

Clickbait Journalism SNS Users From the Perspectives of Drive-Reduction and Truth-Default Theories

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ABSTRACT: Clickbait has become a technique used for attracting online social media users by arousing and tempting them to click on the website link that pops up in front of them directing them to a specific website to read the whole article. Historically speaking, clickbait is not a new discovery, as it can be traced back to headlines found in yellow journalism. The purpose of this study is to find out the real reason that makes people fall into the trap of clickbait journalism whether they are being driven or it stems from their truth default as human beings. Also, this study aims at finding out the impact of clickbait journalism on social networking site (SNS) users by analyzing their emotions after their usage and exploring if they will resist repeating the entrance again or not after finding that they are deceived. This study will combine the quantitative and qualitative by applying the online survey method and focus groups. The analysis will be from the perspective of the two theories which are Drive Reduction and Truth-Default (TDT) theories.

Keywords: Clickbait Journalism; Drive-Reduction; Truth-Default; SNS

1. Introduction

Around 59.5% of Egyptians are online according to the report published by the digital Egypt 2021 and accordingly get their news primarily from the internet (Kemp, 2021). The stats of social media in Egypt from Mar 2021 - Mar 2022. Facebook has 71.92%, Pinterest has 7.36% and Twitter has 6.29% according to the Statcounter - Global Stats (Statcounter, 2022).

Online content creators are continuously fighting for grabbing the attention of social media users. As part of this fighting, several strategies have been adopted by journalists and news organizations to grab those users' attention. The most popular of them is the clickbait headlines. Clickbait affects credibility as explored in (Chakraborty et al., 2016; Molyneux & Coddington, 2020; Vultee, Burgess, Frazier, & Mesmer, 2020) studies. Therefore, one could claim that producers face a dilemma: clickbait seems as an effective strategy in the short run, but with doubtful results in the long run (Zhang, Jiang & Peng, 2019).

Understanding clickbait is crucial because of its proliferation and accomplishment across forms of digital platforms. This study considers whether the clickbait headlines are being perceived as deception or fake and if users are driven by their instincts (curiosity) or because of their truth default to press on the 'clickbait'-type headline explained by the perspectives of drive-reduction and truth-default theories.

2. Research Problem:

The debate about clickbait journalism has gained fresh prominence with many arguing that audiences click on the news headlines because they are driven or because it stems from their truth default as human beings.

3. Research Importance:

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The issue of clickbait journalism is a continuing concern because the function of news headlines has gained renewed importance as it is the first eye-catching to engage audiences. Research Objectives:

- 1- To find out the real reason that makes the people fall into the trap of clickbait journalism whether they are being driven or it stems from their truth-default as human beings.
- 2- To examine if the 'clickbait'-type headline is fake news.
- 3- To examine if the audience perceives the clickbait headlines as a tool for deceiving them.
- 4- To explore if audiences are driven by their instincts (curiosity) to press on the 'clickbait'-type headline.
- 5- To understand the emotions of the audiences who are tempted by a clickbait-type headline.

4. Literature Review

Clickbait

Biyani, Tsioutsoulouklis & Blackmer (2016) study defined eight types of clickbait, which include exaggeration, teasing, inflammatory, formatting, graphic, bait-and-switch, ambiguous, and wrong.

Also, there are three types of features for clickbait headlines in (Potthast, Köpsel, Stein & Hagen, 2016) study which are: the teaser message, the linked web page, and meta information. Mormal (2019) study examined the presence of clickbait headlines in the post-popular American social news outlets called BuzzFeed, TMZ, and E!Online by analyzing the linguistic techniques used.

The researcher was trying to identify the techniques used by those news outlets to grab the reader's attention through the headlines. Results revealed that clickbait was present in the soft news more than hard news. Also, results differentiated between the techniques used by the three news outlets which appeared that BuzzFeed depended on creating headlines obviously misleading what's written in the article body while E!Online depended on using indirect clickbait and finally, TMZ depended on the varied typography and punctuation.

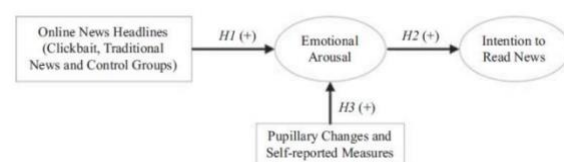
Jiang et al (2019) study questioned the features that attract the audiences to click on the news on an institutional news site. Results showed that the news

consumers' attention happened due to seven features which are "placing them in the central T-shaped zones, using images, increasing text length properly for greater clarity, using visually distinctive punctuation marks, and providing recency and popularity indicators".

In another study (Zhang et al, 2019) the same question was examined applied on the Wechat which is the dominant social networking platform in China and findings showed that the main features were the exaggeration, assumptions, and visual rhetoric "symbols, digits, and pictures".

Pengnate (2018) study examined three hypotheses presented in the following figure to find out how the online clickbait headlines arouse the audience's emotions and behavior responses by using the pupillary dilation response. The results were contradictory to all the previous studies proving that clickbait headlines evoke online users' emotional arousal.

Figure 1. Research Framework



There are studies such as (Beleslin, Njegovan, and Vukadinović, 2017) study examined the audiences' attitudes in Serbia toward the clickbait headlines. At first, the results highlighted that the baited headlines are present more in the soft news and the researchers categorized the types of headlines into three which are traditional, tabloid and clickbait. Secondly, results expressed a negative attitude toward the people who fall in the trap of clickbait headlines as they believe that these are untrustworthy news.

Rony, Hassan, and Yousuf (2017) study tried to identify to what extent is clickbait present and it analyzed the above one million posts in U.S.-based media organizations. They ended that there is an urgent need for creating a system embedded into the browsers to identify the clickbait news from the traditional ones.

Bazaco, Redondo, and Sánchez-García (2019) study started by noting that clickbait is an approach of "viral journalism". The researchers defined the clickbait and tried to find out the ways used by the El País and El Mundo newspapers on Facebook and Twitter. Findings showed that there is a high usage of clickbait in the studied newspapers. In addition to its presence in the soft news. Also, the techniques were arousing the emotions and using exaggerations, etc.... The

researchers used the following model to define the clickbait.

Table 1. Analytical model for the defining variables of clickbait

A. PRESENTATION VARIABLES	1. Incomplete information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence of the most relevant data • Unanswered questions • Use of enumeration and lists • Deliberate ambiguity
	2. Appeals expressions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocative • Imperative • Singularisation of reader
	3. Repetition and serialisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thematic reiteration • Reiteration of frames • Dosage of data in successive deliveries
	4. Exaggeration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperboles • Comparisons of superiority and superlatives • Neologism formed with prefix "super" • Intensifying adjectivisation
B. CONTENT VARIABLES	5. Soft news	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Soft or sensational content • Personal, emotional, episodic or anecdotal representation frames
	6. Striking audiovisual elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shocking and/or odd photos and videos • Use of funny memes • Image manipulation

Source: Authors' own creation

Pujahari and Sisodia (2019) study applied an experiment to detect the clickbait headlines and non-clickbait headlines. Results exposed that one categorization method “is not efficient enough to combat clickbait articles” as the researchers explained that there are websites that use graphical images as clickbait headlines and this cannot be easily found by using the text processing technique.

Potthast et al. (2018) study introduced the readers to the Clickbait Challenge 2017 stimulated research and highlighted a definition for the clickbait messages on the social media stating that “the term “clickbait” refers to social media messages that are foremost designed to entice their readers into clicking an accompanying link to the posters’ website, at the expense of informativeness and objectiveness”.

Nolan (2017) study questioned the relationship between the clickbait headlines' presence and people’s trustworthiness. It questioned too the gender trying to identify which gender is more likely to click on the clickbait’s headlines. Results found that there is no relationship at all between those two variables and this meant that people who click on the clickbait headlines can still be directed to the news and still trust it. And about the gender, females were more than males in clicking on the baited headlines, however, males seem to be trusting them more than females and this was explained as females being more cautious than males.

Chen, Conroy, and Rubin (2015) study add to the research that was trying to find out ways to detect clickbait, especially after the journalism became online and the readers mainly depend on it instead of the traditional journalism. The techniques this study depended on were the lexical choices,

Syntax/Pragmatics used in the headlines. In addition to the placement of the images. The study reached that clickbait is present in the soft news where its headlines can be exaggerated and can include emotions. Also, the suspenseful language was detected to be part of clickbait.

Chen and Rubin (2017) study questioned the different kinds of headlines that people admit that it is a clickbait and the characteristics of the headlines that people always click on and are considered clickbait headlines. Findings showed that readers decide which is clickbait and which is not due to two main factors which are the form and content. Moreover, the readers recognized characteristics such as obscene language, forward-referencing, and informal or everyday phrasing as pointers of clickbait.

In general, clickbait’s impact on the political media selection was explored in (Mihelich, 2019) study where the researcher was trying to find out if people or users who are naturally curious are the ones who are “likely to select clickbait”. Findings revealed that when users dealt with clickbait headlines due to their curiosity, they do not repeat it again and return back to “media we are familiar with”. It was noted that curiosity was not enough to push the user to select media that might counter their political biases.”

5. Theoretical Framework

Truth – Default Theory (TDT)

Truth – Default Theory (TDT) was established by Timothy R. Levine. It is considered a “new theory of deception and deception detection” according to (Levine, 2014) study. The theory is grounded in the idea that people who lie are few and the default of the people is the truth, so consequently, when they communicate, they believe not doubt “people tend to presume that other people communicate honestly most of the time ... However, people sometimes try to deceive others.”

Also, in (Levine and McCornack, 2014) study, it was explained that the main concentration of TDT is on the message receiver side.

Levine (2014) study defined truth bias as “the tendency to actively believe or passively presume that another person’s communication is honest independent of actual honesty”. A table of prepositions by Levine was presented in (Masip, 2017) study and it is as follows:

Table 2 Propositions of Levine's (2014) Truth-Default Theory	
01. Most people tell the truth most of the time.	
02. Most lies are told by a few prolific liars.	
03. Most people believe what others say most of the time (truth bias).	
04. This is adaptive because most communications people encounter are honest and enables efficient communication. However, it makes people vulnerable to occasional deception.	
05. Both truthful and deceptive messages are means to attain certain goals. Most people do not lie if their goals can be attained telling the truth.	
06. When the truth is incongruent with the sender's goals, people may doubt veracity.	
07. Other "triggers" (which implicate a lack of coherence (internal logical consistency) in message content, discrepancies between the message and the known reality, and third party information) revivify deception.	
08. If these triggers are strong enough, the person will scrutinize the message to assess veracity.	
09. The person may judge the message as deceptive on the basis of communication context and motive, sender demeanor, third party information, and degree of coherence and correspondence.	
10. Deception triggers may not occur at the time of the deception.	
11. Because context for a few transparent liars) the relationship between veracity and behavior is poor, deception is not accurately detected by passively observing the sender's behavior at the time the lie is told.	
12. Instead, whenever deception is detected, this occurs later in time via the liar's confession, external evidence, or correspondence.	
13. Coherent sensitive questioning of the sender can produce diagnostic information. The wrong questioning may hinder detection accuracy.	
14. Deception detection expertise does not involve skill in passively detecting and interpreting behavior but in generating diagnostic information from senders.	

Table 2. Drive – Reduction Theory

In a psychology book by Bernstein et al (2008), the drive reduction theory was explained as a theory of motivation that was established by American psychologist Clark L. Hull in the 1930s. The Drive-Reduction Theory highlights how motivation starts from biological drives which are human needs. Hull started from the idea that the body gives signals to the brain when an imbalance happens.

A “drive” happens in the situation when there is tension generated by a human’s physiological or biological needs. For example, if someone is thirsty, the body gives a signal to the brain that there is an imbalance and a motivation drives that person to go drink water quickly so he can return to balance again. Noting that Maslow’s hierarchy of needs was developed as a substitute to Hull’s approach.

The drive pushes the person to act in a specific behavior to accomplish a specific goal or satisfy a need. “If the goal of the drive is achieved, the drive is reduced and an optimal state is restored. The drive reduction here is a reinforcer, strengthening the connection between the drive and behavior.”

6. Research Hypothesis:

1. There is no statistically significant relationship between the respondent’s demographic characteristics and their interaction with clickbait news.
2. There is no statistically significant relationship between the respondent's level of experience in social networks and their interaction with clickbait news.

Research Questions:

1. Do people consider the 'clickbait'-type headline as a deception or fake news?
2. Are people driven by their instincts (curiosity) to press on the 'clickbait'-type headline?
3. Do people press the on the 'clickbait'-type headline because of their truth-default?

4. Why don’t people resist pressing on the ‘clickbait’-type headline?

5. How do people feel – emotions – after finding out that it was a 'clickbait'-type headline?
 6. Will those people who fell into the clickbait journalism trap repeat the action (trust) or will they dislike the page (distrust) on SNS?

7. Methodology:

The survey method was used as the basic research method for data collection using the questionnaire containing twenty-two questions grouped in three parts was used as the research instrument. The first set of questions was formulated with the aim to identify the socio- demographic characteristics of participants, while the others were related to finding the real reason that makes the people fall into the trap of clickbait journalism.

8. Results:

This is one of the few studies that examine the user’s perceptions toward clickbait headlines as the researchers studied their views on the social media on-line news information that includes clickbait headlines, which were published on the most visited internet portals to find out if they are being driven or it stems from their truth-default as human beings.

Overall survey results showed that users are drawn into the topics by clickbait headlines depending on people’s natural curiosity as they are the ones who are likely to select clickbait. The SPSS program was used to analyze the results of the study. The descriptive and frequency method, the Chi-squared test, the Z-Test, T-Test, the Mann-Whitney test, and the main component analysis were applied.

Table 3. Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics			
	N of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Validity
Total	15	0.737	0.859

The research involved 100 respondents from different nationalities such as Egyptian, American, German, Nigerian, Syrian, Sri Lankan, Indian, Jordanian, Pakistani, and Saudi Arabian, and the respondents were dominated by female respondents with 66%. The largest number of respondents was between 15 and 25 years of age (56%), with a slightly smaller number of them aged 26 to 36 (23%). 21% of respondents were somewhat older than 37.

Statistical results indicated that 95% of the sample uses the Internet extensively and spends a long time ranging between one and 10 hours and that 87% of them have been using the Internet for more than 4 years.

Table 4. Relationships between Gender and Clickbait Headlines

	Gender		Z	P_value
	Male	Female		
RQ3	46.46	52.58	-1.019	0.308
RQ2	55.24	48.06	-1.197	0.231
RQ6	56.35	47.48	-1.520	0.129
RQ4	50.72	50.39	-0.057	0.954
RQ5	48.87	51.34	-0.432	0.665

Table 5. Relationship between Nationality and Clickbait Headlines

	Nationality		Z	P_value
	Egyptian	Foreigners		
RQ3	50.53	50.41	-0.017	0.987
RQ2	48.63	56.76	-1.205	0.228
RQ6	49.01	55.50	-0.989	0.323
RQ4	49.55	53.67	-0.626	0.531
RQ5	50.55	50.35	-0.031	0.976

Table 6. Relationship between Age and Clickbait Headlines

Ranks				
	Age	Mean Rank	Chi Test	P_value
RQ3	15 – 25	53.12	6.849	0.144
	26 – 36	39.09		
	37 – 47	55.42		
	47 – 57	67.70		
	57 – above	39.17		
RQ2	15 – 25	44.54	8.215	0.084
	26 – 36	51.80		
	37 – 47	67.31		
	47 – 57	62.40		
	57 – above	59.00		
RQ5	15 – 25	51.71	0.402	0.982
	26 – 36	50.22		
	37 – 47	46.92		
	47 – 57	49.90		
	57 – above	46.67		

RQ6	15 – 25	49.61	0.397	0.983
	26 – 36	51.09		
	37 – 47	49.92		
	47 – 57	56.60		
	57 – above	55.00		
RQ4	15 – 25	50.23	1.468	0.832
	26 – 36	46.24		
	37 – 47	55.35		
	47 – 57	59.30		
	57 – above	52.50		

The following tables (2 – 3 – 4) presented the findings that indicated that there is no significant relationship between the demographics such as Age, Gender, nationality, and Clickbait Headlines as all the nationalities, age groups, and genders clicked on the clickbait headlines.

Table 7. Relationship between respondent's level of experience and Clickbait Headlines

Social media experience	1 - 2 Years	3 - 4 Years	More than 4 Years	Chi Test	P_value
RQ3	55.79	37.92	50.94	1.433	0.489
RQ2	34.79	47.33	51.98	2.456	0.293
RQ6	46.71	62.92	49.95	1.377	0.502
RQ4	48.00	55.42	50.36	0.248	0.883
RQ5	37.43	54.67	51.26	1.840	0.399

The statistical analysis presented in the following table shows that there is no statistically significant relationship between the respondent's level of experience in using social networks and their interaction with the Clickbait news, where the Chi-Test showed the absence of these differences, then the second hypothesis of the study was correctly proven.

It is also reported that the participants will click headlines that are in the area of their interests without thinking if it was bait or not as the participants never select a headline that directly conflicts with their biases.

According to the respondent's answers, the following factors received the highest influence on the choice of news to be read: personal interest, short and understandable headline, and up-to- date topic. About the personal interest, baited audiences indicated there are headlines that tell what they do not know which grabbed their attention.

The study results – presented in the following table – reveal that clickbait headlines tempt emotional arousal, which positively influences the intention to read clickbait news. The results pointed out to thriller type of headline which makes the audiences more motivated

and consequently emotionally aroused noting that they never doubt that it is a bait. Also, the exaggerating headlines and enticing pictures tempt the audiences to click on the headline. The exaggerating headlines are the headlines that get the readers to press due to their fears. These are the headlines types that take advantage of people’s desire and curiosity. This finding agrees with (Chen and Rubin, 2017) study and (Mihelich, 2019).

Table 8. To Find out if people are driven by their instincts (curiosity) to press on the 'clickbait'-type headline

	No		Not Sure		Yes		Mean	Std. Deviation	CV
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %			
You think that other “triggers” raising suspicion are a lack of coherence in message content, discrepancies between the message and the known reality, and third-party information revealing deception.	17	17.0	22	22.0	61	61.0	2.440	0.770	31.54
You believe that if these triggers are strong enough, you will scrutinize the message to assess veracity.	13	13.0	22	22.0	65	65.0	2.520	0.717	28.47
You believe that you click on the news headline because you are driven by your instincts to feed your interests – curiosity (information – entertainment – etc....)	12	12.0	8	8.0	80	80.0	2.680	0.680	25.37
If the news headline is thriller, don't you doubt it --- won't you think even for once that it is just a bait and not real?	27	27.0	22	22.0	51	51.0	2.240	0.854	38.13
RQ2: Are people driven by their instincts (curiosity) to press on the 'clickbait'-type headline?							2.470	0.540	21.88

Consequently, the survey respondents reported that they know well that not everyone is telling the truth which contradicts the hypothesis of the Truth – Default Theory (TDT) which says that the audience is grounded in the idea of “people tend to presume that other people communicate honestly most of the time ... However, people sometimes try to deceive others”.

Also, the respondents are quite aware that both truthful and deceptive messages are means to attain certain goals as the results showed that most of the audience who reads these kinds of news believes there is a misrepresentation of the article in the headline.

Table 9. To Find out if people press on the on the 'clickbait'-type headline because of their truth-default

	No		Not Sure		Yes		Mean	Std. Deviation	CV
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %			
You believe that most people tell the truth most of the time.	66	66.0	25	25.0	9	9.0	1.430	0.655	45.82
You believe that most lies are told by a few prolific liars	23	23.0	28	28.0	49	49.0	2.260	0.812	35.92
You believe what others say most of the time (truth bias).	43	43.0	28	28.0	29	29.0	1.860	0.841	45.22
You think that both truthful and deceptive messages are means to attain certain goals. Most people do not lie if their goals can be attained telling the truth.	18	18.0	14	14.0	68	68.0	2.500	0.785	31.40
RQ3: Do people press on the on the 'clickbait'-type headline because of their truth-default?							2.013	0.458	22.77

Findings showed that 67% of audiences believe that if they clicked once on the bait headlines, they will never repeat entering the same pages again as they are easy to avoid, and once the audience realizes that it is a hoax

they will not be deceived again. However, this does not indicate that those users have stopped falling prey to clickbait, which newsmakers are masters in creating emotional and visual stimuli that re-motivate users to respond to it and consume it and fall into the trap of its fake content. This finding agrees with (Nolan, 2017) as it revealed that people who click on the clickbait headlines are directed intendedly to the news through a thriller headline and still trust consuming it again and again.

Results revealed that users do not resist pressing on the clickbait-type headline as the context-sensitive questioning of the social media platforms users can produce diagnostic information. In addition, users believe that deception detection expertise does not involve skill in passively detecting and interpreting behavior but in generating diagnostic information from senders.

Table 10. To Find out the reasons behind people’s resistance to pressing on the 'clickbait'- type headline

	No		Not Sure		Yes		Mean	Std. Deviation	CV
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %			
Context-sensitive questioning of the sender can produce diagnostic information. The wrong	15	15.0	20	20.0	65	65.0	2.50	0.75	29.81
questioning may hinder detection accuracy to you.									

You believe that deception detection expertise does not involve skill in passively detecting and interpreting behavior but in generating diagnostic information from senders.	31	31.0	27	27.0	42	42.0	2.11	0.85	40.36
RQ4: Why don't people resist pressing on the 'clickbait'-type headline?							2.31	0.56	24.26

This study’s results revealed that the online clickbait headlines arouse the audience’s emotions and behavior responses noting that clickbait headlines evoke online users’ emotional arousal according to the following table.

Table 11. To Find out how the people feel after finding out that it was a 'clickbait'-type headline.

	No		Not Sure		Yes		Mean	Std. Deviation	CV
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %			
If the news headline was thriller headline, will this be more motivation for you to click on it --- will you be emotionally aroused?	36	36.0	12	12.0	52	52.0	2.160	0.929	43.01
Will you feel annoyed if you fell in the trap of clicking on a bait headline?	17	17.0	8	8.0	75	75.0	2.580	0.768	29.76
RQ5: How do people feel – emotions – after finding out that it was a 'clickbait'-type headline?							2.370	0.646	27.26

Overall, a negative attitude towards clickbait headlines has been expressed by most participants (77%), as well as a tendency to avoid reading these types of news articles.

Table 12. To Find out if the people who fell into the trap of the clickbait journalism will repeat the action (trust) or will they dislike the page (distrust) on SNS

	No		Not Sure		Yes		Mean	Std. Deviation	CV
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %			
You believe that deception triggers may not occur at the time of the deception.	23	23.0	24	24.0	53	53.0	2.30	0.823	35.77
If you clicked once on the bait headlines, will you repeat entering the same pages again?	67	67.0	10	10.0	23	23.0	1.56	0.845	54.15
RQ6: Will those people who fell in the clickbait journalism trap repeat the action (trust) or will they dislike the page (distrust) on SNS?							1.9300	0.61142	31.68

Findings pointed out the different techniques used to arouse emotions and direct the users to click on the baited headlines.

Table 13. Techniques of Clickbait Headlines

	No		Yes		Weighted Percent
	Count	Row N %	Count	Row N %	
Incomplete Information	47	47.0	53	53.0	37.59
Appeals expressions	70	70.0	30	30.0	21.28
Exaggeration	47	47.0	53	53.0	37.59
Other	95	95.0	5	5.0	3.55
Total			141		100.00

47% of the respondents' believability of the clickbait headlines was perceived as both fake and deceiving as presented in the following table. Only 30% believe it is only fake not intending to deceive them, while 16% believe the clickbait headlines intend to deceive them by providing misleading messages ignoring that it is fake.

Table 14. Deception or Fake News

Do people consider the 'clickbait'-type headline as a deception or fake news?		
	Frequency	Percent
Deception	16	16.0
Fake News	30	30.0
None of those	7	7.0
Both of the following	47	47.0
Total	100	100.0

9. Conclusion:

There are many factors affecting the audience's interaction with Clickbait news. Personal factors related to the audience itself, such as their personal interests and curiosity, and other factors related to the style of the news, its components, the elements of attraction included in it, and its headlines' ability to arouse the interest of the audience.

The user's interaction with the clickbait news is not affected by its demographic characteristics, nor is it affected by their level of social networking experience. That means everyone may fall into the trap of clickbait headlines whenever these headlines succeed in arousing the psychological motives of this user and attract their attention with obscene rumors or gossip or information that makes the audience go to click on these headlines motivated by the possibility that this news is valuable and important to them.

It's concluded that users do not prefer these types of headlines despite their frequent deception feeling frustrated and angry towards clicking on the clickbait headlines, however, their curiosity was the main reason for catching them. Noting that the curiosity gap can have a positive effect if news websites provided good content away from editorial scams and consequently will achieve a higher level of traffic.

In addition, the Drive-Reduction theory hypothesis is confirmed after analyzing this study's results as it was indicated that individuals' psychological motives direct their behavior to the consumption of this type of headline, which leads the users to click on the clickbait headlines. Also, it is concluded that the news makers' exploitation of the curiosity gap among social media platforms users plays a key role in the provisions of the nets around the users to consume such

types of headlines by relying on the inclusion of the headlines of this news with everything new, strange and exciting, which raises the user's appetite for research and exploration to satisfy their motive of curiosity and their desire to gain understanding.

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