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Tinius Digest report on changes, trends and developments within the media business at large.

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Problematic News Consumption may be harmful

An American study of problematic news consumption finds a correlation between consumption and mental and physical ill-being. Be aware: the study does not conclude on potential causation.

[Download the report.](#)

Four main findings:

1. High alert – all the time

Witnessing negative news on a 24-hour news cycle might bring about a constant state of high alert, kicking people's surveillance motives into overdrive as the world becomes dark and dangerous. This triggers a need to obtain more information—and the vicious circle continues.

2. Mental and physical issues

The greater the consumption of negative news, the higher the proportion struggled with mental and physical disorders. The association is significant even after controlling for demographics, personality traits and general news use.

3. Anxiety and stress

73.6 percent of those with the highest problematic news consumption reported psychological challenges—including stress, anxiety, concentration problems and exhaustion. In the rest of the population, the proportion is eight percent.

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61 percent of those with the highest news consumption also reported physical challenges – including body pain and digestion problems. In the rest of the population, the proportion is 6.1 percent.

Short videos improve resilience against misinformation

Google, the University of Cambridge, the University of Bristol and the University of Western Australia has published a comprehensive study about resilience against misinformation on social media.

[Download the study.](#)

Four main findings:

1. 'Vaccinated' against misinformation

Five short videos were enough to inoculate people against manipulation techniques commonly used in misinformation: emotionally manipulative language, incoherence, false dichotomies, scapegoating, and ad hominem attacks.

2. Clear effects

The direct effect of the study shows that the participants improved manipulation technique recognition, boosted confidence in spotting these techniques, increased people's ability to discern

trustworthy from untrustworthy content, and improved the quality of their sharing decisions.

3. Politically neutral

The effects are robust across the political spectrum and various covariates.

4. Confirms established theory

The study thus confirms the theory of psychological vaccination (psychological inoculation), which 'strengthens resistance to future unacceptable counterarguments'.

Social media reduces overall political news gaps

Subscription platform Piano has published their Subscription Performance Benchmark Report 2022.

[Read the report.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Stable news consumption gaps

News consumption gaps are either stable or converge throughout the campaign. The effect is significant over variables such as gender, age, education, and political interest.

2. Social media reduces overall gaps

The study finds that social media provides political information to groups that use traditional media channels the least, thereby reducing overall gaps in political media consumption.

3. Conclusion

The researchers conclude: 'In this way, to some extent, election campaigns equalize inequalities in political news consumption when it matters the most.'

Employees don't know if they are being monitored

The Norwegian Data Protection Authority has surveyed employees' knowledge about surveillance and monitoring at the workplace.

[Download the report.](#)

Four main findings:

1. More accessible technology

Monitoring at the workplace is becoming increasingly more accessible. Emails, browsing history and use of work phones are more traditional monitoring. Now Google, Microsoft and Zoom also offer additional functions that allow employers to monitor their employees' digital activities.

2. Most employees unaware of monitoring

55 percent of employees respond that they have 'little', 'very little' or 'not at all' an overview of what information employers collect about them.

3. Worrying numbers

The Norwegian Data Protection Authority believes the figures are worrying and may 'indicate that digital work tools record such large amounts of information that it can be challenging for employees to keep track'.

4. Indication of surveillance

Seven percent of employees respond that they have indications that the employer has monitored, or is monitoring, which websites they visit. Three percent have also seen signs that the employer has taken invasive measures (inspection of email, logging of keyboard use or screen recording). 14 percent have used software that measures their productivity.

Temperature impacts hate speech online

The Lancet has published a study looking into the impact of the weather on digital hate speech. The study includes four billion geolocated tweets from the US from 2014 to 2020.

[Download the study.](#)

Four main findings:

1. The ideal temperature

The fewest hateful tweets are published when the temperature outside is between 12 and 21 degrees Celsius.

2. Extreme temperatures = extreme speech

When the thermometer passes 40 degrees celsius, the number of hateful tweets increases by 22 percent. Cold also causes things to get heated in the comment fields: Between -3 and -6 degrees, hate speech increases by 12.5 percent.

3. Universal implications

The findings are also significant when the researchers consider different climate zones, political affiliations, religions, income and places of residence.

4. Aggressive tendencies

The researchers believe the results show that temperature can trigger aggressive tendencies and highlight people's inability to adapt to extreme temperatures.

Robots can be used to assess children's mental well-being

A team of roboticists, computer scientists and psychiatrists from the University of Cambridge has conducted a study with 28 children between the ages of eight and 13. They had a child-sized humanoid robot administer a series of standard psychological questionnaires to assess the mental well-being of each participant.

[Download the study.](#)

Three main findings:

1. Robots a useful addition

Robots can better detect mental well-being issues in children than parent-reported or self-reported testing. Robots may thus be a helpful addition to traditional mental health assessment methods, although the robots are not intended as a substitute for professional mental health support.

2. Sharing more information

Study participants all said they enjoyed talking with the robot. The children were willing to confide

in the robot, sometimes sharing information with the robot that they had not yet shared via the standard assessment method of online or in-person questionnaires.

3. Not all positive

For children experiencing well-being-related concerns, the robot may have enabled them to divulge their true feelings and experiences, leading to more negative response ratings to the questionnaire.