Impact of Misinformation and Satisfaction on Trust in Information from Social Media Platforms

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Abstract

The proliferation of social media platforms has revolutionized information dissemination and consumption, with platforms like Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube becoming primary sources of information globally. However, the credibility and trustworthiness of information on these platforms have become subjects of concern and debate. This study investigated the impact of misinformation perceptions and user satisfaction on trust in information provided by social media platforms among U.S. adults.

Using a subset of 1,258 participants from the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP) who provided complete responses, we examined whether support for restricting false information online and satisfaction with social media experiences influenced trust in social media information, controlling for demographic factors. The study addresses a critical gap in understanding how misinformation and user satisfaction interact to influence trust in social media information.

Multivariable linear regression analysis revealed that views on misinformation restriction ($p < .0001$), satisfaction with social media ($p < .0001$), and education level ($p = .045$) were significantly associated with trust in information from social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. Specifically, greater support for restricting misinformation and higher satisfaction with social media experiences were associated with increased trust in social media information.

Our findings highlight the complex interplay between perceptions of misinformation, user satisfaction, and trust in the digital information ecosystem. These results underscore the need for strategies to mitigate misinformation, enhance user satisfaction, and foster trust in shared information on social media platforms.

Keywords: Social Media Misinformation, Satisfaction, Trust in Information, Social Media

Introduction

The advent of social media platforms has totally changed the manner of disseminating information and how it is consumed (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Platforms such as Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), and YouTube have become primary sources of information for many individuals worldwide. However, the credibility and trustworthiness of the information disseminated through these platforms have been a subject of concern and debate (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017).

Research Gap and Problem Statement

While extensive research has been conducted on misinformation and user satisfaction separately, there is a critical gap in understanding how these factors interact to influence trust in social media information. This study addresses this gap by examining the combined impact of misinformation and user satisfaction on trust in social media platforms. The novel approach of considering both factors simultaneously provides a more comprehensive understanding of the complex dynamics at play in the digital information ecosystem.

This study aimed to explore the impact of misinformation and satisfaction on people's trust in the information provided on social media platforms. H_1: the potential presence of misinformation negatively impacts users' trust in the information provided on social media platforms. H_2: satisfaction of getting news on social media platforms is positively associated with

trust in the information provided on these platforms. By examining these relationships, this study seeks to contribute to the understanding of the factors influencing trust in information from social media platforms. These findings could have significant implications for the design of strategies to combat misinformation, enhance user satisfaction, and ultimately increase trust in the information shared through social media platforms.

Impact of Misinformation on Trust

Misinformation, defined as false or inaccurate information, especially when intended to deceive, is a growing concern in the digital information landscape (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017; Muhammed & Mathew, 2022; Murphy et al., 2023; Wang et al., 2019). Social media platforms have become fertile ground for the spread of misinformation, often leading to public confusion and mistrust (Lazer et al., 2018; Brashier & Fazio, 2020). Misinformation can have far-reaching effects, influencing people's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors and potentially leading to significant societal consequences (Lewandowsky et al., 2017; Vosoughi et al., 2018). Previous research has indicated that these factors can influence individuals' perceptions and behaviors related to information consumption on social media (Blank & Lutz, 2017). This study investigates the aspects that make one trust information from social media platforms. The results may hold several implications for strategy design to help mitigate misinformation, improve user satisfaction, and in general, build a trusted base of information that is availed through social media platforms. (Pennycook & Rand, 2020). The literature on misinformation, satisfaction, and trust in information from social media platforms is wide-ranging and covers several disciplines. A few studies have explored the concept of misinformation in this present digital age. Social media platforms have become places where misinformation flourishes easily, which at times engenders public confusion and mistrust (Allcott & Gentzkow, 2017). Similarly, exposure to

false news significantly reduces individuals' trust in the media (Pennycook & Rand, 2020). The mechanisms through which misinformation spreads and the factors that contribute to its proliferation are complex and multifaceted, warranting further exploration.

Role of Satisfaction

Satisfaction with social media platforms is a significant determinant of user engagement and continued use of a platform (Lin, 2007; Zhang & Leung, 2015; Alalwan et al., 2017; Kim et al., 2011; Lin & Lu, 2011). User satisfaction on social media platforms is influenced by various factors, including the accuracy of information (Kim & Dennis, 2019). Misinformation can significantly reduce user satisfaction, leading to decreased trust in the platform (Luo et al., 2022; Boneh et al., 2019). In the context of satisfaction, user satisfaction on social media platforms is influenced by various factors, including the accuracy of information (Kim & Dennis, 2019). Misinformation can significantly reduce user satisfaction, leading to decreased trust in the platform (Kim & Dennis, 2019). Satisfaction can also be a predictor of trust in social media platforms (Tandoc et al., 2018).

Trust in the information provided on social media platforms

Trust in information is a critical factor that influences the effectiveness of communication and the acceptance of the communicated message (Metzger et al., 2010; Fogg et al., 2003; Kelton et al., 2008). Users often must rely on the credibility of the source or the content itself due to the lack of traditional gatekeeping mechanisms (Wiedmann & von Mettenheim, 2020; Prike et al., 2024; Lucassen & Schraagen, 2013; Flanagin & Metzger, 2007). Factors such as the credibility of the source, the quality of the content, and endorsement by others can influence trust in the information provided on social media platforms (Metzger et al., 2010; Prike et al., 2024; Lucassen & Schraagen, 2013; Flanagin & Metzger, 2007). Exposure to false news significantly

reduces individuals' trust in the media, highlighting the negative impact of misinformation on trust (van Duyn & Collier, 2019; Ognyanova et al., 2020; Pennycook & Rand, 2018; Tsfati & Cappella, 2003).

Demographic Factors on Trust

The selection of demographic covariates such as sex, education level, race, ethnicity, and marital status in our study examining trust in social media information is grounded in both theoretical considerations and empirical evidence from previous research. Guess found that individuals with higher education levels are more likely to critically evaluate information, leading to lower trust in misinformation (Guess et al., 2020). These finding aligns with our study, suggesting that education level is a significant factor in determining trust in information from social media platforms. Gender differences have been observed in social media use patterns and trust in online information, women tend to have higher levels of trust in social media news compared to men (Hopp et al., 2020). Cultural backgrounds and experiences, represented by race and ethnicity, can shape perceptions of media credibility and trust. Racial and ethnic minorities often have different levels of trust in social media information compared to majority groups (Chen & Li, 2017). While less commonly studied, marital status can influence social networks and information-sharing behaviors, potentially affecting exposure to and trust in social media information (Obi & Ezennwanne, 2023). By including these demographic covariates, we aim to control for potential confounding factors and isolate the effects of misinformation and satisfaction on trust in social media information. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of the relationships between variables and enhances the generalizability of our findings across diverse populations.

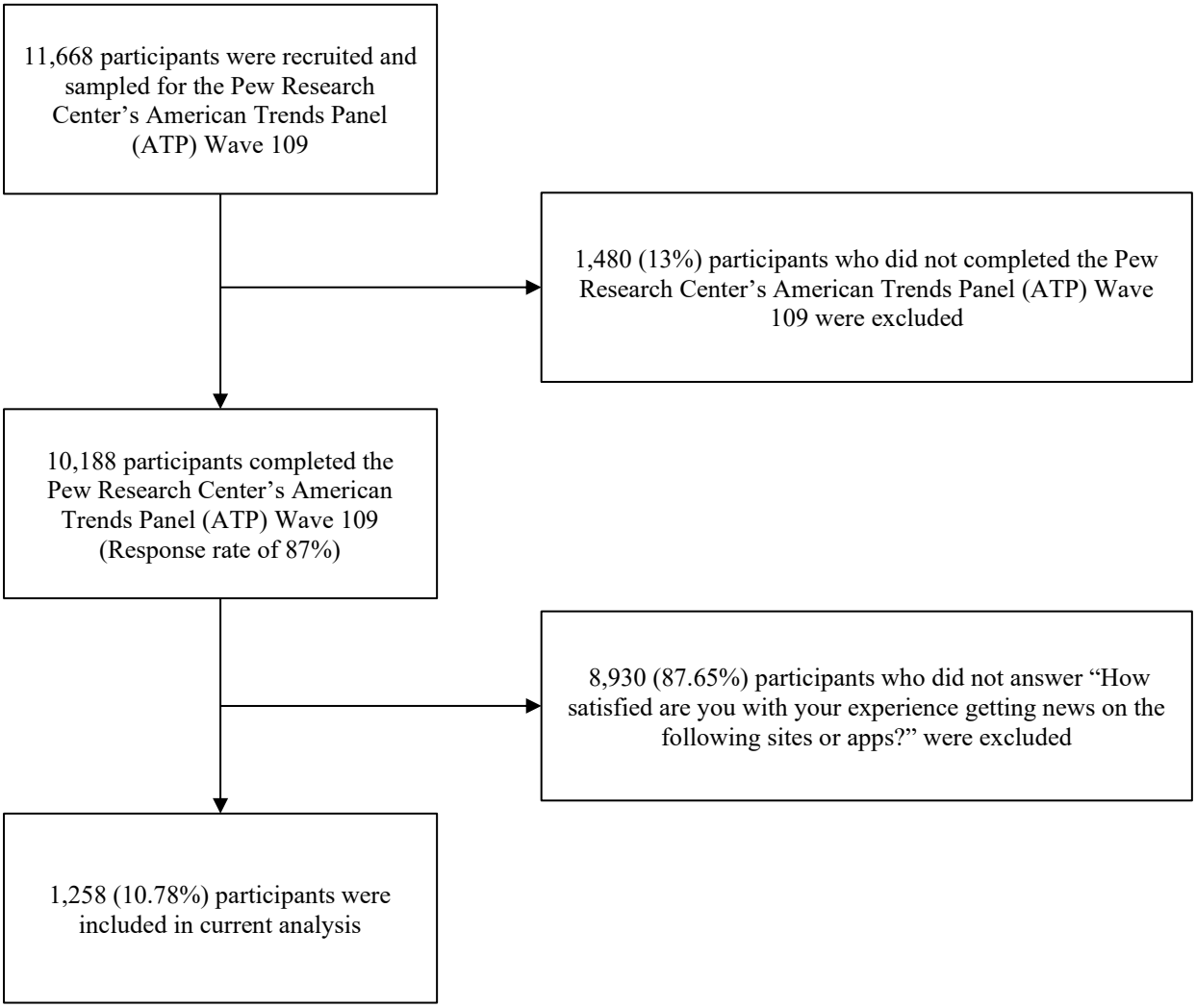
Materials and Methods

Data sources

The Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP) is a nationally representative online survey panel. The panel is composed of more than 10,000 adults selected at random from across the entire U.S. The American Trends Panel Wave 109 dataset was utilized for this study, and the panel topic was related to new digital platforms and gender identity (Pew Research Center, 2022). Figure 1 explains data selection process.

Figure 1

Study Participants selection process



Participants and Procedures

The Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel Wave 109 dataset was selected for this study due to its national representativeness, diverse demographic coverage of the U.S. population, and its focus on new digital platforms and gender identity. The overall target population for this survey was noninstitutionalized persons aged 18 and older, living in the U.S., including Alaska and Hawaii. All active panel members were invited to participate in this wave. This particular wave, conducted in May 2022, provided timely and relevant data on social media usage, attitudes towards misinformation, and trust in online information sources, aligning closely with the research objectives of this study. A total of 10,188 panelists responded out of 11,668 who were sampled, for a response rate of 87%. For this study, the analysis focused on 1,258 participants who provided complete responses to all questionnaires related to the main variables. This subset was selected from the larger sample to ensure a complete dataset for all variables of interest in the analysis.

Measures

Dependent Variables

Trust in the information provided on social media platforms

In the measurement of trust in the information provided on social media platforms, participants are asked “How much do you trust the information you get from social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube?” Participants are asked to rate their level of trust in the information on a five-point scale: "1 - A great deal", “2 - A fair amount”, “3 - Some”, “4 - A little”, and " 5 - No trust at all”. The 5-point Likert scale was chosen to measure trust in information from social media platforms as it provides a balanced range of options, allowing participants to express varying degrees of trust from 'no trust at all' to 'a great deal of trust'.

Independent Variables

Satisfaction with social media information

To measure satisfaction with social media information, participants were asked about their experiences getting news on specific platforms: 'How satisfied are you with your experience getting news on Twitter?', 'How satisfied are you with your experience getting news on Facebook?', and 'How satisfied are you with your experience getting news on YouTube?'. These platform-specific questions allow for a more detailed understanding of user experiences across different social media sites, reflecting the varied nature of information dissemination on these platforms.

Views on Misinformation Restriction

Participants were asked to choose between two statements that best aligned with their view on misinformation management: '1 – Technology companies should take steps to restrict FALSE information online, even if it limits people from freely publishing or accessing information', or '2 – People's freedom to publish and access information should be protected, even if it means FALSE information can also be published'. While this binary choice may simplify a complex issue, it effectively captures the fundamental tension between information restriction and freedom of information in the context of misinformation management. In subsequent analyses and discussions, this variable will be referred to as 'Views on Misinformation Restriction' to accurately reflect its focus on attitudes towards restrictive actions against misinformation.

Demographic variables

Participants reported on their age (18-29, 30-49, 50-64, 65+), sex (male, female, in some other way), race/ethnicity (White, American Indian or Native Alaskan, Asian or Asian American, Hispanic or Latino/a/x, other), education level (college graduate, some college, H.S graduate or

less), and marital status (married, living with a partner, divorced, separated, widowed, never been married).

Statistical Analysis

SAS statistical software (version 9.4; SAS Institute Inc., Cary, NC, USA) was used for all analyses related to the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (ATP) dataset. Initially, the characteristics of the final dataset sample were assessed and are presented as weighted frequencies (percentages) or means (standard deviations). Subsequently, chi-square tests were conducted to examine the relationships between the study variables. Additionally, the associations between trust in information from social media platform and views on misinformation, and satisfaction with information on social media were explored using multivariable linear regression analysis. All the statistical tests were two-sided, with a p-value of 0.05 set as the threshold for statistical significance.

The selection of control variables (age, gender, education level, race/ethnicity, and marital status) was based on their potential influence on trust in social media information, as suggested by previous research (Chou et al., 2009; Pew Research Center, 2021; Abdelzaher et al., 2022; Osborne & Waters, 2002). Prior to regression analysis, model assumptions were rigorously checked. Linearity was verified using scatterplots to ensure a linear relationship between the dependent variable and independent variables (Durbin & Watson, 1950). The Durbin-Watson test was performed to check for autocorrelation in the residuals, confirming independence (Hair et al., 2010). Homoscedasticity was assessed through examination of residual plots to ensure constant variance of residuals, residual plots showed no clear pattern, indicating homoscedasticity. Normality was evaluated using Q-Q plots of residuals, Q-Q plots showed no substantial deviations from normality (O'Brien, 2007). Multicollinearity was checked

by calculating Variance Inflation Factors (VIFs) for all predictors (Ecker et al., 2022). Effect sizes were calculated using Cohen's d for continuous variables and odds ratios for categorical variables to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships between variables.

Figure 2

Distribution of residual for Sleep Difficulties

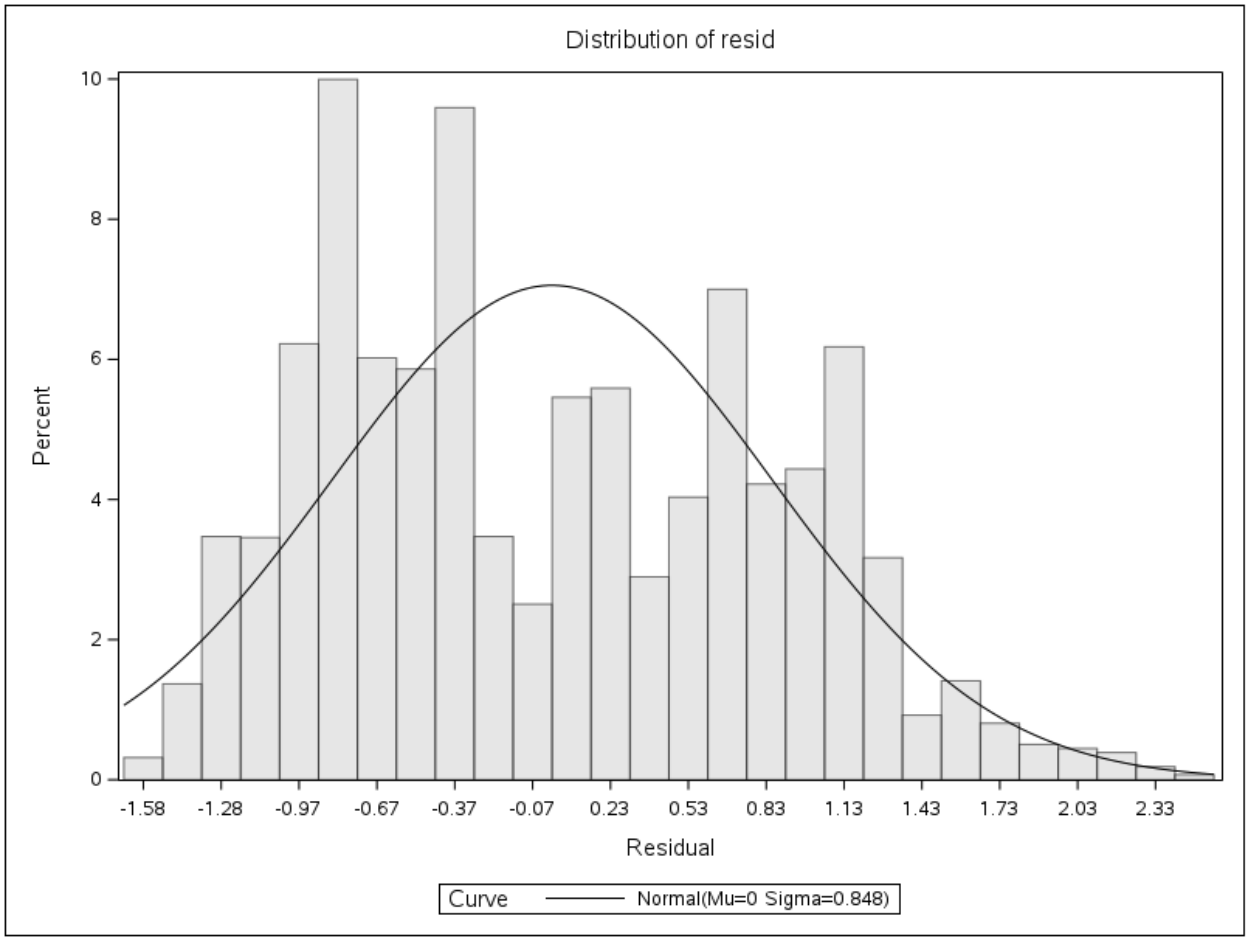
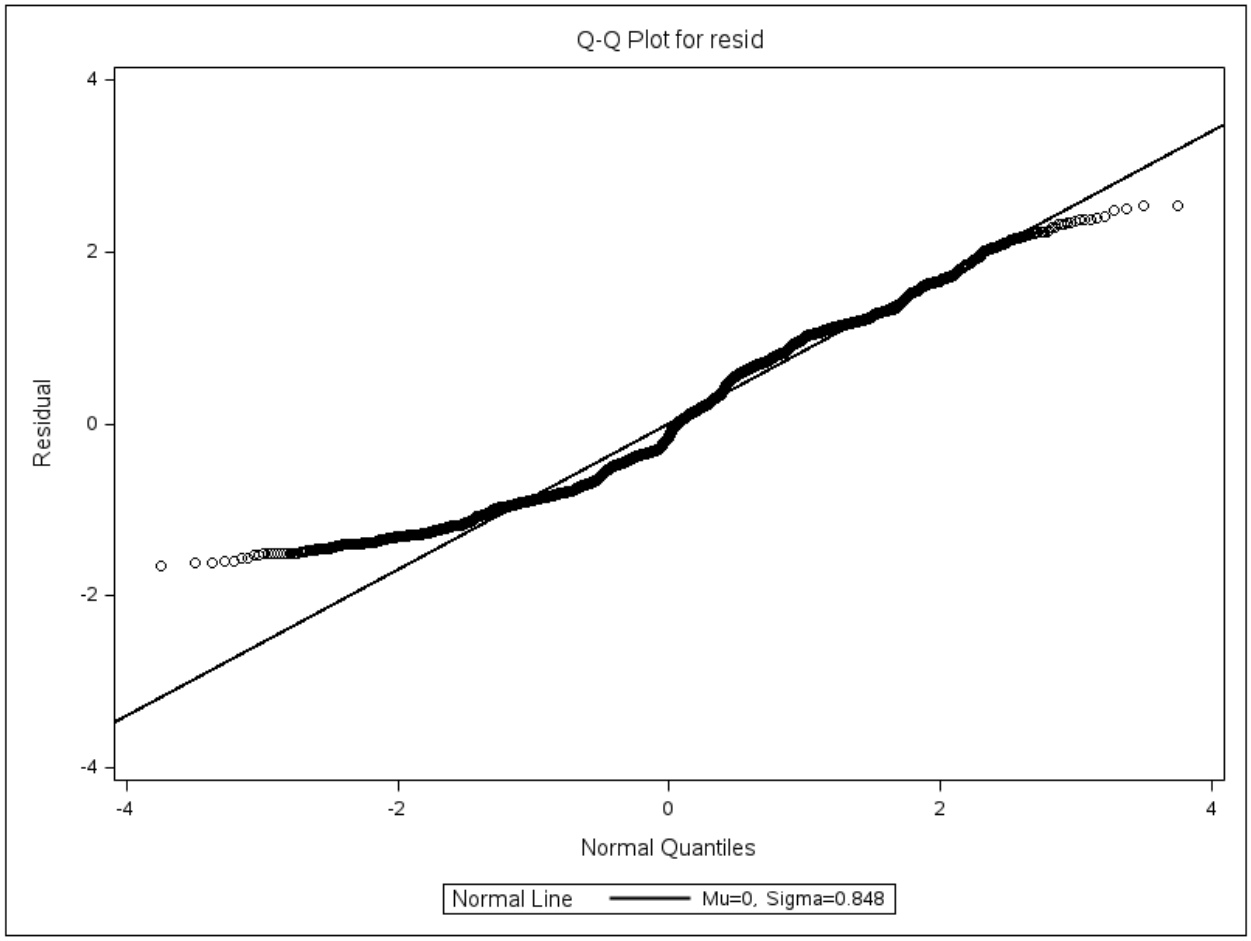


Figure 3.

Q-Q Plot for residual



3. Results

Descriptive statistics

Table 1 describes the demographic characteristics of the nationally representative U.S. adults included in this analytic cohort by dependent variables. 20.51% of participants were aged between 18 and 29 years, 43.56% were between 30 and 49 years, 25.60% were aged between 50 and 64 years, and 9.86% were 65 years and older. 51.99% of the participants were male, 46.74% were female. Regarding race/ethnicity, 58.59% of participants were White, 7.55% were American Indian or Native Alaskan, 24.17% were Asian or Asian American, 2.94% were Black

or African American, 5.96% were Hispanic or Latino/a/x. 61.84% of the participants were college graduates, 51.83% of participants were married, 11.37% were living with a partner, 7.63% were divorced, 2.15% were separated, 2.31% were widowed, 24.56% had never been married. The chi-square test indicated significant differences in all variables ($p < .0001$).

Table 1.

Demographics Descriptive Statistics of Participants in the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (N=1,258)

Variable	**Study Population**		***p***
	N	**%**	
Age (year)			<.0001
18-29	258	20.51	
30-49	548	43.56	
50-64	322	25.60	
65+	124	9.86	
Refused	6	0.48	
Sex			
Male	654	51.99	
Female	588	46.74	
In some other way	13	1.03	
Refused	3	0.24	
Race/Ethnicity			<.0001

White	925	73.53	
American Indian or Native Alaskan	103	8.19	
Asian or Asian American	77	6.12	
Black or African American	55	4.37	
Hispanic or Latino/a/x	78	6.20	
Other	20	1.59	
Education Level			<.0001
College graduate	778	61.84	
Some College	314	24.96	
H.S. graduate or less	163	12.96	
Refused	3	0.24	
Marital Status			<.0001
Married	652	51.83	
Living with a partner	143	11.37	
Divorced	96	7.63	
Separated	27	2.15	
Widowed	29	2.31	
Never been married	309	24.56	
Refused	2	0.16	
Total	1,258		

Statistics of the main variables for participants in the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel

In table 2, U.S. residents' the trust in information from social media sites is notably low. Only 1.43% of the respondents trusted the information a great deal, 9.14% trusted it a fair amount, 37.04% trusted it some, 36.09% trusted it a little, and a significant 15.90% had no trust at all. This distribution indicates a general skepticism toward social media information. Regarding views on misinformation, 63.59% of participants believe that technology companies should take steps to restrict false information online, even if this limits people's freedom to publish or access information. In contrast, 35.61% thought people's freedom to publish and access information should be protected, even if it means false information could also be published. Satisfaction with social media in terms of getting news shows varied levels, with 8.19% of respondents being very satisfied, 36.41% being somewhat satisfied, 38.55% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 12.16% being somewhat dissatisfied, and 4.53% being very dissatisfied. The chi-square test indicated significant differences in all variables ($p < .0001$). These results highlight a pervasive lack of trust and satisfaction with social media as a source of news, alongside divided opinions on how to handle misinformation.

Table 2

Statistics of Main Variables from Participants in the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel (N=1,258)

Variable	Study Population		***p***
	N	**%**	

How much do you trust the information you get from social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube?			<.0001
A great deal	18	1.43	
A fair amount	115	9.14	
Some	466	37.04	
A little	454	36.09	
No trust at all	200	15.90	
Refused	5	0.40	
Misinformation (Which comes closer to your own view - even if neither is exactly right?)			<.0001
Technology companies should take steps to restrict FALSE information online, even if it limits people from freely publishing or accessing information	800	63.59	
People's freedom to publish and access information should be protected, even if it means FALSE information can also be published	448	35.61	
Refused	10	0.79	
Satisfaction on Social Media			<.0001

(How satisfied are you with your experience getting news on the following sites or apps?)*		
Very satisfied	103	8.19
Somewhat satisfied	458	36.41
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	485	38.55
Somewhat dissatisfied	153	12.16
Very dissatisfied	57	4.53
Refused	2	0.16
Total	1,258	

Note. [a]Missing values: 8,930; For Views on Misinformation Restriction, a positive estimate indicates that support for restricting false information is associated with higher trust in social media information

Multivariable Linear Regression Analysis of Misinformation and Satisfaction on Trust in Information from Social Media Platforms for U.S. populations.

The detailed results of this regression analysis are presented in Table 3, which shows the estimates, standard errors, confidence intervals, and p-values for each variable in the model. The regression model included variables such as sex, education level, race, ethnicity, and marital status as control factors. The estimate for misinformation is 0.362 (SE = 0.141; 95% CI: .083-.640), which is statistically significant ($p < .0001$). This result suggests that increased

concerns about misinformation are significantly associated with decreased trust in information from social media platforms.

Similarly, the estimate for satisfaction with social media was 0.367 (SE = 0.071; 95% CI: .226-.509), this difference was also statistically significant ($p < .0001$). This indicates that higher satisfaction with social media experiences is significantly associated with greater trust in the information provided on these platforms. The control variable was sex, with an estimate of 0.146 ($p = 0.276$; SE = 0.133; 95% CI: -.117-.408) indicating that sex had no significant impact on trust. Education level had a statistically significant effect, with an estimate of 0.034 ($p = 0.045$; SE = 0.069; 95% CI: .004-.345). Race, ethnicity, and marital status did not show significant effect.

Table 3

Multivariable Linear Regression Analysis of Factors Influencing Trust in Social Media Information (n=1,258)

Effect	Estimate	SE[a]	95% CI[b]		*p*
			LL[c]	UL[d]	
Fixed Effect					
Intercept	0.381	.474	-.554	1.317	.422
Views on Misinformation Restriction	0.362	.141	.083	.640	<.0001**
Satisfaction on Social Media	0.367	.071	.226	.509	<.0001**
Gender	0.146	.133	-0.117	.408	.276
Education Level	0.034	.069	.004	.345	.045*
Race	-.004	.065	-.132	.124	.953
Ethnicity	.034	.069	-.102	.170	.625
Marital Status	-.012	.033	-.078	.053	.703

Note. [a]SE = standard error; [b]CI = confidence interval; [c]LL = lower limit; [d]UL = upper limit *p <.05 **p <.0001

Discussion

This study investigated the impact of misinformation and user satisfaction on trust in information provided by social media platforms among U.S. adults, utilizing data from the American Trends Panel of the Pew Research Center. The findings indicate significant associations between concerns about misinformation, satisfaction with social media experiences, and trust in social media information.

One of the key findings is the significant negative association between concerns about misinformation and trust in social media information ($p < .0001$). This suggests that as individuals become more aware of or concerned about the presence of false information online, their trust in the information disseminated through social media platforms diminishes (Warner-Søderholm et al., 2018; Li & Chang, 2022). This finding is consistent with prior research indicating that exposure to misinformation can erode trust in digital information sources (Pennycook & Rand, 2020; Ognyanova et al., 2020; Aïmeur et al., 2023). The pervasive nature of misinformation can create a general sense of skepticism, leading users to question the credibility of the information they encounter online, even if it comes from reputable sources (Tsfati & Cappella., 2003; Warner- Søderholm et al., 2018; Aslett, 2024). The significant relationship between views on misinformation restriction and trust in social media information ($p < .0001$) suggests that individuals who support restricting false information online tend to have higher trust in social media platforms. This finding aligns with the "trust in platform governance" theory, which posits that users who believe platforms are actively combating misinformation are more likely to trust the information they encounter (Adeeb & Mirhoseini, 2023).

Several mechanisms may explain this relationship. Firstly, users who support misinformation restriction may perceive platforms as more responsible and credible, leading to increased trust. This aligns with research showing that perceived platform credibility is a key

factor in user trust (Cabero-Almenara et al., 2023). Secondly, the desire for misinformation restriction may reflect a user's critical thinking skills and media literacy, which are associated with better ability to discern credible information, potentially leading to more informed trust decisions (Bhatti et al., 2019). Moreover, the emotional impact of misinformation may play a role. Research has shown that misinformation often elicits strong emotional responses, particularly negative ones (Cabero-Almenara et al., 2023). Users who support restrictions may feel more protected from these negative emotional experiences, fostering a more positive and trusting attitude towards the platform.

The positive relationship between satisfaction with social media experiences and trust in social media information ($p < .0001$) highlights the role of user experience in shaping trust. Higher levels of satisfaction with how news and information are presented on social media platforms contribute to greater trust in the information provided (Zhang & Tang, 2023; Kim & Lee., 2019; Alhabash & Ma, 2017; Zhang & Leung, 2015). These findings align with studies that emphasize the importance of user experience and platform design in fostering trust (Troshani et al., 2020; Jha & Verma, 2024a). When users find social media platforms reliable and user friendly, they are more likely to trust the content they consume (Jha & Verma, 2024b). The positive association between satisfaction with social media information and trust corroborates the "user experience satisfaction" model, suggesting that positive experiences with a platform's content and features lead to increased trust in the platform overall (Pew Research Center, 2022).

Education level also emerged as a significant factor, albeit to a lesser extent ($p = .045$). Higher education levels were associated with increased trust in social media information. This may be attributed to better information literacy skills, which enable individuals to critically evaluate the credibility of online content (Guess et al., 2020; Trixa & Kaspar, 2024). Educated

individuals may possess the necessary skills to discern accurate information from falsehoods, thereby enhancing their overall trust in social media information (Yevelson-Shorsher & Bronstein, 2018). While education level showed a statistically significant effect on trust in social media information, the relatively small effect size warrants further discussion.

Interestingly, demographic variables such as gender, race, ethnicity, and marital status did not significantly impact trust in social media information. This finding indicates that while these factors may influence other aspects of social media use, they do not play a pivotal role in determining trust in the information provided on these platforms. This finding is important because it suggests that interventions aimed at enhancing trust in social media information should focus more on addressing misinformation and improving user satisfaction rather than targeting demographic-specific strategies.

The significant relationship between views on misinformation restriction and trust in social media information ($p < .0001$) suggests that individuals who support restricting false information online tend to have higher trust in social media platforms. This finding aligns with the "trust in platform governance" theory, which posits that users who believe platforms are actively combating misinformation are more likely to trust the information they encounter. The positive association between satisfaction with social media information and trust corroborates the "user experience satisfaction" model, suggesting that positive experiences with a platform's content and features lead to increased trust in the platform overall.

Limitations

This study has several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. Firstly, the cross-sectional nature of the data limits our ability to establish causal relationships

between misinformation, satisfaction, and trust in social media information. While our findings suggest significant associations, longitudinal studies are needed to explore the temporal dynamics of these relationships and to determine causality. Secondly, although we utilized a nationally representative sample from the Pew Research Center's American Trends Panel, our analysis focused on a subset of 1,258 participants who provided complete responses to all variables of interest. This relatively small subsample may limit the generalizability of our findings to the broader U.S. population. Future studies should aim to replicate these results with larger samples to enhance external validity. The self-reported nature of the data introduces the potential for response biases, including social desirability bias and recall bias. Participants may have reported their trust levels, views on misinformation, and satisfaction with social media in ways they perceived as more socially acceptable or may have inaccurately recalled their experiences. Additionally, the binary measure used to assess views on misinformation restriction may oversimplify a complex issue. A more nuanced scale could capture the multifaceted nature of attitudes towards misinformation and information freedom. Furthermore, while we controlled for several demographic factors, other potential confounders such as political ideology and income were not included due to dataset limitations. Lastly, the study's focus on specific social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) may not capture the full spectrum of social media experiences. As the social media landscape continues to evolve, future research should consider emerging platforms and their unique characteristics that may influence trust and misinformation dynamics. Despite these limitations, this study provides valuable insights into the relationships between misinformation, satisfaction, and trust in social media information. By acknowledging these limitations, we hope to encourage further research that addresses these gaps

and contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of trust in the digital information environment.

Conclusions

The findings have several practical implications. First, they suggest the necessity for social media platforms to implement strategies aimed at mitigating the spread of misinformation. Enhanced fact-checking mechanisms, user education campaigns, and transparent content moderation policies could help rebuild trust. Second, improving the overall user experience on social media platforms can enhance user satisfaction, which, in turn, can positively influence trust in the information provided. This might include improving the accuracy of the information displayed, enhancing user interface design, and providing users with more control over the content they see. Future research should further explore the mechanisms through which misinformation impacts trust and how different types of misinformation (e.g., health-related vs. political misinformation) might have varying effects. Additionally, investigating the role of other demographic factors, such as socioeconomic status and digital literacy, could provide a more comprehensive understanding of trust dynamics in the digital age. Besides, potential future studies should explore the mediating role of digital literacy skills in the relationship between education and trust in social media information, as well as investigate specific aspects of user satisfaction and their individual contributions to trust formation. Based on our findings, we propose several concrete strategies for social media platforms and policymakers to enhance trust and reduce misinformation: 1. Transparent Governance: Platforms should implement and clearly communicate their misinformation policies. This could include regular updates on content moderation efforts, providing clear rationales for content removal, and involving users in the

policy-making process through public consultations. 2. User Empowerment Tools: Develop and prominently feature fact-checking tools and information literacy resources within the platform interface. This could include pop-up prompts encouraging users to verify information before sharing or integrating third-party fact-checking services directly into the user experience. 3. Personalized Trust Indicators: Implement machine learning algorithms to provide personalized trust indicators for content, based on individual users' interaction history, fact-checking behavior, and stated preferences for information sources. 4. Collaborative Filtering Systems: Develop systems that allow users to collaboratively rate and filter content for credibility, leveraging the collective intelligence of the user base to identify and flag potential misinformation. 5. Incentivize Accurate Information: Create reward systems for users and content creators who consistently share accurate, well-sourced information. This could include increased visibility for trusted sources or badges of credibility for reliable users. 6. Cross-Platform Verification: Collaborate with other social media platforms to create a shared database of verified information and known misinformation, allowing for faster and more consistent fact-checking across the digital ecosystem. 7. Targeted Digital Literacy Programs: Partner with educational institutions to develop and implement digital literacy programs tailored to different age groups and education levels, addressing the specific skills gaps identified in our research. 8. Adaptive Content Presentation: Utilize AI to adapt the presentation of potentially controversial or misleading content based on individual users' digital literacy levels and fact-checking behaviors, providing additional context or verification prompts as needed. 9. Regulatory Frameworks: Policymakers should consider developing regulatory frameworks that require platforms to meet certain transparency and accountability standards in their efforts to combat misinformation, while balancing concerns about free speech and censorship. 10. Public-Private Partnerships: Establish

collaborations between social media platforms, academic institutions, and government agencies to conduct ongoing research on misinformation dynamics and develop evidence-based interventions. By implementing these strategies, social media platforms and policymakers can work towards creating a more trustworthy digital information environment, leveraging the insights gained from this study to address the complex interplay between misinformation, user satisfaction, and trust in social media information.

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