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Yoongi Kim
*University of Massachusetts Boston*, yoongi.kim001@umb.edu

Jonathan Kim
*University of Massachusetts Boston*, jonathan.kim@umb.edu

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*TREO Talk Paper*

**Yoongi Kim**
University of Massachusetts Boston
yoongi.kim001@umb.edu

**Jonathan Kim**
University of Massachusetts Boston
jonathan.kim@umb.edu

## Abstract

Given this pandemic's impact, social network users exhibit a high level of sentiment associated with various topics related to the pandemic. Among those topics, racial discrimination has often been observed in social networks and studied by numerous disciplines such as sociology, communication studies, and information systems. In 2020, Asians have been experiencing an increasing number of incidents ever since COVID-19 broke out in Wuhan, China. COVID-19 has been rapidly spreading since mid-January 2020 throughout Asia and globally (Edara 2020). The fear caused xenophobia against the Asian population. Although the virus is officially named COVID-19 by the World Health Organization, Asian individuals have been targeted in the United States, making them deal with acts of racism, such as accusing the culture or getting attacked and removed from public places (Edara 2020).

According to the U.S. Census, the Asian population increased 72% from 2000 to 2015, making it the fastest-growing group. The Asian population is expected to be the country's largest immigrant group, surpassing Hispanics in 2055. In about 50 years, the Asian population will make up 38% of all U.S. immigrants, while Hispanics will make up 31% of the country's immigrant population.

Given this situation, the new wave of racism is alarming, and studying this hate towards the Asian population is crucial in the time of the pandemic. Limited study has been conducted to see what factors affect people to spread the news on racism with social media. We explore factors that may escalate the negative sentiments towards the Asian population thereby leading to spreading the news with social media during the pandemic. With extensive literature review, we develop a research model that explains the relationships among the identified factors. Our study attempts to answer the research questions below.

RQ1: What are the factors affecting social network users to spread the news on racism?

RQ2: How do source credibility, source popularity, and sentiment affect the behavior of spreading the news on racism?
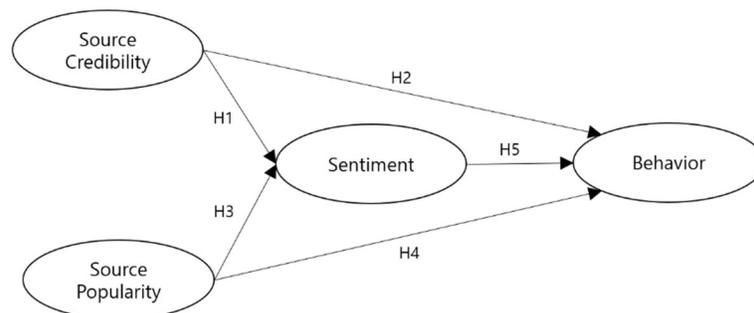


Figure 1: Research Model

## References

Edara, I.R. 2020. "Anti-Asian Racism in the Shadow of Covid-19 in the USA: Reported Incidents, Psychological Implications, and Coping Resources," *Journal of Psychological Research| Volume* (2:03).