Fake news about brands:
Why do consumers share them and how can it be reduced?

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Overview

Fake news is defined as generating and spreading false stories disguised as credible news source(Silverman, 2017).

Based on Bem's (1972) self perception theory, we hypothesize that when consumers are exposed to fake news about brands, they don't have prior information about it. Hence, their attitude is weak or ambiguous. This attitude when moderated positively by credibility of the media through which the fake news gets disseminated and the consumer's trust on the brand reinforces the belief about the fake news. This reinforced belief influences consumers to share fake news about brands.

Our research aims to add novelty to the existing literature by **investigating moderating effect of rewards or recognitions to consumers** by brands as a solution to reduce sharing of brand fake news. We are still in the process of data collection and looking forward to extend our work to examine the effect of fake news in influencing consumer's purchase intention.

Brand fake news example

The Apple company is working and developing smart wedding rings, which connect with the couple's ring, and let them know everything about the spouse's trajectory and the places visited by him or her.
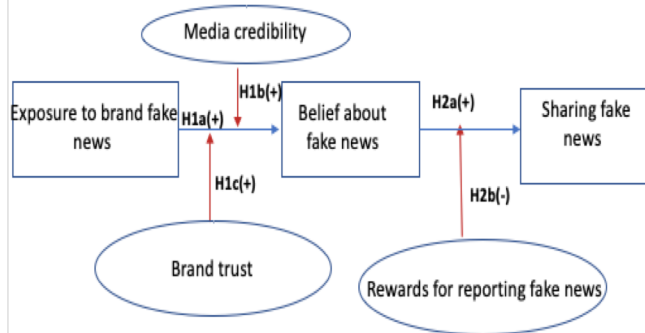
CNN — Live TV

Kellogg's spokesperson announces Rice Krispie mascot "Pop" is now a trans woman

By Helen Regan and Andrew Raine, CNN

Updated 2:35 a.m. ET, May 20, 2022

Conceptual diagram

Hypotheses

H₁ₐ: *Exposure to fake news about brands reinforces belief about the news*

H₁ᵦ: *Credibility of the media which publishes fake news about brands positively reinforces belief about the fake news*

H₁꜀: *Trust on the brand about which the fake news is published positively reinforces belief about the fake news*

H₂ₐ: *Belief on fake news has a positive effect on sharing the fake news*

H₂ᵦ: *Rewards/recognitions for communicating fake news to brands have a negative effect on sharing fake news*

Summary of Studies

			Conditions and status				
Study	**Subject Pool**	**Total Sample***	**Product category 1**	**Product category 2**	**Media: CNN**	**Media: Fox News**	**Status of Studies**
1A	MTurk	200	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	Ongoing
1B	MTurk	200	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	Ongoing
2A	University participants	150	🟢	🔴	🟢	🟢	Will begin soon
2B	University Participants	150	🔴	🟢	🟢	🟢	Will begin soon

*Min. sample size determined by g*power.   🟢 Involved   🔴 Not involved