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Visual Attention and Real-World Decision Making: Sharing Photos on Social Media

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Abstract

The present study examined the effect of visual attention and personality traits on decision-making in digital environments. Fifty-nine individuals were asked how likely they would be to share 40 distinct memes (photos with superimposed captions) on social media while their eye movements were tracked. Results showed that the likelihood of sharing memes increased as fixation duration to the text of the meme increased; conversely, the likelihood of sharing decreased as visual attention to the image of the meme increased. In addition, agreeableness predicted an increased likelihood of sharing memes. These results indicate that differences in perceptual processing of digital content and specific personality traits affect the likelihood that an individual will share said content on social media platforms.