Ali Zain

⌂ a-zain.github.io ✉ azain@email.sc.edu
☐ +1 857 204 9325   🎓 Google Scholar/Lq5X5LcAAAAJ

RESEARCH INTERESTS

My research interests are **online misinformation**, **information processing**, **digital discourse in politics**, **public relations**, **and science and health communications**. I use traditional qualitative and quantitative methods as well as more sophisticated *computational* and *psycho-physiological methods*. Moreover, I am interested in conducting **inter-disciplinary research** in collaboration with domain experts from computer science, public health, and marketing.

EDUCATION

2020 – Present

University of South Carolina, Columbia (UofSC)
ABD (Expected Graduation: May 2023)   PH.D. IN MASS COMMUNICATION

My doctoral dissertation uses self-report questionnaires and psychophysiological measures to assess the role of social media labels used by mainstream platforms (i.e., Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter) in countering the online spread of misinformation. Building on the Heuristic Systematic Model, this research examines how these labels facilitate heuristic or/and systematic information processing. During viewing, I map the paths of neural processing mechanisms (e.g., gaze fixation, gaze map, arousal, and brainwave activity) as well as the variables associated with persuasion (e.g., message and source credibility, sharing and verification intents, and subsequent social media engagement behaviors). The findings are expected to provide recommendations for improvement and personalization of platforms' user-interfaces to make them more efficient in countering misinformation.
Dissertation Committee:
Drs. Sei-Hill Kim (Chair), Jungmi Jun, Taylor Wen, and Amir Karami (Business School)

2018 – 2020 Hacettepe University, Ankara (HU)   M.A. IN COMMUNICATION SCIENCES
2011 – 2015 University of the Punjab, Lahore (PU)   B.S. IN COMMUNICATION STUDIES

PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL PUBLICATIONS

JoHC '23

Ittefaq, M., Zain, A., and Bokhari, H. (2023). Opioids as comedy: exploring topics, sentiments, and engagement in Last Week Tonight with John Oliver on YouTube. *Journal of Health Communication.*
https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2023.2176575

PUS '23

Chen, Y., Long, J., Jun. J., Kim, S., Zain, A., and Piacentine, C. (2023). Anti-intellectualism amid the covid-19 pandemic: the dynamics of anti-Fauci discourse on Twitter. *Public Understanding of Science.*
https://doi.org/10.1177/09636625221146269

JoHC '23

Jun. J., Wickersham, K., Zain, A., Ford, R., Zhang, N., Ciccarelli, C., Kim, S., and Liang, C. (2023). Cancer and COVID-19 Vaccines on Twitter: The Voice and Vaccine Attitude of Cancer Community. *Journal of Health Communication. https://doi.org/10.1080/10810730.2023.2168800*

SCJ '23

Zain, A. (2023). Celebrity capital and social movements: a textual analysis of Bollywood celebrities' tweets on 2020-21 Indian farmers' protest. *Southern Communication Journal. https://doi.org/10.1080/1041794X.2022.2160006*

AJHB '22

Jun, J., Fitzpatrick, MA., Zain, A., and Zhang, N. (2022). Have e-cigarette risk perception and cessation intent of young adult users changed during the pandemic? *American Journal of Health Behaviors, 46* (3), 304-314(11). https://doi.org/10.5993/AJHB.46.3.9

Vaccines '22

Jun, J., Zain, A., Chen, Y., and Kim, S. H. (2022). Adverse mentions, negative sentiment, and emotions in covid-19 vaccine tweets and their association with vaccination uptake: global comparison of 192 countries. *Vaccines, 10*(5), 735. https://doi.org/10.3390/vaccines10050735

Etkileşim '22

Dino Gidreta, A., Binark, M., Ozsu, G. and Zain, A. (2022). Trusts and doubts in Africa over Belt and Road Initiative: a thematic content analysis of opinions in Ethiopian twittersphere. *Etkileşim 5*(9), 12-35. DOI: 10.32739/etkilesim.2022.5.9.153

SU&M '22

Jun, J., Zhang, N., Zain, A. and Mohammadi, E. (2022). Social media discussions on the FDA's modified risk tobacco product authorization of IQOS. *Substance Use and Misuse 57*(3), 472-480. DOI: 10.1080/10826084.2021.2019777

JAS '21

Zain, A. (2021). (Re)Production of hindutva-driven populism in India: an analysis of Bharatiya Janata Party's political messaging in twittersphere. *The Journal of Asian Studies 5*(2), 179-194. DOI: 10.34189/asyam.5.2.005

JAS '20

Zain, A., Ozsu, G. , Binark, M. and Dino Gidreta, A. (2020). China-Pakistan Economic Corridor and technicians of opinion in Pakistani twittersphere: a thematic content analysis. *The Journal of Asian Studies 4*(1),9-28. DOI: 10.34189/asyam.4.1.002

Moment '19

Zain, A. (2019). Rise of Modi's tech-populism in India. *Moment Journal 6*(1),199-208. DOI: 10.17572/mj2019.1.199208

Peer Reviewed Conference Presentations

ICA '23

Bhala, N., Zain, A., and O'Boyle, J. (Accepted; May, 2023). *Twitter Conversations about Causes, Solutions and Effects of Delhi Air Pollution: Agenda-Building Content Analysis.* 73rd Annual International Communication Association Conference. Toronto, Canada.

AEJMC '22

Zain, A. (2022, August). *Moralization in polarized debate on COVID-19 vaccination: human-AI collaborative analysis of tweets.* 105th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, Detroit, MI.
First Place Moeller Student Paper Award

AEJMC '22

Zain, A. and Long, J. (2022, August). *Countering online misinformation: testing impact of state sponsorship labels on message credibility, verification intention and behavior.* 105th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, Detroit, MI.

AEJMC '22

Zain, A. (2022, August). *Spiral of silence 50 years later: conceptual and empirical new directions.* 105th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, Detroit, MI.

ICA '22

Ittefaq, M., Zain, A., and Bokhari, H. (2022, May). *Opioids as comedy: exploring topics, sentiments, and engagement in Last Week Tonight with John Oliver on YouTube.* 72nd Annual International Communication Association Conference. Paris, France.

ICA '22

Chen, Y., Long, J., Jun, J., Kim, S., Zain, A., and Piacentine, C. (2022, May). *Anti-intellectualism amid the covid-19 pandemic: the dynamics of anti-Fauci discourse on Twitter.* 72nd Annual International Communication Association Conference. Paris, France.

AEJMCSEC '22

Zain, A. (2022, March). *Online endorsed misinformation and climate change: using heuristic cues to assess perceived credibility of messages and sharing intentions.* 47th Annual AEJMC Southeast Colloquium, Memphis, TN.
Top Student Paper Award

BDHS '22

Jun, J. and Zain, A. (2022, February). *Global comparison of covid-19 vaccination sentiments and emotions on Twitter: findings from 192 countries.* 3rd National Big Data Health Sciences Conference. Columbia, SC

AEJMC '21	Zain, A. (2021, August). *Using theory of planned behavior, and operationalization of political partisanship and belief in misinformation to predict individuals' intentions to quit social media.* 104th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, New Orleans, LA.
AEJMC '21	Jun, J., Fitzpatrick, MA., Zhang, N., and Zain, A. (2021, August). *Has covid-19 impacted the risk perceptions and cessation intent of youth vapers?* 104th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, New Orleans, LA.
AEJMC '21	Zain, A. (2021, August). *Celebrity capital and social movements: a textual analysis of Bollywood celebrities' tweets on 2020-21 Indian farmers' protest.* 104th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, New Orleans, LA.
AEJMC '21	Kim, S.,Zain, A., and Heo, Y. (2021, August). *Idealized science vs. scientific skepticism in South Korea: micro-level evidence for the two-cultures thesis.* 104th Annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication Conference, New Orleans, LA.
UBSK '21	Zain, A. (2021, February). *Doctrine of hindutva and political discourse of India's Bharatiya Janata Party: an analysis of 2019 election campaign.* 1st International Social Sciences Conference, Ankara, Turkey.
CIM '20	Ozsu, G., Zain, A., Binark, M. and Dino Gidreta, A. (2020, November). *Technicians of opinion in Ethiopia, Pakistan, and Turkey and their tweets about Chinese vision of alternative globalization: a comparative content analysis.* 17th International Symposium: Communication in the Millennium, Istanbul, Turkey. ISBN: 978-605-83703-9-5
Senex '19	Zain, A. (2019, November). *Aging-friendly smartphones: analysis of smartphones user-interface to assess their usability among elderly citizens.* Senex: 3rd Congress of Aging Studies for Graduate Students, Antalya, Turkey.
ETCSS '16	Zain, A. and Soomro, A (2016, November). *Cultural continuity and mass media: an analysis of leading online newspapers of Pakistan.* 1st National Conference Emerging Trends and Challenges in Social Sciences, Multan, Pakistan.

Books & Book Chapters

2020	Zain,A. (2020). Contact and sanction: cricket as a diplomatic tool in India and Pakistan. In M. Binark (Ed.), *Popular culture and media in Asia* (pp. 411–440). um:ag Publications.ISBN: 978-605-7882-42-4
2020	Zain,A. (2020). Aging friendly smartphones. In Y. Dede and M. Figan (Ed.), *Aging in digital culture and afterwards* (pp. 297-314). Alternatif Bilisim Dernegi.ISBN: 978-605-80007-2-8
2016	Zain,A. and Khan, N. T. (2016). *Muasharti Jamhooriat.* Kettering Foundation.An Urdu translation of The Ecology of Democracy by David Mathews

Under Review Publications

2022	Kim, S., Oh, S., Zain, A., Heo, Y., and Jun, J. (Under Review: R&R). *Idealized Science vs. Culture of Skepticism in South Korea: Micro-Level Evidence for the Two-Culture Model of Public Understanding of Science*
2022	Zain, A. and Long, J. (Under Review). *Countering State-Sponsored Misinformation: Testing the Effect of Social Media Labels on Message Credibility and Verification.*
2022	Zain, A. and Ciccarelli, C. (Under Review: R&R). *Political partisanship and belief in misinformation: operationalizing theory of planned behavior to predict intentions to quit social media.*

In-progress Projects

2022-2023	**Countering online misinformation: a mixed methods approach to assess efficacy of social media labels.**
	Led by: Ali Zain
	Current Stage: Data Collection

2021-2022	**Biometric responses and health outcomes of youth exposure to modified exposure claims for novel tobacco products with FDA authorization cues.**
	Led by: Dr. Jungmi Jun
	Current Stage: Manuscript Writing

2022	**This ad speaks to me: an investigation of mechanisms underlying social identity relevant advertising.**
	Led by: Dr. Taylor Wen
	Current Stage: Data Analysis

2022	**Anti-social disinformation on social media: the effects of information sources and message Framing.**
	Led by: Dr. Sei-Hill Kim
	Current Stage: Pre-test

2022	**Young adults' responses to the tobacco industry's corporate social responsibility communication.**
	Led by: Dr. Jungmi Jun
	Current Stage: Manuscript Writing

2022	**Exploring the role of emotions and moralization in diffusion of polarized information on Twitter and beyond.**
	Led by: Ali Zain
	Current Stage: Manuscript Writing

Professional Experience

2020 – Present	University of South Carolina (UofSC)	Graduate Research Assistant/Instructor of Record
2016 – 2017	Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan (AKFP)	Digital Media Strategist
2014 – 2016	Daily Pakistan (DP)	Content Editor

Teaching Interests

- Communication Theory
- Communication Research Methods
- Digital Media & Big Data Analysis
- Health Communication
- Strategic Communication
- Public Opinion & Political Communication
- Social Media Analytics & Research
- Communication & Persuasion

Teaching Experience

SP '21 '23, FA '22	JOUR 332 – Mass Communications Research	Teaching Assistant
SP '23	JOUR 715 – Strategic Communications Strategies	Teaching Assistant
SP '23	JOUR 772 – Health, Science and the Media	Teaching Assistant
FA '22	JOUR 705 – Strategic Communication Principles	Teaching Assistant

FA '22	JOUR 536 – Crisis Communication	Teaching Assistant
FA '21, SP 22	JOUR 220 – Account Planning: Mining Insights	Instructor of Record
FA '20 '21, SP '22	JOUR 533 – Public Relations Management	Teaching Assistant
FA '20 '21	JOUR 507 – Communicating Science, Health and the Environment	Teaching Assistant

Awards & Honors

2023
Breakthrough Graduate Scholars Award: For demonstrating phenomenal commitment to research and scholarly activity in doctoral studies (award ceremony to be held in January 2023)

2022
First Place Moeller Student Paper Award: For presenting "Moralization in Polarized Debate on COVID-19 Vaccination: Human-AI Collaborative Analysis of Tweets" at 105th annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) conference (including 250 USD cash prize and waiver of conference registration fee worth 200 USD)

2022
Top Student Paper Award: For presenting "Online endorsed misinformation and climate change: using heuristic cues to assess perceived credibility of messages and sharing intentions" at 47th annual conference of AEJMC Southeast Colloquium

2016
University Gold Medal: For securing highest CGPA in BS Communication Studies in the class of 2015

Grants & Scholarships

2020 – 2023
Mary Caldwell Graduate Scholarship: Graduate scholarship worth 9, 000 USD for the doctoral program at University of South Carolina

2022 – 2023
Junior Scholar Award: Training and research support worth 4, 500 USD awarded by South Carolina SmartState Center of Health Quality (CHQ)

2022
Mass Communication and Society Travel Grant: To attend 105th annual Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC) Conference in Detroit, MI (1, 000 USD)

2022
ICA 2022 Michael Haley Travel Grant: To attend 72nd International Communication Association Conference in Paris, France (400 USD)

2022
ICA 2022 Political Communication Division Travel Grant: To attend 72nd International Communication Association Conference in Paris, France (400 USD)

2019-2020
Research Grant by Hacettepe University: For the transnational study of China's Belt and Road Initiative (3, 200 USD)

2017-2020
Turkiye Graduate Scholarship: Fully funded scholarship for MA in Communication Sciences at Hacettepe University

2012-2015
PU Merit Scholarship: Awarded to 5 top-ranked students at University of the Punjab

Professional Training & Certifications

2022 – 2023
CHQ Junior Scholar Program: Extensive research traineeship offered by the SC SmartState Center for Health Quality to apply computational methods for research at the interaction of public health and social media

2022 – 2023
Publication Process & Peer Review Training: Certificate program offered by the Journal of Mass Communication Quarterly (JMCQ) focused on formal manuscript review process training

2022
Intercultural Inclusion and Diversity Learning Series: A series of training workshops, lectures, and activities focused on diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility

2022
SHARPGrads Certificate: The Skills, Habits, and Research Program for Graduate Students offered by the UofSC Digital Research Services and Research Computing Institute focused on training workshops on computing, textual analysis, programming, and visualization tools

2021	**Programming for Everybody:** online Coursera program offered by University of Michigan focused on python programming	
2021	**Citi Certificate on Human Research:** Training demonstration program for social and behavioral researchers offered by Citi Program	
2021	**HubSpot Social Media Maarketing:** Certificate program offered by the HubSpot Academy focused on social media monitoring, content strategy, social engagement, creating social media policies, and demonstrating social ROI	
2021	**Google Analytics:** Certificate program offered by the Google Analytics Academy focused on training demonstrations and activities to test online analytical skills	

RESEARCH SKILLS

• R/RStats	• BrandWatch	• NodeXL	• Deedose
• Python	• NVivo	• Advanced Excel	• SAS
• iMotions	• Qualtrics	• SEO	• Gephi

TALKS/GUEST LECTURES/MEDIA

2023	Using Information Processing Perspective to Counter Online Misinformation	BALL STATE UNIVERSITY
2022	Countries with lower-than-expected vaccination rates show unusually negative attitudes to vaccines on Twitter shorturl.at/cHMY5	THE CONVERSATION
2021	Use of new media technologies by populist right-wing political parties in India	HACETTEPE UNIVERSITY
2019	Ageing-friendly smartphones to overcome digital divide in aging societies	AKDENIZ UNIVERSITY
2017	Journalistic prospects of new media technologies	UNIVERSITY OF THE PUNJAB

SERVICE TO THE FIELD

2022-2023	Research & Scholarship Advisory Council (UofSC CIC)	MEMBER
2023	Public Understanding of Science (PUS)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Health Communication Division, International Communication Association (ICA)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Journalism Studies Division, International Communication Association (ICA)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Communication and Technology Division, International Communication Association (ICA)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	New Media & Society (NM+S)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Social Media & Society (SM+S)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	JMIR Medical Informatics (JMI)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Journal of Social Sciences (JSS)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	JMIR Formative Research (JFR)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Political Communication Division, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)	PEER REVIEWER
2022	Graduate Student Interest Group, Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication (AEJMC)	PEER REVIEWER
2021	Computational Communication Division, International Communication Association (ICA)	PEER REVIEWER

REFERENCES

Sei-Hill Kim   KIM96@MAILBOX.SC.EDU

Eleanor M. & R. Frank Mundy Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of South Carolina
803-777-7037

Jungmi Jun   JUNJ@MAILBOX.SC.EDU

Associate Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of South Carolina
803-576-5982

Mary Anne Fitzpatrick   FITZPATM@MAILBOX.SC.EDU

Educational Foundation Distinguished Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of South Carolina
803-777-4614

Taylor Jing Wen   JWEN2@MAILBOX.SC.EDU

Associate Professor
School of Journalism and Mass Communication
University of South Carolina
803-777-3312