

## Research Question

### Is Partisan News Consumption driven by consumers' perceptions of news brands, independent of worldview-confirming news content?

### Background

- Partisan News Consumption (PNC) is a rapidly growing global phenomenon (e.g., Reissman, 2022)
- In the US, liberals choose outlets like CNN and conservatives pick outlets like Fox News (e.g., Jurkowitz, et al., 2020)
- PNC is concerning because it leads to political polarization (e.g., Martin & Yurukoglu, 2017; Stroud, 2010)
- It is widely believed that PNC occurs because of confirmation bias (e.g., Iyengar & Hahn, 2009)

### 5 Pre-Registered Experiments

- **Experiments 1 & 2:** Removing brand attribution from real Fox & CNN headlines eliminates PNC
- **Experiment 3:** Conservatives (Liberals) are more likely to consume counter-ideological news stories when presented by Fox (CNN)
- **Experiments 4 & 5:** Effect mediated by perceived source credibility
- **DV:** Consequential headline choice (Experiments 1-4); 7-point Intention to read scale (Experiments 5)

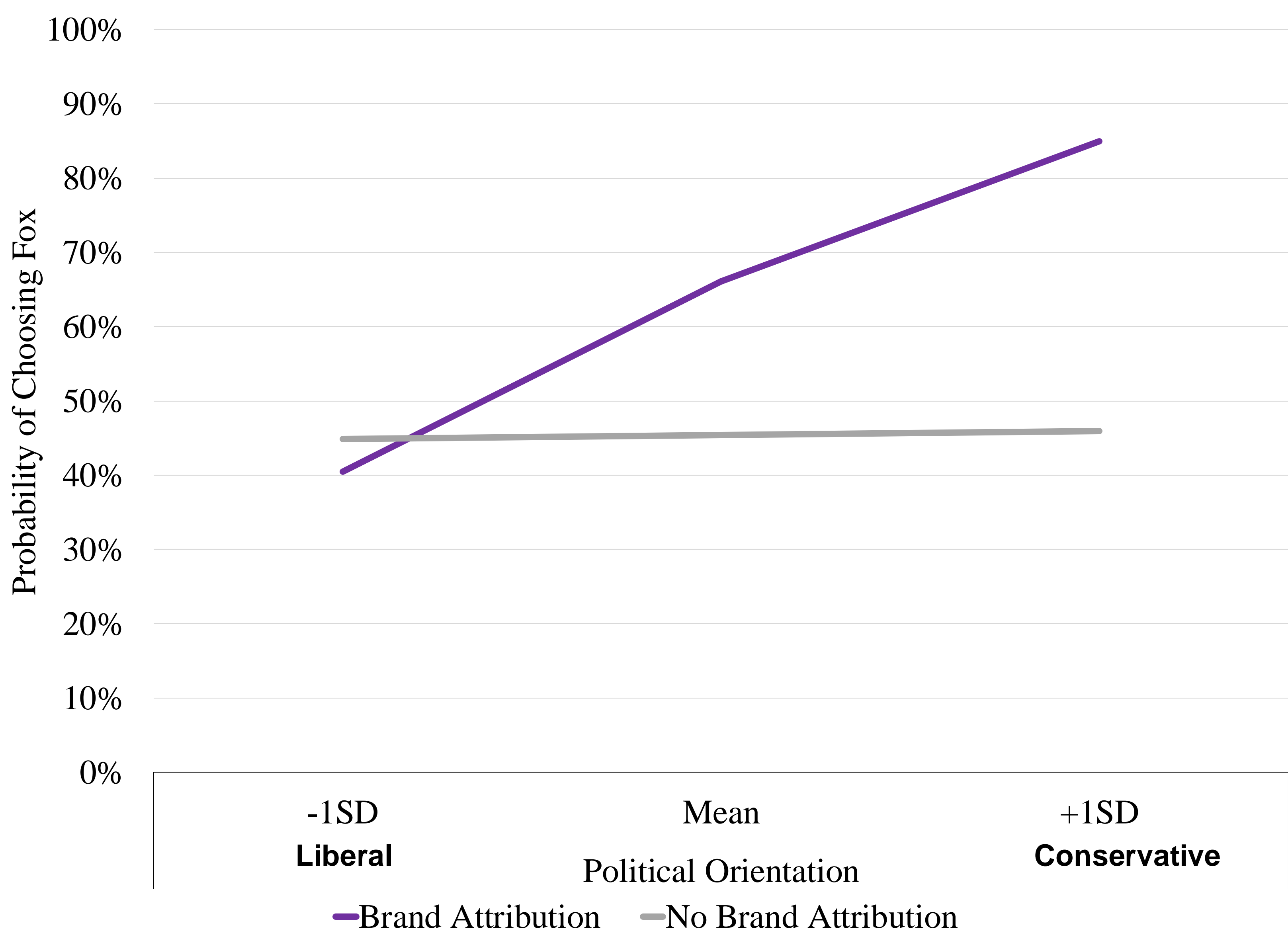
### Experiment 1: Removing Source Attribution

- N = 409
- Design: 2 (Attribution: Yes vs No) x Political Orientation
- Real pairs of headlines from 5 distinct news stories
- Example Stimuli:

Attribution Condition Example

No Attribution Condition Example

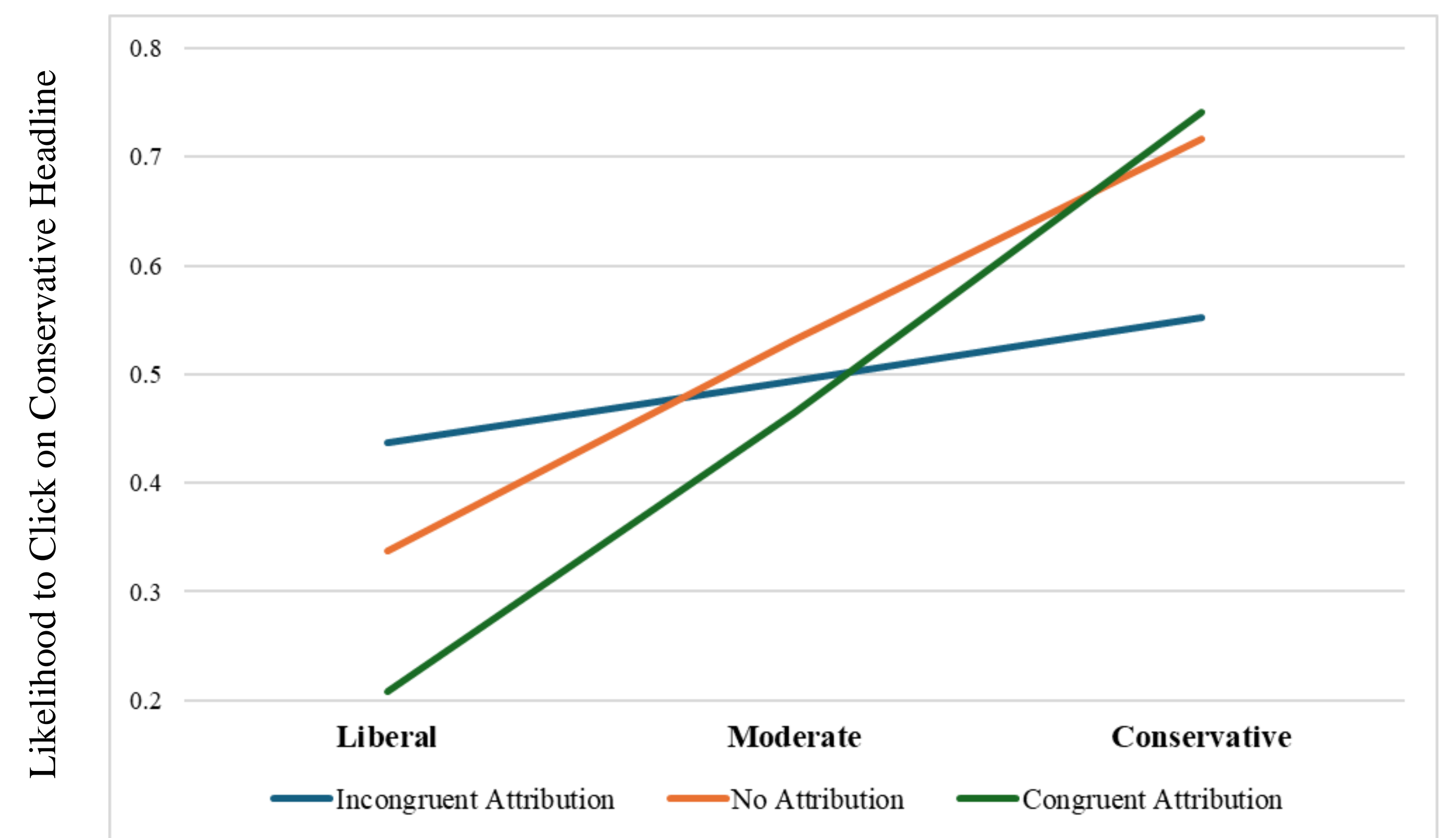
<p>Student athlete urges Supreme Court to keep West Virginia's anti-trans sports ban on hold</p> <p>Supreme Court could take first transgender sports case with appeal from West Virginia soccer player</p>	<p>Student athlete urges Supreme Court to keep West Virginia's anti-trans sports ban on hold</p> <p>Supreme Court could take first transgender sports case with appeal from West Virginia soccer player</p>
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### Experiment 3: Manufactured Headlines

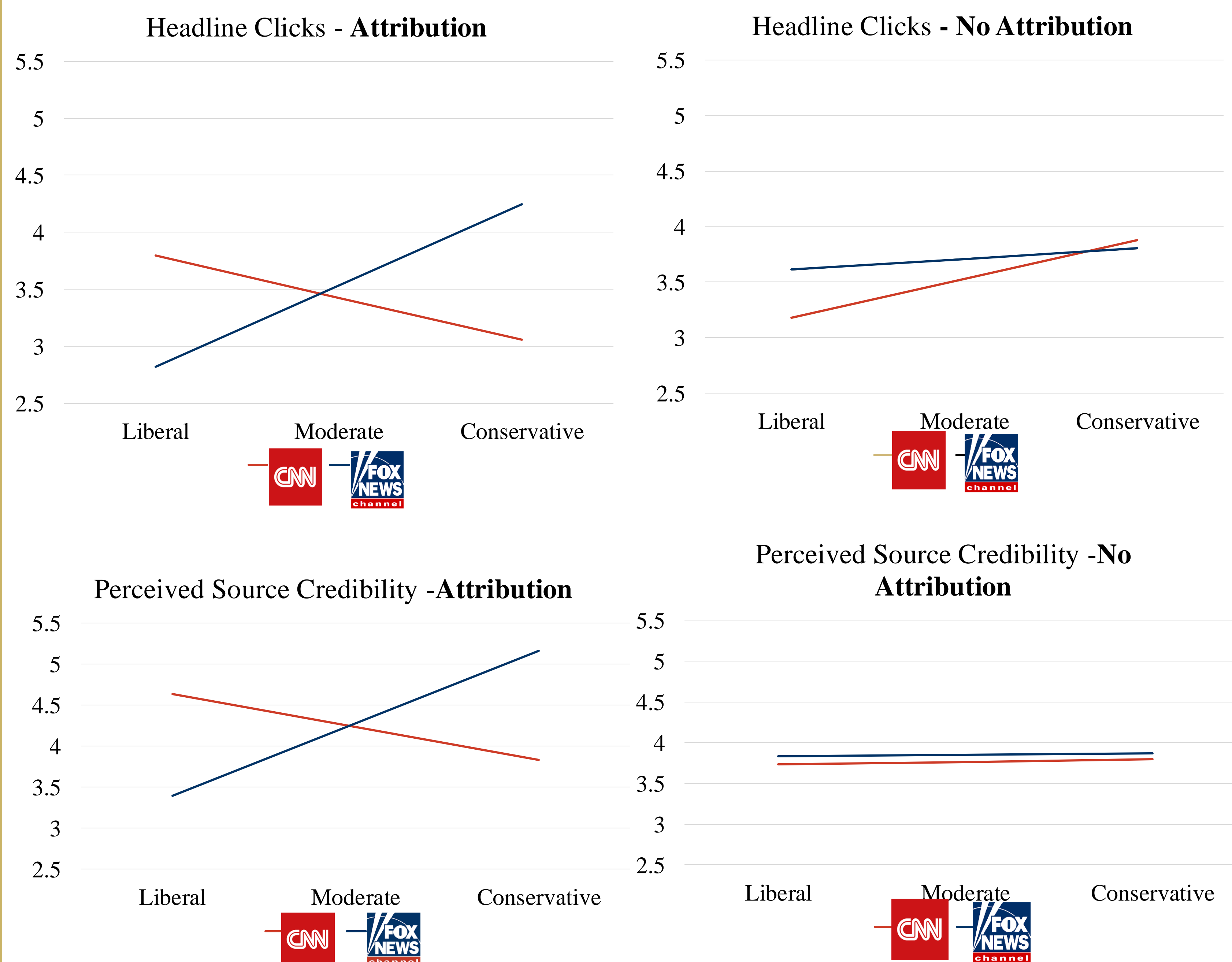
- N = 1600
- Design: 3 (Attribution: Congruent vs Incongruent vs None) x Political Orientation
- Fictional headlines (Gay Rights, Immigration, Election Integrity, Abortion) presented in randomized pairs (one conservative, one liberal)
- Example Stimuli from Incongruent Condition:

<p>Gay rights activists march in record numbers throughout the country, remembering their fight for the "right to love"</p>	<p>"We're stopping the steal come November" – The GOP's strategy for a "more honest" election this year</p>
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### Experiment 5: Mediation by Source Credibility

- N = 358
- Design: Similar to Experiment 1 but also measures source credibility



### Conclusion

- PNC is not a simple case of confirmation bias
- Consumers choose news from the brand they perceive to be more credible, independent of content