Fake New - Effect of accuracy on social media sharing E3 (11/28/2017) (#6999)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?
No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?
Does prompting people to think about accuracy decrease the likelihood that they will be willing to share fake news on Facebook?

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
Participants will be asked "If you were to see the above article on Facebook, how likely would you be to share it?". Responses will be recorded on a 6-point scale from "Extremely unlikely" to "extremely likely".

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Participants will be in one of two conditions: 1) Control condition where they indicate whether they would share a set of 12 fake and 12 real news studies on Facebook, and 2) Treatment condition where they are first asked to indicate how accurate they think a news headline in (as part of a pretest) and, subsequently, indicate their willingness to share a set of 12 fake and 12 real news studies on Facebook (as in the control).

Half of each type (fake v. real) is Pro-Democratic and half is Pro-Republican. The fake and real news headlines were pretested to be equally partisan.

Those in the treatment condition will be first given either a fake or a real headline (both of which are neutral politically).

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
We will begin by testing for an interaction between a condition (0=control, 1=treatment) and a news type (0=fake, 1=real). We will then test for a simple effect of news type in each of the two conditions (the effect is predicted to be larger in Treatment). We will also test for a simple effect of condition for each of the two types of news (the effect is predicted to be larger for fake news).

All analyses will be performed at the level of the individual item (i.e. one data point per item per subject) using linear regression with robust standard errors clustered on subject.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
Participants have to indicate having a Facebook account to complete the study.

Those who indicate anything other than 'yes' on the following question will be removed from the analysis: "Would you ever consider sharing something political on Facebook? Yes/No/I don't use social media".

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.
1200 participants from Mechanical Turk

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
We will use item ratings from a pretest to investigate the item-level factors that determine sharing in the treatment vs. control conditions. Specifically, we have indices of partisanship, likelihood, familiarity (novelty), and funniness. We will predict sharing (again, at the level of the individual item using linear regression with robust standard errors clustered on subject) in a model with 2-way interactions between a Condition dummy of each of these 4 factors. Our key prediction is that the correlation with likelihood will be stronger in the treatment than the control.

We will investigate potential differences in the treatment effect for the 2 counterbalance conditions in the treatment. Specifically, it is possible that the treatment effect is larger when the initial item is fake rather than real (or vice versa).
We will explore whether the predicted treatment effect varies as a function of performance on the Cognitive Reflection Test (using a median split) and political ideology (forced choice between Democrat and Republican and/or Clinton and Trump). We will also look at the effect separately for politically concordant and discordant stimuli (concordant = Pro-Democrat items for Democrats/Clinton supporters, discordant = Pro-Republican items for Democrats/Clinton supporters. Vice versa for Republicans/Trump supporters).

Participants will also be asked: "How important is it to you that you only share news articles on Facebook if they are accurate?" and "How important do your Facebook 'friends' think it is to only share news articles on Facebook that are accurate?". They will respond to these questions on a 5-point scale from not at all important to extremely important. The order of the questions will be randomized, and the questions will be presented on separate pages. Following both of these questions, participants will complete an 8-item version of the Fear of Negative Evaluation scale. We will first check if responses to the importance of accuracy questions differ depending on which question was asked first, and differ across conditions. If responses differ depending on which was asked first, we will restrict our analyses to the first question asked of each participants. If responses do not differ across conditions (indicating this is a stable individual difference), we will investigate whether the predicted treatment effect varies across levels of self-reported importance of accuracy for social media (both individually and presumed concern for accuracy among friends), and will also check for evidence of a 3-way interaction between condition, concern for accuracy among friends, and fear of negative evaluation.