

IMPACT OF FAKE NEWS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

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1. Abstract

The objective of this article is to present evidence that despite social media being such a boon, it has a very strong negative impact on peoples lives. In this new era of internet and variety of social media, the society that we live in is changing. On the one hand, social media has created a decentralized communication channel and has opened the door for all to have a voice and participate in a democratic fashion including people in repressive countries, but on the other hand, it has become a breeding ground for false and fake news. The increasing use of mobile devices and easy Wi-Fi access, the Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Twitter have turned into powerful platforms for providing news and entertainment. New channels of online communication, such as Skype, WhatsApp, Messenger, and many others have also led to a rampant increase in the spreading of fake news. This paper uses primary data to analyse the current issues about fake news and to highlight its negative impact on society.

2. Introduction

In today's world, it is undeniable that social media plays an important role in impacting our culture, our economy, our overall view of the world and our day to day activities. Social media is a new forum that brings people to exchange idea, connect with, relate to, and mobilize for a cause, seek advice, and offer guidance. It is a medium that has removed communication barriers and made it easier to communicate with just about anyone across the globe, allowing us to break down international borders and cultural barriers. Unfortunately, despite bringing such positive effects, social media has come at a price. Fake news across social media is spreading like wildfire. Now a day it is very difficult to differentiate between which news is real and which news is not. Because of this spread of fake news, people of all age groups are suffering its negative impacts.

3. Review Literature

[Posetti, et al., 2018] has used open to adoption or adaption model which target the newly emerging problem of fake news/posts on social media. The author claims that fake news itself is an oxymoron as news which is not verifiable cannot termed as 'news'. Therefore, no one should use the term 'fake news'. Public use a particular phony information which is not verifiable and includes entertainment formats like memes, music, editing it etc. and share it to get noticed by everyone. These attempts are made to confuse/manipulate people. Misinformation is particularly dangerous because it is well organised, resourced, and reinforced by advancements of technology. The spread of disinformation is made largely with the help of social media as within seconds you can reach a mass number. What news media can do is tack more closely to professional standards ethics and check every information before it is out in public.

[Nagi, 2018] used traditional empirical-analytical method to analyze the current issues based on the limited data available on open access repositories about fake news. Social media scholars are now digging into this vast terrain to examine the effect of fake news in our society. Information available on public domain portals and websites was used for formulating research questions. Data was collected based on the data made available by Pew Research Centre (USA), Reuters Institute (UK), European Commission (EC) and other entities. From the data collected it was evident that most popular fake news stories were more widely shared on Facebook than on any other popular mainstream news media. Most people who read fake news stories reported that they believed them. Also in 2016, most discussed fake news stories in USA tended to favour Donald Trump over Hillary Clinton. Fake news is affecting not only adults but also children and the sooner companies such as Facebook, WhatsApp, LINE, etc. act upon it the better it will be for the society.

[Amedie, 2015] objective in his research paper “The impact of social media on society” is to demonstrate the negative impact of social media on psychological issues. Four major categories have been pointed out:

1. Facebook Depression: Researchers have proposed a new phenomenon called Facebook depression which is depression that develops when individuals spend an excessive amount of time on social media sites and then begin to exhibit classic symptoms of depression.
2. Anxiety: Stress is produced from constantly trying to project an unrealistic and unachievable perception of perfection from social network. The social anxiety of stress is associated with trying to project a perfect self at all times. Constantly trying to project an image of perfection leads to the constant release of the stress hormone
3. False intimacy: Social media promotes putting up a facade that highlights all the fun, excitement and success in life. To fit in, people try to portray perfectly happy and trendy facades. As a result people are perceived as they want to be perceived.
4. Catfishing: people create fake social networking profiles, and befriend strangers online while using a fake or stolen identity.

In conclusion, social media despite having positive benefits, enables people to create false identities and superficial connections.

[Antino Kim,2019] As a measure of counteracting fake news on social networks, we have three mechanisms for ranking sources (ranking sources), ranking of user articles (rating of articles collected by users to evaluate the source) and ratings of sources that are applied after the first publication of the article. We are exploring the effect. User (user, judging by the source of the checkmark). Two experiments showed that ranking sources affects users' trust in social networks in articles where the ranking mechanism is important. Qualitatively low ratings, which can spread false news, have a greater impact than high ratings. If the rating is low, the user pays more attention to the rating mechanism, and the overall rating of professionals and consumer goods has a greater impact than the consumer rating. Also pay attention to the secondary effect in the assessment. Perpetrators who spread false news can have a greater impact than a high rating. If the rating is low, the user pays more attention to the rating mechanism, and the overall rating of professionals and consumer goods has a greater impact than the consumer rating. He also draws attention to secondary effects, which are more sceptical of unrated sources, even if the user orders differently with ratings from multiple sources.

4. Research Methodology and Design

Restatement of the problem

Purpose of the research was to study the impact that fake posts and news on social media have on society.

Research Objectives

1. To understand the various components of social media that have an impact on society.
2. To identify various socio, economic and demographic factors that have an impact.
3. To analyse the cause and effect relationship between fake news and social/personal life.

Hypothesis

Our assumption is that fake news on social media does have an impact on peoples personal and social lives.

Let H0 be that social media does not have an impact on social and personal lives.

Let H1 be that social media does have an impact on social and personal lives.

Research Design

Research designs are created on the basis of research objectives that include descriptive research, exploratory and causal. Exploratory research is unstructured and is undertaken when a situation is vague, new and very little is known about the same and makes use techniques like secondary resource analysis, case study method, expert opinion

method, observation in depth interviews and focus groups. Causal research establishes relationships between two variables and in order to make this relationship, experiments need to be carried out.

1. Data Sources: Primary research
2. Tools: Questionnaires, Surveys and Personal Interviews
3. Analysis: To analyse the factors that affect social life and if fake news has a significant impact on society.

Research Methodology

This paper makes use of descriptive research, which helps in describing the characteristics of a situation, problem or phenomena. Descriptive research was undertaken to give a detailed profile of the population under study, to find out about the reasons as to how people come across fake news on social media and what are the reasons which influence them to forward these fake news posts to other without checking its credibility. We wanted to understand the various components of social media which influence our society, identify various socio-economic and demographic factors.

4. Data Analysis

The research aims to analyse the effect of fake news shared on social media and that impact it has on the society. For this quantitative analysis has been done.

Qualification is a very important factor when we talk about fake news and its spread as education makes us able to differentiate between right and wrong and which sources to believe and which to not.

Table 1: Relation between qualification and the ability to differentiate fake news and real/legit news.

Qualification	Ability to differentiate		
	Never	Sometimes	Always
Professional	6	24	18
Self-employed	2	14	10
Student	10	101	57
Total	18	139	85

Interpretation: The above table signifies that 37.5 % of the professionals, 38.46% of self employed and 33.92% of the students are always able to identify whether the news that they receive via social media is fake or no.

Table 2: Relation between qualification and willingness to check the credibility of news received via social media.

Qualification	Checking of credibility of news	
	No	Yes
Professional	13	35
Self-employed	11	15
Student	48	120
Total	72	170

Interpretation: From the above table we are able to conclude that 72.9% of professionals, 57.7% of self employed, and 71.43% of students check the credibility of the news they receive before forwarding it.

Table 3: Relation between qualification and the reasons why they forward news.

Qualification	Reasons							Others
	Awareness	Relatable	Concern	Awareness, Relatable	Relatable, Concern	Awareness, Concern	All three	
Professional	18	8	7	4	2	3	3	3
Self-employed	11	4	5	1	2	2	-	1
Student	46	32	22	20	3	17	20	8
Total	75	44	34	25	7	22	23	12

Interpretation: The above table signifies that across all the professions, majority of the people forward news that they receive via social media because they want to raise awareness.

Table 4: Relation between frequency of coming across fake news in metropolitan and non-metropolitan cities

Frequency	City	
	Metropolitan	Non-Metropolitan
Once a day	98	23
Twice a day	37	9
More than twice a day	55	20
Total	190	52

5. Conclusion

The crisis about fake news on various social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, You-Tube, Instagram and several popular communication apps including WhatsApp, Messenger and many others is constantly on the rise. In this new era most of us are always connected to the internet and this is how we receive, sift and filter the daily news. To summarize, despite the positive benefit of rapid information sharing, social media enables people to create false identities and superficial connections, causing depression. In this research, we have explored the harms posed by this uncensored and unmonitored new medium of communication which exposes us all to a gradual breakdown of social cohesion and the destruction of our traditional value systems.

6. References

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