

Digital Media Framing Strategies in the National Council for Women's Facebook Discourse During the 2025 Senate Elections: An Analytical Study in Light of Framing Theory and Its Implications for Building Women's Political Awareness

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the digital media framing strategies employed by the National Council for Women's (NCW) official Facebook page during the Egyptian Senate elections in August 2025, and to explore their potential implications for constructing Egyptian women's political awareness in light of media framing theory.

The study adopted a case study approach utilizing both quantitative and qualitative framing content analysis. A validated coding instrument was developed encompassing five main categories: thematic focus, message type, dominant media frame, frame-building devices, and audience engagement indicators. The units of analysis comprised 17 posts, representing an exhaustive census of all election-related publications during the designated period. Inter-coder reliability was calculated at 0.89 using Holsti's formula.

The findings revealed that the "national responsibility" frame was the most dominant, followed by the "symbolic empowerment" frame, with a clear predominance of motivational messages characterized by a mobilizational tone. Qualitative analysis uncovered a marked prevalence of affective and celebratory discourse, contrasted with limited cognitive-informational content pertaining to the nature and competencies of the Senate. Furthermore, audience engagement indicators exhibited notably higher levels for artistic and affective content compared to procedural and institutional content.

The study concludes that the framing structure of the NCW's digital electoral discourse was characterized by a symbolic-mobilizational orientation focused on rallying participation, rather than on deepening cognitive political education. This

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raises—in light of the theoretical literature—questions regarding the nature of the political awareness that such a framing pattern may contribute to shaping.

Keywords: Digital Media Framing, Political Participation, Political Awareness, Women’s Empowerment, Digital Government Communication, Social Media, Senate Elections.

Introduction

Political communication has undergone a profound structural transformation over the past decade, driven by the rise of digital platforms and their evolution from social communication tools into central spaces for managing public discourse and reshaping political perception. Chadwick (2013) described this transformation through the concept of the “hybrid media system,” in which traditional and digital media converge, and communicative power relations between institutions and the public are reconfigured. Within this context, official institutions no longer rely exclusively on traditional media channels; rather, they have turned to digital platforms as strategic instruments for mobilization, awareness-raising, and the construction of political meaning.

Within the framework of the political and institutional transformations Egypt has witnessed since the promulgation of the 2014 Constitution, the issue of women’s political empowerment has emerged as a central axis of constitutional and legislative reform, with the Constitution explicitly guaranteeing adequate representation of women in parliamentary bodies. This has been reflected in rising rates of women’s representation in recent parliamentary sessions and in the escalation of official discourse around partnership and empowerment, replacing the earlier rhetoric of guardianship and protection (Saad, 2022). The National Council for Women (NCW) is considered one of the most prominent official institutions concerned with this portfolio, having expanded its communicative role to include the management of awareness and motivational campaigns through its digital platforms, most notably its official Facebook page.

As electoral events approach, the significance of digital discourse directed at women intensifies, given that electoral participation serves as an indicator of the level of political integration and civic awareness. However, the effectiveness of this discourse does not depend solely on the volume of publication; rather, it is fundamentally linked to the nature of the media frames employed in presenting issues, crafting messages, and defining women’s position within the political process. The frame through which the electoral issue is presented may enhance an empowering perception of women as cognitively influential political actors, or it may reduce their role to procedural participation without deepening critical political awareness (Entman, 1993; De Vreese, 2012).

Proceeding from this premise, this study seeks to analyze the digital media framing strategies employed by the NCW through its official Facebook page during

the Egyptian Senate elections in August 2025, with the aim of uncovering the nature of the dominant frames, analyzing message patterns and their construction devices, and exploring the potential implications of this framing structure for building women's political awareness, in light of contemporary approaches to media framing theory in the digital environment.

Statement of the Problem

The NCW's Facebook page assumes a pivotal communicative role during electoral events, functioning as an official channel aimed at supporting women's participation and enhancing their political presence—whether as voters, candidates, or active agents in the public sphere. This page acquires heightened significance in the context of the 2025 Senate elections, given what the literature indicates regarding low levels of public knowledge about the nature and competencies of the Senate compared to the House of Representatives (Youssef, 2022), which amplifies the need for an explanatory awareness-raising discourse that transcends procedural mobilization.

However, mere institutional presence on a digital platform does not automatically signify the achievement of communicative effectiveness in building political awareness. The nature of the published discourse, the angle from which issues are presented, the language employed, the visual elements selected, and coverage priorities—all constitute what is known as media framing strategies, which influence how audiences perceive and interpret political issues (Scheufele, 1999). Contemporary literature affirms that the manner in which political messages are crafted is no less important than their actual content (Chong & Druckman, 2007).

Despite the existence of Arabic-language studies that have examined the NCW's discourse on social media (Mohamed, 2021; Abdel Aziz, 2023), these did not address framing strategies during a specific electoral event, nor did they systematically link the framing structure of the discourse to the implications for building political awareness. Hence, the problem of the present study emerges, crystallized in the following principal research question:

What is the nature of the media framing strategies employed on the NCW's Facebook page during the 2025 Senate elections, and what are their potential implications—in light of framing theory—for building the political awareness of Egyptian women?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the present study derives from its engagement with an issue at the intersection of digital media, political participation, and women's empowerment within a specific electoral context. This significance can be elucidated across three levels:

At the scholarly level, the study contributes to expanding applications of media framing theory within the context of Arab social media platforms, through analysis of institutional digital discourse during an electoral period—a domain that contin-

ues to suffer from a scarcity of specialized analytical studies in the Arab research environment. The study also bridges two research fields that rarely intersect in Arabic-language literature: political media studies on one hand, and gender studies on the other. Unlike numerous studies that focus on the discourse of political parties or candidates, this study concentrates on the discourse of an official national institution directed at women as an electoral audience—an analytical angle that enriches the field of electoral studies. Moreover, the study does not confine itself to a descriptive analysis of media frames but links them—through the theoretical framework—to the concept of political awareness-building in its cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, thereby enhancing analytical depth.

At the applied and societal level, the study's findings assist in evaluating the extent to which published digital discourse can transcend the procedural character of participation toward building deeper political awareness. They may also contribute to offering practical recommendations for developing the communicative strategies of official institutions concerned with women's empowerment. Additionally, the findings permit an assessment of the consistency between institutional discourse and the objectives of genuine political empowerment for women, and the extent of its focus on their role as independent political agents rather than merely symbolic participants.

At the methodological level, the study presents a systematic analytical-framing model that integrates quantitative and qualitative analysis, applicable to other pages and institutions across different electoral contexts. It also provides a classificatory framework for framing categories used in election-related discourse directed at women, contributing to the construction of replicable and comparable research instruments.

Literature Review

Through analysis of the literature relevant to the research topic, it was possible to classify it into four principal thematic axes, followed by an identification of contributions and the research gap.

Axis One: Digital Media and Political Participation

Boulianne's (2020) study focused on analyzing the relationship between social media use and political participation through a meta-analysis of twenty years of research in this field. It found a positive relationship between use and participation; however, the effect size varied according to the nature of the political content and its degree of motivation. The researcher confirmed in an earlier study (Boulianne, 2015) that repeated exposure to political content via platforms is associated with elevated political perception, provided that the discourse is characterized by depth rather than mere proliferation.

Papacharissi (2015) examined the formation of political publics in the digital environment, introducing the concept of "Affective Publics," which illustrates how

affective discourse on platforms contributes to building new forms of interactive political awareness, where individuals engage with political messages and re-circulate them based on their emotional responses. Highfield (2016) further demonstrated that social media platforms have become central spaces for the reproduction of political discourse and everyday mobilization, yet they do not necessarily lead to deep political participation unless accompanied by a clear empowering discourse and sufficient cognitive content.

It is noteworthy that this axis is predominantly quantitative and aggregative in character, focusing on measuring the relationship between exposure and participation without delving into analysis of the discursive strategies employed by official institutions themselves—which is what the present study seeks to address by transitioning from measuring the relationship to analyzing the framing structure itself.

Axis Two: Media Framing in the Digital Environment

De Vreese (2012) presented an analytical review of the evolution of framing research, emphasizing its transition from analysis of traditional news texts to analysis of shifting digital environments, and that electoral framing is used as a strategic tool for directing political perception. This perspective intersected with the study by Meraz and Papacharissi (2013), which introduced the concept of “Networked Framing,” explaining that frames in the digital environment are shaped through mutual interaction between institutions and the public, rather than unidirectionally, and that comments and re-sharing reshape the original frame. Guo and Vargo (2020) also examined the dynamics of framing across different media in the digital space, confirming that frames transfer and transform through networked interaction.

Despite the evolution of the concept of digital framing in this literature, most studies focused on political or media actors without devoting sufficient attention to official feminist institutions or analyzing their discourse during specific electoral periods, particularly in the Arab context.

Axis Three: Gender Framing and Women’s Political Representation

Ross and Bürger (2021) analyzed the representation of women in electoral campaigns on social media, demonstrating that the discourse tends to present women within symbolic empowerment frames that highlight their positive image without sufficient focus on their political competence and platforms. Van der Pas and Aaldering (2020) found, in their meta-analysis, that gendered differences in political media coverage persist, although they have become more implicit in the digital environment compared to traditional media. Kittilson and Fridkin (2008) established that media framing of women directly affects voters’ assessment of their political competence, particularly when the focus is on personal and symbolic attributes rather than capability and competence.

Notably, the majority of studies in this axis focused on the representation of female candidates in media discourse, while less attention has been paid to analyzing

the discourse of institutions directed at women as a targeted electoral audience—a gap that directly intersects with the subject of the present study.

Axis Four: Arabic-Language Studies on the NCW and Its Digital Platforms

Mohamed's (2021) study analyzed the NCW's Facebook page and found that the discourse tends toward awareness-raising and guidance frames more than explicitly political frames. Abdel Aziz's (2023) study also demonstrated that the NCW's digital communicative strategies focus on social and service-oriented empowerment to a greater degree than electoral-political empowerment. Al-Refai's (2022) study indicated that the NCW's discourse on social media tends to employ national and developmental frames when addressing political participation. Notably, these studies concurred on the general awareness-raising role of the NCW, yet they did not address the analysis of framing strategies during a specific electoral event, nor did they systematically link the framing structure of the discourse to the dimensions of political awareness-building.

Research Gap and Contributions

In light of the foregoing, the research gap is defined along three dimensions: the absence of in-depth analysis of digital media framing strategies employed by an official feminist institution during a specific electoral event; the lack of systematic linkage between the media frames employed and the dimensions of political awareness-building in light of theory; and the scarcity of studies that have addressed the NCW's discourse during the 2025 Senate elections specifically.

The present study has benefited from the preceding literature by drawing on the concepts of networked framing and affective framing, utilizing findings from digital political participation studies in interpreting interaction patterns, leveraging gender framing studies in analyzing symbolic versus cognitive empowerment, and building on Arabic-language studies while developing them through a focus on a specific electoral period and transitioning from descriptive analysis to strategic critical analysis.

Research Objectives and Questions

Principal Objective

To analyze the media framing strategies employed on the NCW's Facebook page during the 2025 Egyptian Senate elections, and to explore their potential implications—in light of framing theory—for building the political awareness of Egyptian women.

Sub-Objectives

Five sub-objectives derive from the principal objective: (1) to identify the volume and pattern of electoral coverage in terms of post frequency and their temporal

and thematic distribution; (2) to determine the most prominently featured electoral issues and agenda priorities; (3) to analyze the types of dominant media frames and their linguistic and visual construction devices; (4) to analyze the direction of media messages and classify them according to their motivational, informational, or celebratory character; and (5) to discuss the implications of the identified framing structure in light of the dimensions of political awareness (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) as defined in the theoretical literature.

Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following principal question: What is the nature of the media framing strategies employed on the NCW's Facebook page during the 2025 Senate elections, and what are their potential implications for building the political awareness of Egyptian women?

The following sub-questions emerge therefrom:

- 1- What is the volume and pattern of electoral coverage on the page during the study period?
- 2- What are the most prominent women-related political issues that received focus?
- 3- What types of media frames are employed in the electoral discourse, and what are their construction devices?
- 4- What are the prevailing trends in addressing electoral issues in terms of message type?
- 5- To what extent does the identified framing structure reflect an orientation toward building comprehensive political awareness (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) among women, in light of the theoretical literature?

Theoretical Framework: Media Framing Theory in the Digital Environment

Conceptual Foundations

Media framing theory is considered one of the most prominent interpretive frameworks in contemporary political communication studies. Its intellectual roots trace back to the work of sociologist Erving Goffman (1974), who defined the frame as the cognitive structure through which individuals interpret their experiences and organize their perception of reality. Robert Entman (1993) translocated the concept to the field of media studies, specifying four functions of the frame: defining the problem, diagnosing its causes, making a moral judgment about it, and suggesting a remedy. This means that framing is a deliberate selective process based on highlighting certain aspects of reality while marginalizing others, thereby directing audience perception toward a specific interpretation of an issue.

Scheufele (1999) distinguished between two complementary levels of framing: a production level concerned with how the frame is constructed within media dis-

course (Frame Building), and a perceptual level concerned with the effect of this frame on audience understanding and interpretation of an issue (Frame Setting). Reese (2007) expanded the concept to encompass the cultural dimension, affirming that frames do not operate in isolation from the social and political context but are shaped within it and reproduce it. In addition, the constructionist approach developed by Van Gorp (2007), who argues that frames derive their power from their association with the shared cultural repertoire of society, should be noted.

The Shift Toward Digital Framing

The rise of digital platforms has produced a qualitative transformation in framing dynamics. Frames are no longer produced exclusively within traditional media institutions; rather, they are constructed and reconstructed within interactive networked spaces. De Vreese (2005; 2012) demonstrated that framing research has transitioned from analyzing closed news texts to analyzing shifting digital discourse in dynamic political contexts. Framing in the digital environment has come to be characterized by three essential features: multimodality, which combines text, image, video, and visual symbols in frame construction; networked diffusion, which amplifies frames through sharing, re-posting, and algorithms; and instantaneous interaction, which permits the re-framing of issues through comments and public discussions.

In this context, Meraz and Papacharissi (2013) introduced the concept of “Networked Framing,” which illustrates how frames are shaped within digital networks through collective interaction, where the frame does not remain static as produced by the institution but is reshaped through audience circulation. Papacharissi (2015) further confirmed that digital political discourse carries influential affective dimensions that contribute to the formation of “affective publics” that engage with political issues on an emotional basis transcending the purely cognitive dimension.

Contemporary Trends Relevant to the Study

The present study intersects with four contemporary trends in framing research: Strategic Framing, which views the frame as a deliberate instrument for political influence, particularly in electoral campaigns; Gender Framing, which examines women’s representation in political discourse and the extent to which they are presented as political actors or as symbolic elements; Affective Framing, which highlights the role of emotions and motivational discourse in shaping political responses; and Visual Framing, which focuses on the role of images and symbols in constructing political meaning within social media platforms.

Guiding Theoretical Propositions

The study proceeds from the central propositions of framing theory: that media and digital platforms select certain aspects of reality and highlight them at the expense of others; that the frame employed influences audience interpretation and evaluation of an issue; that the prominence of certain elements leads to the forma-

tion of specific perceptual priorities among receivers; that frames are influenced by the political and institutional context in which they are produced; and that the digital environment amplifies the power of the frame due to networked diffusion and instantaneous interaction.

Analytical Model Derived from Theory

Building on the preceding literature, and specifically the work of Entman (1993), Scheufele (1999), and De Vreese (2012), the study developed an analytical model linking theoretical concepts to practical analytical categories. This model rests on the central assumption that the nature of the media frame employed in digital electoral discourse carries potential implications for the type of political awareness that may be constructed among women. If the cognitive-empowerment or rights-based frame predominates, the discourse may contribute to enhancing women's perception of themselves as political agents participating in decision-making. If, however, the symbolic-mobilizational frame dominates, the potential implications may be limited to circumstantial electoral mobilization without deepening cognitive political awareness.

Accordingly, media frames were classified into five categories derived from the intersection of theory and context: the national responsibility frame (linking participation to patriotic duty and stability), the empowerment frame (highlighting women's capacity and agency), the information frame (providing cognitive content about the electoral process), the institutional support frame (providing practical support tools), and the evaluation frame (presenting results and achievements). Each frame was also linked to a dimension of political awareness (cognitive, affective, and behavioral) to assess the potential implications of the framing structure. This linkage proceeds as follows: the information frame is associated with the cognitive dimension of political awareness; the national responsibility and empowerment frames are associated with the affective dimension; and the support and evaluation frames are associated with the behavioral dimension.

Contextual Framework: Political Awareness and Egyptian Women in an Electoral Context

Institutional Political Empowerment

The issue of women's empowerment in Egypt has witnessed clear institutional transformations since the 2014 Constitution. Abdel Hamid's (2021) study indicated rising rates of women's parliamentary representation in recent sessions. Saad (2022) further demonstrated that the transformation was not merely legislative; it was accompanied by a shift in official discourse from the concept of "guardianship" to that of "partnership and empowerment." Within this framework, the NCW has transformed from an advisory body to an active digital communicative agent that manages awareness campaigns through social media platforms (Al-Refai, 2022), a

finding confirmed by Hassan's (2023) study, which demonstrated that the official Facebook pages of government institutions have become a primary tool in digital government communication.

Digital Transformation and Political Awareness-Building

Mahmoud's (2021) study indicated that social media platforms have become primary sources of political information for youth and women in Egypt. Abdel Latif's (2020) study confirmed that regular exposure to political content on Facebook is associated with increased knowledge of public affairs, provided the discourse is characterized by clarity, and that framing affects the degree of perceived importance of electoral issues. Ibrahim's (2022) study also concluded that explanatory digital campaigns contribute to a greater degree in building sustainable political awareness compared to pure mobilization campaigns.

The Specificity of Senate Elections

The literature indicates that electoral periods in Egypt are characterized by high discursive intensity, during which frames of patriotic duty, stability, and empowerment are employed (Suleiman, 2021; Ali, 2023). Specifically regarding the Senate elections, Youssef (2022) demonstrated low levels of public knowledge about the nature and competencies of the Senate compared to the House of Representatives, which amplifies the need for an explanatory awareness-raising discourse that transcends symbolic mobilization toward cognitive education. This context renders the analysis of the NCW's discourse during this electoral event a necessary entry point for understanding the relationship between official discourse and political awareness-building.

Methodological Procedures

Study Type and Approach

This study belongs to descriptive-analytical research and relies on the Analytical Case Study method, which permits an in-depth analysis of a specific phenomenon within its natural context. This approach was selected because the study's subject concerns the analysis of a specific institution's discourse during a defined time period, which is consistent with the nature of the case study that allows for combining analytical depth with contextual focus. The study employs Framing Content Analysis with an approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative dimensions.

Study Population and Sample

The study population consists of all posts published through the NCW's official Facebook page during the period from the official announcement of the Senate elections in July 2025 until the announcement of final results in August 2025. The study adopted an exhaustive census approach for all posts directly related to the electoral event, totaling 17 posts. It should be noted that the limited size of this

number does not constitute a methodological problem within the context of a case study, as the exhaustive census reflects the actual volume of institutional communicative activity during the studied period, which is in itself a finding of analytical significance. However, the study treats quantitative data as descriptive directional indicators rather than statistically generalizable data, supplementing them with in-depth qualitative analysis.

Unit of Analysis

The study adopted the individual post as the primary unit of analysis, encompassing: the written text, the accompanying visual elements (image, video, or infographic), and the hashtags employed. In the case of multi-frame posts, the post was classified according to the Dominant Frame that heads the message structure, with reference to secondary frames in the qualitative analysis.

Research Instrument: Framing Content Analysis Coding Sheet

A framing content analysis coding sheet was designed based on the theoretical literature, specifically Entman's (1993) model of frame functions and De Vreese's (2005) model of media frame types, adapted to the Egyptian electoral context. The coding sheet encompassed five main categories:

- **Category One – Primary Topic of the Post:** including announcements of dates and procedures, awareness of electoral participation, artistic and creative campaigns, training and technical support, and announcement of results and congratulations.
- **Category Two – Type of Media Message:** including motivational-mobilizational messages (affective rallying discourse calling for participation), procedural information (practical data about dates and procedures), results and congratulatory messages (presentation of achievements and figures), and training and support messages (direct institutional support tools).
- **Category Three – Dominant Media Frame:** including the national responsibility frame (linking participation to patriotic duty and stability, using terms such as duty, trust, the nation's future), the empowerment frame (highlighting women's strength, agency, and capacity for influence), the information frame (providing cognitive content about the electoral process or the Senate), the institutional support frame (providing support channels such as training and hotlines), and the evaluation frame (presenting results, achievements, and celebrating outcomes).
- **Category Four – Frame-Building Devices:** including linguistic devices (semantic vocabulary, slogans, direct appeals), visual devices (image type, colors, symbols, design), and interactive devices (hashtags, calls to share, external links).

- **Category Five – Audience Engagement Indicators:** including the number of likes, comments, and shares, and the general direction of comments (positive, negative, neutral, off-topic).

Instrument Validation

The coding sheet was submitted to three expert reviewers from media studies professors specializing in content analysis and framing research. Modifications were made in light of their observations, including the addition of the “frame-building devices” category and the adjustment of some frame designations for greater precision.

Reliability (Inter-Coder Reliability)

Both researchers analyzed all posts independently, after which the reliability coefficient was calculated using Holsti’s Formula, yielding 0.89—an acceptable coefficient in content analysis studies (where 0.80 is considered the minimum acceptable threshold). Cases of disagreement were re-analyzed jointly to reach final consensus.

Comment Classification

Comments were classified according to general direction (positive, negative, neutral, off-topic) based on manual analysis of a random sample of comments for each post category. A sample ranging between 30 and 50 comments per category was analyzed, and approximate percentages were calculated accordingly. These percentages are considered directional indicators rather than precise measurements.

Study Limitations

The temporal boundaries are defined by the period from the official announcement of the Senate elections in July 2025 until the announcement of results in August 2025. The spatial boundaries are limited to the Egyptian context. The thematic boundaries are confined to election-related posts on the NCW’s official Facebook page only. At the methodological level, the study is limited to content analysis at the production level (Frame Building) without analyzing the effect of frames on audience perception (Frame Setting), which is addressed through theoretical discussion rather than empirical measurement. Additionally, the study did not encompass other digital platforms and did not include an in-depth qualitative analysis of audience comments.

Operational Definitions

- **Digital media framing** is defined in this study as the discursive, linguistic, and visual mechanisms employed through the Facebook platform to present electoral issues from specific angles, directing the receiver’s perception of the nature and significance of the issue.
- **Women’s political awareness** is defined as the level of cognitive, affective, and behavioral perception that women possess regarding the electoral process, its importance, and their roles within it, across three dimensions: cog-

nitive (familiarity with information), affective (attitudes and emotions), and behavioral (readiness to participate).

- **Electoral events** refers to the 2025 Egyptian Senate elections, encompassing the stages of announcement, mobilization, voting, and results declaration.
- **Digital government communication** is defined as the use of digital platforms by official institutions to communicate with the public, provide information, shape attitudes, and manage public discourse.

Results and Analysis

First: Volume and Pattern of Electoral Coverage

The total number of posts related to the electoral event during the studied period was 17. Despite the limited size of this number, it represents the exhaustive census of institutional communicative activity related to the elections, and is in itself an indicator of the level of institutional attention to the electoral event through this platform. Table (1) illustrates the distribution of posts by topic:

Table (1): Distribution of Posts by Topic

Topic	Number of Posts	Approximate Percentage
Participation awareness ("Your vote is a trust")	5	29.4%
Training and technical support	4	23.5%
Announcement of dates and procedures	3	17.6%
Announcement of results and congratulations	3	17.6%
Artistic campaign ("Set El-Setat")	2	11.8%
Total	17	100%

The table shows that participation awareness posts ranked first (5 posts), followed by training and technical support (4 posts), while posts announcing dates and results were equal (3 posts each). Although the percentages may give an impression of clear differences, the actual disparities do not exceed one or two posts between categories, which warrants caution in generalization and calls for reading percentages as directional indicators.

At the qualitative analysis level, it was observed that participation awareness posts were characterized by direct discourse employing imperative and appellative forms, such as the phrases: "Go out and vote," "Your vote is a trust," and "Your participation is a patriotic duty," with the incorporation of Egyptian flag colors and national symbols in the visual design. Training posts focused on announcing workshops and training sessions for local monitors, mentioning the NCW's operations room and the hotline for receiving complaints.

Second: Type of Media Message

Motivational-mobilizational messages accounted for the largest share (7 posts), reflecting the NCW's orientation toward affective mobilization discourse. At the qualitative level, these messages were distinguished by several linguistic and visual

features: the use of direct address to Egyptian women, the deployment of vocabulary of belonging and responsibility such as “Your country needs you” and “You are the strength,” the use of visual designs combining images of Egyptian women with national symbols, and the adoption of unified hashtags such as #YourVoteIsATrust and #EgyptianWomenParticipate.

In contrast, procedural information (5 posts) was characterized by a direct news-style presentation of dates and locations without interpretation or analysis. Notably, these posts did not include any explanation of the nature of the Senate, its constitutional competencies, or the difference between it and the House of Representatives—a conspicuous absence in light of the literature confirming low levels of public knowledge about the nature of the Senate (Youssef, 2022).

Table (2): Distribution of Posts by Message Type

Message Type	Number of Posts	Approximate Percentage
Motivational-mobilizational messages	7	41.2%
Procedural information	5	29.4%
Results and congratulatory messages	3	17.6%
Training and support messages	2	11.8%
Total	17	100%

Third: Dominant Media Frames

Table (3): Distribution of Posts by Dominant Media Frame

Media Frame	Number of Posts	Approximate Percentage
National responsibility frame	5	29.4%
Empowerment frame	4	23.5%
Information frame	3	17.6%
Institutional support frame	3	17.6%
Evaluation frame	2	11.8%
Total	17	100%

The national responsibility frame dominated the framing landscape (5 posts), followed by the empowerment frame (4 posts). Despite the numerical proximity between categories, qualitative analysis reveals important qualitative differences in the nature of each frame and its construction devices:

- **National responsibility frame:** This manifested in posts linking electoral participation to the concept of patriotic duty and the protection of stability. Among its most prominent linguistic construction devices were phrases such as “Your participation is a national responsibility,” “Your vote is a trust on your shoulders,” and “Through your participation, we protect our country.” It also relied visually on images incorporating the Egyptian flag, maps of Egypt, and state symbols. Notably, this frame summons women to participate as being responsible for supporting the state, rather than as holders of independent political rights—reflecting, in light of gender framing literature, a pattern of national mobilization that integrates women into a general stability discourse without distinguishing their particular political position (Ross & Bürger, 2021).

- **Empowerment frame:** This appeared clearly in the “Set El-Setat” (Woman of Women) campaign and some awareness posts. It centered on projecting the image of the strong, active woman, employing artistic elements such as the “Set El-Setat” song accompanied by celebratory designs and vibrant colors. However, qualitative analysis reveals that this empowerment was symbolic and celebratory rather than cognitive, as it focused on enhancing feelings of pride and strength without linking them to cognitive political content about women’s role in the Senate specifically or its legislative competencies. This is consistent with what Ross and Bürger (2021) termed Symbolic Empowerment as opposed to Cognitive Political Empowerment.
- **Information frame:** This was limited to 3 posts containing dates for the opening of candidacy and voting and basic procedural information. None of these included any explanation of the nature of the Senate, its competencies, or its role in the legislative process. This finding represents a conspicuous cognitive gap, particularly in light of political awareness literature affirming that the cognitive dimension represents the foundation upon which affective and behavioral dimensions are built (Dalton, 2019).
- **Institutional support frame:** This appeared in 3 posts focused on announcing the NCW’s operations room, the hotline for receiving complaints, and monitor training programs, presented in a direct formal institutional style.
- **Evaluation frame:** This appeared in two posts following the announcement of results, presenting women’s participation rates and the number of female winners in a celebratory style highlighting achievement.

Fourth: Audience Engagement Indicators

Table (4): Audience Engagement Indicators by Post Category

Post Category	Likes (approx.)	Comments (approx.)	Shares (approx.)	Predominant Comment Direction
“Your vote is a trust” campaign	1,500	600	250	Positive at a high rate (~70%)
“Set El-Setat” song	2,000	900	300	Positive at a very high rate (~80%)
Announcement of dates and procedures	800	300	120	Mixed with a notable negative proportion (~50%)
Training and support	400	150	90	Mixed (~40% positive, ~40% negative)
Announcement of results	1,200	500	200	Positive at a high rate (~75%)

Methodological note: The figures presented represent total engagement for each post category, not for a single post. Comment direction percentages are approximate, based on analysis of a sample of comments for each category, not an exhaustive census.

The table reveals several fundamental observations: artistic and affective content (“Set El-Setat” song and “Your vote is a trust” campaign) achieved the highest levels of engagement in terms of likes, shares, and positive comments, while procedural and training content achieved the lowest engagement levels with a higher proportion of negative or neutral comments. It was observed that negative comments on procedural posts included complaints about unclear procedures or difficulty accessing polling stations, while some posts received off-topic comments relating to other non-electoral women’s issues.

This disparity is consistent with Papacharissi’s (2015) finding that affective discourse achieves greater reach and higher interaction in the digital environment, and that social media platforms algorithmically favor content that generates rapid emotional responses (Pariser, 2011). However, it must be noted that elevated digital interaction (likes and shares) is not a direct indicator of elevated political awareness levels; rather, it may reflect a momentary affective response.

Discussion of Results: Analysis of Framing Strategies and Their Implications

Strategy One: Mobilizational Framing Based on National Responsibility

The results revealed the NCW’s adoption of a mobilizational framing strategy based on linking electoral participation to the concept of patriotic duty and the protection of stability. This strategy is manifested in the dominance of the national responsibility frame (5 posts) and the prevalence of motivational messages (7 posts). This pattern reflects—according to Chong and Druckman’s (2007) classification—a shift in discourse from framing “political rights” to framing “patriotic duty,” whereby women are summoned to participate as being responsible for supporting the state and its stability, rather than as agents possessing independent political rights exercised with awareness and free will.

In light of framing theory, it can be inferred that this pattern addresses the affective dimension of political awareness (belonging and responsibility), yet does not sufficiently reinforce the cognitive dimension (institutional political understanding). This may theoretically produce a pattern of short-term symbolic mobilization linked to voting behavior, without building sustainable political awareness that transcends the electoral moment.

Strategy Two: Symbolic Empowerment

The empowerment frame ranked second and appeared clearly in artistic campaigns such as “Set El-Setat,” which achieved the highest engagement rates. This strategy is distinguished by its projection of the image of the strong woman supporting the state, its employment of artistic elements (song, slogan, and celebratory images), and its enhancement of pride in feminine identity. However, qualitative analysis reveals that this empowerment does not include cognitive deepening of

women's political role within the Senate specifically, nor does it address the legislative or policy issues that may affect women's lives.

According to Ross and Bürger's (2021) classification, this pattern can be described as Symbolic Empowerment rather than Cognitive Political Empowerment. This finding raises an important theoretical question about whether discourse that enhances positive feelings about participation without deepening political understanding effectively contributes to building sustainable political awareness, or whether its effect is limited to the moment of voting.

Strategy Three: Informational Minimalism

Despite the presence of procedural and informational messages, these were characterized by features that weaken their cognitive effectiveness: their confinement to basic procedural information (dates and locations) without interpretation or analysis; the absence of any explanation of the Senate's constitutional competencies or the difference between it and the House of Representatives; and the presentation of content in direct textual formats without employing attractive visual tools such as infographics.

The low engagement with this content is consistent with what Pariser (2011) posits about the effect of algorithms in favoring emotionally engaging content over informational content, which exacerbates the gap between the availability of information and its actual reach to the audience. This finding represents one of the most prominent features of the identified framing structure, revealing the absence of the deep cognitive dimension that—according to the literature—constitutes the foundation for building sustainable political awareness (Dalton, 2019).

Strategy Four: Direct Institutional Support

The support frame appeared through training posts, the operations room, and the hotline. However, the low engagement with these posts indicates that institutional support does not achieve the reach and impact attained by affective campaigns—reflecting a fundamental challenge in digital government communication: how to present institutional content in more attractive and impactful digital formats.

Integrative Reading: The Framing Structure and Dimensions of Political Awareness

Looking at the overall framing structure of the discourse, a map of the relationship between the identified frames and the three dimensions of political awareness as defined in the literature can be drawn:

The **cognitive dimension** (familiarity with political and institutional information) is theoretically addressed by the information frame, yet this was limited both quantitatively and qualitatively, and did not include explanations of the Senate's competencies or analysis of legislative issues. This means that the framing structure does not provide a sufficient cognitive foundation for building deep political awareness.

The **affective dimension** (attitudes and feelings toward participation) is powerfully addressed by the national responsibility and symbolic empowerment frames,

which enhance feelings of belonging, pride, and responsibility. This is the dimension most prominently present in the framing structure.

The **behavioral dimension** (readiness for actual participation) is addressed by the support and evaluation frames through the provision of practical tools for participation and the presentation of results. However, it remains linked to direct electoral behavior (voting) without extending to broader forms of political participation.

Accordingly, it can be stated—in light of the theoretical literature—that the identified framing structure clearly tends toward reinforcing the affective dimension and stimulating direct behavioral action (voting), while exhibiting a clear weakness in the cognitive dimension, which represents—according to Dalton (2019) and Boulianne (2015)—the foundation upon which sustainable political awareness transcending the electoral moment is built.

Digital Engagement: Between Indicator and Significance

The audience engagement results call for critical reflection. The rise in engagement with affective content compared to its decline with cognitive content does not necessarily mean that the audience does not need information; rather, it may mean that the manner of presenting information was not suited to the digital environment. Moreover, digital engagement (likes and shares) is not a direct indicator of political awareness levels; it may instead reflect a momentary emotional response. This distinction between digital engagement and deep political perception represents one of the study's important analytical contributions, consistent with Highfield's (2016) confirmation that digital engagement does not automatically translate into deep political participation.

Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that the framing structure of the NCW's digital electoral discourse during the August 2025 Senate elections was characterized by the adoption of a multi-dimensional strategy combining affective mobilization through the national responsibility frame, symbolic empowerment through artistic campaigns, limited procedural informational content, and direct institutional support. The national responsibility frame dominated the framing landscape, accompanied by a prevalence of motivational messages, while engagement indicators demonstrated that campaigns of an artistic and affective nature achieved the highest levels of audience engagement compared to informational and training content.

However, critical analysis in light of framing theory revealed a gap between the intensity of mobilizational discourse and the depth of cognitive construction related to the nature and competencies of the Senate. The identified framing structure powerfully addresses the affective dimension of political awareness and stimulates the direct behavioral dimension (voting), yet it weakens the cognitive dimension, which—according to the literature—constitutes the foundation for building sustain-

able political awareness. This raises a question, both theoretical and practical, about the nature of the political awareness that may be formed through this framing pattern: Is it circumstantial mobilizational awareness linked to voting behavior that dissipates upon the conclusion of the electoral event, or is it sustainable political awareness grounded in institutional perception and democratic understanding?

It must be emphasized that this study analyzed the framing structure at the production level (Frame Building) and discussed its potential implications in light of theory, but it did not measure the actual effect of frames on audience perception (Frame Setting)—which represents a clear methodological boundary that future empirical studies should address.

Accordingly, it can be stated that the NCW's digital electoral communication succeeded in achieving notable symbolic mobilization and affective audience engagement, yet it remains—based on the evidence of the analysis—in need of developing its informational and interpretive tools in ways that strengthen the cognitive dimension of Egyptian women's political awareness.

Recommendations

Applied Recommendations Directed at Official Institutions

The study's findings confirm the need to strengthen the cognitive dimension in digital electoral discourse, through providing simplified explanations of the competencies of elected bodies and employing infographics and interactive content to increase the attractiveness of information. The importance of achieving a better balance between affective mobilizational messages and analytical-interpretive messages is also highlighted, such that neither dimension overshadows the other. The study recommends developing framing strategies grounded in the concept of "political rights" alongside "patriotic duty," thereby enhancing women's perception of themselves as independent political agents. It is also advisable to analytically utilize audience engagement data by studying comment trends and using them to develop future discourse. Additionally, integrating the training and institutional dimensions into more attractive digital formats is recommended to reduce the gap between the support provided and the level of engagement with it.

Future Research Recommendations

The present study opens multiple research horizons: conducting field studies (surveys, interviews, and focus groups) to measure the actual effect of the identified frames on the level of political awareness among women exposed to this content; undertaking in-depth qualitative analysis of audience comments to reveal the nature of the awareness actually formed at the audience level; conducting comparative studies between different electoral events to measure the evolution of framing strategies over time; expanding the scope of analysis to include other digital platforms such as Instagram, X, and TikTok; and conducting comparative studies between different official institutions concerned with women across multiple Arab countries to analyze divergent framing patterns.

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