

DOES THE NUMBER OF FACEBOOK 'LIKES' INFLUENCE HOW USERS PERCEIVE HUMOROUS PICTURES SHARED ON FACEBOOK?

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ABSTRACT

83 participants, recruited from a large Midwestern university, viewed 10 humorous pictures, half of which were significantly funnier than the other half. The number of times each picture had been 'liked' on Facebook was displayed below each picture, and this number was manipulated so that half of the participants thought the pictures had been 'liked' around 1000 times while the other half thought they had been 'liked' less than ten times. Participants rated how funny, enjoyable, and pleasant they thought each picture was, and they also rated how likely they were to 'like' the picture on Facebook. They were surreptitiously recorded while viewing the pictures, and the videos were later coded to determine how much each picture caused them to laugh and smile.

The results revealed that no matter how humorous the pictures were, the number of Facebook 'likes' had no effect on how participants rated the pictures or on how much they laughed or smiled.