Title: The Impacts of Stay-at-Home Policies on Online Content Creation

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Abstract

In responding to the COVID-19 pandemic, many states in the U.S. issued lockdown orders to urge their residents to stay at home. In this study, we examine how the physical restrictions impact online users’ content creation behavior. Exploiting a natural experimental setting wherein five states did not enforce any lockdowns and other states that issued lockdowns during one month from late March to early April 2020, and using a unique dataset collected from a short video-sharing platform, we study the impact of lockdown orders on content volume and content novelty. We combined econometric methods with machine learning-based natural language processing to show that the users residing in lockdown states create more content after the lockdown orders but there is a decrease in the novelty of the content. Our findings have important contributions to the online content creation literature and have implications for designing digital platforms in responding to physical restrictions.

Bio

Xunyi Wang is an Assistant Professor of Information Systems & Business Analytics in the Hankamer School of Business at Baylor University. He earned his Ph.D. in Management Science & Systems from the School of Management at the University at Buffalo, SUNY. His research interests are in the areas of the sharing economy, digital platforms, healthcare IT, and gamification. His research has been published in Information Systems Research, Production and Operations Management, Decision Support Systems, Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association, Journal of Medical Internet Research, among others.
Time: 1:20-2:20 pm Mar 04/2022

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