

Fact-Checking and Misinformation: Evidence from the Market Leader

Moritz Hengel, Julia Cagé, Emeric Henry and Nathan Gallo

Abstract :

Amid global concerns over the spread of misinformation, the fact-checking industry has grown remarkably in recent years. Yet, the efficiency of fact-checking in actually reducing the circulation of fake news remains contested. In this article, we carry out a unique partnership with the world market leader for fact-checking – AFP Factuel – to propose a novel identification strategy. First, exploiting the full set of stories considered by AFP, we compare the evolution of the popularity on Facebook of fact-checked stories (treated group) vs. stories considered for a fact-check but ultimately not rated (control group) before and after the date of consideration. Second, relying on the fact that among the posts related to the fact-checked stories, only some are flagged on Facebook, we compare the evolution of the popularity of the rated vs. the non-rated posts before and after the date of first rating.