

Post Approvals in Online Communities

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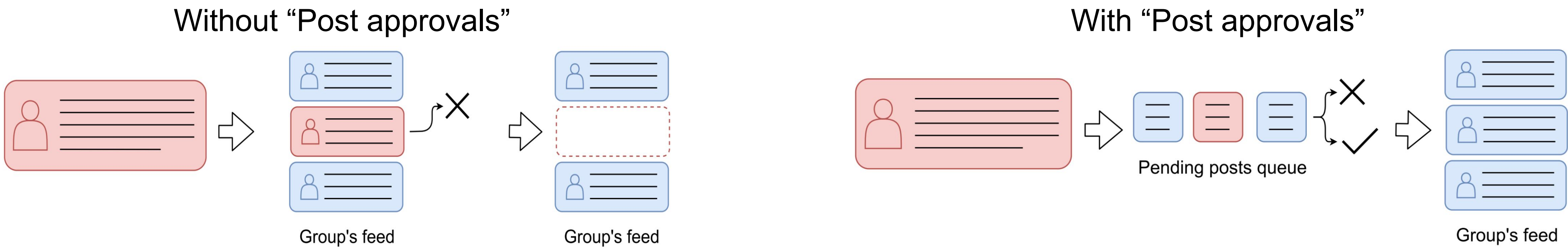
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How does adopting post approvals shape online communities?

Possible tradeoffs

(Wise et al. 2006)

- + Well-moderated spaces are more attractive to users.

(Cosley et al. 2005)

- + Oversight increases the quantity/quality of contributions.

(Jhaver et al. 2019)

- Over-enforcement can discourage participation.

(Dosono and Seeman 2019)

- Moderation tasks can overwhelm community leaders.

Data

Study period: March 28 to July 11 2021, 103 days

Inclusion criteria:

- 128+ members
- At least 1 post & 1 comment per 7-day period

PA-ON — with post approvals; (n=9k):

- all communities that turned on post approvals

PA-OFF — without post approvals; (n=225k):

- a random sample (50%) of communities that did not change any moderation-related setting

Group-level variables:

General	Moderation-related	Activity-related
Visibility, group topic...	Leader time spent, number of reports...	Num. posts, time spent...

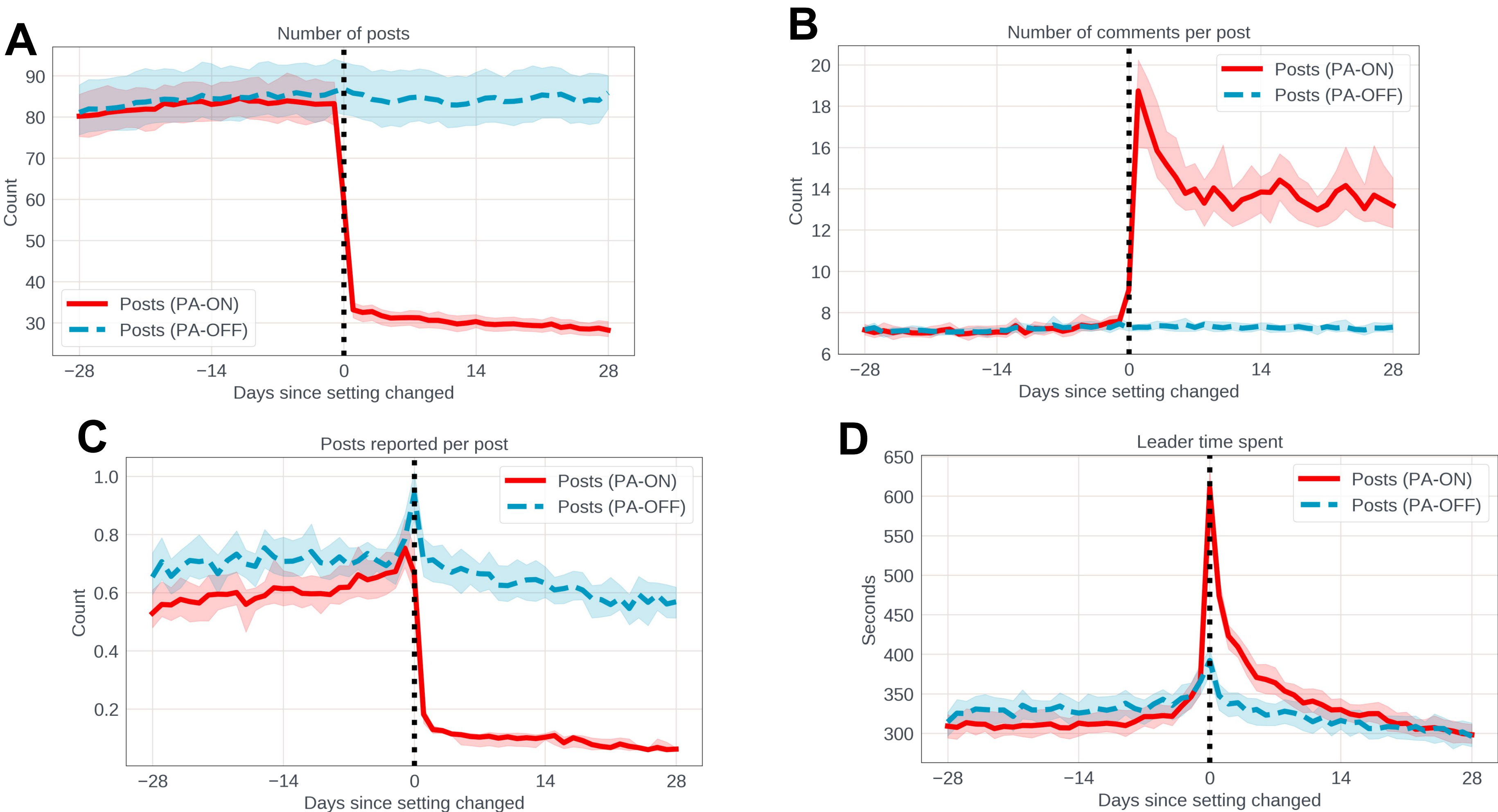
Study design

Matching	Exposure	Outcome
	Adopted post approvals	?
	Did not adopt	?

t=0

(We used propensity score matching on group-level variables)

Main result: post approvals creates communities centered around fewer,^A higher-quality posts,^{B/C} not increasing the average time community leaders spend in their groups^D



More in the paper: What leads communities to adopt post approvals? How are communities differentially affected by post app.?