Original of Online Political Hostility - 2021 March - Perception (#59945)

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1) Have any data been collected for this study already?
No, no data have been collected for this study yet.

2) What's the main question being asked or hypothesis being tested in this study?
H1. Hostile messages are considered more offensive in online (vs. offline) contexts. This is a hypothesis derived from the perception hypothesis, however our results so far indicate that hostile messages are considered no more (and if anything, less) hostile online (vs offline).
H2. Hostile messages are considered less inappropriate in online (vs. offline) contexts.
H3. Hostile messages are considered less rare in online (vs offline) contexts.

3) Describe the key dependent variable(s) specifying how they will be measured.
For H1, we ask “How offensive does this comment seem to you?” 1 not offensive at all … 7 extremely offensive.
For H2, we ask “How appropriate or inappropriate would this comment be in the given context?” 1 perfectly appropriate … 7 extremely inappropriate
For H3, we ask “Finally, please consider how common or rare it is that such a comment is made in the given context.” 1 very common … 7 very rare

4) How many and which conditions will participants be assigned to?
The experiment has 4 conditions manipulated within participants in a 2 (context: online vs offline) × 2 group size (small private vs large public) design. Each condition is randomly paired with a message constituting a balanced mix of high vs medium hostility, and pro-Republican vs pro-Democratic messages. The four messages are 1) a pro-Rep high hostility message on immigration; 2) a pro-Dem medium hostility message on the pandemic; 3) a pro-Dem high hostility message on the Capitol siege. 4) pro-Rep medium hostility message on abortion.

5) Specify exactly which analyses you will conduct to examine the main question/hypothesis.
For H1, we regress offensiveness on an indicator of online vs offline context.
For H2, we regress inappropriateness on an indicator of online vs offline context.
For H3, we regress rarity on an indicator of online vs offline context.
We shall correct for multiple observations per respondent with fixed effects for respondents and stories.

6) Describe exactly how outliers will be defined and handled, and your precise rule(s) for excluding observations.
As an attention check, we include a modified color test (asking people to enter “decaf” into an open textbox). We will test the robustness of our findings by subsetting to attentive respondents, but our main analysis includes all respondents.

7) How many observations will be collected or what will determine sample size? No need to justify decision, but be precise about exactly how the number will be determined.
We collect a quota-sampled, diverse online sample of US Americans through YouGov. N = 1300.

8) Anything else you would like to pre-register? (e.g., secondary analyses, variables collected for exploratory purposes, unusual analyses planned?)
We manipulate group size for exploratory purposes, following up on our previous results showing that there is a particularly large gap between seeing online and offline contexts when it comes to hostility against strangers (as opposed to the self, or friends).