Fake News - Effect of accuracy on social media sharing E4 (4/30/2019) (#22839)

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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 four conditions: 1) Passive control condition where they indicate whether they would share a set of 12 fake and 12 real news studies on Facebook, 2) Active control condition where they are first given a headline (fake or real) and asked to rate how funny the headline is (as part of a pretest) before making sharing judgments (as in the control), 3) Treatment condition where they are first asked to indicate how accurate they think a news headline in (as part of a pretest) before making sharing judgments (as in the control), and 4) Treatment condition where they are first asked to indicate whether they agree it's important to only share accuracy news content on social media before making sharing judgments (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.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
We will begin by testing whether the active and passive control conditions differ by testing for main effect or interaction between condition (0=passive, 1=active) and a news type (0=fake, 1=real). If there are no significant differences, we will combine the two control conditions for subsequent analyses (the subsequent analysis is preregistered such that this is assumed, but if not the same analysis will be completed separately using the active and passive conditions as the control).
We will then test whether the two treatment conditions differ from the control condition(s) by testing for an interaction between condition (0=control, 1=treatment) and a news type (0=fake, 1=real) – this will be done separately for the two treatment conditions. 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 Lucid

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
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 and political ideology (Democrat versus Republican continuous scale). We will also look at the effect separately for politically concordant and discordant stimuli (concordant = Pro-Democrat items for Democrats, discordant = Pro-Republican items for Democrats. Vice versa for Republicans).