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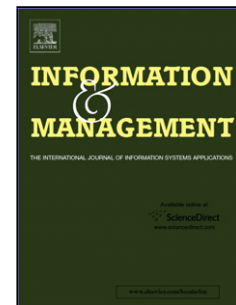
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Effects of Group Arguments on Rumor Belief and Transmission in Online Communities: An Information Cascade and Group Polarization Perspective

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ABSTRACT

The proliferation of the Internet and online communities has greatly increased the number and transmission speed of online rumors. To take more effective measures to counter the negative effects of these rumors, researchers and companies should understand the underlying mechanism of online rumor transmission. Therefore, this study takes an early initiative by focusing on users' arguments in online discussion forums on the rumors and their effects on an individual's belief in rumor and belief change, which is guided by the informational cascade and group polarization theories. In turn, belief and belief change on the online rumor lead to intention to spread the rumor. A lab experiment was conducted to test research hypotheses, which support most of the key hypotheses. The results, implications, limitations of the study, and conclusion are presented.

Keywords

Online rumor, group arguments, informational cascade, group polarization, rumor transmission intention

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The proliferation of the Internet and online communities has greatly increased the number and transmission speed of online rumors. To take more effective measures to counter the negative effects of these rumors, researchers and companies should understand the underlying mechanism of online rumor transmission. Therefore, this study takes an early initiative by focusing on users' arguments in online discussion forums on the rumors and

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