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Study 4: Accuracy and Social Motivations & Perceptions of (Mis)information (#97580)

Created: 05/19/2022 04:37 AM (PT)

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 a non-financial accuracy motivation manipulation increase belief in politically-incongruent true news?

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
Incongruent True News Score: The mean number of politically-incongruent true articles rated as accurate.
We will also calculate the following additional variables that we calculated in studies 1-3:

Fake news score: The mean perceived accuracy of 8 fake news items (4 Democrat and 4 Republican)
True news score: The mean perceived accuracy 8 true news items (4 Democrat and 4 Republican)
Truth discernment score: The true news score minus the fake news score.
Partisan bias score: The average perceived accuracy of politically-congruent items minus the average perceived accuracy of politically-incongruent items.

Note: while perceived accuracy is measured on a continuous scale within the survey, we will code it on a dichotomous scale for analysis, as we did in previous studies. We will also report results for the continuous scale as a robustness check.

For this specific study, we have added 4 additional misleading news headlines as stimuli. We will run the main analysis with the 16 original stimuli and conduct exploratory analysis with the 4 additional misleading headlines.

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
Participants will be assigned to a 1) financial accuracy motivation condition, 2) a non-financial accuracy motivation condition, and 3) a control condition.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
As in previous studies, we will use ANOVA to test whether the experimental condition, political-congruence, and veracity influences perceptions of news headlines.

We will follow up with a planned comparison to test our main hypothesis, which is that the non-financial accuracy motivation increases belief in politically-incongruent true news as compared to the control condition.

Secondarily, we will examine whether the non-financial accuracy motivation condition increases truth discernment and reduces partisan bias as compared to the control condition.

We will also add data from the financial accuracy motivation condition and control condition to our integrative data analysis.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
As in Studies 1-3, we will exclude participants who fail our bot check, our attention check, or say they were responding randomly.

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.
A power analysis conducted using G*Power indicates that we would need a sample size of 312 per condition to have 90% power to detect the smallest effect found in previous students (partisan bias, d = 0.26). We need a sample size of 97 per condition to detect our largest effect (incongruent true news, d = 0.47). Since we expect the effect of the non-financial accuracy motivation may be smaller than the effect of the financial accuracy motivation condition, we will primarily focus on belief in incongruent true news as our main outcome variable. We will recruit 1000 participants, as that allows us relatively high power and is within our budget. 500 participants will be Republicans and the other 500 will be Democrats, as defined by the online participant recruitment platform Prolific Academic.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
Nothing else to pre-register.