The Perils of Flagging Pirates: How Gender, False Consensus and Normative Messages Influence Digital Piracy Intentions

Authors : Kate Whitman, Zahra Murad, Joe Cox, Adam Cox
Abstract : This study investigates the influence of normative communications on digital piracy intentions. Although descriptive norms are thought to influence behavior, the study examines the potential bias in one's own behavior, leading to false consensus—a phenomenon perpetuating undesirable activities. The research tests the presence of false consensus and the effect of correcting normative predictions on changes in piracy intentions, examining gender differences. Results from a controlled experiment (N = 684) indicate that normative communications, reflecting the "real" norm based on government data (N=5000), increase (decrease) piracy intentions among men (women) underestimating their peers' behavior. Conversely, neither men nor women overestimating their peers' piracy show any notable change in intentions. Considering men consume more illegal content than women, suggesting they pose a higher risk, the study highlights the need for cautious use of normative communications. Therefore, policymakers should minimize the visibility of piracy behavior for effective digital piracy management.
Keywords : digital piracy, false consensus, normative interventions, persuasive messages
Conference Title : ICSIPAC 2024 : International Conference on Social Influence, Persuasion and Attitude Change
Conference Location : Barcelona, Spain
Conference Dates : February 05-06, 2024