

Gender Stereotypes and Citizen Journalism

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Every citizen is a reporter, Oh Yeon-ho said as he launched Ohmynews in 2004, largely as a fierce reaction to partisan politics in South Korea (Oh, 2004). “The citizens of the Republic of Korea had long been preparing for a grand revolution in the culture of news production and consumption,” he said. “All I had to do was raise the flag.” The success of his site provided a high profile example of a movement many others had predicted. Glaser defined citizen journalism as the idea that “people without professional journalism training can use the tools of modern technology and the global distribution of the Internet to create, augment or fact-check media on their own or in collaboration with others.” (2004). Gillmor (2004) applauded the ability of the “people formerly known as the audience” to bypass legacy news organizations, such as TV networks, newspapers, and magazines, and report the news their own way.

When the citizen journalism movement reached the United States, however, it took on a much different flavor than the fierce political discussion of Ohmynews. The Northwest Voice, a citizen journalism website in Bakersfield, Calif., began in early 2004 as well, and became one of the first citizen journalism experiments in the United States. Its content, however, focused more on human-interest stories (Glaser, 2004). Some of the site’s most viewed stories covered lighter topics, such as a mother’s reaction to sending her child to his first day of school (Meyer, 2006). Other citizen journalism sites followed a similar script. In a case study of MyMissourian.com, a Columbia, Mo. citizen journalism website based on the Northwest Voice, Bentley et. al (2007) found that the most popular stories covered issues that normally did not receive much attention

in the mainstream media. Women, for example, filled the site with stories of their lives and causes, even though the site was originally created to discuss the 2004 presidential elections (pg. 249).

The idea that citizen journalism exists to cover only issues of the fairer sex, however, is a misconception. Mayhill Fowler, for example, has bucked the trend since 2008. Fowler, who calls herself an amateur fiction writer and political enthusiast, contributed a series of dispatches to *The Huffington Post's* Off the Bus project that contained influential information about what political figures said in her presence not knowing she was on the beat as a reporter (Boehlert, 2009). Her boss Arianna Huffington is herself an influential figure in citizen journalism. "At HuffPost, we see citizen journalism as an integral part of what we do – and, via Eyes and Ears, our citizen journalism community, we're harnessing the wisdom of the crowd to tackle stories too big for one reporter, attend events traditional journalists have been kept from (or have overlooked), and to find and highlight the small but evocative story happening right next door," she wrote (2009). Another citizen journalist argued the movement needs more female voices to flourish.

"If citizen journalism is to make the strides it should ... there needs to be parity of the sexes and a reliable sense of mutual respect. Otherwise it might as well be tabloid writing. Muting of female voices will only be a detriment to the concepts behind citizen journalism" (Askcherlock, 2010).

For citizen journalism to make the gender equality strides Askcherlock mentions, media professionals and researchers need to better understand how audience members of both genders react to user-generated content. They also should determine what role, if any, gender plays in

credibility and some of its core components, such as social presence, coorientation, and expertise.

This is an important question to consider as women have closed the gap in overall Internet use (Pew, 2012). More than 85 % of men and women say they use the Web regularly. Citizen journalism opportunities are also expanding. Dube (2010) lists 23 citizen media initiatives created by legacy media organizations, including CNN's iReport, CBS' EyeMedia, BBC's iCan, and independent sites such as MapYourMoments. CNN paid more than \$750,000 for the iReport domain name in 2008 to expand its ability to publish user-generated content (Learmonth, 2008).

This study uses an online experiment to examine if participants' reactions to stories published on a major news organization website differ based on the story's author and his or her declared gender. The study has a specific focus on credibility and the measures that lead up to it, such as social presence, coorientation, and expertise, and asks whether, if at all, men and women react differently to staff writers and citizen journalists, especially if the author's gender matches theirs. Social presence, for example, will answer whether participants notice authors that share their gender more than others. Coorientation will help explain if participants think authors share their beliefs and perceptions more if they also share their gender. Expertise, as a concept, will help explain whether participants think authors that share their gender are more of an expert on the topic they are covering and therefore more trustworthy. As this study deals with audience perceptions based on gender cues, it could also help inform why some authors would choose to hide or even alter their gender online to reach a certain audience.

Literature Review

Pearson (1982) was one of the first to suggest male writers have more credibility than female writers. She also wrote in her book (1985) that female writers believed they would have more credibility if they were male, and writers of both sexes thought they had more credibility with members of their own sex than with those of the opposite sex.

White and Andsager (1991) also suggested that women found newspaper opinion columns written by women more interesting than those written by men, while men felt the same about male-written columns. However, they suggested that there would be no difference in credibility between male and female writers regardless of the reader's gender. In other words, the type of story, they suggested, mattered. News pieces seem more credible on the surface than opinion columns.

These credibility differences between men and women revolve around basic gender stereotypes (Deaux & Lewis, 1984). A gender label alone can lead people to infer a variety of gender-related characteristics (pg. 1002). Several studies (Broverman, Vogel, Broverman, Clarkson, & Rosenkrantz, 1972; Rosenkrantz, Vogel, Bee, Broverman, & Broverman, 1968) identified two sets of characteristics that are ascribed to women and men. Subjects associated warmth and expressiveness with women more than men, and competence and rationality, with men more than women. Personality traits are the essence of gender stereotypes (Deaux and Lewis, 1984). Gender stereotypes are able to bind people together, and also are important in the social perception process (Grant and Holmes, 1981, 1982).

Deaux and Lewis (1984) also found information about how one stereotype component can influence other components. However, gender information alone does not lead to the inference of a certain set of characteristics. "In most cases, however, the influence of gender can

be outweighed by other information, such as role behaviors, traits, and the like” (pg. 1002). In other words, if readers only have the author’s name and lack other cues about the author’s credibility, they may fall on gender stereotypes.

These same gender stereotypes seem to drive how men and women use a medium. Men look for information on a wider variety of topics than women do, “from researching products to buy to getting information on their hobbies to looking for political news. Sometimes, men and women look for different kinds of information” (Fallows, 2005). After the events of September 11, men visited more websites to tell them about things that were happening; more women said the internet helped them find people they needed to reach. (p.iv). A larger percentage of women than men said in the study that they suffered from information overload online. While men and women both appreciate what the Internet does for their lives, men said they valued how it helps their activities, such as jobs and pastimes, more than women while women valued relationships with family, friends, colleagues, and communities (pg. v).

Both genders are increasingly exposed to cues beyond gender stereotypes to help them determine the credibility of the information they find online. These other cues can mitigate the effect of gender stereotypes. Matheson (1991) found that within a computer-mediated communication environment, participants who thought they were interacting with a woman found her to be more cooperative and less exploitive. This occurred only when participants were explicitly told the person on the other side of the conversation was a woman. “It is conceivable that such information focused subjects on the characteristics of the other that were similar to their own, and hence invoked gender relevant dimensions of themselves, which were, in turn, ‘projected’ onto the negotiator” (pg. 143). It took a strong suggestion to outweigh other cues and cause participants to go back to their default understanding of gender.

Flanagin and Metzger (2003) suggested sex is a significant factor when looking at perceived website credibility measures. “It is the interaction between author’s and viewer’s sex that seems at the base of this relation” (pg. 698). For instance, their research suggested same-sex credibility evaluations were lower than opposite sex credibility evaluations. Credibility would be higher when the sex of the message source matched the sex of the receiver. Four years later, Flanagin and Metzger (2007) underscored the importance of website features in determining perceived credibility. They suggested that a site’s frame, such as whether it was a news or shopping site, was the main determination of credibility. Their earlier study looked only at what they called “personal websites,” where a single author was clearly identified and she, in this case, was sharing about her life. For instance, participated said reviews on shopping websites from people like them were more credible than expert reviews. On news websites, however, expert opinions were rated the most credible.

Armstrong and McAdams (2009) supported these findings when they suggested that information-seeking was one of the main determinants of credibility. Their study focused on Weblogs or blogs, one of the most common user-generated content forums online. A blog allows an author to publish her own news stories or thoughts, feelings, or opinions in a chronological format. A blog is primarily a content delivery system. The authors manipulated the gender descriptors of the blog’s author, and found that gender cues can influence the perceived credibility of blogs because individuals may perceive some topics as “belonging” to female or male bloggers or as requiring a particular expertise. They found blog posts written by men were deemed more credible than those written by women, but the writing style and topic of the blog were also likely to influence the perceived credibility of the post. As blogs become more prevalent and accepted as sources of credible information, they suggested that gender cues would

become less important. Tone, in fact, could have a greater influence than gender. A more cynical tone increased perceived credibility among young people.

Credibility

To understand the effect of gender on credibility, however, it is important to define the concept more precisely for an Internet age. Its definition is not as straightforward as it was 10 years ago. It is still true that the more credible people find a news source, the more likely they will be to use it. However, people use media that they say are not credible. For example, Reeves & Nass (1996) found audiences consistently awarded higher credibility marks to TV, even though TV stories lack the depth of and borrow extensively from newspaper reports. The reason they suggested was the human dimension.

At its most basic level, credibility is not simply an objective measure of a medium's features or messages (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007). It revolves around subjective evaluations of how stories, sources and organizations are presented. Reeves & Nass (1996), Wackman (1973), Kim (2010), Sundar (1999) and Rafaeli (1988) have shown that credibility needs to include measures of how much a person likes a medium, how much they have come to rely on it, and how connected they feel to it and its agents.

The human dimension of the "credibility crisis" Gaziano first wrote about in 1986 has become even more complicated in 2012. The Internet has made more information available than ever, while muddling some of the core concepts of traditional credibility. Deciding what is credible requires examining relationships between people and their sources for news even more.

Early media scholars approached credibility from two measures: do you trust the media and do you believe what you read? Gaziano & McGrath (1986) expanded the definition to include 12 measures. Their scale coupled questions about trust and believability with concepts

such as objectivity, complexity, completeness, truth and reputation. Despite the comprehensive nature of the Gaziano & McGrath scale, researchers found other elements. Meyer (1988), a former newspaper editor himself, boiled the Gaziano & McGrath scale down to one element – believability – while adding the idea of community affiliation. Beaudoin & Thorson (2004) reinforced Meyer's addition by suggesting that credibility grows the more the newspaper connects to the community. Perloff (2003) added another human element in examining persuasive research – perceived expertise. Expertise links credibility to what people judge as the extent of a source's knowledge and experience on a topic.

Another way to look at credibility is to break it into separate components that examined message, source, and organizational credibility separately. Source credibility, for example, could include Perloff's expertise dimension, while organizational credibility spoke more to Meyer's addition of affiliation. Separating the concepts has proven useful. Sundar (1999) demonstrated the need to examine source credibility on its own when he asked readers to rate stories based on the type and number of quotes they had. But he also found an interesting connection between a person's relationship with a source and credibility. People judged sources based more on who the source was rather than what he or she said. His study speaks to the personal nature of credibility definitions, whether they deal with sources, messages or organizations. The human elements of messages take three forms – social presence, coorientation, and expertise – which work together to create a connection that leads to credibility and override gender stereotypes.

Connection

Social Presence

The ways in which non-human agents such as TV news broadcasts or even newspapers make receivers feel as if they are human constitutes what researchers call social presence. The

three dimensions social presence are (1) source attention, or how much focus the source receives in the presentation relative to other cues, (2) co-presence, or how much an audience member can feel the other person's existence, and (3) mutual awareness or the feeling of being "known" by another (Biocca et al., 2001; Gunawardena & Zittle, 1997; Tamborini & Skalski, 2005). Social presence is the personal characteristics that make a receiver connect with the source. It can be created from pictures, word choice, and tone, among other elements.

Coorientation

Recognizing a human presence is not enough, however. Credibility also depends on how closely a person allies with the source. Wackman (1973) wrote the goal of communication for information exchange is to increase coorientation between two people. He defined coorientation as the level of similar attitudes and the perceived congruency of those attitudes. Finding something to relate to in the media is not hard. In fact, Reeves & Nass (1996) said it is natural. In what they called the "media equation," they suggested coorientation between source and receiver existed even as messages were disseminated through the media. People have evolved to respond to other humans. When they see something that resembles a human, they respond to the media the same way they would to another person, and they tend to like media that act in a human fashion. Gender stereotypes play a role in how audience relate to the media.

Expertise

Another element of source credibility is perceived expertise. Hovland et al. (1953) suggested two dimensions of source credibility: trustworthiness and expertise. They argued that a receiver's tendency to accept a speaker's message depends on her estimation of how informed and intelligent the speaker is and how likely the speaker is to make valid points. Perloff (2003) defined expertise as a core characteristic of credible communicators. Whether a communicator

should emphasize her expertise or her similarity to the audience can be a dilemma. Stories on factual matters, such as news, might rely more on an expert's knowledge than similarity (Perloff, 2003).

In order for news to connect with readers, it must pay attention to each of the three elements – social presence, coorientation, and expertise – because stronger connections have the ability to dramatically alter perceptions. As connection grows, so does credibility. Sundar (1999) identified relatedness as one of four elements that defined both online and newspaper credibility. Greater social presence can also lead to reliance, which Wanta (1994) suggested can increase credibility.

Defining credibility for the Internet age requires more than just a study of site features. Flanagin & Metzger (2007) found that source matters. The nature of the organization and its messages were determining factors in the credibility respondents assigned. Participants consistently gave news sites the highest credibility scores, even when they had never seen that particular news site before. They could learn from the social cues the site provided how credible it was, but interestingly, the more social presence the site had the less credible it was. Personal weblogs were rated the least credible even when they had the exact same, almost verbatim stories, as the news, and e-commerce sites. Meyer, Marchionni & Thorson (2006) also found social presence was not positively related to the credibility of news websites. The main predictor in their study was expertise. Subsequent analysis revealed coorientation *not* social presence positively predicted expertise.

Credibility online

The impact of new credibility concepts, such as coorientation, social presence, expertise and interactivity online does not invalidate the more traditional credibility definitions originally

applied to newspapers. Credibility online must join the Web's ability to make connections through technology with traditional concepts of trust, believability and expertise. Defining credibility also necessitates an understanding of the values and purpose of Web communication. Sites that connected most with audiences (Flanagin & Metzger, 2007) are sites that present trustworthy information in formats that spoke to the audiences and allowed them to connect.

Johnson & Kaye (2004) also suggest relationships help determine why users sometimes rate opinionated blogs more credible than news Web sites. They linked credibility both on and offline, with how familiar a person was with the medium. Those with more familiarity with the Internet and less with traditional media rated political blogs more credible. Traditional media could attract an audience with less familiarity with traditional news media online if they adopted more of the social presence and coorientation attributes of the Web.

To measure and increase credibility in the Internet age, researchers need to examine not only if trust, belief, and expertise exist. They must look at how individuals come to create these feelings and how the options available online can help. Most importantly, connection may enable us to overcome gender stereotypes in information processing.

HYPOTHESES AND METHODS

Based on the literature, this study examined the following hypotheses within the citizen journalist context:

- H1. Gender match, or whether the receiver's gender matches that of the sources, will have a direct positive effect on credibility perceptions for stories written by a news organization staff writer.**
- H2. Gender match will have a direct positive effect on credibility perceptions for stories written by audience members.**

H3. The components of credibility, such as coorientation, social presence, and interest, will mitigate the effects of gender on credibility.

The study is based on a 2 (story author) x 2 (author's gender) within-subjects experiment, which asked participants to read four news stories, all ostensibly coming from the same major news website. The stories were basic news stories on six separate topics selected to be non-controversial. The researchers specifically avoided stories dealing with politics, religion or women's issues. The topics were technology, health, U.S. news, entertainment, world news, and crime. The gender of the story author, along with whether the author was a staff writer or audience member was manipulated. In the end, each participant read a story written by a male and female staff writer and a male and female audience member. The order of the authorship conditions, the topics, and the writer's gender were randomized through a simple website-based program called a PHP script. The random assignment and within-subjects design helped the experiment to focus on the variance authorship created, not other external factors.

Respondents answered the same questions after each story. Respondents rated the social presence, expertise, coorientation, credibility, and interest they had in each story. The questions followed Meyer, Marchionni & Thorson (2010), which used a similar model to determine how participants ranked the credibility of stories written in traditional news, opinionated, and citizen journalism formats. Story titles for this study included "After tornado, town rebuilds by going green," "Air Force One Backup Rattles New York Nerves," "In digital age, can movie piracy be stopped?" and "Students, musicians fight and fear Taliban."

Social presence measured how much readers noticed the person behind the story, with questions such as "I felt like I got to know the author," "At times, I felt like the author was in the room with me," and "I thought of the author while reading the article." Expertise measured the level of proficiency participants thought the author had with the topic through questions such as

“The author sounds like he or she knows what he or she is talking about,” and “The author has done his homework on this story.” Coorientation measured how closely allied the reader felt to the author, with questions such as “I understand the story’s issue in the same way the author does,” and “I felt like this author probably is a person kind of like me.” The experiment also asked participants to rate the credibility of the story and the organization behind it using questions suggested by Meyer (1988) and Gaziano & McGrath (1986), such as “The story was accurate,” “I believe what I read in the story,” and “I can trust what I read,” and “This company probably cares about readers like me,” “The company seems in-touch with the average person,” and “The company probably thinks it’s important to publish quality reporting.” The experiment also asked participants about how much they liked and were interested in the story.

Results

The experiment was administered online. Participants were recruited from a large journalism class at a Midwestern university, through online advertisements placed on a LinkedIn discussion board for the university’s alumni, and through a classified ad in the community’s newspaper. In all, 224 people participated in the study. Of those, 175 completed the entire study. Less than 45 % of those who completed the entire study were students (74 out of 175), and the ages of the participants ranged from 15 to 72. Students who took the study received extra credit in a beginning journalism class, while everyone was entered into a drawing for one of four \$50 gift cards to iTunes.

Participants were almost equally divided between men (46 %) and women (54 %). The sample was 88 % white, 5 % Black and 3 % Hispanic and 2 % Asian. It also represented a wide range of other socio-economic factors such as education and income. More than half of the participants had attended some college (53 %), while 18 % said they had an advanced degree

(either a Master's or a Ph.D.). Another 53 % reported incomes less than \$25,000 annually, while 12 % had incomes of more than \$100,000 a year.

The story was the unit of analysis. Each participant then had six units of analysis. Statistical tests focused on the differences between the participant's gender and whether it matched the author's. An independent samples T-test focused on all the stories, asking only if gender matched. The only statistical significance was found when an audience member was the author. Expertise ($t(343)=-2.22, p<.01$) and story credibility ($t(343)=-2.66, p<.01$) were both statistically significant in the negative direction. This meant that when the author's gender did not match the participant's, the story was rated less expert and less credible. (See table 1).

Next, the researchers examined if any difference existed for men and women across the authorship conditions. For men, the only statistically significant variable was story credibility ($t(374)=2.62, p<.01$) if the story was written by a staff member. Male participants (see table 3) found the staff written story more credible if the author's gender did not match. In other words, male participants rated stories written by staff writers who were women more credible than those written by men.

For women (see table 4), statistical significance was found only for audience written stories. If the author's gender did not match the participant's, women found less social presence ($t(343)=-.248, p<.01$), story credibility ($t(343)=-2.42, p<.01$), and interest ($t(343)=-.346, p<.01$). In other words, women assigned more social presence, story credibility and interest to stories written by other women. These t tests provided no support for **H1**: story credibility will depend on matching gender for staff written stories, and only partial support for **H2**: credibility for audience written stories will also rely on gender match. For staff written stories, only men seemed to care about gender match and were likely to rate stories written by women more

credible. For audience written stories, women rated stories written by other women more credible, and also gave those stories higher social presence and coorientation scores.

To determine the effects of the variables that the literature suggests can predict credibility, univariate ANOVAs examined if there was any interaction between the story's author and gender match. For men, only interest was statistically significant in the ANOVA (see table 5), and gender match was the only influence.

For women, social presence, story credibility, and interest had statistical significance, while expertise, even though it was significant in the t test, had no statistical significance when the gender match and authorship were examined together (see table 6). Social presence was not significant with gender match alone, but was significant for the author condition and for the interaction. Story credibility was significant for gender match and authorship, but not in the interaction. Interest was significant for gender match and the interaction, but not for authorship. These tests suggest partial support for **H3**: the predictors of credibility will mitigate the impact of gender cues. The only element that affected credibility for the men when the author's gender matched was interest, and this variable was not statistically significant for the authorship condition. In other words, interest determined credibility for men more than gender.

For women, story credibility was affected by both gender match and authorship, but not in the interaction. Authorship was statistically significant at the $p < .01$ level, while gender match was significant at the $p < .05$ level. Women related better to stories, staff or audience written, that present their point of view, but find staff written stories more credible. However, interaction effects were found for social presence and interest, which suggest these variables mediate gender effects. Women noticed other women more in audience written stories, while they gave higher

interest scores to stories written by women, regardless of whether the author was a staff writers or an audience member.

Discussion

These findings suggest that a more nuanced relationship between gender and credibility is continuing to emerge online. This study examined the growing citizen journalism movement to determine whether audience written stories are more susceptible to gender stereotypes. This was an effort to explore ways to encourage women to participate in citizen journalism, regardless of story content. As Mayhill Fowler has demonstrated, women citizen journalists are just as capable of covering politics as they are of chronicling their child's first day of school.

What this study suggests is that traditional journalistic definitions of credibility apply for stories written by staff reporters on legacy media websites. The cue that this is a professionally produced story is a more powerful predictor of story credibility than gender. Manipulating the author did little to influence experiment participants as far as staff written stories were concerned. The author matters in professional news, but whether his or her gender matches the audience members does not. This may represent what Armstrong and McAdams (2009) predicted when blogs and other forms of user-generated content become more mainstream. What matters then is the expertise and professionalism of the author, not whether he is a man or woman. Simply attaching that author to a respected news organization engenders trust for men and women.

For user-generated content, however, gender stereotypes continue to have some influence, but that influence, for the most part, can be mitigated by how connected a person feels to the story and the site behind it. Men, for example, found audience written stories nearly as credible as staff written stories, while they found female staff writers more credible than male reporters.

Women, on the other hand, felt more connected with female writers only when they were audience members.

In other words, gender matters less than social presence, or the measure of how much receivers notice the author behind the story. Men may simply chose news that is interesting to them regardless of who wrote the story. This represents a repudiation of Pearson's early research that male writers are more credible. In fact, this study suggests that men may think that female journalists write more interesting stories.

This study offers some support for the perception that citizen journalism relates more to women than men. Women are looking for a similar point of view when they approach citizen journalism. They look at other cues when reading staff written stories, but rely somewhat on gender stereotypes for nontraditional stories. This confirms Armstrong and McAdams (2009) finding on blogs and Flanagin and Metzger's (2003) finding in personal websites. Women are making more clear distinctions between citizen journalism and traditional journalism online, and notice gender distinctions more than men.

What they notice most, this study suggests, is the presence of other women in citizen journalism forums and how credible their stories seem, not necessarily expertise or coorientation. This may support in part the perception that women are more attracted to user-generated content, but not because the stories are produced by other women. They still judge it based on its perceived credibility. In other words, they are not giving content a pass simply because the author is another women. The lower scores women assigned to interest may mean they are more critical consumers of user-generated content even while they appreciate seeing other women get involved. The key for them was social presence or noticing the author's part in the story. Writers, both professional and amateur, who want to reach a female audience, could focus more on

distinguishing themselves through their writing, such as being more transparent with their sources of information, the process that went into creating the story, or even their personal reflections on why the story is important.

As Askcherlock, Fowler and Huffington argued, citizen journalism may present new and expanded opportunities for female voices to join the news process. In fact, this study seems to support the idea that women's voices are vital to the continued growth and success of citizen journalism ventures. As women get involved, however, they must stand on their own merits and not any roles or stereotypes assigned to them in the past.

It is also interesting to note this study found no detrimental effect on organizational credibility for publishing audience written content. Audience written stories may have received lower story credibility scores, but this difference was largely eliminated when social presence and interest were added to the equation. In other words, CNN may not be hurting its brand by investing heavily in iReport. In fact, the audience members who write for iReport may help the news organization connect with and involve more women in the news process, as long as they maintain their unique voice and make their presence known.

This study is limited by the experimental method it used. These findings can only be generalized for the 175 participants. The study also barely scratched at a complex question with simple manipulations of authorship and the author's gender. A more complete study that attempts to examine which elements predict the concept or credibility, and which help mitigate any gender stereotype effects if any.

However, this study follows other recent research to suggest continued Internet use is minimizing some gender stereotypes, especially as far as news and citizen journalism is concerned. Media professionals should find ways to attract more women to citizen journalism

sites if they wish to enlarge their female audience. More importantly, they should help women find more articles that interest them outside of traditional news criteria to enlarge the conversation about important gender-related issues.

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Tables

Table 1 Independent Samples T test comparing whether participants gender matches story author across all dependent variables

<i>Story Author</i>	<i>Does the participant's gender match the story authors?</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>
Audience member	Social Presence	No	196	4.6650	1.52267	-1.741	343	-.27016 .15515
		Yes	149	4.9351	1.29139			
	Expertise	No	196	4.6139	1.38204	-2.222**	343	-.32341 .14554
		Yes	149	4.9374	1.28011			
	Coorientation	No	196	4.2806	1.33036	-1.237	343	-.17800 .14385
		Yes	149	4.4586	1.31432			
	Story Credibility	No	196	4.7126	1.28575	-2.657**	343	-.34782 .13090
		Yes	149	5.0604	1.08778			
Reporter	Interest / Involvement	No	196	4.6186	1.18901	-1.867	343	-.23373 .12521
		Yes	149	4.8523	1.10129			
	Organization Credibility	No	196	4.3282	1.34206	-1.568	343	-.22434 .14304
		Yes	149	4.5526	1.28094			
	Social Presence	No	192	3.2587	1.32970	-.107	374	-.01487 .13959
		Yes	184	3.2736	1.37703			
	Expertise	No	192	5.0590	1.18601	.987	374	.11881 .12043
		Yes	184	4.9402	1.14760			
	Coorientation	No	192	4.3889	1.10229	.075	374	.00845 .11337
		Yes	184	4.3804	1.09542			
	Story Credibility	No	192	5.3385	1.11861	1.029	374	.12477 .12125
		Yes	184	5.2138	1.23162			
	Interest / Involvement	No	192	4.8984	1.05328	.985	374	.11039 .11206
		Yes	184	4.7880	1.11952			
	Organization Credibility	No	192	4.4288	1.22445	.108	374	.01396 .12918
		Yes	184	4.4149	1.28037			

Note: * p<.05., ** p<.01

Table 2 Independent Samples T test comparing whether men match story author across all dependent variables

<i>Story Author</i>	<i>Do the genders match for men?</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>MD</i>	<i>SED</i>
Audience member	Social Presence	No	274	4.7981	1.46280	.418	343	.07974 .19089
		Yes	71	4.7183	1.31251			
	Expertise	No	274	4.7251	1.36822	-.773	343	-.13879 .17944
		Yes	71	4.8638	1.26312			
	Coorientation	No	274	4.3224	1.34952	-.967	343	-.17057 .17640
		Yes	71	4.4930	1.22262			
	Story Credibility	No	274	4.8382	1.25639	-.738	343	-.11955 .16189
		Yes	71	4.9577	1.04187			
	Interest / Involvement	No	274	4.7591	1.15981	1.250	343	.19222 .15384
		Yes	71	4.5669	1.13701			

Reporter	Organization Credibility	No	274	4.4027	1.34627	-.620	343	-.10906	.17578
		Yes	71	4.5117	1.21215				
	Social Presence	No	304	3.2270	1.33416	-1.150	374	-.20358	.17703
		Yes	72	3.4306	1.41912				
	Expertise	No	304	5.0384	1.15422	1.281	374	.19578	.15287
		Yes	72	4.8426	1.21670				
	Coorientation	No	304	4.3991	1.09641	.521	374	.07505	.14398
		Yes	72	4.3241	1.10762				
	Story Credibility	No	304	5.3542	1.15435	2.620**	374	.40046	.15286
		Yes	72	4.9537	1.21584				
	Interest / Involvement	No	304	4.8865	1.09410	1.547	374	.21985	.14209
		Yes	72	4.6667	1.04055				
	Organization Credibility	No	304	4.4572	1.23585	1.124	374	.18409	.16384
		Yes	72	4.2731	1.30884				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 3 Independent Samples T test comparing whether women match story author across all dependent variables

Story Author	Do the genders match for women?		N	Mean	SD	t	df	MD	SED
Audience member	Social Presence	No	267	4.6792	1.46750	-2.478*	343	-.45333	.18291
		Yes	78	5.1325	1.24761				
	Expertise	No	267	4.6804	1.35363	-1.875	343	-.32387	.17269
		Yes	78	5.0043	1.29990				
	Coorientation	No	267	4.3371	1.30371	-.529	343	-.09027	.17065
		Yes	78	4.4274	1.39975				
	Story Credibility	No	267	4.7778	1.22855	-2.422*	343	-.37607	.15527
		Yes	78	5.1538	1.12648				
	Interest / Involvement	No	267	4.6049	1.17351	-3.463**	343	-.50731	.14648
		Yes	78	5.1122	1.00619				
	Organization Credibility	No	267	4.3770	1.30905	-1.254	343	-.21271	.16960
		Yes	78	4.5897	1.34725				
Reporter	Social Presence	No	264	3.3056	1.35411	.872	374	.13294	.15243
		Yes	112	3.1726	1.34602				
	Expertise	No	264	5.0000	1.19604	-.023	374	-.00298	.13181
		Yes	112	5.0030	1.10191				
	Coorientation	No	264	4.3712	1.10202	-.367	374	-.04545	.12390
		Yes	112	4.4167	1.09096				
	Story Credibility	No	264	5.2336	1.15641	-1.112	374	-.14737	.13250
		Yes	112	5.3810	1.21787				
	Interest / Involvement	No	264	4.8352	1.05294	-.252	374	-.03084	.12264
		Yes	112	4.8661	1.16534				
	Organization Credibility	No	264	4.3864	1.24744	-.848	374	-.11959	.14106
		Yes	112	4.5060	1.25919				

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4 Univariate analysis of variance comparing whether the male participant's gender matches that of the story author

Interest

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>η</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Gender Match MEN (G)	1	4.864	3.886*	.049
Story Author (A)	1	1.478	1.181	.278
G * A	1	.022	.017	.895
Error	717	(1.251)		

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 6 Univariate analysis of variance comparing whether the female participant's gender matches that of the story author

Social Presence

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>η</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Gender Match WOMEN (G)	1	3.506	1.827	.177
Story Author (A)	1	379.476	197.729**	.000
G * A	1	11.738	6.116*	.014
Error	717	1.919		

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Story Credibility

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>η</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Gender Match WOMEN (G)	1	9.357	6.606*	.010
Story Author (A)	1	15.927	11.245**	.001
G* A	1	1.786	1.261	.262
Error	717	1.416		

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Interest

<i>Source</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>η</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Sig.</i>
Gender Match WOMEN (G)	1	9.890	7.998**	.005
Story Author (A)	1	.008	.007	.934
G * A	1	7.753	6.270**	.013
Error	717	1.237		

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$