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 QUESTION

DO A WRITEUP ON SOCIAL MEDIA AND PROLIFERATION OF FAKE NEWS, DODGY HEALTH ADVICE AND FAKE CURES OF COVID- 19.

Due to the rampant spread of the virus, covid-19 a lot of false claims and cures have been disseminated through the social media. These series of claims have caused fear and havoc in the minds of citizens and it has caused the death of a few citizens.

Social media as we all know has been used as a tool to inject various opinions and beliefs into the minds of its audience due to the fact that the world is now a global village and it is also one of the fastest means to spread information. This has led to the rise of false medical practitioners who administer fake cures for the virus covid-19. In a press conference Donald trump claimed that hydroxychloroquine was a cure for coronavirus a lot of people went to drug stores to get it and it was reported that people were rushed to hospitals for chloroquine poisoning, this claim by trump had not even been approved or tested by medical experts. Also on a whatsapp video which went viral a woman claimed that garlic cures corona virus which also turned out to be false when the world health organisation (WHO) claimed there is no evidence from the current outbreak that eating garlic has protected people from 2019-nCoV.

A video was also released on whatsapp where a media practitioner, doctor Richard.C. okoye , the president doctors savealife foundation global peace ambassador U.N warned people on the use of gloves and masks which has killed many in Italy and Spain, he claimed they won’t protect anyone from the virus as they were designed mainly for doctors during surgery to protect them from splash of blood or drop of saliva. He also claimed that the virus isn’t air-borne and that the reason for the 6-metres social distancing is in a case where someone who is infected coughs it won’t be able to touch the next person due to the distance between the both of them.

David Ajikobi, the Nigeria editor at Africa check, an organization founded in 2012 to fight misinformation in African countries, said ‘there’s been a lot of misinformation and disinformation about it, the fake news around the coronavirus has ranged from claims that millions of people died to faux science suggesting that drinking boiled water can cure you of covid-19. While fake news is a global problem, it is especially so in Nigeria – where false information on social media can quickly end up on legitimate news websites.

Lately the governor of Oyo state, Makinde claimed that he fought covid-19 with carrots, black seed oil, honey and vitamin c which helped to boost his immunity, this is yet to be approved by any health practitioner.

In fighting this virus false claims and misinformation will not help, it will rather create more problems for the country as a whole. The NCDC should also try to make their informations credible enough so that people can detect fake news when they see them and finally it would be better if these disseminators of fake news are brought to justice which will serve as a warning to others who want to do the same.

The world will be a better place if the law is strictly adhered to and those who constitute themselves as a menace to the society are brought to law.

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