Gergo Gyori (gegy@itu.dk), BSc Data Science
Katalin Literati-Dobos (klit@itu.dk), BSc Data Science
Ludek Cizinsky (luci@itu.dk), BSc Data Science
Lukas Rasocha (lukr@itu.dk), BSc Data Science

Reflections on Data Science 2023

Social Study: Herding effect on Reddit

1 Introduction

Posts that achieve popularity on social media platforms, like Reddit, often outperform average posts significantly, which indicates a qualitative difference between popular posts and the rest. With this phenomenon an interesting question emerges: is the success of a post attributable to its inherent quality, or is it influenced by the herd effect? This social psychological behaviour that leads individuals to perceive an action as the appropriate course simply because it's what "everyone else" seems to be doing. This effect has already been documented in various studies such as [1] [2]. In this study we aim to investigate the herd effect on Reddit, more concretely, we want to find out to what extent does an initial upvote to a post influence its future score?

2 Experiment implementation

3 Results and discussion

Discuss your findings in light of the theories and concepts covered in the course (e.g., causality, experimental designs, extraneous variables, social influence, reproducibility, etc.)

Since we learned a bit too late about the vote fuzzing our experiment only recorded the overall score of the posts, while not looking at changing number of comments which might have been a better indication (no comment count fuzzing).

4 Conclusion

References

[1] Lev Muchnik, Sinan Aral, and Sean J. Taylor. Social influence bias: A randomized experiment. *Science*, 341(6146):647–651, 2013.

[2] Matthew J. Salganik, Peter Sheridan Dodds, and Duncan J. Watts. Experimental study of inequality and unpredictability in an artificial cultural market. *Science*, 311(5762):854–856, 2006.

[3] C.T. Bergstrom and J.D. West. *Calling Bullshit: The Art of Skepticism in a Data-Driven World*. Random House Publishing Group, 2020.