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**PEOPLE'S PERCEPTION AND TRUST IN RADIO JOURNALISM: A PANACEA TO
MITIGATION OF FAKE NEWS FROM SOCIAL MEDIA**

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ABSTRACT

The study was sought to find out the people's perception and trusts in radio journalism a panacea to mitigation of fake news from social media. Disinformation and hoaxes, often known as "fake news," are spreading and influencing how people view daily events. Several information systems have become more polarized and confrontational as a result of foreign players, citizen journalism, and the proliferation of talk radio and cable news. False news and sophisticated disinformation efforts are particularly problematic in democratic systems, and there is rising debate over how to handle these concerns while preserving the benefits of digital media. It is critical that government, business, and consumers work together to tackle these difficulties in order to maintain an open, democratic system. In their society, governments should support news literacy and robust professional journalism. To develop public trust and correct fake news and disinformation without legitimizing them, the news sector must deliver high-quality journalism. The study also reviewed the concept of journalism, Radio Journalism, Fake News, Social Media and How Radio Journalism Advert Fake News on Social Media. It was on the same point that the study concluded that the proliferation of disinformation brought about by the rising usage of social media platforms is a major modern concern. It contributes to political polarization and has an impact on a variety of fundamental rights, including the right to free expression and equality. Yet, given the absence of unprotected speech, the remedies for misinformation are mostly social and educational at this point. These methods and initiatives, along with fact-checking and the production of counter-narratives, continue to be the favored vanguard in the fight for the truth while protecting free expression. A lack of vital news or information could lead to chaos as people are misled by inaccurate information. One of the recommendations made was that Government should provide in-depth and evidence-based information that is authoritative is unbiased and offers a balanced approach.

KEYWORDS: People's Perception, Radio Journalism, Mitigation, Fake News and Social Media



Introduction

The news media has a critical responsibility to "help individuals in becoming informed." A critical condition for the news media to fulfill this job is to provide people with the knowledge they require to be free and self-governing. It is equally vital that the news medium be used and trusted. After all, if voters do not consume or believe the news, even a highly knowledgeable news media ecosystem is of little democratic use. Jones (2018) observed that media trust is either diminishing or that many individuals do not trust the news media at the same time. According to Gallup statistics, the proportion expressing a great deal or a fair degree of "trust and confidence" in "the mainstream media" decreased from 68 percent in 1968 to 32 percent in 2016, and while it has subsequently risen, just 12 percent indicate "a great deal" of confidence in the media (Guess, Nyhan, & Reifler, 2018). Another comparative survey found that the proportion of individuals who believe "most news most of the time" is about 49 percent across all countries analyzed (Newman, Fletcher, Kalogeropoulos, & Nielsen, 2019). While charges that media trust is diminishing in general are exaggerated, it is clear that news media trust is at best weak. (Hanitzsch, Van Dalen, & Steindl 2018).

Prior (2007) states, in addition to the aforementioned, that the change to high-choice media settings has resulted in numerous news concerns or exacerbated challenges for conventional news media and news media trust. For begin, news organizations now face unprecedented competition for people's attention from a myriad of other information sources. Second, many of the news industry's younger rivals are so-called "alternative" and "political" media, which regularly accuse established news organizations of being untrustworthy (Jamieson & Cappella, 2008). (Ladd, 2012). Lastly, digital and social media have reduced political and other social actors' reliance on news media to reach the public, allowing them to avoid the news media while also providing outlets for assaults on the news media (Groshek & KocMichalska, 2017). Fourth, more "fake news" (Egelhofer & Lecheler, 2019), disinformation, and misinformation is likely to circulate in public than ever before (Benkler, Faris, & Roberts, 2018). There is also evidence that prominent politicians are less afraid of being caught disseminating disinformation than they were previously, with President Trump acting as an example (PolitiFact, 2019). Finally, it is widely recognized that when presented with problematic information, people choose attitude-consistent information and engage in motivated reasoning and skepticism (Flynn, Nyhan, & Reifler, 2017). This is especially true for partisans and those whose opinions are challenged by facts that contradicts them. Such are also the most prone to the hostile media phenomenon, which is the tendency to see the news media as antagonistic to one's own side while supporting the other side in a political debate (Kavanagh and Rich 2018).

According to a poll performed by Kalogeropoulos, Suiter, Udris, and Eisenegger (2019), with all of the challenges that current news media encounters, confidence in the media has become increasingly important. After all, why should customers have more trust in the accuracy of news media information than information from other sources? How else could news organizations guard against political actors or partisan media? And why would individuals utilize the news media if they could get information that reinforced their own attitudes and ideas from other sources? In fact, some research indicates that a lack of confidence in news media is related with less use of these and



higher use of non-mainstream information sources, establishing a relationship between trust in news media and selective exposure to news media. (Ladd, 2012)

Simultaneously, Engelke, Hase, and Wintterlin (2019) investigate (a) how much individuals trust the news media and (b) how much this affects their use of these and other types of media. One problem is that studies usually depend on single or excessively broad measures of media trust, while another is a lack of agreed conceptualizations and operationalizations of media trust. Additionally, there has been relatively little study on the impact of faith in the news media on people's media consumption (Kovach & Rosenstiel 2014). Taken together, this suggests that studies on news media trust and its implications for media consumption should be reconsidered (Fischer, 2016).

Given this, the goal of this paper is twofold. The first goal is to present a concentrated overview of (a) previous research on how news media trust has been conceived and operationalized, as well as (b) research on how news media trust influences the use of traditional news media vs non-mainstream media. The second phase is to provide the groundwork for future research on news media trust and its influence on people's use of traditional and alternative media. Two cautions should be addressed before proceeding. First, while the terms "media trust" and "news media trust" are used interchangeably in the literature, they normally relate to trust in conventional news media such as newspapers (Holbert 2005). While writing about news media and news media trust in this article, we refer to conventional news media such as newspapers, television news, and radio news in their offline or online editions unless otherwise noted. Second, while a thorough understanding of the relationships between people's confidence in the news media and their media consumption would demand equal attention to conceptualizations and operationalizations of news media trust and media consumption, we will concentrate on news media trust in this article.

Concepts of Journalism

Journalism is the art and science of obtaining, compiling, and presenting news through various forms of mass media. It is essentially a way of spreading knowledge and facts, often from an objective position, with an emphasis on truth and education. After all, knowledge is power, and we require constant access to current and credible information in order to survive in any setting. News educates us about what is going on in the world around us, draws our attention to situations that we should be aware of, and motivates us to act. While journalism is intriguing and engaging, it is essentially a tool for empowerment. By journalistic writing and reporting, experts provide individuals with the information they need to manage their lives. Today's media has an impact on how we interact with our communities, cultures, companies, and even governments. (Carter et al., 2022).

Journalism is the development and transmission of reports on the interaction of events, facts, ideas, and people that constitute the "news of the day" and, to some extent, enlighten society. The word refers to a career (whether professional or not), a method



of gathering information, and the classification of literary genres. Journalism's appropriate function differs across country, as do opinions of the profession and its resultant status. The news media in certain nations is controlled by the government and is not independent. In others, the news media is independent and acts as a for-profit business. Additionally, various countries' rules controlling free speech, press freedom, and slander and libel trials may be implemented differently. The rise of the Internet and smartphones around the turn of the century brought about substantial changes in the media landscape. As a result, consumers are increasingly accessing news through e-readers, smartphones, and other personal electronic devices rather than the more conventional formats of newspapers, periodicals, or television news channels. News companies must monetize its digital arm while also enhancing the environment in which they publish in print. Print income for newspapers has fallen faster than digital revenue has increased (Wikipedia, 2023).

Given the industry's diversity, journalism may be defined in a multitude of ways in today's globe. It is the discovery, gathering, analyzing, and editing of news or information for publishing or presentation on a specific media arena, which might include the press (newspapers, magazines, or books), radio, television, or the Internet. Journalists are those who write about past events, such as news stories, opinion pieces known as features, or features on any given problem that informs others. They are finished in newspapers, periodicals, radio and television stations, and are increasingly completed on the Internet (Strömbäck 2005). Journalism is a wonderful profession that requires considerable knowledge, reading, curiosity, a solid writing style, and a strong work ethic. It must be done with integrity. A lack of it might lead to chaos as people are misled by inaccurate information. Today's journalism has a plethora of communication platforms (Mathias, 2019). Journalism can be broadcast journalism, which uses traditional journalistic approaches, or internet journalism, which uses digital technologies. Journalism forums include the following:

- News Reporting: A journalist gathers news and either produces an article or reports on it for a news channel, whether on radio, television, or an internet forum. This could be an event, an occasion, a catastrophe, a disaster, or an investigative news story.
- Feature writing: News or information can be translated into a thorough style of writing or an opinion generating piece through feature writing. It could be a book or movie review.
- Discussion and debate boards: The editorial page could feature articles with opinionated pieces that contrast different points of view. Radio, internet, and television networks feature debates and discussions moderated by well-known journalists.

Journalism on the Internet:

- Blog writing: News or information is also published in feature style writing on online forums known as blogs. The blog could be made more creative by including videos, video links, or images.
- TV channels have recognized the importance of the internet and established devoted websites to it. They give reading material and run concurrent news on these websites.
- Many journalists now use the internet to broadcast their own shows, chat shows, reviews, hilarious takes, interviews, opinionated pieces, and so on.
- Today, many citizens report news and provide videos and images, boosting the phenomenon of citizen journalism.
- Wikis are another massive knowledge platform that is offered for free. Numerous writers contribute to this forum's content in order to help millions of individuals.
- Mojo Journalism- A new term in journalism that essentially means mobile journalism. It is a type of reporting in where events, stories, or multimedia content are field reported using smaller, linked mobile devices such as smart phones, DSLR cameras, laptops, or GoPros. This phenomenon has also had a significant impact on citizen journalism. "Mobile Journalism is about empowering the individual storyteller to use whatever consumer technology they have available to them to generate the greatest possible visual story that they can," explains Glen Mulcahy, Founder of Mojocon. I'd like to believe that the definition of Mobile Journalism may be expanded to include mobile devices other than smartphones, such as DSLR cameras, laptops, and Go Pros."

Concepts of Radio Journalism

Radio journalism, often known as broadcast journalism, is the delivery of news and journals using electronic means as opposed to conventional methods such as printed newspapers and posters. It is compatible with radio (on the air, via cable, and over the Internet), television (via cable, via the Internet, and via the World Wide Web. These types of media broadcast visuals (both static and moving), visual text, and audio. Wikipedia (Wikipedia, 2022). Some standards and processes must always be followed while writing a script for radio broadcast journalism. The criteria for radio news reporting are intended to guarantee that the public receives accurate information. To begin with, radio news must be concise, clear, and accurate. The information should be thoroughly scrutinized and only broadcast when the radio journalist has received irrefutable confirmation. Accuracy is a core concept of journalism in general, and especially of broadcast journalism. It is the bedrock of news writing since the accuracy of the facts stated serves as the foundation for all other components of the journalistic output given. A respectable radio station cannot afford to broadcast unstable or incomplete information, much alone false news. The reputation of media companies is vital; it is a trademark that must be safeguarded at all costs. A good reputation is built over time and through hard effort, but it can be destroyed in an instant. It's tough to get and much more difficult to get back. As a result, news editors must double-check and cross-check the information they receive. To validate the information obtained from



three different sources, as indicated by manuals and guidelines: "Journalism as a literary craft, whether print or broadcast, is distinguished by the honest reporting of facts. Your final product must correctly represent the story's facts. On the field, you must explore every possible lead in order to obtain and report information." 2018 (Davian)

A career in radio journalism is enticing. Understanding why you want to work in radio journalism is significantly more important than learning how to do it. The most trustworthy source of information is someone with practical experience in radio journalism." Radio journalists locate, study, and broadcast news articles to a wide range of listeners. They must present news bulletins, interview people, and narrate news pieces or lengthier parts." The job of a radio journalist is similar to that of a print journalist in that he or she gathers, compiles, and reports news. This might be at the local, national, or global levels. A professional radio journalist would often use noises such as interviews, press conferences, and sound effects to make the listener feel as though they were also present. Radio journalism differs from other types of journalism in that radio stories are typically heard once and then forgotten. Because listeners do not have the option of hearing the radio broadcast again, radio journalists must ensure that their stories are clear, concise, and easy to understand. Like a television journalist, a radio journalist frequently gives the news live. Radio journalists are also required to have certain technical skills, such as the ability to record, edit, and mix audio. Depending on the size of the newsroom, a radio journalist may be required to do everything from on-air interviews to audio editing. Larger newsrooms often allocate separate employees to each task, but a small local newsroom may only have a few staff members who share all responsibilities. 2023 (Pasche)

Concepts of Fake News

Fake news is information that is incorrect or misleading and is presented as news. The phrase is a neologism (a new or re-purposed expression that is entering the language, driven by culture or technology changes). Fake news, or fake news websites, have no basis in reality but are portrayed as factually correct. Fake news has also been referred to as junk news, pseudo-news, alternative facts, fake news, hoax news, and bullshite news (Wemple, 2016). Fake news, according to the National Endowment for Democracy, is "Misleading information on the internet, particularly on social media. Most of this information is created by for-profit websites and Facebook pages, which provide a platform for ad money." "Fake news does not fit the criteria of misinformation or propaganda," he said. Its motivations are often financial rather than political, and they are not linked to a greater objective." Media expert Nolan Higdon has described fake news as "false or misleading information portrayed as news and disseminated in modes spanning spoken, written, printed, electronic, and digital communication. Higdon contends that the term "fake news" has been used too narrowly to specific channels and political beliefs. While most definitions focus solely on content veracity and format, recent research suggests that content rhetorical structure may have a substantial influence in the impression of false news (Beisecker, Schlereth, and Hein, 2022).



Fake news is information that is incorrect or misleading and is presented as news. Fake news is frequently intended to harm a person's or entity's reputation or to profit from advertising income (Hunt, 2016). Although false news has existed throughout history, the phrase "fake news" originally used in the 1890s, when dramatic newspaper reports were widespread. However, the phrase has no set definition and has been used to refer to any sort of incorrect information. It's also been used by public figures to refer to any negative news. Moreover, misinformation is the dissemination of false information with malicious purpose, and it is occasionally manufactured and distributed by hostile foreign entities, particularly during elections. Other definitions of fake news include humorous pieces misconstrued as genuine, as well as stories with sensationalist or click bait titles that are not supported by the text. Due of the variety of fake news, academics are beginning to use the term "information disorder" as a more impartial and informative word. According to a recent research, fake news travels faster than true news, and it is the fault of human people, not bots.

Fake news, defined by the researchers as statements debunked by six major fact-checking organizations, may spread 10 times faster than real news articles, according to a study done by scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The researchers investigated misinformation that spread on Twitter between 2006 and 2017. While several politicians and other opponents in the United States blamed automated bots for the spread of fake news before to the 2016 election, the MIT researchers removed bot-dispersed tweets from their investigation (Gross, 2018).

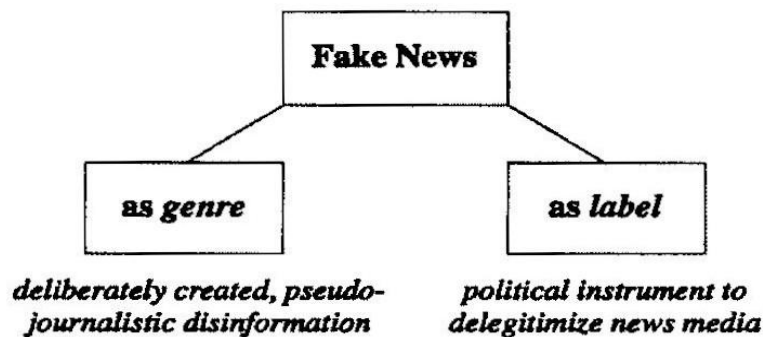


Fig.1: Fake news and the instruments

Concepts of Social Media

According to Jurgenson (2012), social media is a collection of interactive Internet apps that enable the collaborative or individual creation, curation, and sharing of user-generated information. There are numerous and diverse examples of social media networks. Facebook, Friendster, Wikipedia, dating sites, Craigslist, recipe sharing sites (such as allrecipes.com), YouTube, and Instagram are among them. Social media platforms all share the traits listed above, yet they differ in many ways. Platform designs, structures, conventions, and user bases, in particular, frequently differ. Scholars classify and name many subgroups of social media, with a particular emphasis on social networking sites, in their efforts to discern between different types of social media platforms. (Boyd & Ellison 2007) distinguish social network sites from social



networking sites. They contend that social networking entails meeting new people and forming new connections, which contradicts real user behaviors. Users of social networking sites, in particular, prefer to communicate with current social friends over new social acquaintances. Facebook, MySpace, YouTube, and Live Journal are examples of social networking platforms. Microblogging sites are a second subset of social media. These let users to send brief messages to a large number of people, generally via links and photos. Some services have specific restrictions on the number of characters or quantity of substance that can be included in a message. Each message on Twitter, the most popular microblogging site in the United States, and Weibo, China's suite of microblogging services, is limited to 140 characters. Vine, Twitter's video tool, restricts segments to 6 seconds.

Identity, interpersonal connections, institutions, and the political economy are all influenced by social media. Social media blurs the distinctions between public and private, work and play, online and off. Such ambiguity must be considered as scholars continue to learn how social media affects and is influenced by the social environment. Some important areas of interest are starting to emerge. Scholars are becoming increasingly interested in how social media users traverse social media networks in active and argentic ways. Early study concentrated mostly on the benefits of social media. This body of study focused on how social media platforms lead users and support specific types of engagement and self-presentation. This study focuses on resistance—how social media users redraw lines, negotiate limits, and modify social media environments to achieve their goals. This research also sees the emergence of digital technology and social media usage as a network of interconnected practices and material circumstances through which users can navigate as needed (Barassi & Treré, 2012).

People's Perception of Radio Journalism

Broadcast media, particularly radio journalism, is advantageous because it reaches the grassroots, is portable, has a character of immediacy in information dissemination, and transmits a wide range of programs. Radio is an effective medium for mobilizing people; hence, it overcomes illiteracy and appeals to the individual. Radio journalism has been useful in developing countries, especially in the center of health care, because the people get to know the usefulness of primary health care through awareness campaigns on radio; hence, information is indispensable for a progressive society. Radio, when properly used, has proven to be the best and most effective medium of communication with a larger population. Radio enhances the chances of getting information across to a wide range of audiences.

According to Ajibade O. et al. (2017), radio journalism is seen by people to be one of the most significant modes of communication signals to any location on the planet. Music, news, conversation, interviews, sports event descriptions, and advertisements are now included in radio broadcasts. People view radio journalism as



the easiest form of broadcasting information, as people can listen to their vehicle radios on their way to work and during their free time to listen to their favorite programs on the radio. Radio broadcasts a wide range of news. Aside from broadcasting, radio is used by airline pilots, astronauts, construction workers, police officers, sailors, and others who operate in a wide variety of fields.

People's Trust in Radio Journalism

A lot of misinformation and fake news have become the order of the day as a breed of so-called journalists have been misusing the power of the Internet and social media by posting malicious and misleading information to grab attention (Salaudeen, 2020). During the course of this flood of misinformation, the factual content gets lost. Today, it's hard for people to trust the news and other information they receive now and then. It's worth mentioning that radio, one of the oldest, continues to remain the most popular medium reaching over 90 percent of the country's population despite vast expansion of television channels and social media networks. People have always shown unflinching faith in the content aired on radio and the vast population of the country relies on it for the consumption of news and for entertainment purposes.

In this era of digital age where there is a barrage of fake news, it is the radio broadcasters who have helped spread awareness and assisted listeners navigate their way through this maze of misinformation and paid news. In the words of a broadcaster, being a very personal and distanced form of communication, radio has now become a new 'comfort companion' for its listeners. Precisely, it's the Radio which has always kept its audience intact even in extreme crisis be it social, political, economic or an unprecedented health emergency like COVID-19 pandemic. This voice medium has never let its audience down when it comes to firsthand information on issues confronting them and has proved a credible means of information and education through entertainment mode (Scharkow, 2017). Meanwhile, the sub-theme 'trust in radio journalism' has been aptly embedded to lay emphasis on fair journalism practices, which makes sense in the growing menace of fake news and misinformation campaigns.

People's trust in radio is due to its low cost and simplicity. Relative to the other media, both its capital cost and its running expenses are small. The medium is cheap to use and can attract a substantial audience. Radio remains affordable and can be listened to everywhere, even when electricity or connectivity is not reliable. The medium is therefore one of the most popular means of communication, used by an overwhelming majority of people.

How Radio Journalism Averts Fake News on Social Media

According to Darrell (2017), journalism is undergoing significant change. Emerging digital platforms have released innovative journalism practices that allow for unique kinds of communication and more global reach than ever before in human history. Equally, radio helps assuage or avert the effects of fake news obtained from social media on people perception of some social issues. On the other side, disinformation and hoaxes, often known as "fake news" are spreading and influencing how people's view daily events. Several information systems have become more polarized and confrontational as a result of foreign players, citizen journalism, and the proliferation of talk radio and cable news, while public trust in traditional journalism



has plummeted. False news and sophisticated disinformation efforts are particularly problematic in democratic systems, and there is rising debate over how to handle these concerns while preserving the benefits of digital media. It is critical that government, business, and consumers work together to tackle these difficulties in order to maintain an open, democratic system. In their society, governments should support news literacy and robust professional journalism. To develop public trust and correct fake news and disinformation without legitimizing them, the news sector must deliver high-quality journalism. Companies in the technology sector should invest in systems that detect fake news, limit financial incentives for those who profit from disinformation, and promote online accountability. Informing people about news literacy should be a top focus for educational institutions. The portability, convenience, cheap cost, and availability of free signals make radio journalism a very popular medium in both developed and undeveloped countries to stop the spread of fake news in the public. A study of false news is critical in this digital age of immediate message news distribution and worldwide engagement, when the spread of manufactured news is becoming more prevalent in the mass media, new media, social media, websites, and blogs. Fake news, also known as junk news, pseudo-news, alternative news, or hoax news, is a type of neologism for fabricating news with the intent to spread lies (Dis-information); transmitting false information without the intent to spread lies (Mis-information); and conveying genuine information with the intent to cause harm (Mal-information). The rise of fake news is rather shocking, as it is presented as factually correct and true. Propaganda or satire news, on the other hand, cannot be conveyed as genuine news, but rather as yellow journalism. Fake news discourse has become increasingly popular in recent years as a result of the manifestation of the 'Global Village' theory via online journalism, social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and others; websites, blogs, and people's desperation to gain financially and politically. As a result, the global network and platforms are bombarded with sensational, dishonest, and downright fake news and headlines in order to enhance readership and advertising patronage, (Višňovský, and Radošinská, 2020). Good enough, radio journalism has played a paramount role in mitigating the effects of such junk news.

Since the 2016 U.S. presidential election, the so-called "fake news" phenomenon has been one of the most discussed topics in both public and scientific discourse (Nelson & Taneja, 2018). While the term fake news was originally applied to political satire (Baym, 2005), it now appears to stand for all things 'inaccurate' (Lazer, 2017; Tambini 2017) and is even applied in contexts that are completely unrelated to mediated communication (Packer, 2017). But what fake news represents is something bigger than the phrase itself: a fundamental shift in political and popular attitudes toward what journalism and news represent, as well as how facts and information may be received in a digitalized world. We contextualize the two elements of false news within the current political climate and illustrate how they relate to other notions using literature from journalism, political science, and communication studies. In doing so, we argue that 'fake news' is more than just a single incident or a passing trend; it is the manifestation of a wider and fundamental shift in the technological and political underpinnings of mediated communication in modern democracies. Our analysis of the present empirical research on fake news as a genre and label allows future research to expand on existing findings while also contrasting these findings with existing concepts in the literature. We also provide a study agenda to address unsolved questions. With this comprehensive analysis, we add clarity to the discourse surrounding false news and



propose that scholarly attention be directed into the underappreciated category of fake news. While disinformation has circulated through media since the early days of mass communication, scholars and pundits have argued that recent years mark 'the rise of the misinformation society' (Pickard, 2016) and the era of 'alternative facts' and 'post truth' (Benkler, Faris & Roberts, 2018); (Madrigal, 2017). Without the vital roles of radio journalism fake news from social media would have turned the world upside down. As Higgins (2016) explains, the term 'post-truth' describes not only an increase in the frequency of lies in the public sphere, but refers to a world in which truth is no longer an expectation. The rise in use of disinformation (defined as the intentional and purposive spread of misleading information, which is different from misinformation which relates to 'unintentional behaviors that inadvertently mislead'; Chadwick & Vaccari, (2019), spans across the globe from Europe and the U.S. to Brazil, Nepal, and Russia (to name a few examples) and across contexts from health issues (such as the safety of the childhood vaccinations) through environmental problems (such as global warming) to consumer topics (such as the effects of Listerine mouthwash on the severity of colds) and, of course, to diverse political and social debates. (Benkler, Faris & Roberts, 2018).

A substantial number of Nigerians are exposed to fake news regarding various issues, including journalism. Allcott, Gentzkow and Yu (2019), suggests that many people who are exposed to these misinformation and disinformation believe them to be true. According to Gottfried and Shearer (2016), the emergence of social media as a key source of information has created a new ecosystem for the spreading of misinformation. Misinformation on social media has caused wide spread alarm in recent times. Social media is becoming a major channel for the diffusion of news and information. They are also increasingly attractive and targeted for abuse and manipulation. Social media is increasingly becoming a dumping ground for all kinds of junks due to its openness and timeliness. These junks are posted in form of rumors, spam and fake news. The difficult part of it is that, how to detect this misinformation on social media has become an important problem. Misinformation on social media about journalism increases high fears, and uncertainties among people. When misinformation is amplifying especially by influential people, the grave danger is that information which is based on fact ends up having only marginal impact. WHO (2020), observes that there seems to be barely an area untouched by misinformation in relation to the Covid-19 crisis; varying from origin through unproven prevention and cures, and encompassing responses by government, companies, celebrities and individuals? The false information spread even negates the significance of a body of true facts. Accordingly, the motives for spreading misinformation are many which include; political aims, self-promotion, and attracting attention as part of a business model. Those who do so play on emotions, fears, prejudices and ignorance and claim to bring meaning and certainty to a reality that is complex, challenging and fast-changing (WHO, 2020). Hassan (2020), opines that there is an urgent need in Nigeria to counter the scourge of fake news around Covid-19 and emphasizes that, the need for accurate and factual information is critical. The mind-blowing questions are; how does one decipher genuine information from fake ones? What are the considerations before one decides to share or forward unverified information on the social media? The above questions are answered in the following paragraphs. Readfearn (2020), advises that the source of information and the source's source should be considered before consuming or sharing information. Misinformation often sound like a rumor; which the finding organization make profit from the fake



news they are sharing. Readfearn (2020), further advises that every information should be fact-checked. Another way of combating misinformation on social media is to match ones' source with other sources. Carvin and Brookie (2020), submit that it is advisable to cross-match information with other sources to deduce facts.

According to Carkin and Brookie's (2020) words, "before you share a facebook status or a tweet, picture yourself standing at your school P.T.A, church or community meeting. Is what you're about to share constructive for those folks, or will it make the situation worse?" Furthermore, it is advisable that anxiety should be controlled when passing a piece of information across before the information disseminated becomes fake news (Carkin and Brookie 2020). According to the authors, anxiety is not only natural but viral. When anxiety is spread by social contagion, it leads to panic which is more problematic. While navigating the online space, the tone of communication matters. A harsh tone into the space could breach information that was intended to be passed across. Be patient, kind, deliberate and fact-based. However, Nigerian government has a key role to play in providing the civil society with accurate information. Accordingly, to rapidly and effectively counter disinformation and misinformation, the government must engage in a sustained two-way communication with her citizens (Hassan, 2020). The government must consistently and transparently provide information that respond to people's concerns. Nigeria Center for Disease Control, National Orientation Agency and other relevant agencies, should be more proactive and transparent in disclosing data in line with Right to information laws and policies. Through this, rumors would be countered urgently from wide spread. Nevertheless, this is not a substitute for information professionals such as librarians. The news media and librarians should see themselves as ally in the fight against misinformation. This is possible because media disseminate information publicly while the librarians supply the public with reliable database, portals and websites where facts are published. To this end, UNESCO (2020) warns government not to impose restrictions on freedom of expression that can harm the essential role of an independent press, but to recognize journalism as a power against misinformation even when it publicizes verified information and informed opinions that annoy those in power. It is the civic responsibility of all individuals to guide against rumors and conspiracy theories that are rampant in the social media concerning coronavirus disease. In as much as health experts and journalist are doing their part, it is the places of every Nigerian to stop spreading false-hoods that could make public health response harder for the citizens. Considering the menace caused by misinformation on covid-19 it is deemed necessary to a step in the right direction to be taken in order to avert this menace. According to Mboutidem & Umama (2020), the source of information and the source's source should be considered before consuming or sharing information, it is expedient to verify the source of the information before consumption to avoid spreading rumors. They also recommended that Cross-matching of information should be ensured to deduce facts, this encourages information evaluation which helps in checking biases. On the same note the government must engage in a sustained two-way communication with her citizens, they must consistently and transparently provide information that respond to people's concerns. Through this, rumors would be countered urgently from wide spread.

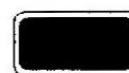


Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the proliferation of disinformation brought about by the rising usage of social media platforms is a major modern concern. It contributes to political polarization and has an impact on a variety of fundamental rights, including the right to free expression and equality. Yet, given the absence of unprotected speech, the remedies for misinformation are mostly social and educational at this point. These methods and initiatives, along with fact-checking and the production of counter-narratives, continue to be the favored vanguard in the fight for the truth while protecting free expression. A lack of vital news or information could lead to chaos as people are misled by inaccurate information. Today's journalism has a plethora of communication channels; it must be done out with integrity. Basically, it is a method of disseminating knowledge and facts, frequently from an objective standpoint, with a focus on accuracy and education. After all, knowledge is power, and we need ongoing access to updated and reliable information to live in any environment. Asserts that the transition to high-choice media contexts has resulted in various news or increased issues for traditional news media and news media trust, must be looked into.

Recommendations

1. We recommend the creation of a new kind of Tech Company that is not necessarily a 'platform' or a 'publisher' and that limits the liabilities of such corporations. We expect the government to present these suggestions in a White Paper later this year. This procedure should clearly define legal duty for digital corporations to act against harmful and illegal content on their platforms. Because engagement is part of their business model and growth strategy, tech businesses are not passive platforms into which users submit material; they reward what is most engaging. They have made a lot of money by employing this model. This site manipulation by tech companies must be made more obvious. The same way that firms' money are inspected and scrutinized, the non-financial parts of technology organizations, such as their security systems and algorithms, should be reviewed and scrutinized to ensure they are operating responsibly.
2. We urge that the government include proposals in its upcoming White Paper for a social media educational levy to fund a comprehensive media educational framework. We propose a fee on tech businesses operating in the UK to help pay for the ICO's extended work, similar to how the banking sector pays for the Financial Conduct Authority's upkeep.
3. We recommend that government should provide in-depth and evidence-based information that is authoritative, unbiased and offers a balanced approach.



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