

GP.C: Literature Review

Project Group A

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We are studying the effects of humor on people's intentions to engage with science on social media. Specifically, we have a survey data set that was fielded among American adults in October 2018. The survey was conducted online and our group's codebook (see GP.B) contains the relevant questions that we will use for data analysis.

We decided to study the effects of humor because it has been used in science communication in several forms (e.g., a "Science Comedy Night" hosted by members of the American Association for the Advancement of Science) and has been recommended as an effective strategic tool for scientists to connect with public audiences (Baram-Tsabari & Lewenstein, 2013; Goodwin & Dahlstrom, 2014). We have listed our research question and the relevant literature below.

Will Americans who find science humor funny be more likely to engage with scientific content on social media?

- Investigations of humor as a strategy for communication have been primarily conducted in research on advertising and entertainment.
- For example, advertising professionals commonly assume that humor has a positive influence on ad-related outcomes (Madden & Weinberger, 1982).
- Research also shows that humor can have positive effects on attentiveness to and recall of messages (Blanc & Brigaud, 2014).
- Humor can also positively affect the likability of an a communicator (Wanzer et al., 1996).
- The use of humor in health communication shows that funny stories can increase the perceived severity of consequences among women, which decreased their intentions to engage in unprotected sex (Futefas & Nan, 2017).
- Moreover, a recent study found that humorous Facebook news posts have positive consequences for political participation (Matthes & Heiss, 2019).
- The evidence we have found so far leads us to think that our survey respondents who find science humor to be funny will be more likely to engage with scientific content on social media.

References

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