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Write up a proposal for an experiment

**Intro**

Since the beginning of media, those who produce content and those in charge of its production have always had control of the portrayal and interpretation of events that take place. Despite this either conscious or unconscious awareness of the influenced exerted by media creators, there is no denying that media presentment affects how individuals interact with and interpret the world around them. These interpretations and actions can be manipulated by the bias intake of media (Entman 2007). This experiment will be exploring how media news stories can affect judgement and decision making. In this study, a short survey will be presented containing various news article headlines, asking participants to determine the amount of bias present in the headline. I hypothesize that when participants are treated with a brief lesson on bias, they will rate headlines with bias more accurately than those who did not receive the lesson.

**Methods**

Participants are to be recruited through the undergraduate student population at the University of California – Merced. As compensation for participation, each participant received subject pool credit, which is commonly used as extra credit for courses.

A series of twelve (12) news headlines from various sources, half from liberal news sources and others from conservative news sources, are to be randomly presented to participants. Each ideological group will have three (3) headlines about crime and three (3) on immigration in the United States (6 crime and 6 immigration: 12 headlines total). Bias levels are to be determined by the researchers, gathering the average for each headline, and using that as the bias level. Each news subject for each ideological group will contain a low, medium, and high ranked biased headline. Participants will be asked to rank the level of perceived bias for each headline on a Likert scale, ranging from one to seven points – one being “completely unbiased” and seven being “completely biased, with the mid-range point being a neutral ranking.

Before taking the survey, half of the participants at random must watch a video, giving a brief lesson on bias and identifying it within news sources. This is administered to see if a brief lesson would prime participants to be more attentive to bias and better detect it within news headlines. Following the survey both groups (video and no video) are given demographic background questions. In addition, questions asking about their news sharing habits, fact-checking their sources, and other related questions are presented.

**Results**

To analyze results, I plan to conduct a two-way ANOVA test. As the independent variables, I will use treatment/no treatment as one variable and bias detection accuracy as another. In a similar experiment conducted by Gordon Pennycook and David G. Rand (2019) they utilize similar variance measurements to ANOVA, which has shown to be useful.

I would expect the results to show that there is statistical significance when using the ANOVA test. It might be slight significance, but there will be significance. I would also expect people on both sides of the ideological fence to have about the same ability to distinguish between biased and unbiased headlines. However, those who hold more liberal viewpoints will have a better ability to accurately identify bias.

**Conclusion**

The findings from this study will have the ability to help shed light on whether bias intervention trainings are effective or not, as explored by researchers such as Boissin et al. (2021). Additionally, these findings should help industry workers when creating their own personalize workspace anti-bias videos, whether they be in relation to media or not. Overall, the study will be able to highlight human judgment, observing how much of one’s judgment is influenced by their own thoughts and beliefs, rather than those of people around oneself.

**References**

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