



SPEAKER

Mandy Hu

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Mantian (Mandy) Hu is Associate Professor in the Department of Marketing at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. She is also the director of the Center for Consumer Insights. Her research focuses on using quantitative models to study and explain consumer behavior in the industries such as telecommunication, automobile, e-commerce and FinTech. In particular, she is interested in the effects of social network, word-of-mouth, search and learning on influencing consumer decisions.

Her research has been published in *Marketing Science*, *Management Science* and other leading international journals. Professor Hu received PhD in Marketing from Stern School of Business at New York University and BA in Economics from Fudan University.

CUHK Webinar

Battle of Ideologies Online: An Empirical Study of Facebook



16 October 2020 (Friday)
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ABSTRACT

Online social media platforms provide a battleground for propaganda and allow supporters of different political ideologies to increase the impact of their ideas and their fights with each other. This paper collects news and comment data from all of Hong Kong's news media pages on Facebook since 2019, a period during which Hong Kong has witnessed frequent mass protests. Thanks to Hong Kong's unique "one country, two systems" policy, we can for the first time study the ideological collision between two legitimate and coexisting systems, post-authoritarianism and pro-democracy, on an open online platform. The exogenous shocks of police-civil conflict and the unique writing habits of users from different backgrounds allow us to reveal the micromechanisms of how public response to the online content lead to the opinion polarization. We show that 1 additional anti-police comment was generated by every 3 pro-police comments and 1 additional comment on the demand for democracy in Hong Kong was generated by about 25 pro-police comments in Simplified Chinese. Our results demonstrate the counter-productivity of the effort to hire an "Internet Water Army" to influence public opinion on social media platforms.



DISCUSSANTS

Anthony Fung

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A former journalist in China

MODERATOR

Zheng Michael Song

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