

# (Dis)information for Hire?

## Abstract from old study that should be updated

Amidst rampant concerns about disinformation, **social media influencers (SMIs)** can capitalize on their often enormous **outreach to spread false claims** among their followers. However, despite their sizable potential, the extent to which SMIs sow **discord and endorse false narratives** is uncharted territory. In this paper, we explore the scale at which **SMIs engage with misinformation**. We begin by **gathering posts from English-speaking influencers with over 500,000 followers on Instagram using CrowdTangle**. We then identify instances of **disputed content by (i) cross-referencing posts with verified false claims from Politifact, and (ii) manual fact-checking of a random sample of 1000 political posts**. This research is pioneering in providing empirical evidence on SMIs' participation in spreading falsehoods. Yet, we find that the concerns are exaggerated, as the involvement of SMIs in propagating false claims is minimal, with only 0.003% of the more than 1.3 million posts analyzed actually supporting statements flagged as disputed by Politifact.

## Data

- Instagram Posts from 2000 large entertainment accounts sampled from HypeAuditor, 2020-2023 ( `ct_combined_20-23.csv` )
- List of relevant accounts, i.e., excluding entertainment organizations such as sports clubs or movie studios ( `account_clusters.csv` )
- List of fake news sourced from Politifact and from Sacha's experiments

## Task

The Idea is basically to replicate the procedure proposed by [Choi and Ferrarra \(2024\)](#), probably without the fine-tuning of the LLM.