lower percentages, while are 54% and 66%, respectively. In contrast, retired citizens have 85 % of the voting, which is the highest rate among different groups based on occupation (Norris, 2002, p. 107).

On the other hand, few studies show how socio-demographic factors affect political participation in Bangladesh and South Asia. When it comes to occupation, this study failed to find one. One study focuses on political participation based on income and discovers a correlation between rising income levels and declining political participation. More specifically, lower-income individuals in Bangladesh are more engaged in voting, while higher-income individuals are more active in various other forms of participation (Haque & Hossain, 2019, p. 136).

They were therefore required to respond to two questions to ascertain the participants’ various occupational forms and statuses. They initially have a choice from eight options to characterize their “occupational status,” which are as follows: a) Working/employed, b) Self-employed, c) Temporary worker (less than six months), d) Unemployed, e) Retired f) Student g) Housewife/homemaker h) Not applicable. Secondly, they have also given five options to specify their ‘main occupational sector,’ and that is a) Private Sector, b) Agriculture Sector, c) Public (government) sector, d) NGOs/INGOs//Foundations/CBOs/TradeUnions/civil society e) Other (pleases specify). Following that, this study wants to make two different categories for drawing hypotheses. First, employed and unemployed; second, public, private, and agriculture. Moving forward, this study wants to draw two different hypotheses,

Hypothesis 5e1: *Employed people will be more likely to be active in politics than other groups.*

The modernist approach is one of the most used approaches to explain socio-demographic features in relation to political participation in this study. That serves as a primary justification

for the current hypothesis as well. More specifically, Norris (2002) demonstrates that students and unemployed people usually participate less in civic and political activities than all other groups. Therefore this study also believes that employed citizens will have more political engagement than any other occupational groups.

Hypothesis 5e2: *officials in the private sector will be less likely to participate in political activities compared to other sectors.*

This hypothesis fundamentally contrasts Norris's (2002) study, which revealed that those in government service participate less than those in the private sector. As this study previously mentioned, a hybrid regime and authoritarian government and the scenario of the political environment of Bangladesh. That caused a considerable decline in voting percentage in Bangladesh's last two national elections. Similarly, spontaneous representation in political activities also significantly decreased over the last decade, and a sense of fear, distrust, and oppression also emerged among the people (Ali Riaz & Parvez, 2021). According to Rocha et al. (2008), political participation under a hybrid regime is generally very limited outside of elections due to a broader sense of dissatisfaction with political institutions in society. Similarly, the incumbent government's harassment of civil society and the media are highly prevalent traits of a hybrid regime, which appears to influence increased distrust and fear. From that perspective, this study assumes that the perception of fear, conflict and vote rigging may negatively impact the attitude of those who usually work in the private sector.

Rural/urban cleavage

To find out the impact of rural/urban cleavage on political participation, it is evident that the modernization approach to political participation would come to explain and dive deep into it. According to the modernist approach, the journey from traditional society to industrial society was a major incident to the change in the way of life; at the same time, massive urbanization of the people in Western society also occurred. On the other hand, people's activity in a different forms of civic activity started to increase even though those mostly participated in voting and protesting against the government. After that, while post-industrial societies arose with the developments of the massive service sector, mass education, and expansion of wide urbanization, people's activity in different societal forms also changed. Following that, various forms of modern political participation also have arisen (Bell, 1999); (Dalton, 1998); (Norris, 2002). More specifically, there are different paradigms of discussion regarding more and more urbanization and an increasing number of opportunities and political mobilization. Some would

argue about using urban poor in nationalist and totalitarian movements, and some would bring the discussion of deprivation and lack of resources for rising poor urban citizens (Bienen, 1984). As this research does not want to dive only into measuring the relationship between urbanization and political participation, thus, the study wants to assess only the fundamental role of rural-urban cleavage over the citizen of Bangladesh. Moving forward with that view, Bernhard Wessels finds that from comparing sixteen modern Western countries, urbanization and other post-industrial or modern factors are strongly correlated with the membership of various political and social organizations (Wessels, 1997). Similarly, Deutsch (1961) presented a positive relationship between urbanization and an increasing amount of political participation in a cross-national study. On the other hand, this research finds contrary studies regarding this in Japan, whereas Richardson (1973) explains that urban residents are more physiologically active with national politics but less active in voting, while their counterparts, in other words, rural residents, are more active in local politics and voting.

Likewise, in the South Asian context, research finds a significant percentage of disparity between urban and rural people in voting, where urban residents vote less than rural residents. According to the South Asia Barometer (2004), the most uncommon voters are (30%) in cities and (18%) less in villages (Bratton et al., 2006, p.8). They also discovered that this trend is prevalent in all parts of Africa, East Asia, and Latin America. As this study seeks to find out the relationship between rural-urban cleavage and political participation, respondents are given detailed options in the 'Address' section, which starts with division and district and ends with ward number and polling booth number, but a sub-section named 'Area' is more relevant in our studies whereas two options given and that is: a) Urban (municipality/city corporation) b) Rural (union parishad/upazila). Therefore, as recent studies and modernist theorist (i.e., Bell, 1999; Dalton, 1998) argues that urbanization in relation to other socio-demographic resources will lead to more citizen civic and political activities, this study stands for the following hypothesis,

Hypothesis 5f 1: *Urban residents will be more likely to be active in various forms of political activities.*

There is multiple rationale behind this hypothesis. Research suggests (Richardson, 1973) that residents of rural areas are less likely to participate in political activities other than voting. Moreover, Bratton et al. (2006) demonstrate that village residents have more percentage of voting in South Asia compared to city dwellers. Similarly, as this research has previously

shown, urbanization presents a variety of options that encourage increased participation in different forms of political activities, such as in the area of education. In Bangladesh, the literacy rate is 72% for rural residents and 81% for city dwellers⁴. Education provides a variety of social resources that can influence citizens' behaviour in expressing their political and civic rights, as this study presented earlier in the context of Bangladesh. Therefore, this thesis believes that urban residents will be more active in participating in multiple forms of political involvement compared to rural residents. A summary of the application of dependent and independent variables has presented in Appendix 1.

Relationship between Variables

The relationship between dependent and explanatory variables, in other words, the analytical framework between the variables, is shown in the figure below:

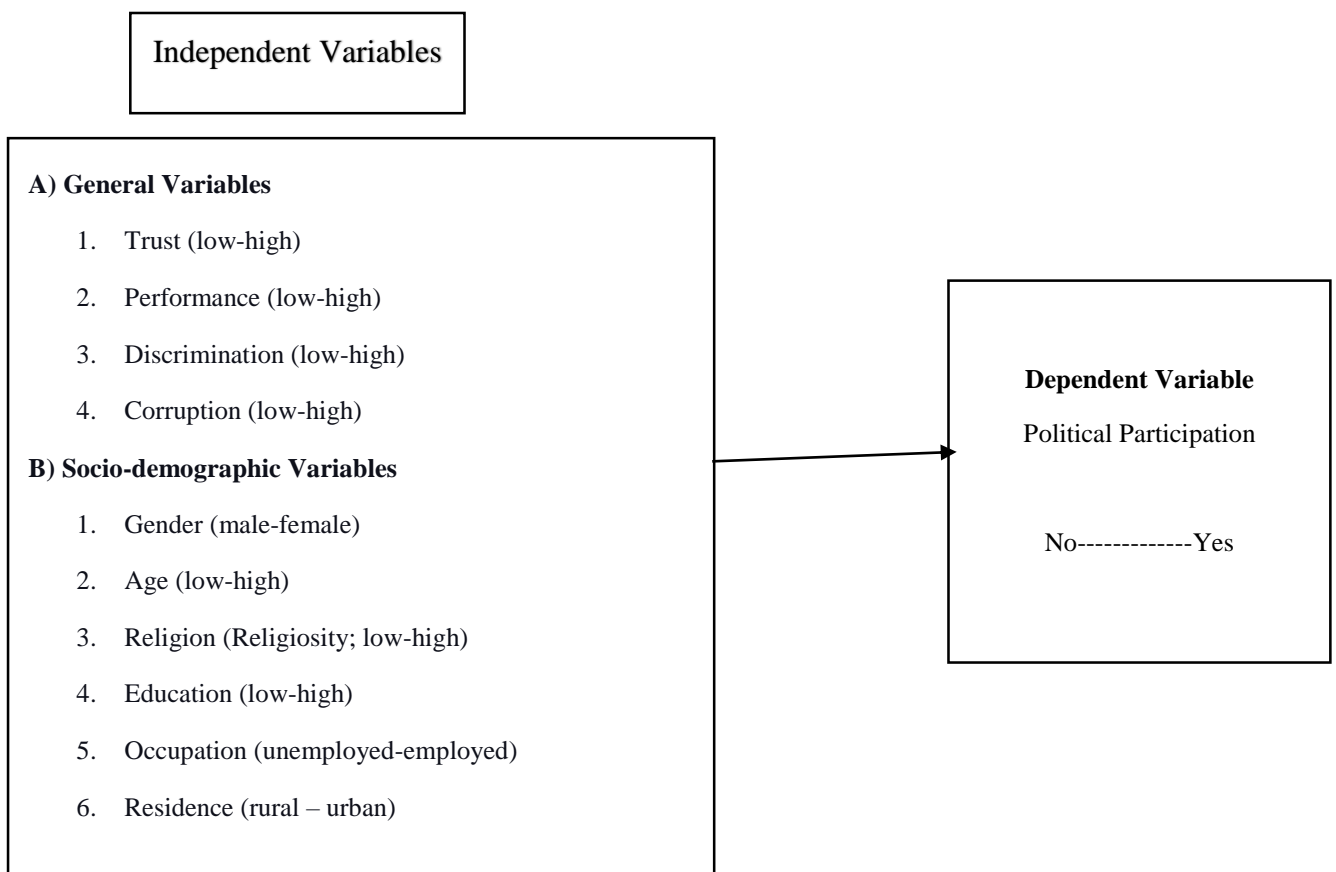


Figure 2.2: Analytical framework between the dependent and independent variable

Source: Researcher synthesis

⁴ <https://www.thedailystar.net/youth/education/news/bangladeshs-literacy-rate-now-7466-3080701>

2.4 Conclusion

From the discussion of the multidimensional definition and explanation of political participation, this chapter operationalized the variables of the study. Following that, the operationalization of variables indicates that using a single theory or approach to measure political participation in Bangladesh would not be possible. Hence this research uses three approaches that explain political participation in detail. More specifically, the modernist approach to political participation helps this study to make a hypothesis on performance, education, and rural/urban cleavage in regard to the relationship with political participation. Moreover, this research also uses mobilizing agency theories to operationalize and make a hypothesis on trust, religion, and how it impacts the political activities of the citizen of Bangladesh. Lastly, the civic voluntarism model has been used to determine the relationship between multiple independent variables and political participation, such as discrimination, corruption, gender, and age.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology used in this study.

3.2 Area of the Study

Measuring political participation in Bangladesh is the main objective of the study. The research decided to focus on Bangladesh for two key reasons. Firstly, the researcher is a native Bangladeshi citizen, which lends a significant interest in the area selection. He has also recently attended various political events, which can help bring a comprehensive understanding of the country's political involvement process and scenario. Second, given the research's discussion in the first chapter regarding Bangladesh's authoritarian government for a decade and the nature of the trust paradox in government institutions, it is crucial from an academic standpoint to dive in and assess the condition of the citizen's participation in the overall political sphere.

3.3 Research Approach and Design

A research approach serves as the general direction or indication of a study's methodology and serves as the guiding method of research. As Layder (1998) states, "The range of methods and techniques of data-gathering open to researcher include use of qualitative or quantitative data or some combination of the two" (p. 42). Hence, there are three fundamental ways of carrying out a study: qualitative, quantitative, or mixed approach. To describe qualitative research is an approach to exploring and understanding the meaning of someone or groups ascribed to social or human issues (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). In contrast, the quantitative approach is described as entailing the collection of numerical data, exhibiting a view of the association between theory and research as deductive and as having an objectivist conception of social reality (Bryman, 2012, p. 160). Whereas according to Creswell & Creswell (2018), a mixed method approach combines qualitative and quantitative data into a unique design to provide philosophical presumptions and theoretical frameworks. The current study will employ a quantitative approach to measure the level of political participation and what explains it in the case of Bangladesh.

3.3.1 Justification for Selecting Quantitative Research Approach

Since the beginning of the discourse of political participation, the quantitative approach, more specifically, survey research, has been massively involved in measuring political participation

for large-scale projects. The classic example of using a quantitative method regarding political participation is Verba and Nie's (1972) study, where they try to overlook the American political engagement scenario with different national surveys and that identifies some primary modes of the discourse as well. It works as one of the pioneer extensive studies in this phenomenon. Following that, in the seventies, there were two large-scale studies that were the most influential, and those also were done with a quantitative approach (i.g. Kaase and Marsh, 1979; Verba et al., 1978). Similarly, some studies mainly attempted to collect political acts in various regions of the world as part of the Political Actions research project, such as Dalton (2002), Marsh (1990), van Deth 1998, and so on. They mostly use large-scale survey data, including the World Value Survey (WVS), European Value Study (EVS), European Social Survey (ESS), European Election Study (EES), and the US Citizenship Involvement Democracy (CID) survey, among others. Furthermore, Teorell et al. (2007) used CID data to measure political engagement in various democratic capitalistic nations and developed a new typology to explain modes of political participation. Moving on to a specific case, Theocharis and van Deth (2016) measured several types of political activities in Germany and developed a newly enlarged typology of political participation. Haque and Hossain (2019) also employed a quantitative approach to assess socio-demographic variation in Bangladeshi democratic participation. They conducted their research using the South Asian Barometer survey in particular. However, as quantitative research assists with determining the relationship between various factors in society and finding an explanation based on theoretical assumptions and findings, this study also seeks to explain the relationship between political participation and various other democratic factors. Following that, in a quantitative study, survey data usually has a significant role in determining the relationship between variables based on theories related to the dependent variable of the study, which is political participation, in this case. Hence, this study uses Government and Trust Survey (GTS) to explain political participation in Bangladesh. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2017), quantitative research aims at examining an empirical process and method to explain a particular feature that is empirically able to be fulfilled or not in a specific case. Thus, this study also employs quantitative methods to measure political participation in Bangladesh based on multiple approaches or models of the participation discourses.

3.4 Research Methodology

According to Sarantakos (2017), research methods essentially direct a study through the process of collecting and analyzing data. The methods used for collecting and analyzing the

data are crucial since they affect how the research outcome turns out. More specifically, the choice of research methodology clearly indicates how and where data should be collected and which specific method should be used for data analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The methodological choices of the current study are explained below.

3.4.1 Method of Data Collection

Unit of Analysis

As the primary research question of the study is ‘What explains the variation in political participation in Bangladesh?’, this research wants to find out the answer by analysing the perception and experience of individuals through survey data. In other words, the unit of analysis of the study is mainly the individual of Bangladesh. To clarify that each respondent’s response and ratings on trust and performance of the public institutions, personal experience of participation, social exclusion or discrimination, and socio-demographic factors have been used to investigate the variation of political participation in Bangladesh.

Sources of Data

The quantitative approach of the study allows using the survey to explain the relationship between different variables consisting of certain social and political discourses (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Answers from the survey respondents should be able to identify the impact of measuring variables on the dependent variable of the study (Van Thiel, 2014). Since this thesis tries to identify factors to explain people's activities in politics and society, it uses secondary data from the Governance and Trust Survey's (GTS) third rounds database (2020) of Bangladesh (unpublished). It is a South Asian-based database where data has been collected in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. This database was created with financial support from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (Norad) as a part of the Norwegian Program for Capacity Development for Higher Education and Research for Development (NORHED). GTS has three rounds of data. Where the first was in 2008, and the second was in 2015. This study has selected the third round (2020) because this one is the recent one. As this research intends to assess the perception and experience of different factors concerning political participation in Bangladesh, recent data always help identify the current scenario of a case.

Sampling

Sampling always plays a significant part in quantitative research, where the sample size should be a lot higher than in a qualitative study and eventually which will represent the population (Cohen et al., 2017). GTS surveys third round has a total of 2740 voting-age representative

samples from Bangladesh. This sample N=2740 is selected from the country's different divisions, districts, and sub-districts. Likewise, different socio-demographic features are also considered, for instance, gender, age, level of education, income, occupation, and others. That follows the discussion of Cohen et al. (2017) and Creswell & Creswell (2018), among others. They suggest different sampling forms to eradicate the collected data's unrepresentativeness. For instance, simple random sampling, where samples are selected randomly from the population, and every person has a chance to be chosen. Clustered sampling, in which the sample would be clustered in different groups based on multiple interests from the population. Similarly, stratified sampling is dividing the sample into different strata or subgroups based on different social or demographic attributes. In both cases afterwards, individual and sub-groups would be randomly selected for sampling. Following that, it can be said that the sample design of GTS is a simple random sample that represents the population of the current study^{5,6}, because the national voter list of Bangladesh was used to identify samples. Fifty respondents were selected randomly from each selected polling station. Therefore, this discussion above indicates that the samples (N=2740) from Bangladesh in the GTS survey are reasonably representative.

Descriptive statistics based on the socio-demographic features of the samples have given in Table 3.1 along with national data^{7,8}. To explore the underlying scenario of political participation in Bangladesh, this study chose five socio-demographic characteristics (Gender, Education, Religion, Age, and Rural/Urban Cleavage). The socio-demographic distribution of the whole sample size (N=2740) is shown in Table 3.1. However, in terms of data collecting, female respondents exceeded male respondents, and that represents national population data well enough where the female proportion is also higher. Most respondents had finished lower secondary school as national data also suggest that around 75% is literacy rate, whereas a smaller proportion was illiterate. Regarding religion, most responders are Muslim, as expected, with Hindus coming in second. Similarly, the table demonstrates that most respondents are very religious, with a mean score of 9.46. It is just below the highest value on the scale (10). In case of age, most respondents are between the ages of 30 and 70 years. Surprisingly, when

⁵ Baniamin, H. M. (2019). Relationships among governance quality, institutional performance, and (dis) trust: Trends and tensions: A quest for critical ingredients of institutional trust. University of Bergen

⁶ Hossain, A. (2022). Democratic Legitimacy in South Asia and Beyond: Does Culture Matter? University of Bergen

⁷ Population and Housing Census, 2022,

http://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/b343a8b4_956b_45ca_872f_4cf9b2f1a6e0/2023-04-18-08-42-4f13d316f798b9e5fd3a4c61eae4bfef.pdf

⁸ Bangladesh Statistics, 2020,

https://bbs.portal.gov.bd/sites/default/files/files/bbs.portal.gov.bd/page/a1d32f13_8553_44f1_92e6_8ff80a4ff82e/2021-06-30-09-23-c9a2750523d19681aecfd3072922fa2c.pdf

asked about occupation, the majority of people are homemakers. Following that, in order to evaluate the hypothesis about occupational status, this study created an index with two categories: Employed and Others, which includes unemployed, students, and homemakers.

Table 3.1 : Descriptive Statistics of samples and National Data

Variables	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Data from National Population
Gender (1 = Male, 2 = Female)	2740	1	2	1.53	.499	Total -165.15 million Male – 49.51% Female – 50.43%
Educational qualification (1= Illiterate, 8= Masters/higher)	2740	1	8	3.96	1.904	Literacy – 74.7%
Religion (1= Muslim, 2= Hindu, 3= Buddhist, 4= Christian)	2740	1	4	1.11	0.395	Muslim – 91% Others – 9%
Religiosity	2737	1	10	9.46	1.26	
Age	2740	10	92	42.07	13.07	
Occupational Status (1= Others (Unemployed, Retired and Homemakers, 2= Employed)	2740	1	2	1.42	0.494	
Occupational Sector (1= Private, 2= Public and others)	2740	1	2	1.34	0.475	
Residence (1=Urban, 2= Rural)	2740	1	2	1.69	0.463	Urban – 31.66% Rural – 68.34%
Valid N	2740					

However, the agricultural industry and other sectors have a higher proportion of responders (rickshaw pullers, fishermen, daily labourers, lawyers, business people, and so on). Following in the footsteps of occupational status, this study created an index to categorize the data into Private, Public, and Others. Lastly, looking at residences, larger numbers of people live in rural areas, which also represents the national proportion.

3.4.2 Data Analysis and Interpretation

Data analysis consists of different steps, which vary depending on the approach of the study, which is primarily qualitative or quantitative, or mixed. Quantitative data analysis has some essential stages, for instance, categorising data, inspecting and coding data, distributing data and finally, analysing data based on the distributive or inferential statistical method (Van Thiel, 2014). Since this research uses secondary survey data from a database; hence, most of the preliminary part of the statistical analysis has already been done. Even though understanding the data set, differentiating this study's samples and data set from its three rounds and countries was challenging parts. However, to complete the statistical analysis of the data, this research has used IBM SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software provided by the IT department of the University of Bergen (UiB). Therefore, this study has used SPSS for running univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses. It also includes a distributive analysis of all independent and dependent variables of the research. Following on, this study involves multiple correlations (helps to identify a link between two) and regression (originates from recognising the magnitude of the relationship) analysis to determine the relationship between dependent variables and explanatory variables, i.e. the impact of trust/performance on political participation.

3.4.3 Deductive Method

The deductive method includes empirically or experimentally testable prepositions based on a theoretical argument for a particular phenomenon (Gray, 2004). A quantitative study uses survey data to explain a certain variable based on different theoretical considerations and assumptions that involve the deductive method mainly. Following that, this research used different theories to test a series of hypotheses in regard to making an explanation for varying political participation in Bangladesh. As Gray (2004) suggests, before making a series of assumptions, operationalization of those theoretical concepts is also being done by the study. Therefore, it is evident that this research has used the deductive method to assess this study's central research question, which is "What explains political participation in Bangladesh"?

3.5 Quality of the Research

Nowadays, there are different measures and processes for ensuring research quality. Yin's (2014) four tests are primarily used to verify the research quality; those include construct validity, internal validity, external validity and reliability (p.40). Some researchers added other

tests as well, for instance, statistical validity, convergent validity, content validity and so on (Bryman, 2012, p.173). Validity and reliability basically help to secure the credibility of data and the authenticity of the research process to explain the research problem. Thus, this study uses Yin's (2018) 4 test to assess the quality of research.

3.5.1 Construct Validity

Construct Validity mainly concerns on adequate operationalization of a construct. In other words, whether a concept or theory has been translated into functioning reality or not (Van Thiel, 2014, p. 49). Hence, to ensure the construct validity of research, concepts should be appropriately defined. Before discussing theoretical relevance or drawing a hypothesis, this study meticulously explained political participation and briefly provided definitions of other variables. As political participation is the dependent variable of the study, this research operationalizes it by a question where a list of actions included regarding people's most familiar political and civic activities in a specific circumstance ("here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year. {joined others (like political workers) in your community to request some actions from govt., contacted the media (calling a radio/TV program or writing a letter to a newspaper, etc. writing in Social media, contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint, refused to pay a tax/fee to govt.}"). These activities are the most common modes of political activities nowadays. In addition, the GTS survey has asked this question as per the standard of the globally acceptable World Value Survey or European Value Survey.

However, in terms of independent variables, this study uses multiple approaches of political participation. For instance, the modernist approach has been used for operationalizing performance, mobilizing agency theory for trust and the civic voluntarism approach for discrimination and corruption. Those three approaches have also been used for socio-demographic variables according to the explanation related to their features and political participation. Multiple studies, for example, Neilson and Paxton (2010); Kim (2014) and Putnam (1995) explain how institutional and generalized trust can affect political participation. This study measured both generalized trust and institutional trust by asking about overall trust and mentioning different major public institutions' names. Likewise, for performance Bell (1999) and Nekola (2006) shows that satisfaction with government performance and capacity can explain political participation in multiple cases. This study operationalized performance by

asking about satisfaction with the performance of different public services and the overall assumption of the capacity of various sectors. Additionally, corruption and discrimination are also measured by asking about an individual's personal experience. For corruption, Kostadinova (2009) and Olsson (2014) used this as an explanatory factor to see the variation in the political activities of people in different countries. Howe & Hunzai (2019); Sifat and Shafi (2021) follow the pathway of Verba et al. (1972) and (1995) to explain the impact of discrimination on people's participation. Socio-demographic variables have also been discussed thoroughly, according to previous research on their relationship with political engagement. Studies from Norris (2002) & (2009) and Verba et al. (1995) clearly show the different influences of these variables on the political activities of people. However, as this thesis discussed this process in more detail in the third chapter, thus this study believes that the operationalization of the concept has been done comprehensively and as per the standard questions in globally recognized surveys such as World Values Survey (WVS), European Social Survey (ESS), etc.

3.5.2 Internal Validity

Internal validity refers to “establishing a causal relationship, whereby certain conditions are believed to lead to other conditions, as distinguished from spurious relationships” (Yin, 2014, p. 46). As political participation is the study's dependent variable, it is hypothesized by other factors by presenting casual relationships before. Independent variables of the study, such as trust, performance, discrimination, and corruption, have been used several times by other researchers, and it is almost evident that they have a significant relationship with political participation. Though some studies find a positive correlation, and others find the opposite. A strong level of trust in government and generalized trust in society helps to create more participation, demonstrated by Fukuyama 1995; Norris, 2002; Putnam, 1995; Verba et al., 1995. There are opposite views as well though that is not the majority view. For performance, Dalton 1998 and Nekola 2006 have explained how performance impacts the political practice of a citizen with cross-national data. In the case of discrimination, studies found both sides' relationship with political participation. Considering the fact of Bangladesh and the South Asian context, Howe & Hunzai (2019); Sifat and Shafi (2021) provided a robust negative correlation between social exclusion and discrimination and political participation among certain groups of people. While Verba & Nie (1972); Stokes (2003) show the opposite, they reveal that discrimination makes a positive impact on people's participation. Furthermore, on corruption, Kostadinova (2009) and Stockemer (2013) conclude that it relatively has an

influence on the perception and practice of politics. In the case of socio-demographic variables, for instance, education, occupation, gender, etc., all significantly influence people's civic and political participation. To clarify, among others, Verba et al. 1995 and Norris (2009) have clearly shown these factors' causal explanation with political participation. Moreover, as this thesis hypothesis followed a theoretical approach regarding finding the relationship between the explanatory variables and dependent variables, other empirical studies also followed. There it can be said that internal validity or a causal relationship between independent and dependent variables has been established.

3.5.3 External Validity

External Validity ensures that whether generalization of the study is possible or not. Especially for a quantitative study, it indicates that in what extent the result would be accepted in other cases, scenarios, and institutions (Van Thiel, 2014, p. 49). However, as a quantitative study, this research has a considerable number of respondents (N=2740) in Bangladesh provided by the GTS survey, which used random sampling and has a proportional representation of samples from various part of the country and socio-demographic features as presented in Table 3.1. However, this research is a cross-sectional study, whereas studies regarding political participation have both longitudinal and cross-sectional data. Therefore, generalization of the research would be possible considering the fact that it has large samples and proportional representation in the context of South Asia and Bangladesh.

3.5.4 Reliability

Reliability of research is defined as the process of how a study's result can be replicated by any other researchers following the same methodology and data (Gray, 2004). According to Van Thiel (2014), reliability consists of accuracy and consistency. Accuracy stands for using proper measures and tools for the study, whereas consistency refers to that using the same methodology will provide similar kinds of findings. The explanatory variables used by this study to determine political participation have fair consistency because those have also been used an immense amount of time by other scholars. Trust and performance are the most commonly used variables among other included independent variables in the current study (i.e., Bell, 1999; Dalton, 1998; Kim, 2014; Mishler & Rose, 2005). Similarly, discrimination and corruption have been used various times even though this research has drawn hypotheses in contrast to most of the research because of the context (i.g., Verba & Nie, 1972; Stokes, 2003; Olsson, 2014). While using these variables in different research, they have been validated and

tested multiple times in different waves of surveys. Moreover, to talk about the GTS third rounds survey, questionnaires have been created by two faculty members of the University of Bergen, and three universities, one from each country (Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka), have collaborated with UiB. A research team has worked under the guidance of a faculty in each country. Most of the questions followed the WVS question and sampling procedures of the survey presented earlier. However, by using GTS survey data, multiple studies have already been published in prominent journals and institutions by researchers from around the world, particularly from Norway, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Sri Lanka. (i.e., Askvik & Jamil, 2013; Baniamin 2019; Baniamin 2020; Baniamin & Jamil 2017; Jamil et al., 2013; Hossain 2022). Following the discussion above, the study believes that the reliability of the study has been precisely established.

3.6 Ethical Consideration

A research's ethical consideration is also a significant step, similar to any other processes and phases of a study (such as data gathering, data analysis, and so on). If a survey has been conducted for three rounds (2018,2015,2020), expanded into another country (from Bangladesh, Nepal to Sri Lanka), and produced some well-acknowledged research worldwide. In that case, one can easily be ensured that ethical considerations were appropriately considered in the data management process. Similarly, the GTS survey has completed its whole procedures under the supervision of some trained specialists from academia, starting from questionnaire making to completing data collection and making a database. Furthermore, as far as this research can know, basic ethical standards have been secured in the data management process, such as taking participants over 18, obtaining written consent, protecting respondents' anonymity in the real world, and so on. However, since this research uses secondary data from an unpublished database, it can only assemble information on the survey from various published theses and research works. Proper citation and documentation were used throughout the thesis to ensure they were included as not the concept of this study.

3.7 Conclusion

To sum up, following the standard research design, this chapter has discussed the detailed methodological process of the study. At first, the research provided its justification for selecting Bangladesh as the area of study and selecting a quantitative approach. Then this thesis revealed and explained its research methods, starting from the unit of analysis to the data collection and analysis part. It then discussed the deductive nature of the study and reasonably justified the quality of the research. Finally, a brief elaboration of the ethical consideration of the study also has been provided. In the next chapter, this research will present a detailed data analysis part where distributive analysis and correlation analysis have been done to find a correlation between explanatory variables and the dependent variable of the study.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis. First, descriptive statistics of the dependent and other variables are presented. Second, a bivariate correlation (Pearson's r) analysis carried out and the findings presented. Third, multivariate analyses are carried out where the dependent variable is explained by several independent variables. A regression is carried out where results are presented and discussed.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics of Dependent Variable: Political Participation

As measuring political participation is primarily determined by different types of political and civic activities (e.g., Verba et al. 1995; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980), this study attempts to measure participation by creating an index based on people's last year's personal experiences with various activities such as protesting, contacting the media, writing in social media, contacting a government official, and refusing to pay taxes to the government. To simplify the analysis data participation index has been separated into two categories: no participation and participation. Whereas never done is categorized as no participation, doing it once and more than once is labelled as participation.

Table 4.1: Political Participation in Bangladesh

	Mean	(S.D.)
	1.20	.543
	1.02	.171
Political Participation	1.08	.366
	1.11	.404
	1.01	.115
Combined (Index)	1.010	.1005
Valid N	2740	

Note: Minimum value (1) and Maximum value (5)

Table 4.1 illustrates the overall political engagement scenario in Bangladesh, excluding voting. As previously noted, citizens of Bangladesh vote in large numbers, which is typically the primary form of participation; however, voting is not considered a kind of political

participation in this study. The mean score for different forms of participation, which is around 1.0, indicates that overall political participation is relatively low among all respondents. 'Joined others in protesting' has the highest participation of every type of action, with a mean score of 1.20, followed by 'contacted government officials,' which likewise has more participation than other three forms of actions, with a mean score of 1.11. The mean of 'Refused to pay tax to govt.' indicates that it is the lowest participating activity, with a 1.01 score. Similarly, the mean value for 'contacted media' is 1.02, making it the second least participated activity. 'Writing in social media' is in the middle, with a mean score of 1.08. As a result, the combined mean implies that respondents participated in political activities at a very low level in Bangladesh. Detailed percent distribution of the dependent variable is also given below:

Table 4.1: Percent distribution of dependent variable: political participation

	Never Done	Once	More than once
Joined in the protest	87.0%	6.0%	6.8%
Contacted media	98.5%	0.9%	0.5%
Writing in Social Media	94.9%	1.9%	3.0%
Contacted government officials	92.5%	4.0%	3.4%
Refuse to pay tax	98.6%	0.4%	0.2%
Valid N			2740

Note: Q: Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year?

- a) Joined others (like political workers) in your community to request some actions from govt.
- b) Contacted the media (calling a radio/TV program or writing a letter to a newspaper, etc.
- c) Writing in Social media
- d) Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint
- e) Refused to pay a tax/fee to govt.

Table 4.2: Level of Political Participation (percent distribution)

	Percentage	Frequency	
Political Participation Index	No participation	79.9%	218
	Participation	20.1%	551
	Combined	100%	2740

Note: No Participation = Never done (1)

Participation = Once and More than once (2)

Tables 4.2 and 4.3 present the detailed percent and frequency distribution of respondents' responses to questions about political activity. Only 20% of respondents have political participation, which implies they have actively participated in various forms of participation once and more than once in the recent year, according to Table 5. At the same time, around 80% of people have no participation in a one-year period. Table 4 shows that 6.8% of respondents attended protests multiple times, and 6% participated for ones, which is eventually the most participated form. Only 0.2% of persons refused to pay their taxes more than once, and 0.4% did it once. Similarly, only 0.9% of respondents contacted the media once, and about 0.5% have done it multiple times regarding different civic issues. Approximately 3% of people have written multiple times on social media and contacted officials about various topics, while 4% of people contacted officials once, and 1.9% have written for a single time on different political and government issues. In contrast, the rest of the people never participated in any form of activities which are in question.

4.3 Descriptive statistics of Independent Variables

This section presented descriptive statistics for the study's independent variables. Table 4.4 shows the mean or average value of responses of independent variables, including indexes based on several indicators. However, the results demonstrated in Table 4.4 involve multiple indexes that includes the total number of answers for each value or measure and the combined average of various independent variables.

4.3.1 Trust

This research asked two separate questions to investigate generalized trust and trust in institutions to determine the relationship between trust and political participation in Bangladesh.

Table 4.3: Descriptive Statistics of the Independent Variables

Trust	Mean	(S.D.)
Institutional Trust (scale 1 - 4)		
a. Confidence in Parliament	3.37	0.774
b. Confidence in Central Government	3.32	0.796
c. Confidence in Civil Service	3.08	0.827
d. Confidence in Political Parties	2.68	1.009
e. Confidence in police	2.44	0.992
Overall Institutional Trust index (Low-High)	2.97	0.684
Generalized Trust (scale 1 - 2)		
Most people can be trusted or not	1.92	0.266
Performance		
Development of Service Sectors (scale 1 - 5)		
a. Education Services (school, college and university)	4.03	0.623
b. Social and Security Services (health care, social security, maintenance of law, banking)	3.65	0.742
c. Regular/daily Services (electricity, water and energy supply, garbage removal, local sanitation)	3.50	0.915
d. Infrastructure Services (road, transport, maintenance of bridge)	3.51	0.970
e. ICT, Agriculture and Animal Health Services	3.63	0.924
Overall Performance Index in Service Sectors (Poor-High)	3.83	0.65
Perception of Government Success (scale 1 - 5)		
a. Success in: Reducing poverty	2.32	1.12
b. Success in: Checking crime (e.g. extortion, drug control)	3.10	1.33
c. Success in: Ensuring peoples' safety and security	2.66	1.19
d. Success in: Checking pollution and environmental hazard	2.95	1.23
e. Success in: Generating employment	2.98	1.19
f. Success in: Checking corruption	3.32	1.28
g. Success in: Human resource development for overseas employment	2.62	1.08
h. Success in: Controlling human trafficking	2.35	1.16
i. Success in: Improving the general economic situation	2.30	1.06
Overall Performance Index in Success Perception (Low-High)	2.73	0.81
Discrimination (scale 1 - 4)		
a. Discriminated on Gender	1.10	0.456
b. Discriminated on Religion	1.02	0.214
c. Discriminated on Ethnicity	1.02	0.197
d. Discriminated on District/region	1.13	0.560
e. Discriminated on any Disability	1.06	0.349
f. Discriminated on Political affiliation	1.16	0.584
Overall Discrimination Index (Low-High)	1.07	0.23
Corruption		
Corruption Perception (scale 1 - 5)		
How many politicians involved in corruption?	3.62	0.747
How many civil servants involved in corruption?	3.41	0.794
Overall Corruption Perception Index (Low-High)	3.51	0.709
Personal/family experience of getting asked/ hinted for a Bribery	1.73	1.056

Note 1: A detailed description of questionnaire for these independent variable has been added in the Appendix section.

Note 2: All Don't know (99) answers are removed from the analysis

This study examined institutional trust by developing a confidence index for five major government institutions (parliament, central government, civil service, and political parties). Appendix (2) includes a complete description of the various indicators and their percentile distributions. Table 4.4 displays descriptive statistics for several indicators used by this research. It demonstrates that the institutional trust's combined mean value is 2.97. Since this construct is measured on four scales, it implies that the majority of respondents have 'quite lot of confidence' in several government organizations. It is very interesting to notice that from parliament to police, respondents' confidence/trust level follows a downward trend, but it is higher for the parliament, with a mean score of 3.37. It demonstrates that people have "quite a lot of confidence" in the national parliament. After that, the following two options, central government and civil service, ranked second and third in terms of trust among respondents, with mean values of 3.32 and 3.08, respectively. These also suggest that responders have a high confidence level in central government and civil service following parliament. The police have the lowest confidence level among all the listed institutions, with a mean score of 2.44. It demonstrates that respondents lack trust in the police, which they do not have in the other four government institutions. Political parties have the second lowest trust within the list, with a mean score of 2.68, indicating that they are more trusted than the police but have somewhat less trust than the civil service.

On the other hand, generalized trust is shows the contrary results to institutional trust, with a mean value of 1.92. A simple two-scale question measures this, whereas respondents are asked whether or not most individuals can be trusted. According to the mean value, respondents believe they must be cautious when dealing with others. In other words, most people are distrustful. The appendix section has a description of the percentages of the answers of the respondents to this question.

4.3.2 Performance

The performance of the government is also measured by framing two different indexes based on the development perception of various services sectors of the government and success on different indicators in a five-year time frame. As before, a detailed percent distribution has been given in the Appendix (3). First, to measure the performance, more specifically, to identify the development of different public services questionnaire presents twenty-two items

where respondents measure from low to high on a 1 to 5 scale. To simplify the data, this research combined all 22 items into an index under five service sectors: education, social and security, regular, infrastructure, ICT, agriculture, and animal health services. Table 4.4 shows that the combined mean value of all service sectors is 3.83, representing the respondent's indication of almost a 'good' development in the last five years (2020). Respondents fully describe as 'good' development in the case of education service with a 4.0 mean score. After that, the mean scores of social security service and ICT, agriculture and animal health service were almost similar, respectively, 3.65 and 3.63. That reveals that people also think that these two departments developed in a somewhat 'good' way. As good stands as the fourth alternative from the one in question. However, in terms of regular service and road transport service, both have almost identical mean scores, respectively 3.50 and 3.51. That reveals that the development of these services is not as satisfactory as the other three services in the list.

Furthermore, in the case of the success perception index, people are asked to measure government success in multiple indicators, from poor performance to higher. The average mean score of success indicators is 2.73. It demonstrates that the majority of the respondents consider that the government 'neither succeeded nor failed' in different areas of human development in Bangladesh. Similarly, most of the respondents believe that the government mostly 'neither succeeded nor failed' in four different areas, i.e., checking corruption with a mean score of 3.32, checking crime with a mean value of 3.10, checking pollution with a mean of 2.98 and generating employment with a 2.95 mean score. However, the mean values of the rest of the indicators suggest that people believe government 'did not quite succeed' in the following areas, improving the general economic situation (2.30), reducing poverty (2.32), and human resource development (2.35). In controlling human trafficking and ensuring people's safety and security, the mean values are 2.62 and 2.65, respectively. As these values are above the average, people mostly think the government also 'neither succeeded nor failed' in these areas. The higher position in the index lies in checking corruption, with a mean value of 3.32, and the lower position lies in improving the general economic situation, with a mean score (2.32).

Nevertheless, it is interesting to notice the difference in people's perceptions between the development and success index. Whereas in the case of development, most of the respondents believe that multiple sectors are developing in a good way. While talking about success, they mainly consider government neither succeeded nor failed.

4.3.3 Discrimination

This study assessed discrimination based on the respondents' six identities or experiences, including gender, religion, ethnicity, district/region, disability, and political affiliation. According to Table 4.4, the overall level of discrimination among respondents is relatively low, with a combined mean value of 1.07. It implies that most of those who took part in this study experienced no discrimination over one year, despite the fact that respondents' experience of discrimination based on political identity has a higher mean score of 1.13. Discrimination based on district/region and gender comes in second and third, with mean values of 1.13 and 1.10, respectively. It demonstrates that the majority of people did not face discrimination; still, the percentage of people suffering discrimination is higher based on political affiliation, geography, and gender than others. Furthermore, any discrimination based on ethnicity or religion is ranked lower in Table 6, with mean scores of 1.02 for both items. That demonstrates that respondents have very less experience to face discrimination based on these two identities. However, in the case of personal disability, the mean value is 1.06, indicating that the majority of respondents did not face discrimination because of their disability, although the rate is not lower as it based on religion or ethnicity. Appendix (4) includes a percentile distribution of the discrimination index.

4.3.4 Corruption

In this study, individuals' overall perceptions of politicians and civil servants are primarily used to assess corruption. According to the overall mean value (3.51) of corruption perception in Table 4.4, respondents consider that a significant number of politicians and civil servants are involved in corruption, as measured on a 5-point scale. More specifically, the table shows that politicians are more corrupt than public officials, with a mean value of 3.62, suggesting that quite many politicians are corrupt. On the other hand, civil servants are not far behind in terms of the public impression of their involvement in corruption, with a mean score of 3.41. It suggests that most respondents assume that some of the civil servants are engaged in corruption. In addition, respondents' personal or family experience with paying bribes or being intimidated by public officials to get anything done within one year was also used to quantify corruption in this study. This measure's result was also graded on a 5-point scale from low to high. According to Table 5, the mean value of corruption is 1.73, indicating that most respondents have rarely been requested or hinted at bribery. As the mean value is above the 0.50 range, it nevertheless shows that a notable number of respondents have been requested or

given indications for bribery in the previous year (survey data was taken in 2020). Appendix (5), as usual, includes a detailed description of the percentage of the overall response.

4.4 Bivariate analysis - Correlation (Pearson's corr.)

Before conducting a correlation analysis between the dependent and independent variables, this study seeks to examine if there is a cumulative pattern among the various measures of the dependent variable itself. More particularly, if respondents engage in any form of activity, they are more likely to engage in other forms of activity as well.

Table 4.4: Correlation between Different Measures of Political Participation(Pearson's R)

	Joined others in the protest	Contacted media	Writing in Social Media	Contacted government officials	Refuse to pay tax
Joined others in the protest		0.184**	0.115**	0.351**	0.120**
Contacted media	0.184**		0.268**	0.226**	0.085**
Writing in Social Media	0.115**	0.268**		0.109**	-0.008
Contacted government officials	0.351**	0.226**	0.109**		0.171**
Refuse to pay tax	0.120**	0.085**	-0.008	0.171**	

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

Table 4.5 illustrates a pattern of relationship between various political actions of respondents. In other words, if a person attends or does not attend a distinct political activity on the list, he is more likely to participate or not participate in other activities as well, except for 'refusing to pay taxes' and 'writing on social media'. The correlation coefficient between these two specific measures is $r = -0.88$ ($p < 0.01$). The purpose of running this correlation is to find out whether participation on one political activity triggers engagement in other political activities. Though the overall engagement of citizens in different political activities is low. It shows that respondents who have participated in any of these actions, they more likely to engage in other political activities as well except refusing to pay taxes to the government or writing something about political issues. An index based on these characteristics has been developed to assess overall political participation in Bangladesh. Following that, the index has correlated with other explanatory variables and has represented in the table below.

Table 4.5: Correlation between the Dependent Variable and Independent Variables

Independent Variables	r	Index/Mean of Variables
Socio-demographic factors		
a) Gender (ref. female)	-0.128**	1.53
b) Age	-0.014	42.07
c) Religion (ref. Muslim)	-0.016	1.11
Religiosity (low-high)	-0.145**	9.46
d) Educational qualification (illiterate – higher educated)	0.121**	3.96
e) Occupational status (ref. employed)	0.111**	1.42
Private and other sectors (ref. private)	0.094**	1.34
f) Rural/Urban cleavage (ref. urban)	0.063**	1.69
Trust		
<i>Institutional Trust index</i>	-0.162**	2.97
a) Confidence in Parliament	-0.099**	3.37
b) Confidence in Central Government	-0.158**	3.32
c) Confidence in Civil Service	-0.123**	3.08
d) Confidence in Political Parties	-0.114**	2.68
e) Confidence in police	-0.182**	2.44
<i>Generalized Trust</i>	0.039*	1.92
Performance		
<i>Development of Service Sectors Index</i>	-0.206**	3.83
a) Performance of Education Services	-0.173**	4.037
b) Performance of Social and Security services	-0.171**	3.656
c) Performance of Daily Services	-0.259**	3.502
d) Performance of road and transport Services	-0.082**	3.519
e) Performance of ICT, Agriculture and Animal health services	-0.085**	3.635
<i>Perception of Government Success Index</i>	0.130**	2.73
a) Success in: Reducing poverty	0.167**	2.32
b) Success in: Checking crime (e.g. extortion, drug control)	0.012	3.10
c) Success in: Ensuring peoples' safety and security	0.118**	2.66
d) Success in: Generating employment	0.184*	2.98
e) Success in: Checking pollution and environmental hazard	0.182**	2.95
f) Success in: Checking corruption	0.000	3.32
g) Success in: Controlling human trafficking	0.106**	2.35
h) Success in: Human resource development for overseas employment	0.135**	2.62
i) Success in: Improving the general economic situation	0.138**	2.30
Discrimination index		
Discriminated on Your gender	0.045*	1.10
Discriminated on Your religion	-0.014	1.02
Discriminated on Your ethnicity	0.030	1.02
Discriminated on Your district/region	-0.016	1.13
Discriminated on Any disability	0.082**	1.06
Discriminated on Political affiliation	0.094**	1.16

Corruption

<i>Perception of Corruption index</i>	0.012	3.51
a) How many politicians are involved in corruption?	0.043*	1.73
b) How many civil servants are involved in corruption?	-0.004	3.62
Personal or family's experience of hints by a public official for giving bribe.	0.134**	3.41

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

***. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).**

4.4.1 Political Participation and Socio-demographic Variables

Gender

The correlation findings from this research show that gender has a significant negative correlation with political participation, with $r = -0.128$ ($p < 0.01$). That means female respondents participate less in political activities. Eventually, this supports the study's premise on the relationship between gender and political participation. Similarly, the correlation coefficient demonstrates that, despite having gone so far in engaging in voting and most political activities, women are less likely to be active in different kinds of political engagement than men.

Age

Age has no significant relationship with political participation. This means age does not matter in engaging citizens in political participation. People of different ages may get involved in politics.

Religion

Similarly, religion has no impact on citizens' participation in politics; people of any religious denomination can equally get involved in politics. However, to the contrary, religiosity has a high negative correlation with political participation, with a value of $r = -0.145$, ($p < 0.01$). As a result, more religious persons participate less in political activities. That essentially supports the study's hypothesis on religiosity and the findings of Driskell et al. (2008).

Education

Education has a significant correlation with political participation, with $r = 0.121$, ($p < 0.01$). That means as people are more educated, they are more likely to participate in

traditional or modern forms of political engagement. Furthermore, this validates the impact of education on the political participation of citizens.

Occupation

The analysis reveals that occupational status highly correlates with political participation, where $r = 0.111$ ($p < 0.01$). This means persons who are employed have a higher involvement in politics than those who are jobless, retired, or women (homemakers). This is in line with findings that women, in general, are less inclined to take part in politics in Bangladesh. It also supports the hypothesis that employed people will be more engaged in various forms of political participation. Nonetheless, the finding shows a significant relationship between respondents' occupational sector and political participation [$r = 0.094$, ($p < 0.01$)]. It demonstrates, in particular, that respondents working in different jobs in the private sector are more likely to be involved in varieties of political activities than those working in the public or other sectors. As a result, this finding contradicts the study's premise, which holds that persons working in the private sector are less inclined to participate in the process.

Rural/Urban cleavage

As shown in Table 4.6, rural/urban cleavage is also substantially correlated with political participation, with a correlation coefficient of $r = 0.063$, ($p < 0.01$). Earlier research reveals that rural dwellers are more likely to take part in formal and non-formal forms of political activity (Bell, 1999). At the same time, this is totally contrary to the study's hypothesis, which implies that people who living in urban areas are more likely to participate than those living in rural areas. However, it is interesting to see the findings of the relationship between urban/rural cleavage and political participation, as this study did not find any research indicating that people in rural regions participate in different kinds of participation. The majority of studies show that rural residents are more willing to be active only in voting.

4.4.2 Political Participation and Trust

As trust is measured in two ways to determine its relationship to political participation, institutional trust and generalized trust, correlation analysis also provides a different outcome for these two in terms of political participation. Table 4.6 shows that institutional trust variables and the Index of institutional trust have a robust negative connection with political participation. Respondents who have more trust in the country's five major institutions are less likely to participate in political activities. In other words, people with less trust in government

institutions are more likely to engage in various political activities. On the one hand, this effectively rejects the study's first premise on the role of trust in political participation. On the other hand, it confirms this thesis's alternative hypothesis, which states that increased trust leads to lower participation. Similarly, it demonstrates the finding of Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), who conclude that more trust might sometimes lead to lower total political engagement. In contrast, there is a moderate level of relationship between generalized trust and political participation. In other words, people in Bangladesh who have a high level of confidence in other individuals are more willing to participate in politics. This study supports Fukuyama's (1995) claim that a high generalized trust will lead to people being more active in the political and civic engagement process. To finalize the causality between trust and political participation, more statistical analysis has been presented in the next chapter.

4.4.3 Performance and Political Participation

According to the findings table 4.6, there is a significant correlation between discrimination and various forms of political activity. It means citizens who personally encounter discrimination based on different identities are more willing to participate in politics. Discrimination based on any disability and discrimination based on political affiliation, in particular, had a significant correlation with the dependent variable where values of $r = 0.082$ and 0.094 , ($p < 0.01$), respectively. Following that, discrimination based on gender has a somewhat significant relationship with a score of $r = 0.045$, ($p < 0.05$). The remaining three factors have insignificant relationships with political activism, where discrimination based on ethnicity is positively correlated and discrimination based on religion and the region has a negative correlation. In Bangladesh, ethnic and religious minorities are included through different affirmative policies to include them in mainstream society and governance. This finding rejects the study's primary premise (Hypothesis 3a), which states that discrimination will cause people to be less attached to the entire political participation process. In contrast, as Marsh and Ramrez (2019) stated, the thesis has a second premise (Hypothesis 3b) which hypothesizes that discrimination will enhance people's participation in politics. The current correlation analysis results are in support of this hypothesis. This chapter, however, has been followed by a regression analysis to determine the causal explanation.

4.4.4 Discrimination and Political Participation

As revealed in the table, there is a significant correlation between discrimination and various forms of political activity. It recommends that citizens who personally face discrimination based on different identities are more willing to participate in politics. Discrimination based on any disability and discrimination based on political affiliation, in particular, had a significant correlation with the dependent variable where values of $r = 0.082$ and 0.094 , ($p < 0.01$), respectively. Following that, discrimination based on gender has a somewhat significant relationship with score of $r = 0.045$, ($p < 0.05$). The remaining three factors have insignificant relationships with political activism, where discrimination based on ethnicity is positively correlated and discrimination based on religion and the region has a negative correlation. This output analysis rejects the study's primary premise (Hypothesis 3a), which states that discrimination will cause people to be less attached to the entire political participation process. In contrast, as Marsh and Ramrez (2019) stated, the thesis has a second premise (Hypothesis 3b) which hypothesizes that discrimination will enhance people's participation in politics. The current correlation analysis results are in support of this hypothesis. This chapter, however, has been followed by a regression analysis to determine the causal explanation.

4.4.5 Corruption and Political Participation

As Corruption Index shows that the perception of corruption is insignificantly and positively related to political participation. Whereas the question of how many politicians are corrupt has a moderate correlation with $r = 0.043$, ($p < 0.05$), the question of public officials being corrupt has no relationship with political participation. It demonstrates that politicians' corruption engages people more in politics compared to civil servants' involvement in corruption. This may be because civil servants are more engaged in petty corruption than politicians, who are more engaged in grand corruption. Grand corruption affects people more than petty corruption does. On the other hand, personal and familial bribery experience significantly correlates with political participation, with $r = 0.134$, ($p < 0.01$). That explains those who have encountered bribery are more likely to participate actively in politics than those who have not. As a result, this variable's two unique measures indicate two distinct relationships in which perception of corruption weakly supports the research hypothesis while personal or family experience with bribes contradicts that. This study's hypothesis about corruption and political participation suggested that citizens who perceive more corruption will engage less in political activities.

However, the following chapter will provide a more detailed explanation of how to determine causation between these two variables.

4.5 Conclusion

In short, this chapter presents descriptive statistics of all variables. Where data shows that only 20% of respondents participate in politics. Additionally, this study discovered that there is a high level of institutional trust and that people are satisfied with the development and government's success in Bangladesh on various measures. Corruption perception and personal experience with bribery and discrimination were not much evident among the study's total N. This chapter also shows a correlation analysis involving multiple independent variables and political participation indexes, revealing interesting results. Some of the notions in this thesis are backed by the analysis, such as socio-demographic characteristics, trust, discrimination, etc. Similarly, some of the hypotheses are not supported by Pearson correlation analysis and produce mixed results, for example, corruption, performance, and so on. As a result, the following chapter will give a more reasonable and causal explanation using regression analysis.

Chapter 5: Multi-Variate analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction

To establish the causality between independent variables and political participation, a multi-variate analysis is carried out through regression analysis (OLS) in this chapter. Each cluster of independent variables is analysed separately and presented first. Thereafter, all independent variables are correlated and presented to explain political participation in Bangladesh. Following that, a detailed discussion of the study's findings is also presented.

5.2 Regression Analysis

The thesis first presents five different models to find the causality between political participation and each group of independent variables separately. Finally, a combined model in a table also presented to answers the research question, test the hypothesis and causality between all variables with the dependent variable.

5.2.1 Socio-demographic Variables Affecting Political Participation (Model 1)

Table 5.1: Regression Analysis of Socio-Demographic Variables Affecting Political Participation

Socio-demographic variables	Model 1
	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)
a) Gender(ref. female)	-0.119**
b) Age (low-high)	0.042*
c) Religion (ref. Muslim)	-0.011
Religiosity (low-high)	-0.104 **
d) Educational qualification (illiterate – higher educated)	0.182**
e) Occupational status (ref. employed)	-0.060
Occupational sectors (ref. private)	0.089
f) Urban/Rural cleavage (ref. rural)	0.071**
N	2740
Constant	1.147
Adjusted R Square	0.059

*. Statistical significance at less than 0.05 level.

**.. Statistical significance at less than 0.001 level.

Table 5.1 shows that several socio-demographic variables have strong effects on participation in politics, whereas the others have no effects. Gender and religiosity, educational qualification,

and rural/urban distribution of respondents all significantly affect political participation. On the other hand, religion, occupational status, and occupational sector do not affect political participation. Nonetheless, the values of the beta coefficients might illustrate the variation in the impact of different socio-demographic variables on the dependent variable. For the gender variable, $\beta = -0.119$, at the < 0.001 level, indicates that female respondents are less likely to participate in any kind of political participation. Likewise, religiosity has a significant negative impact on political participation ($\beta = -0.104$, < 0.001). As a result, more religious persons participate less actively in politics. Regarding the relationship between educational qualification and political participation, education has a substantial positive effect, with a beta value of 0.182 , < 0.001 . The findings of this Beta value show that more educated persons are more likely to participate in a variety of political actions. Moreover, the rural/urban distinction also has a significant and positive impact on varying respondents' political activities, with a coefficient beta, $\beta = 0.071$, < 0.001 . The beta value implies that people in rural areas are more likely to participate in various forms of political actions. In the case of the age of respondents, it moderately affects the variation of the dependent variable ($\beta = 0.042$, < 0.05). Yet, it is interesting to see that age has a moderate level of statistically significant relationship with political participation, as Pearson Corr. did not find any significant relationship between these two. However, it means older people will participate more than younger citizens. The model's overall value, **adjusted R square, is 0.059**, showing that these socio-demographic characteristics explain around 6% of the variation in political participation where the value is statistically significant at < 0.001 level.

5.2.2 Trust Affecting Political Participation (Model 2)

Trust is measured in two distinct categories: institutional trust and generalized trust. Thus, in measuring institutional trust, where the survey asked about confidence in five separate institutions, which are assessed with the same five scales, then an index was computed to analyse the overall level of trust with political participation. The second model is shown on the next page.

Table 5.2 shows that primarily only confidence in central government and confidence in the police has a significant negative relationship where the coefficient beta is **-0.133 and -0.142**, respectively, at (< 0.001) level. That means respondents who think they have quite a 'lot of confidence' in government and 'not very much confidence' in the police participate less in different political activities. Overall, institutional trust substantially affects political

participation, according to Model 2 in Table 5.2, whereas generalized trust does not affect the variance of the dependent variable. Institutional trust has a negative relationship with political participation, with a beta score of **-0.161 at < 0.001 level**. That means persons with high confidence in government institutions are less inclined to participate in political activities.

However, this model accounts for only 2.6% of the variance in political participation (adjusted R squared = 0.026). Trust appears to have a very low level of detrimental impact on political participation, which somewhat validates the study's hypothesis about trust. However, a comprehensive examination of all explanatory variables will help to identify more precise causation or variance caused by the trust variable.

Table 5.2: Trust Affecting Political Participation (Model 2)

Trust	Model 2	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)	Index/Mean of the Variables
<i>Institutional Trust</i>			
Confidence in Parliament		0.043	3.37
Confidence in Central Government		-0.133**	3.32
Confidence in Civil Service		-0.009	3.08
Confidence in Political Parties		-0.007	2.68
Confidence in police		-.142**	2.44
Institutional trust Index		-0.161**	2.97
Generalized Trust		0.007	1.92
	N	2736	
	Constant	1.218	
	Adjusted R Square	0.026	

** Statistical significance at less than 0.01 level.

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

5.2.3 Performance Affecting Political Participation

Performance of public institutions is categorized into two particular groups of indicators and two different indexes are created. The first measures the level of citizens' satisfaction with different services and the second measures policy performance such as success in poverty reduction, checking crime, etc. Table 5.3 shows how different performance measures affect political engagement in Bangladesh.

The third model illustrates that respondents' perceptions of the growth of various service sectors have a negative impact on the variance of political participation, with a beta coefficient of, $\beta = -0.173, < 0.001$. It indicates that those who consider the development of various service sectors satisfying usually engage less in various forms of political activity.

Table 5.3: Performance Affecting Political Participation (Model 3)

Performance	Model 3	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)	Index/Mean of the Variables
Development of Service Sectors (index)		-0.173**	3.83
Perception of Government Success (index)		0.099**	2.73
	N	2381	
	Constant	1.200	
	Adjusted R Square	0.051	

******. Statistical significance at less than 0.001 level.

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

Conversely, respondents' perceptions of government success positively affect different forms of political participation. It means the government's success perception, based on several human development sectors, i.e., reducing poverty, checking crime, generating employment, checking corruption etc., has influenced the respondent's overall political participation in Bangladesh. More particularly, people who think that the government 'neither succeeded nor failed' tend to be more active in political activities, as the index mean is 2.73 and measured into five scales. This model's adjusted R square value is 0.051, indicating that respondent performance perception has a 5% effect on the variance of political participation. This essentially represents a lower level of variation in terms of political participation from the performance variables. Therefore, the question is whether the hypothesis of the thesis is accepted or denied. An overall regression model will assist in finalizing the causation of political participation and other factors.

5.2.4 Discrimination Affecting Political Participation

The fourth model's findings on the statistical significance of the relationship between personal experience of discrimination and political participation are provided in the table 5.4. Based on the findings in Table 5.4, only two types of personal discrimination can explain the variation in political participation. Discrimination based on Political affiliation significantly impacts political participation in Bangladesh, where the score of beta is, $\beta = 0.09, <0.001$. Individuals who encounter discrimination because of their political affiliation are more involved in various forms, including conventional and non-conventional political participation.

Table 5.4: Discrimination Affecting Political Participation (Model 4)

Discrimination	Model 4	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)	Mean of the Variables
Discriminated on gender (male to female)		0.028	1.10
Discriminated on religion (other religion to Islam)		-0.072*	1.02
Discriminated on ethnicity (other ethnicity to Bengali)		0.026	1.02
Discriminated on district/region		-0.036	1.13
Discriminated on any disability		0.057	1.06
Discriminated on Political affiliation (opposition-affiliated to party in government)		0.097**	1.16
Overall Discrimination (Index)		0.004	1.07
N		2673	
Constant		1.136	
Adjusted R Square		0.013	

****. Statistical significance at less than 0.001 level.**

***. Statistical significance at less than 0.05 level.**

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

On the other hand, people who suffered religious discrimination are less willing to participate in the broader political sphere. However, the R square value of the model o shows that discrimination has fundamentally no significance over political participation, as this model only has a 1.3% influence over the dependent variable (Adjusted R square = 0.013).

5.2.5 Corruption Affecting Political Participation

As bivariate correlation analysis on two different corruption measures failed to explain the relationship between corruption and political engagement, this section of the study will provide an (OLS) regression model and analysis. To simplify the test, perceptions of corruption among respondents over politicians and civil servants are combined into one index.

Table 5.5: Corruption Affecting Political Participation (Model 5)

Corruption	Model 5	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)	Index/Mean of the Variables
Perception of corruption by Politicians and Civil Servants		-0.036	3.51
Personal or family's experience of hints by a public official for giving a bribe		0.143**	1.73
N		2589	
Constant		1.180	
Adjusted R Square		0.017	

****. Statistical significance at less than 0.001 level.**

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

The fifth regression analysis model shows that the indicator of corruption perception had no explanatory link with political participation. In other words, those who feel that politicians and civil servants are corrupt will not be influenced to participate in political activities. On the other hand, the personal or familial experience of being requested or intimidated by a public service employee is positively and highly responsible for variation in political engagement ($\beta = 0.143, <0.001$). It demonstrates that people with personal or familial experience with being asked for or hinting at a bribe are more engaged in participating in political activities. However, the overall impact of models on the variance of political participation can be assessed by the value of adjusted R squares, which is 0.17, implying that it explains only around (2%) variation in political participation in Bangladesh. Does this finding contradict the study's notion of corruption and political participation? In the following section, a composite model will describe it in more depth.

5.3 Regression Analysis: All independent variable affecting political participation

Table 5.6 illustrates a combined regression analysis model where all variables' indexes affect political participation.

5.3.1 Socio-Demographic Variables

Analysis of Model 6 in Table 5.6 shows that the relationship between gender and political participation has a moderate level of significance ($\beta = -0.114, <0.05$). Almost the same degree of negative correlation was found in the analysis of a different model (Model 1), though the explaining power of gender was reduced when compared to other explanatory variables.

Table 5.6: All independent Variables Affecting Political Participation (Model 6) Pooled data

Model 6	Political Participation (Standardized Coefficient Beta, β)	Index of the Variable
Socio-demographic variables		
a) Gender (ref. female)	-0.114*	1.53
b) Age	0.032	42.07
c) Religion (ref. Muslim)	0.001	1.11
Religiosity (low-high)	-0.068*	9.46
d) Educational qualification (low-high)	0.215**	3.96
e) Occupational status (ref. employed)	-0.029	1.42
Private and other sectors (ref. private)	0.038	1.34
f) Urban/Rural cleavage (ref. rural)	0.091**	1.69
Trust		
a) Institutional trust (Index)	-0.089*	2.97
b) Generalized Trust (low-high)	-0.004	1.92
Performance		
a) Development of Service Sectors (Index) (very bad- very good)	-0.126**	3.83
b) Perception of Government Success (Index) (not succeeded-succeeded)	0.49	2.73
Discrimination (Index) (low-high)	0.004	1.07
Corruption		
a) Perception of corruption on Politicians and Civil Servants (low-high)	-0.089*	3.51
b) Personal or family's experience of hints by a public official for giving a bribe (low-high)	0.137**	1.73
N	2673	
Constant	1.579	
Adjusted R Square	0.156	

****.** Statistical significance at less than 0.001 level.

***.** Statistical significance at less than 0.05 level.

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

Model 6 includes all independent variable in one regression analysis where it shows that, collectively all explanatory variables explaining around 16% variation in political participation in Bangladesh. (Adjusted R square = 0.156). That basically supports the notion of a study where women are expected to participate less and men more.

Following the same trend of the separate model, model 6 in table 5.6 also shows that religiosity has a significant negative effect on explaining political participation. The more one is religious, the less is his political participation. Moreover, educational attainment significantly affects the variance of political participation ($\beta = 0.215, <0.001$). This explains that persons with higher levels of education are more active in politics. This also supports the research hypothesis, which predicted that higher educational qualifications would lead to increased political participation.

On the other hand, the score of the coefficient Beta is **0.091, (<0.001)**, of the urban//rural cleavage contradicts the study's hypothesis. Table 5.6 demonstrates that this variable strongly and positively explains political engagement, implying that rural individuals are more active in political participation. It is interesting to observe that rural people are more involved in numerous forms of political participation, including formal (protest, contact official) and informal (writing in social media) forms. Earlier research suggests that urban people will participate in different forms of civic and political activities (Wessels, 1997), but rural people will only be more active in voting, especially in the global South (Bratton et al., 2006). As this study excludes voting, which has historically been widely participated by the majority of Bangladeshi citizens. However, the hybrid regime or semi-authoritarian rule of Bangladesh can help explain this contradictory conclusion. For the past fifteen years, the ruling government has manipulated the popular voting system, and as a result, the last two elections are alleged to be unfair, biased, and partially favouring the party in power. Moreover, other measures, such as forced disappearances and extrajudicial killings to the mass imprisonment of opposition activists, have intimidated the opposition (Riaz & Parvez, 2021). Therefore, people living in urban areas are better aware of many of these issues; as Dalton (1998) suggests, they usually have more resources and information, which may negatively impact their involvement and actions in politics. Likewise, as the GTS survey's list of political actions is mostly anti-government actions, the general climate of fear and disturbance may lead urban residents to self-censoring their actions over time and answer also, while rural residents are mostly less aware of most of these issues.

In addition, this investigation expected age, occupational status (employed-unemployed), and occupational sector (private-public and others) would affect political participation, but these did not. Surprisingly, while the separate model only of socio-demographic variables, the variable of age significantly affected political participation. However, this was not the case when age was included along with other variables. Regarding expecting a positive association

with age, the civic voluntarism approach and a reasonable amount of research revealed that middle-aged people are more likely to participate in various formal forms of involvement. Melo and Stockemer (2014) show that middle-aged individuals are more likely to participate in various formal forms of participation. According to a study from South Asia and Bangladesh, middle-aged and elderly persons will participate in more than one kind of participation (Bratton et al., 2006; Haque & Hossain, 2019). Although this study adopted the approach of the civic voluntarism model and considered the contextual study on Bangladesh, where increasing age also increases participatory activities, there are contrary studies that demonstrates that young age groups participate in multiple forms of political actions and old and middle age groups participate more in voting (Verba et al., 1995). Aside from that, as Bangladesh has made a major progress in the field of education⁹, nowadays, the younger generation is more educated than the older generation. This may have an impact on the participation of young individuals in comparison to older people, as this study also found that education plays a significant role in explaining participation in politics. Similarly, overall indications of multiple approaches, such as the modernist and civic voluntarism approaches, imply that employment has a positive effect on people's involvement in politics (Burns et al., 2001), whereas student and jobless persons have lower participation (Norris, 2002). Furthermore, studies on political participation and hybrid regimes indicate that ordinary people working in various private sectors may have feelings of anxiety and dissatisfaction, making them less inclined to participate in various activities (Rocha et al., 2008). Though, this study found no evidence of those relationships having a major impact on political participation. Perhaps the unpredictability of democracy in the global south can explain that. However, opposite directions have also been identified in different studies in the case of trust, performance, and institutional participation in Bangladesh. This is because of power distance and authoritarian cultural heritage, as explained by Askvik and Jamil (2013), Benjamin et al. (2020), and Hossain (2022).

5.3.2 Trust

The study's second sub-research question is '*Does trust in governance matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?*' To answer this question, both generalized trust and institutional trust variables were used. It was found that, institutional trust has a moderate level of effect on the variance of political participation in Bangladesh, with a beta value of **-0.089 (<0.05)**. At the same time, the level of significance in a separate test with only the trust variables (Model

⁹ <https://www.usaid.gov/bangladesh/education>

2 in Table 5.2) was higher ($\beta = -0.611, <0.001$) than the result of being evaluated with other independent variables in Model 6 in Table 5.6.

In this study, institutional trust refers to a country's fundamental institutions, specifically trust in the parliament, central government, civil service, political parties, and police. As most people have a high level of trust in the government, it is negatively affected to political participation. This suggests that those with a high level of confidence in various institutions are less likely to participate in political activities. This primarily contradicts the expected result from the study's hypothesis (H1a), which anticipated that higher trust in society would influence a higher level of participation. On the other hand, it also supports the alternate prediction of the thesis (H 1b), which states that greater trust can lead to a decreased level of political participation in society. This is basically demonstrated by the research of Avery (2006) and Rosenstone and Hansen (1993), who show that higher trust does not always lead to increased participation and that lower trust can assist people in becoming more involved in political activities. Similarly, it refers to the unpredictability of people's perceptions and activities aligned with different institutions of modern democracy in South Asia, which has been described by several studies in various research contexts (e.g., Jamil et al., 2013; Askvik & Jamil, 2013). More particularly, it determines that the majority of the people used to trust and respect government leaders, whatever their performance is. Hofstede Index also supports that, as Bangladesh has a high power distance score (80), Which may impact their higher level of trust and detachment in political activities¹⁰. The studies above discussed these issues based on the Hofstede index and other internal and external factors.

In contrast, in the case of social or generalized trust, it does not provide any explanation for people's political activity. Although, Putnam (2000) and Fukuyama (1995) suggested a significant and positive association between political participation and generalised trust. In the case of generalized trust, however, both models produced the same conclusion. That is, whether people have more or less trust in other people does not affect their political participation. To explain, descriptive statistics (Table 4.1) show that respondents have a very low level of generalized trust, which has essentially had no impact on the expression of political behaviours. Similarly, cultural and contextual exceptions may have a justification for that. People with more generalized trust are more satisfied with their surroundings. According to Bäck and Christensen (2016), generalized trust does not consistently articulate a significant relationship

¹⁰ <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison-tool?countries=bangladesh>

with political and electoral participation. Sometimes it largely depends on their personal efficacy on expression regarding civic and political expression.

5.3.3 Performance

The third sub-research question of the study is '*Does performance matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?*' To explain this research question Inferential statistics reveal that (Model 6 in Table 5.6) public perception of the developments in different service sectors has a statistically significant explanatory ability on political participation in Bangladesh, with a coefficient beta of **-0.126, <0.001**. In contrast, respondents' perceptions of government success in various human development indicators, i.e., reducing poverty, controlling crime, generating employment, ensuring peoples' safety, checking pollution etc., are not affecting variations in political participation. As previously demonstrated, a combined test reduces the explanatory potential of variables, whereas a single or separate model provides a more significant relationship among variables. Following that, the sense of government success was significantly correlated with political participation, although this is largely decreased in the combined model.

A significant negative relationship between political participation and perception of service sector development means that people who believe the government is doing well in developing overall service sectors such as education, health and social security, infrastructure and transport, daily services etc., over the past five years are less likely to participate in political activities in Bangladesh. The study's hypothesis about performance is mostly unsupported (H2), as the study projected that higher performance would lead to more political participation. This was also supported by the modernist approach and previous studies (e.g., Nekola, 2006; Dalton, 1998; Norris, 2002). Studies in the South Asian context have also demonstrated a positive correlation between good performance and political activism (Moinul et al., 2017; Wood et al., 2002). Yet, this study revealed the opposite, and therefore it can be stated that the dominant cultural orientation and paradox in South Asia may explain as other studies describe trust and performance of the public sector in South Asia. Furthermore, those who believe the government has done a satisfactory job of developing service sectors are likely to be satisfied with the government and are unlikely to protest on some issues. Not only that, people's political ideologies might have an impact on their decision not to participate in the political system. People who support the ruling party are less likely to disagree with

government decisions since Bangladeshi public sectors are dominated by patron-client relationships based on give and take (Askvik & Jamil, 2013).

In contrast, perceptions of government success in different indicators do not explain people's political participation. While respondents believe that the government is not doing either good or bad (mean of index 2.73 in a scale of 5), this view has no statistical correlation with political participation. Previous indicators of performance showed that those who believe the government is doing well have extremely low levels of participation, which shows that people who believe the government is not performing well have higher levels of participation in various forms of participation. As a result, since this variable indicates that most respondents believe the government has somewhat succeeded in policy performance, it does not influence their participation in politics. More specifically, this index did not affect their political participation.

5.3.4 Discrimination

One of the sub-research question which sheds light on discrimination, and the question is '*Does personal experience of discrimination matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?*'. Six distinct alternatives have been used in this study to determine the personal experience of social exclusion or discrimination. Statistical analysis of Table 5.6 reveals that the discrimination index does not significantly influence variation in people's political engagement in Bangladesh. Even though individual regression analysis shows a strong and moderate level of significant relationship between discrimination based on political and religious identities and political participation. However, the overall explanation level was also relatively low, explaining only about 1% of the variation in the dependent variable (adjusted R square is 0.013).

According to the findings, individuals who have personal experience with discrimination have no impact on their decision to engage or not participate in the political sphere. That eventually rejects both hypotheses (H3a, H3b) of the study, which anticipated, in accordance with a number of studies, that citizens who have experienced discrimination can affect their decision on political participation, either positively or adversely. Now the question is why this study failed to find this expected relationships? It is hard to explain this. Though there may be some reasons, for example, a less amount of discrimination experienced by citizens, since the index mean (1.07) demonstrates that most respondents never experienced discrimination, thus, it does not provide any explanation in the total statistical analysis. Typically, research suggests that

discrimination influences political participation when people are discriminated against for particular characteristics over a long period of time (Howe & Hunzai, 2019; Sifat & Shafi, 2021). One reason could be those who are discriminated are afraid to engage in political activities because the two variables that explain religious and political identity based discrimination are intimidated and are afraid to come forward to express their feelings. However, more case oriented studies can reveal a further in-depth relationship between discrimination and political engagement (for example, studies among religious minorities, in Chittagong Hill Tracts in Southeast Bangladesh and among opposition party activists). However, authoritarian regimes of Bangladesh can have an impact as well. The overall climate of terror, scepticism, and detaining anti-government activists and civil society members can create an overall fear and suspicion in people's thoughts, influencing them not to reveal the discrimination they have encountered.

5.3.5 Corruption

This is the fourth research question in the study that asks '*Does corruption of government officials and politicians matter in the political participation of Bangladesh?*'. Table 5.6 shows that both measures have a statistically significant; where the perception of corruption in politicians and civil servants is moderately and negatively correlated with a beta coefficient score of **-0.089**, (**< 0.05**), and personal or family experience of hints by a public official for giving a bribe is strongly correlated with a beta coefficient value of **0.137**, (**<0.001**) with political participation. Surprisingly, the level of significance in the perception of corruption increased from the independent model (Model 5 in Table 5.5) to the integrated model with other explanatory variables. Model 5 in Table 5.6 revealed no significant effect of corruption perception on varying political participation in Bangladesh. However, when combined with other explanatory variables, the level of significance increased to 0.05 level.

When these outcomes are compared to the study's premise, both measures support the notion that, first, perceptions of corruption among politicians and civil workers are negatively correlated at modest levels with political participation. That means persons who believe that a large number of politicians and government employees are corrupt (Index mean 3.51) are less likely to participate in politics. This study also predicted that (H4) higher levels of perceived corruption among people would result in lower participation. In addition to the civic voluntarism approach, there also is a considerable number of evidence about the impact of corruption on political involvement (e.g., Olsson, 2014; Stockemer, 2013), which demonstrates

that long-term corruption in society causes people to become disengaged from political participation. Also, when there is systemic corruption (Bangladesh has been ranked 147 out of 180 in corruption by Transparency International, which said it was one of the countries with a concerning trend of weakening of anti-corruption institutions (Tribune Report, 2022), where all are corrupt and no use of whistleblowing, people will remain indifferent. Therefore, it creates a sense of distrust, deprivation, and unreliability in various government institutions, and it may have an impact on their decision to express their political actions. Studies on the South Asian environment offer equivalent results when evaluating the effect of corruption on citizens who are well aware (Kochanek, 2010).

Furthermore, the second measure of the study, personal or family experience of being asked for or hints of giving bribes, is positively and strongly related to political participation. That is, persons who believe they have had some personal or family experience with asking/hinting for bribery are more likely to participate in politics. This supports the study's expected result as the index mean is 1.73, which illustrates that people 'sometimes' experienced bribery or hinted at it. To understand more, this was measured in five scales measuring from never to very often. That indicates that the respondents who participated in politics experienced some form of bribery. Therefore, they are more active in participating in political activities that are in line with the study's hypothesis.

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter introduced and described various models of inferential analysis in light of the study's research purpose and hypothesis. This chapter discovers that the combined model (Model 6) offers the most explanation (16%) for political participation of Bangladeshi citizens. Even if it does not offer a high level of explanation for variation in political participation, it can produce valuable insights about variation in political participation in the context of South Asia. However, findings from all measures and indicators show that trust, corruption, and socio-demographic variables affect political participation following the civic voluntarism approach/social resource and cultural motivation approach and partially modernist approach. Similarly, this research failed to uncover the prediction of the mobilizing agency theorist, which illustrates that higher trust in society will lead to higher political participation. Thus, it challenges the mobilizing agency theory-based explanation regarding trust and political participation. However, it also illustrates how social and cultural beliefs and practices matter in political participation, which is often overlooked in the main discourse.

Chapter 6: Conclusion of the Study

6.1 Introduction

This chapter asked three questions. a) What is the research objective? 2) What was done in terms of theory choice, methodology, and types of analysis and c) What are the major findings and implications? The following is a brief description of these. Thereafter, what implications this study has for future research?

6.2 Overview of the Research Objective

The major objectives of the research were to measure political participation in Bangladesh and find out what factors explain it. More specifically, this research investigated whether there is any effect of trust and performance on people's political participation. How the personal experience of discrimination or exclusion impacts respondents on their political expression? Likewise, this study also tried to determine whether corruption perception and personal/familial experience of asking or hinting at bribes affect their political participation or not. In addition, finding the scenario of political participation in Bangladesh in modern/informal forms, for instance, writing in social media or writing to media, is another research objective of the study. Finally, this study also wanted to explore whether there is any direct or indirect impact of authoritarian regimes on people's political participation or not.

6.3 Overview of theory and Methodology

According to Van Deth J. W. (2001), political participation is basically the study of everything related to any citizen participation impacting politics, states, and society. This study predominantly employed Pippa Norris's (2002) definition to explain and defines political participation. In addition, this research is also somewhat influenced by Ekman & Amn's (2020) conceptualisation of political participation. Following that, this study attempted to discover its explanatory variables in light of several contentious approaches from the debate. This study profoundly relied on the social resources and cultural motivation/civic voluntarism approach, the modernist approach and mobilising agency approach to political participation. More specifically, the modernist approach helps this study to test hypotheses on performance, education, occupation and rural/urban cleavage regarding the relationship with political participation. Whereas mobilising agency theories to operationalise trust, religion and civic

voluntarism model for corruption, discrimination, gender and age regarding relation with political participation.

The quantitative and inductive methods were applied in the research. Secondary data has been used, and a considerable number of N=2740 were selected. Data analysis begins with descriptive statistics for multiple variables, followed by a bivariate analysis (Pearson Corr.) to determine the fundamental relationship. Finally, a (OLS) regression analysis has been employed to perform a multivariate analysis.

6.4 Major Findings of the Study

As the main research question and objective poses, the dependent variable of the study was political participation which derives this study to measuring political participation in Bangladesh. Following that, a low degree of political participation (20%) was found among the study's respondents. Where around 25% of the participation is the modern/informal/non-conventional form of political participation (writing in social media is 20% and writing and contacting media is 5%), and the rest of 75% remains in traditional/ formal/conventional forms of participation. To explain political participation, this study investigated different variables, mainly trust, performance, discrimination, corruption, and socio-demographic factors, in light of the modernist approach, civic voluntarism approach (social resource and cultural motivation approach) and mobilizing agency theory. As a result, as predicted, this study demonstrates that socio-demographic characteristics, including educational qualification, religiosity, and urban/rural cleavage, all have a substantial impact on political participation. While this study finds the most interesting findings from the urban/rural cleavage variable, it contradicts the thesis's assumption and finds that persons living in rural regions have a higher level of political participation. Other socio-demographic characteristics, such as age, religion, occupational status, and occupational sectors, on the other hand, had no explaining effect on the variation in political participation in Bangladesh.

In terms of trust, institutional trust, more specifically, confidence in various government institutions, has a moderate level of negative effect on political participation, which rejects the indication of mobilizing agency theory; however, social or generalized trust has no effect on political participation. In the performance variable, the study discovered that the development of service sectors has a robust negative effect on political participation, which is in line with the alternative explanation of the modernist theorist, whereas the perception of government success has no explaining influence on political participation. Furthermore, the third

component in the study, discrimination, has no significant relationship with political participation. In contrast, both corruption indicators provide a strong and moderate level of significance in explaining political participation, which confirmed the study's hypothesis and anticipation of the social resource and cultural motivation theorist/civic voluntarism approach. In short, the study reveals that civic voluntarism/social resource and cultural motivation approaches mainly explained the variance of political participation in Bangladesh, while the modernist theory of political participation explained it partially.

6.5 Generalization of the Study

In quantitative research, the ability to generalise can have an important impact on justifying the quality of the research (Van Thiel, 2014). This study employs cross-sectional GTS data to assess political participation and explain variation in Bangladesh, which has a proportional random sampling from all over the country. As a result, the study primarily seems that the generalisation of the results is possible in the external domain considering the context of Bangladesh, South Asia. However, analytically, to be able to generalise, it needs to be inferentially significant more than one times for theory testing study, this study expected that all three approaches, i.e., civic voluntarism, modernist and mobilising agency, will be able to explain political participation, yet study failed to find in support with mobilising agency theory and partially succeeded/failed with modernist approach. Therefore, this study believes that generalisation of the study would be possible.

6.6 the Future Scope of the Study

This study examined civic voluntarism, modernist, and mobilizing agency approaches in the context of Bangladesh and South Asia. The results have posed a new direction in the study of political participation, while research excluded voting as it is already widely practised and somewhat researched as well. In the case of Bangladesh, political participation, in general, still needs to be well-studied. Therefore, this study attempted to fill that research gap. As only 20% of people participated in different political actions in the last year prior to 2020, whether there is any direct causal impact of the current hybrid regime or not is not identified because of the lack of proper measures in the questionnaire and the overall political reality of Bangladesh. Even though interesting results on the effect of urban/rural cleavage, occupational status and discrimination variables on political participation can be indirectly mediated by the overall climate of fear, unrest and disruption of the authoritarian government of Bangladesh. This study

includes social media writing and writing/contacting media as modern/informal forms of participation in its list of actions of participation, which is now usually most popular forms among the younger generation around the world. This study did not identify massive participation in these form, even though it sheds light on that and finds it possible to work focusing on it in the future. However, in short, under the theoretical foundation outlined above, political participation can be explained by confidence in development, performance perception, personal experience with corruption, and socio-demographic characteristics. One key result of the study is that trust does not always lead to more participation since this study finds that higher trust also leads to lower political participation. Similarly, performance followed the same pattern, with a higher perception of development leading to decreased participation. In these trust, performance, and participation paradoxes, culture can provide an explanation, and future studies focusing solely on cultural phenomena may uncover a significant dynamic. While explaining socio-demographic factors in terms of urban/rural cleavage, occupational status and sectors, mobilization agency theory failed to explain which is interesting in political participation discourse. Thus, one possibility of future study could be measuring the direct impact of a hybrid regime over political participation, as Bangladesh having one for fifteen years. Likewise, in the case of discrimination and political participation, the study did not uncover any relationship, more case-specific research and focus on the authoritarian political environment may provide a reasonable explanation in future. This study hopes that it has somewhat contributed to the academic boundary of researching political participation, focusing on a South Asian context and country-specific case.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Summary of the application of dependent and independent variables

Variables	Questions asked/answer alternatives	Hypothesis	Comments
Political participation (Dependent Variable)	<p>Q. Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you have done any of these things during the past year:</p> <p>a) Joined others (like political workers) in your community to request some actions from govt. b) Contacted the media (calling a radio/TV program or writing a letter to a newspaper etc. c) Writing in Social media d) Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint e) Refused to pay a tax/fee to govt.?</p>		
Trust	<p>Q1. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?</p> <p>a) Most people can be trusted b) Need to be careful in dealing with people</p> <p>Q2. I am going to name a number of organizations and institutions. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence, or none at all?</p> <p>a) Parliament b) the Central Government c) Civil Service d) Political Parties, e) the police</p>	<p><i>The higher citizens' trust in the society, the more political participation.</i></p>	
Performance	<p>Q1. How would you describe the development of the following services over the last five years?</p> <p>a) Public School b) Private school c) Public college d) Private college e) Public university f) Private university g) Health care in public hospital h) Health care in private hospital i) Social security (health, insurance, etc.) j) Maintenance of law and order k) Electricity supply</p>	<p><i>1. The more citizens are satisfied with policy performance, the higher will be the political participation.</i></p> <p><i>2. The higher citizens' trust in the society, the less will be the political participation.</i></p>	

-
- l) Energy supply (gas, firewood, kerosene, etc.) m)
 - Garbage removal
 - n) Maintenance and construction of roads
 - o) Maintenance of culverts/ bridges
 - p) Water supply
 - q) Sewage and local sanitation
 - r) Public transport
 - s) Banking service
 - t) Internet and ICT accessibility and IT service, u)
 - Agricultural extension services (seeds, new technology, fertilizer, etc.)
 - v) Animal health care services (Animal Husbandry).

Q2. How well the Bangladeshi government has succeeded in the following areas:

- a) Reducing poverty
- b) Checking crime (e.g., drug control)
- c) Ensuring peoples' safety and security
- d) Generating employment
- e) Checking pollution and environmental hazard
- f) Mitigating climate change
- g) Checking corruption
- h) Controlling human trafficking
- i) Human resource development for overseas employment
- j) Labor Welfare
- k) Improving the general economic situation
- i) Improving gender equality/ women empowerment.

Discrimination

Q. In the past year, how often, if at all, have you personally been discriminated against based on any of the following:

- a) Your gender
- b) Your Religion
- c) Your ethnicity
- d) Your district/region
- e) Any disability you might have
- f) Political affiliation.

1. The more discrimination in their personal life, the less will be citizens' political participation.

2. The more discrimination in their personal life, the more will be citizens' political participation.

Corruption

Q1. What is your opinion about the following questions?

- a) How many politicians are involved in corruption?
- b) How many civil servants are involved in corruption?
- c) Others.

The more corruption in public agencies as perceived by the citizens, the less will be political participation.

Q2. In recent years, have you or has anyone from your family been hinted at or asked by public officials about paying bribes to do a job or get a business done?

- a) Never
-

-
- b) Seldom
 - c) Sometimes
 - d) Quite often
 - e) Very often
-

Socio-
Demographic
Variables

- 1 Gender
- 2 Age
- 3. Religion
- 4 Education
- 5 Occupation
- 6 Residence

1. Political participation will most likely be less among female respondents.

2. Middle-aged people will be more likely to engage in different political activities.

Or

Older people will be more likely to engage in different political activities.

3. Religious people will be less likely to participate in political activity

4. Higher educated people will be more likely to be active in different forms of political activities.

5.1. Employed people will be more likely to be active in politics than other groups.

5.2. officials in the private sector will be less likely to participate in political activities compared to other sectors.

6. Urban residents will be more likely to be active in various forms of political activities.

Appendix 2: Percent distribution of different indicators of Trust

	Note at all	Not very much confidence	Quite a lot of confidence	A great deal of confidence
Institutional Trust				
Parliament	3.0%	8.9%	34.5%	3.4%
Central Government	3.4%	9.4%	34.9%	46.3%
Civil Service	5.0%	14.6%	45.2%	32.7%
Political Parties	13.8%	26.3%	29.7%	23.5%
The Police	20.3%	31.2%	31.2%	16.2%
Valid N			2381	
Generalized Trust				
		Most people can be trusted		Need to be careful
People can be trusted or not?		7.7%		92.2%
Valid N			2736	

Note: All of the responses of Don't know (99) are removed from the analysis

Appendix 3: Percent distribution of different indicators of Performance

	Very bad	Bad	Not bad Not good	Good	Very good
Development of Service Sectors					
Public School	0.8%	3.0%	20.4%	49.6%	25.5%
Private school	0.3%	1.8%	21.0%	50.8%	24.1%
Public college	0.3%	1.9%	18.6%	50.7%	25.8%
Private college	0.3%	2.4%	22.7%	46.2%	22.7%
Public university	0.4%	1.1%	10.1%	44.3%	31.6%
Private university	0.3%	2.8%	16.2%	42.1%	24.8%
Public hospital	11.4%	19.5%	26.9%	26.8%	14.7%
Private hospital	1.2%	6.8%	22.9%	44.6%	23.0%
Social security	5.8%	8.4%	18.9%	40.6%	21.2%
Maintenance of law and order	4.3%	9.3%	34.3%	35.5%	15.2%
Electricity supply	0.8%	4.5%	18.2%	45.9%	30.1%
Energy supply	5.4%	6.9%	22.9%	34.6%	17.0%
Garbage removal	13.7%	12.8%	19.6%	21.9%	12.7%
Maintenance and construction of roads	10.3%	7.5%	19.3%	40.5%	18.6%
Maintenance of culverts/ bridges	9.6%	5.9%	18.9%	42.8%	16.8%
Sewage and local sanitation	10.8%	7.7%	22.7%	36.2%	14.9%
Public transport	9.7%	9.2%	20.6%	20.6%	17.2%
Banking service	3.8%	2.0%	13.8%	47.7%	26.4%
Internet and ICT	5.4%	3.9%	14.2%	38.7%	19.7%
Agricultural extension services	12.2%	6.4%	18.7%	33.4%	16.0%

Animal health care services	9.3%	7.2%	20.3%	32.5%	17.2%
Valid N	2418				
	Did not succeed at all	Did not quite succeed	Neither succeeded nor failed	Succeeded quite well	Succeeded very well
Perception of Government Success					
Reducing poverty	21.0%	50.9%	6.5%	15.0%	5.3%
Checking crime	8.7%	8.7%	9.6%	23.4%	23.4%
Ensuring peoples' safety and security	12.4%	12.4%	12.4%	18.6%	9.2%
Generating employment	5.0%	42.3%	12.9%	24.6%	13.0%
Checking pollution	6.4%	40.2%	13.0%	20.0%	14.1%
Checking corruption	5.3%	30.8%	11.7%	26.3%	23.4%
Controlling human trafficking	21.3%	46.1%	8.4%	13.5%	6.6%
Human resource development	8.1%	48.3%	11.7%	18.8%	5.3%
Improving the economic situation	20.7%	47.3%	10.0%	15.8%	2.7%
Valid N	2381				

Note: All of the responses of Don't know (99) are removed from the analysis

Appendix 4: Percent distribution Discrimination

	Never	Once/Twice	Sometimes	Many times
Discrimination based on gender	93.9%	2.7%	2.1%	1.2%
Discrimination based on religion	98.9%	0.5%	0.3%	0.3%
Discrimination based on ethnicity	99.1%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%
Discrimination based on region	93.9%	1.8%	1.4%	2.8%
Discrimination based on disability	96.3%	1.8%	0.9%	0.8%
Discrimination based on political affiliation	90.2%	2.1%	3.0%	2.4%
Valid N			2673	

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

Appendix 5: Percent distribution of Corruption

	None	Just a Few	Some	Quite many	Everyone
c) How many politicians are involved in corruption?	.6%	4.9%	34.0%	47.6%	8.8%
d) How many civil servants are involved in corruption?	1.2%	9.7%	38.5%	40.3%	5.3%
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very often
Personal or family experience of getting asked or hinted for a bribery	58.7%	16.9%	14.5%	5.5%	2.3%
Valid N	2589				

Note: All of the responses of Don't know - (99) are removed from the analysis

Appendix 6: Government Trust Survey Questionnaire 2020

Introduction to the enumerators

Questionnaire Serial Number: auto-generated by kobotoolbox

- i) Province:.....
- ii) District Code:.....
- iii) Rural Municipality/Municipality:.....
- iv) Ward number.....

PART A: SOCIO-ECONOMIC BACKGROUND OF THE RESPONDENT

1. Gender: 1. Male 2. Female 3. Other

2. Age (current):

3. Religion

- a) Hindu
- b) Muslim
- c) Buddhist
- d) Christian
- e) Other Religion

4. Education qualification:

- a) Illiterate
- b) Literate (those who can only sign without any formal education)
- c) Primary level (1-5 years)
- d) Lower secondary level (6-8)
- e) Secondary level (9-10)
- f) Higher secondary level (11-12)
- g) Graduate degree
- h) Master's degree or higher

5. Occupational Status:

- a) Working/employed
- b) Self-employed
- c) Unemployed
- d) Retired
- e) Student
- f) House wife/home maker

6. Main Occupational Sector

- a) Private firm
- b) Agriculture
- c) Public sector
- d) NGOs/Foundations/CBOs/Trade Unions/civil society
- e) Other (please specify).....

7. Independently of whether you attend religious services (such as religious ceremonies, festival, or going to Mandir/Pagoda/Mosque/Church) or not, would you say you are?

Not religious at all					Very religious					Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	99

PART C: CITIZENS' CONFIDENCE IN PUBLIC/SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS

8. I am going to name a number of organizations and institutions. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?

	Organizations/Institutions	None at all	Not very much Confidence	Quite a lot of confidence	A great deal of confidence	Don't know
a.	Parliament	1	2	3	4	99
b.	Central Government	1	2	3	4	99
c.	Civil Service	1	2	3	4	99
d.	Political Parties	1	2	3	4	99
e.	The Police	1	2	3	4	99

9. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?

- 1. Most people can be trusted
- 2. Need to be careful in dealing with people
- 99. Don't know

10. How would you describe the development of the following services over the last five years?

	Services	Very bad	Bad	Not bad not good	Good	Very good	Don't know
a.	Public School	1	2	3	4	5	99
b.	Private school	1	2	3	4	5	99
c.	Public college	1	2	3	4	5	99
d.	Private college	1	2	3	4	5	99
e.	Public university	1	2	3	4	5	99
f.	Private university	1	2	3	4	5	99
g.	Health care in public hospital	1	2	3	4	5	99
h.	Health care in private hospital	1	2	3	4	5	99
i.	Social security (health, insurance, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	99
j.	Maintenance of law and order	1	2	3	4	5	99
k.	Electricity supply	1	2	3	4	5	99
l.	Energy supply (gas, firewood, kerosene, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	99
m.	Garbage removal	1	2	3	4	5	99
n.	Maintenance and construction of roads	1	2	3	4	5	99
o.	Maintenance of culverts/ bridges	1	2	3	4	5	99
p.	Water supply	1	2	3	4	5	99
q.	Sewage and local sanitation	1	2	3	4	5	99
r.	Public transport	1	2	3	4	5	99
s.	Banking service	1	2	3	4	5	99
t.	Internet and ICT accessibility IT service	1	2	3	4	5	99
u.	Agricultural extension services (seeds, new technology, fertilizer, etc.)	1	2	3	4	5	99
v.	Animal health care services (Animal Husbandry)	1	2	3	4	5	99

11. How well the Bangladeshi government has succeeded in the following areas:

	Areas	Succeeded very well	Succeeded quite well	Neither succeeded nor failed	Did not quite succeed	Did not succeed at all	Don't know
a.	Reducing poverty	1	2	3	4	5	99
b.	Checking crime (e.g. drug control)	1	2	3	4	5	99
c.	Ensuring peoples' safety and security	1	2	3	4	5	99
d.	Generating employment	1	2	3	4	5	99
e.	Checking pollution and environmental hazard	1	2	3	4	5	99
f.	Checking corruption	1	2	3	4	5	99
g.	Controlling human trafficking	1	2	3	4	5	99
h.	Human resource development for overseas employment	1	2	3	4	5	99
i.	Improving the general economic situation	1	2	3	4	5	99

12. What is your opinion about the following questions?

	Questions	None	Just a few	Some	Quite many	Everyone	Don't know
a.	How many politicians are involved in corruption?	1	2	3	4	5	99
b.	How many civil servants are involved in corruption?	1	2	3	4	5	99

13. In recent years, have you or has anyone from your family been hinted or asked by public officials about paying bribe to do a job or get a business done?

Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Quite often	Very often	Don't know
1	2	3	4	5	99

14. Here is a list of actions that people sometimes take as citizens when they are dissatisfied with government performance. For each of these, please tell me whether you, personally, have done any of these things during the past year?

	Political actions	Never done	Once	More than once	Don't know
a.	Joined others (like political workers) in your community to request some actions from govt.	1	2	3	99
b.	Contacted the media (calling a radio/TV program or writing a letter to a newspaper, etc.	1	2	3	99
c.	Writing in Social media	1	2	3	99
d.	Contacted a government official to ask for help or make a complaint	1	2	3	99
e.	Refused to pay a tax/fee to govt.	1	2	3	99

15. In the past year, how often, if at all, have you personally been discriminated against based on any of the following:

	Discriminated on...	Never	Once/ Twice	Sometimes	Many times	Don't know
a.	Your gender	1	2	3	4	99
b.	Your religion	1	2	3	4	99
c.	Your ethnicity	1	2	3	4	99
d.	Your district/region	1	2	3	4	99
e.	Any disability you might have	1	2	3	4	99
f.	Political affiliation	1	2	3	4	99

Note: Questions are presented based on use