

Radoslav Baltezarević*
Ivana Baltezarević**
Nenad Ravić***

UDK 659.113.2
UDK 316.776.23:004.773
DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2302026B
Original scientific paper
Received 15.03.2023
Approved 17.10.2023

CONFIRMATION BIAS IN DIGITAL COMMUNICATION: THE TENDENCY OF CONSUMERS TO FAVOR INFORMATION THAT CONFIRMS THEIR PRE-EXISTING BELIEFS¹

Summary: *Certain members of society, who are characterized by overconfidence, a relatively low level of knowledge, and a high level of misinformation or incomplete information, tend to selectively choose information from real life or the digital environment, in order to confirm their earlier incorrect beliefs. This phenomenon, known as “confirmation bias”, is widely recognized in every society and mainly occurs in political discussions (by self-proclaimed “political analysts”), but also in discussions on the topic of global conspiracy theories. This kind of phenomenon is increasingly present in digital communication among consumers. Such individuals unfoundedly influence their followers (via electronic word of mouth or writing inaccurate reviews) by favoring one product or service over competing ones with baseless, truncated information or misinformation. Spreading misinformation in the digital environment can have very dangerous consequences. There are a large number of practical examples in which the spread of misinformation led to riots in the streets and violent behavior that even caused deaths.*

Keywords: *Confirmation Bias, Consumers, Digital Environment.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Humans are selective information consumers that interpret information differently based on how it corresponds to their preexisting ideas.² In today's society, societal expectations

* Professor, Faculty of Business Studies, Megatrend University, Belgrade; r.baltezarevic@gmail.com

** Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Megatrend University, Belgrade; ivana.baltezarevic@gmail.com

*** Associate Professor, Faculty of Business Economics and Entrepreneurship, Belgrade; nenad.ravic@vspep.edu.rs

¹ Rad je rezultat projekta Pravnog fakulteta: FPMIRS Znanjem do integrisanja u društvene i ekonomske tokove.

² Flaxman, S., Goel, S. & Rao, J. (2016): Filter Bubbles, Echo Chambers, and Online News Consumption, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 80, Issue S1, 2016, Pages 298–320.

and norms may cause people to act in a conformist manner in an effort to avoid social exclusion.³ Customers are prone to evaluate new information in terms of how logically it fits with their existing views. Confirmation bias is a psychological phenomena that helps explain why people often take information at face value that supports their prior conceptions and ignore evidence that contradicts those beliefs.⁴

People will almost certainly select only those factors that support their desired thoughts and will not take into consideration other (actual) facts, since they are unable to fully comprehend the complexity of a problem. When it happens, the psychological phenomenon known as dissonance can make a person feel extremely uncomfortable.⁵ People who are characterized by overconfidence are difficult to dissuade from their unargued beliefs, even when faced with indisputable facts, out of a simple need to defend their confidence, but also because they are generally completely unaware of their ignorance.⁶ Overconfidence brought on by the confirmation bias process could cause someone to believe something that is more likely to be false than true.⁷ In order to feel more confident about their biased viewpoints, people frequently look for social media sites that reflect their attitudes and ideas.⁸ Social media platforms are used to spread rumors, false information, and other types of misinformation, all of which not only alarm the public and endanger their physical and mental health, but also pose serious problems for governance and the stability of social order.⁹

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Our own experiences shape how we perceive the world, as a result, we seek out evidence that supports our beliefs and interpret events and information in a way that supports those

³ Baltezarević, R. (2022): Uloga normativnog konformizma u digitalnom okruženju u kreiranju stavova potrošača prema luksuznim brendovima, *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, № 1, 177-188 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2201177B.

⁴ More about: Ting, W.C. & Song, G. S. (2017): What lies beneath the truth: A literature review on fake news, false information and more. Institute of Policy Studies.

⁵ Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, I. (2022): Selective exposure in political communication. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, № 3, 2022: 303-315 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2203303B

⁶ Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, I. (2021): Daning-Krugerov efekat: Uticaj iskrivljene realnosti na percepciju potrošača prema luksuznim brendovima. *Baština*, Vol. 31 sv. 55, pp. 237-253 doi: 10.5937/bastina31-33832

⁷ More about: Ofir, C. & Simonson, I. (2006): The Effect of Stating Expectations on Customer Satisfaction and Shopping Experience. In: Research Paper Series, Stanford Graduate School of Business.

⁸ Nikolov, D., Lalmas, M., Flammini, A. & Menczer, F. (2019): Quantifying biases in online information exposure. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 70(3), 218–229.

⁹ Lazer, D., Baum, M. & Benkler, Y. et al. (2018): The science of fake news, *Science*, vol. 359, no. 6380, pp. 1094–1096.

beliefs.¹⁰ Confirmation biases can be intentional or unintentional, but typically they indicate a less overt, less conscious approach to developing biased arguments. It mainly refers to unintentional bias in the collection and application of evidence.¹¹ By the methods they use, confirmation bias studies can be divided into five groups: those that look at self-reported bias, ideological bias, party bias, news bias, and content bias.¹² One can avoid using their own cognitive resources (such checking the accuracy of the information they forward) by imitating the habits of role models and like-minded others. Evidence suggests that under time constraints, its use intensifies.¹³

People's perception of and belief in incorrect information is influenced by individual-level cognitive and socio-psychological aspects, according to a psychological perspective.¹⁴ Confirmation bias is caused by one's memory and desire to recollect information when pursuing a desired goal.¹⁵ Individuals frequently give in to their own prejudices while processing information they come across, as opposed to doing it in a logical, unbiased, and objective manner. People consequently have a propensity to instinctively and unquestioningly seek out information that supports their preexisting view while dismissing contrary information, regardless of its veracity.¹⁶ In the face of contradictory data, people are compelled to stand by their ideas in order to maintain group identity and membership. This contributes to the understanding of why certain people are more likely than others to accept erroneous information.¹⁷ The bias is regarded to be not only epistemically problematic, but also a pervasive and built-in aspect of the mind, present in both every day and abstract thinking tasks regardless of people's IQ, cognitive ability, or willingness to avoid it.¹⁸

Failure to properly evaluate data, issues, opportunities, and viable strategies leads to confirmation bias. Groupthink arises when members of extremely cohesive groups are under pressure to accept decisions made by the group without inquiry and to do so without

-
- ¹⁰ Flaxman, S., Goel, S. & Rao, J. (2016): Filter Bubbles, Echo Chambers, and Online News Consumption, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 80, Issue S1, 2016, P.P. 298–320.
- ¹¹ Nickerson, R.S. (1998): Confirmation bias: a ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 175-220.
- ¹² Johnson, T. J. & Kaye, B. K. (2013): The dark side of the boon? Credibility, selective exposure and the proliferation of online sources of political information. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29, 1862-1871. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.011
- ¹³ Buckert, M., Oechssler, J. & Schwieren, C. (2017): Imitation under stress. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, vol. 139, pp. 252–266, 2017.
- ¹⁴ More about: Ting, W.C. & Song, G. S. (2017): What lies beneath the truth: A literature review on fake news, false information and more. Institute of Policy Studies.
- ¹⁵ Bornstein, R.F. & D'Agostino, P. (1992): Stimulus recognition and the mere exposure effect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 63, pp. 545-552.
- ¹⁶ Flanagin, A. J. & Metzger, M. J. (2000): Perceptions of Internet information credibility. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, 515–540.
- ¹⁷ Flynn, D. J., Nyhan, B. & Reifler, J. (2017): The Nature and origins of misperceptions: Understanding false and unsupported beliefs about politics. *International Society of Political Psychology*.
- ¹⁸ Stanovich, K., West, R. & Toplak, M. (2013): Myside bias, rational thinking, and intelligence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 259–264.
-

exercising critical thought. A kind of groupthink outside the group is confirmation bias.¹⁹ Confirmation bias develops whenever there is a discrepancy in people's behavior or attitudes. People attempt to alter the behavior or attitude of others or, occasionally, accept an existing conviction about something in order to remove the dissonance. The problem with this occurrence is that these views didn't have a solid basis.²⁰ Confirmation bias will be less pronounced when people lose certainty and become more unsure about their initial ideas. This is because they will feel less psychological pain when confronted with contradictory evidence.²¹

Internet users frequently use heuristics when faced with an abundance of information on social media, in part because they lack the tools to digest the information overload completely and objectively.²² According to 68% of people, sharing content on social media helps others get to know them and their interests. The majority of individuals (almost 80%) share content, though, since it keeps them socially linked. When people respond favorably to what they share on social media, 62% of respondents claim that they feel better about themselves.²³ When deciding which products to buy, consumers frequently consult online reviews to evaluate various product characteristics. 89% of consumers worldwide check product reviews before making a purchase.²⁴ According to a recent survey, 65.4% of respondents use social networks to promote products and services.²⁵ It comes as no surprise that some vendors try to generate false reviews, and it has been demonstrated that these biased reviews have an impact on consumer choice.²⁶

Not all online recommendations have the same impact. The persuasiveness of product recommendations varies depending on where they are published and whether the website

-
- 19 Gatlin, K., Cooley, L. & Garland Elam, A. (2019): Confirmation Bias: Does It Vary By Culture Or Education Level? *International Journal of Business Marketing and Management (IJBMM)*, Volume 4 Issue 2, P.P. 40-43.
- 20 Serva, M., Benamati, J. & Fuller, M. (2005): Trustworthiness in B2C e-commerce: an examination of alternative models. *ACM SIGMIS Database: the DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems*, 36(3), pp. 89-108.
- 21 Hart, W., Albarracín, D., Eagly, A.H., Brechan, I., Lindberg, M.J. & Merrill, L. (2009): Feeling validated versus being correct: A meta-analysis of selective exposure to information. *Psych. Bull.* 135(4):555-588.
- 22 Swire, B., Ecker, U. K. & Lewandowsky, S. (2017): The role of familiarity in correcting inaccurate information. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 43(12), 1948-196.
- 23 Seiter, C. (2016): The Psychology of Social Media: Why We Like, Comment, and Share Online. Available at: <https://buffer.com/resources/psychology-of-social-media/>
- 24 Trustpilot (2020): 4 Things Every Business Owner Should Know about the State of Reviews. Available at: <https://uk.business.trustpilot.com/reviews/build-trustedbrand/4-things-every-business-owner-should-know-about-the-state-of-reviews?>
- 25 Ravić, N., Baltezarević, R. & Radić, N. (2022): Istraživanje upotrebe digitalnog marketinga u malim i srednjim preduzećima u Republici Srbiji. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, No 2, 2022: 1-12 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2202001R
- 26 Park, S., Shin, W. & Xie, J. (2021): The Fateful First Consumer Review. *Marketing Science*, 40(3), 481-507.

is affiliated with businesses or manufacturers or not. Even though recommendations from independent consumers were found to be the most effective, however, the study found that these were viewed as less reliable than those from human expertise.²⁷ Consumers may be subject to pre-decision conformation bias, which occurs when they skew information in favor of the products they ultimately intend to select.²⁸ In a digital context, lower consensus makes consumers less certain of their initial beliefs and less confidence in the reliability of average ratings. As a result, when the product's rating dispersion is greater it is reasonable to anticipate that confirmation bias will be lessened.²⁹ Through publishing, re-sharing, commenting, tagging, and re-tweeting, social media allows for individuals and organizations to play a role (influencers) in the distribution of information.³⁰

Micro and macro influencers are common on social media today, or at least those who identify as such. Their primary duty is to represent and recommend brands to their followers, so influencing customer perceptions and consumers' purchasing decisions.³¹ The disadvantage of this type of sanctioned information exchange is that customers are exposed to 'filtered' information.³² This exposure raises the possibility of false information spreading on the social media site.³³

Misinformation manifests itself in the context of social interaction. It typically refers to information that is disseminated widely without a factual basis, validation, or clarification, whether on purpose or accidentally.³⁴ Internet users have the ability to flood social media sites with thousands of critical comments, post unfavorable reviews, make embarrassing memes, and engage in forum discussions. This form of communication can quickly spiral out of hand and spread like wildfire.³⁵ Social media's false content has given rise to extreme

²⁷ Senecal, S., Kalczyński, P.J. & Nantel, J. (2005): Consumers' decision-making process and their online shopping behavior: a clickstream analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(11), pp.1599–1608.

²⁸ Mondal, T., Pramanik, P., Bhattacharya, I., Boral, N. & Ghosh, S. (2018): Analysis and early detection of rumors in a post disaster scenario. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 20(5), 961–979.

²⁹ Petrocelli, J.V., Tormala, Z.L. & Rucker, D.D. (2007): Unpacking attitude certainty: Attitude clarity and attitude correctness. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 92(1):30–41.

³⁰ Shin, J., & Thorson, K. (2017): Partisan selective sharing: The biased diffusion of fact-checking messages on social media. *Journal of Communication*, 67(2), 233–255.

³¹ Kwiatek, P., Baltezarević, R., Papakonstantinidis, S. (2021): The impact of credibility of influencers recommendations on social media on consumers behavior towards brands. *Informatologia*. Vol. 54 No. 3-4, 181-196

³² Fisher, D. R., Waggle, J. & Leifeld, P. (2013): Where does political polarization come from? Locating polarization within the US climate change debate. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(1), 70–92.

³³ Chaxel, A.S., Russo, J. & Kerimi, N. (2013): Preference-Driven Biases in Decision Makers' Information Search and Evaluation, *Judgment and Decision Making*, 8(5), 561-576.

³⁴ Søre, S. O. (2017): Algorithmic detection of misinformation and disinformation: gricean perspectives. *Journal of Documentation*, vol. 74, no. 2, pp. 309–332, 2017.

³⁵ Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, V. (2022): The influence of digital political communication supported by neuromarketing methods on consumer perception towards a tourist destination. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, No 2, P.P. 13-34 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2202013B

circumstances. For instance, when information about Covid-19 and the effects of vaccination was shared online, some people chose not to get the shot, which stoked fears of another Covid-19 variant and slowed the spread of vaccination.³⁶ In some other cases, fake content on social media has led to riots, violence, and even deaths.³⁷ Sometimes misinformation in the digital environment can be reposted countless times by users, thus creating a viral effect. Viral effect is the rapid spread of messages throughout the online world. In this manner, a lot of users might receive the message in just a short period of time.³⁸ Findings imply that the online message's high virality metrics had an impact on the effectiveness of its persuasive effects.³⁹

Because anonymous users and communication are made possible by the Internet, people are compelled to be more hostile than they otherwise would be. This cyber-psychological phenomenon is built on a perception of immunity and freedom from social norms, both of which drive online speakers to act out their worst impulses.⁴⁰ This behavior was also previously observed in the Stanford prison experiment, undertaken by Philip Zimbardo, demonstrated how secrecy in groups can result in increasing hostility and even cruel behavior.⁴¹ Social media encourages the appearance of large numbers, such as the quantity of "likes," "shares," and "retweets" a post has received. This increases the possibility of confirmation bias by encouraging users to overestimate the number of people who share their viewpoint. On the other hand, a large number of digital content sharing helps individuals to make a decision to engage in the reposting of that content (whether it is accurate or not), because a large number means for them that such information is supported by the majority, and that they will not be confronted with social condemnation. Therefore, the decision to leave digital anonymity is made only due to the certainty that their activity will be characterized as justified by the society.

According to the Bandwagon effect, people tend to act in ways that are popular with the majority of people in order to get attention or win praise.⁴² Furthermore, according to the

³⁶ India Today (2021): Fake news on social media leads to vaccine hesitancy in parts of Kolkata. Available at: <https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/kolkata/story/fake-news-social-media-vaccine-hesitancy-kolkata-1810021-2021-06-02>.

³⁷ LATimes (2019): 'Fake news' has killed Nigerians. Can a bill stop the violence? Available at: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2019-12-24/la-fg-nigeria-fake-news-bill>.

³⁸ Baltezarević, R., Baltezarević, I. & Kwiatak, P. (2016): Impact of viral marketing on consumer's attitudes towards brands: In the Internet as a Tool of Modern Business and Communication. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing. pp.106-128. ISBN 978-3-330-01350-6.

³⁹ Alhabash, S., Chiang, Y. H. & Huang, K. (2014): MAM & U&G in Taiwan: Differences in the uses and gratifications of Facebook as a function of motivational reactivity. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 35, 423–430.

⁴⁰ More about: Solove, D. (2007): *The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and the Privacy on the Internet*. London: Yale University Press.

⁴¹ More about: Zimbardo, P. (2013): *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*. New York City: New York Random House.

⁴² Simon, H. A. (1954): Bandwagon and underdog effects and the possibility of election predictions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 18(3), 245–253.

theory of reasoned action, a person's behavior will be influenced if they think that most people are in favor of a particular behavior.⁴³ For some people, being silent because of opposing opinions is an escape mode from the communication process to avoid conflict and reduce tension.⁴⁴ According to the "spiral of silence" theory, people want to escape the social rejection they think will come from speaking out against the majority. People attempt to gauge popular sentiment and form a "quasi-statistical sense" of the prevailing consensus, but this perception mainly depends on media signals.⁴⁵

People publish information in the expectation of receiving favorable feedback in order to increase self-esteem and experience a sense of belonging in their social circles. Anxiety and melancholy can be brought on by missed opportunities. When people find out they aren't included in an activity online, it might damage their emotions, feelings, and even their physical health. According to research, the relationship between the mind and the gut can cause melancholy and anxiety to manifest as nausea, headaches, tense muscles, and tremors.⁴⁶ Additionally, social media encourages a culture of social comparison, where people assess their own online presence in relation to that of others. If people believe that others are more successful, well-liked, or attractive than they are, it might have an effect on how they view themselves and cause them to feel inadequate or inferior.⁴⁷

3. CONCLUSION

Confirmation bias, as an effect that occurs when people want to confirm their prior beliefs, which are usually incorrect, occurs in both real and digital environments. With the development of information and communication technologies, the possibility of simple and faster communication was given, which made this phenomenon appear more and more often (or became more obvious). Confirmation bias stems from an imposed social expectation, where the individual is forced to conformist behavior, so as not to be characterized as a dissenter, an intruder, and as such ostracized from a group that has built its identity with the help of misinformation. This effect spilled over into digital communication in a virtual environment among consumers. By tententiously writing inaccurate reviews, electronic word of mouth, or reposting misinformation about products and/or services, consumers engage in communication that helps them not feel melancholy and anxious about possible social

⁴³ More about: Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1977): Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. Addison Wesley.

⁴⁴ Baltezarević, R., Kwiatek, P., Baltezarević, B. & Baltezarević, V. (2022): The meaning of silence in personal communication: spiral of silence or a stimulant of creativity?. *Creativity Studies*, 15(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2022.11374>

⁴⁵ Noelle-Neumann, E. (1974): The Spiral of Silence A Theory of Public Opinion. *Journal of Communication*, 24(2), pp. 43–51. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00367.x.

⁴⁶ Mclean hospital (2023): The Social Dilemma: Social Media and Your Mental Health. Available at: <https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/it-or-not-social-medias-affecting-your-mental-health>

⁴⁷ Chhetri, G. (2023): The Influence of Social Media: How Likes and Follows Impact Our Behaviors. Available: <https://computenepal.com/influence-of-social-media/>

ostracism. When an individual is unsure of the outcome of expressing his views, he decides to be silent, because according to the “spiral silence” theory, he avoids the feeling of tension and the possibility of conflict in this way. If the digital content, whether it is relevant or not, is supported by the majority (a large number of likes or repeated posts) it is a positive signal to the individual that he can come out of digital anonymity and join the group. Unfortunately, it is difficult to convince people that they are wrong in their beliefs, even when faced with the facts. In general, the consequences of this spread of misinformation negatively affect society and its security, while in a business sense, it harms the business of companies whose brands are desecrated by malicious and distorted information spread by consumers without a high level of credibility in the specific field.

LITERATURE

- Alhabash, S., Chiang, Y. H. & Huang, K. (2014): MAM & U&G in Taiwan: Differences in the uses and gratifications of Facebook as a function of motivational reactivity. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 35, 423–430.
- Baltezarević, R., Baltezarević, I. & Kwiatek, P. (2016): Impact of viral marketing on consumer`s attitudes towards brands: In the Internet as a Tool of Modern Business and Communication. Saarbrücken, Germany: Lap Lambert Academic Publishing. pp. 106-128. ISBN 978-3-330-01350-6.
- Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, I. (2021): Daning-Krugerov efekat: Uticaj iskrivljene realnosti na percepciju potrošača prema luksuznim brendovima. *Baština*, Vol. 31 sv. 55, pp. 237-253 doi: 10.5937/bastina31-33832
- Baltezarević, R., Kwiatek, P., Baltezarević, B. & Baltezarević, V. (2022): The meaning of silence in personal communication: spiral of silence or a stimulant of creativity?. *Creativity Studies*, 15(1), 58–73. <https://doi.org/10.3846/cs.2022.11374>
- Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, V. (2022): The influence of digital political communication supported by neuromarketing methods on consumer perception towards a tourist destination. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, No 2, P.P. 13-34 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2202013B
- Baltezarević, R. (2022): Uloga normativnog konformizma u digitalnom okruženju u kreiranju stavova potrošača prema luksuznim brendovima, *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, № 1, 177-188 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2201177B.
- Baltezarević, R. & Baltezarević, I. (2022): Selective exposure in political communication. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, № 3, 2022: 303-315 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2203303B
- Bornstein, R.F. & D’Agostino, P. (1992): Stimulus recognition and the mere exposure effect. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 63, pp. 545-552.
- Buckert, M., Oechssler, J. & Schwieren, C. (2017): Imitation under stress. *Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization*, vol. 139, pp. 252–266, 2017.
- Chaxel, A.S., Russo, J. & Kerimi, N. (2013): Preference-Driven Biases in Decision Makers’ Information Search and Evaluation, *Judgment and Decision Making*, 8(5), 561-576.
- Chhetri, G. (2023): The Influence of Social Media: How Likes and Follows Impact Our Behaviors. Available: <https://computenepal.com/influence-of-social-media/>
- Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1977): Belief, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. Addison-Wesley.

- Fisher, D. R., Waggle, J. & Leifeld, P. (2013): Where does political polarization come from? Locating polarization within the US climate change debate. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 57(1), 70–92.
- Flanagin, A. J. & Metzger, M. J. (2000): Perceptions of Internet information credibility. *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 77, 515–540.
- Flaxman, S., Goel, S. & Rao, J. (2016): Filter Bubbles, Echo Chambers, and Online News Consumption, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 80, Issue S1, 2016, Pages 298–320.
- Flynn, D. J., Nyhan, B. & Reifler, J. (2017): The Nature and origins of misperceptions: Understanding false and unsupported beliefs about politics. *International Society of Political Psychology*.
- Gatlin, K., Cooley, L. & Garland Elam, A. (2019): Confirmation Bias: Does It Vary By Culture Or Education Level? *International Journal of Business Marketing and Management (IJBMM)*, Volume 4 Issue 2, P.P. 40-43.
- Hart, W., Albarracín, D., Eagly, A.H., Brechan, I., Lindberg, M.J. & Merrill, L. (2009): Feeling validated versus being correct: A meta-analysis of selective exposure to information. *Psych. Bull.* 135(4):555–588.
- India Today (2021): Fake news on social media leads to vaccine hesitancy in parts of Kolkata. Available at: <https://www.indiatoday.in/cities/kolkata/story/fake-news-social-media-vaccine-hesitancy-kolkata-1810021-2021-06-02>.
- Johnson, T. J. & Kaye, B. K. (2013): The dark side of the boon? Credibility, selective exposure and the proliferation of online sources of political information. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 29, 1862-1871. doi: 10.1016/j.chb.2013.02.011
- Kwiatek, P., Baltezarević, R., Papakonstantinidis, S. (2021): The impact of credibility of influencers recommendations on social media on consumers behavior towards brands. *Informatologia*. Vol. 54 No. 3-4, 181-196.
- LATimes (2019): ‘Fake news’ has killed Nigerians. Can a bill stop the violence? Available at: <https://www.latimes.com/world-nation/story/2019-12-24/la-fg-nigeria-fake-news-bill>.
- Lazer, D., Baum, M. & Benkler, Y. et al. (2018): The science of fake news, *Science*, vol. 359, no. 6380, pp. 1094–1096.
- Mclean hospital (2023): The Social Dilemma: Social Media and Your Mental Health. Available at: <https://www.mcleanhospital.org/essential/it-or-not-social-medias-affecting-your-mental-health>
- Mondal, T., Pramanik, P., Bhattacharya, I., Boral, N. & Ghosh, S. (2018): Analysis and early detection of rumors in a post disaster scenario. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 20(5), 961–979.
- Nickerson, R.S. (1998): Confirmation bias: a ubiquitous phenomenon in many guises. *Review of General Psychology*, Vol. 2 No. 2, pp. 175-220.
- Nikolov, D., Lalmas, M., Flammini, A. & Menczer, F. (2019): Quantifying biases in online information exposure. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology*, 70(3), 218–229.
- Noelle-Neumann, E. (1974): The Spiral of Silence A Theory of Public Opinion. *Journal of Communication*, 24(2), pp. 43–51. doi: 10.1111/j.1460-2466.1974.tb00367.x.

- Ofir, C. & Simonson, I. (2006). The Effect of Stating Expectations on Customer Satisfaction and Shopping Experience. In: Research Paper Series, Stanford Graduate School of Business.
- Park, S., Shin, W. & Xie, J. (2021): The Fateful First Consumer Review. *Marketing Science*, 40(3), 481-507.
- Petrocelli, J.V., Tormala, Z.L. & Rucker, D.D. (2007): Unpacking attitude certainty: Attitude clarity and attitude correctness. *J. Personality Soc. Psych.* 92(1):30-41.
- Ravić, N., Baltezarević, R. & Radić, N. (2022): Istraživanje upotrebe digitalnog marketinga u malim i srednjim preduzećima u Republici Srbiji. *Megatrend revija*, Vol. 19, No 2, 2022: 1-12 DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2202001R
- Shin, J., & Thorson, K. (2017): Partisan selective sharing: The biased diffusion of fact-checking messages on social media. *Journal of Communication*, 67(2), 233-255.
- Seiter, C. (2016): The Psychology of Social Media: Why We Like, Comment, and Share Online. Available: <https://buffer.com/resources/psychology-of-social-media/>
- Senecal, S., Kalczynski, P.J. & Nantel, J. (2005): Consumers' decision-making process and their online shopping behavior: a clickstream analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 58(11), pp.1599-1608.
- Serva, M., Benamati, J. & Fuller, M. (2005): Trustworthiness in B2C e-commerce: an examination of alternative models. *ACM SIGMIS Database: the DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems*, 36(3), pp. 89-108.
- Simon, H. A. (1954): Bandwagon and underdog effects and the possibility of election predictions. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 18(3), 245-253.
- Søre, S. O. (2017): Algorithmic detection of misinformation and disinformation: gricean perspectives. *Journal of Documentation*, vol. 74, no. 2, pp. 309-332, 2017.
- Solove, D. (2007): *The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and the Privacy on the Internet*. London: Yale University Press.
- Stanovich, K., West, R. & Toplak, M. (2013): Myside bias, rational thinking, and intelligence. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 22, 259-264.
- Swire, B., Ecker, U. K. & Lewandowsky, S. (2017): The role of familiarity in correcting inaccurate information. *Journal of Experimental Psychology: Learning, Memory, and Cognition*, 43(12), 1948-196.
- Ting, W.C. & Song, G. S. (2017): *What lies beneath the truth: A literature review on fake news, false information and more*. Institute of Policy Studies.
- Trustpilot (2020): 4 Things Every Business Owner Should Know about the State of Reviews. Available at: <https://uk.business.trustpilot.com/reviews/build-trustedbrand/4-things-every-business-owner-should-know-about-the-state-of-reviews?>
- Zimbardo, P. (2013): *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil*. New York City: New York Random House.

Radoslav Baltezarević
Ivana Baltezarević
Nenad Ravić

UDK 659.113.2
UDK 316.776.23:004.773
DOI: 10.5937/MegRev2302026B
Original scientific paper
Received 15.03.2023
Approved 17.10.2023

PRISTRASNOST POTVRĐIVANJA U DIGITALNOJ KOMUNIKACIJI: SKLONOST POTROŠAČA DA FAVORIZUJU INFORMACIJE KOJE POTVRĐUJU NJIHOVA VEĆ POSTOJEĆA UVERENJA

Sažetak: *Pojedini pripadnici društva, za koje je karakteristično da imaju preterano samopouzdanje, relativno nizak nivo znanja, a raspoložu visokim nivoom dezinformacija ili nepotpunih informacija, imaju tendenciju da selektivno biraju informacije iz realnog života ili digitalnog okruženja, kako bi potvrdili svoja ranija netačna ubeđenja. Ova pojava, poznata kao „Pristrasnost potvrđivanja“, je široko prepoznata u svakom društvu i uglavnom se javlja u političkim diskusijama (samoproklamovanih „političkih analitičara“), ali i u raspravama na temu globalnih teorija zavere. Sve češće je ovakva pojava prisutna i u digitalnoj komunikaciji među potrošačima. Ovakve individue neosnovano, okrnjenim informacijama ili dezinformacijama utiču na svoje pratiocе (elektronskom usmenom predajom ili pisanjem netačnih recenzija) favorizovanjem jednog proizvoda ili usluge u odnosu na konkurentske. Faktor koji pojačava efekat pristrasnosti potvrđivanja je uticaj društva, gde je pojedinac prinuđen da prihvati ovakve ideje i da se uključi u ovakvu komunikaciju, kako ne bi bio izopšten iz grupe. Širenje dezinformacija u digitalnom okruženju može imati veoma opasne posledice. Veliki je broj primera iz prakse u kojima je širenje dezinformacija dovelo do nemira na ulicama i nasilničkog ponašanja koje je čak prouzrokovalo smrtne slučajeve.*

Ključne reči: *Pristrasnost potvrđivanja, Potrošači, Digitalno okruženje.*