

The Power of Rumor Mill: How Rumors Shape Political Decision Making

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This project is a replication of Berinsky's study of political rumors surrounding the 2010 U.S. health care reform act. I re-examined the structure of the experimental design and re-analyzed the results generated by the survey experiment. [TBD]

JEL: A10, A11

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I. Experimental design

Berinsky conducted the survey experimental using a two wave online survey. From 17 - 19 May 2010, Berinsky performed a between subjects design experiment, in which the outcome is only measured post - treatment, online with a national sample of 1701 American adults. The second wave was administered to only 699 of the initial respondents from 25 - 29 May 2010. The experiment was conducted by Survey Sample International (SSI) - a U.S. based digital research business that offers survey sampling and related services for market survey research. The survey was constructed according to the the US adult population on education, gender, age, geography, and income.

A. Between vs. Within Subject Design

Widely used in Psychological studies, between-subject experimental designs are an experimental approach in which each subject is tested under one condition and only exposed to a single treatment. In Berinsky's experimental design, the survey respondents were randomly assigned to four different treatment groups and one control group and presented with the stories regarding the controversial 2010 ACA. The following table details the conditions which the survey respondents received,

different people test each condition, so that each person is only exposed to a single user interface.

Within-subjects (or repeated-measures) study design: the same person tests all the conditions (i.e., all the user interfaces).

Summary to examine the impact of the partisan identity of the provider of the rumor correction, Berinsky ran a between - subjects design experiment on In May 2010, two months after the passage of the ACA, I ran a between-subjects design experiment on an internet panel to test the efficacy of various corrective strategi

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TABLE 1—THE EXPERIMENTAL TREATMENTS AND CONTROL OF THE STUDY

	Condition	Description
1	Rumor	Rumor
2	Rumor and Correction	Rumor and correction
3	Rumor and Republican correction	Rumor and correction, Quote from Republican senator
4	Rumor and Democratic correction	Rumor and correction, quote from emocratic representative
5	Control	No experimeital conditions

Note: Table provides a brief description of the experimental design. See text for details.

Source: Table drawn on the original Berinsky(2017) article.

B. Treat and control conditions

How many respondents were assignmend to the treatment and control groups?
Respondents were randomly assigned to one of five conditions (the four experi-
mental treatments and the control)

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Sample figure:

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FIGURE 1. CAPTION FOR FIGURE BELOW.

Note: Figure notes without optional leadin.

Source: Figure notes with optional leadin (Source, in this case).

Sample table:

TABLE 2—CAPTION FOR TABLE ABOVE.

	Heading 1	Heading 2
Row 1	1	Rumor in the form of quotes endorsed by opponents
Row 2	3	4

Note: Table notes environment without optional leadin.

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