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 Social media and proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of corona virus

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Some scholars are of the opinion that the coming of the social media was a mistake and it is really a strong tool that can compel it’s users but the question is that has it done more good than bad.

The rise of new media has increased communication between people all over the world and internet. It has allowed people to express themselves through blogs, websites, video, pictures and other user-generated media. Globalization has grown strong over the years because of new media, Social media which is an example of new media has increased interaction between different countries and improved importation and exportation and also shown creativity of people all over the world, and make more people understand different culture.

Social media is a tool for communication and it is the fastest way people receive information nowadays, The era of print media has reduced people don’t pay attention to it again, If you ask anyone where was the first time they heard about corona virus they will say social media either Twitter, Whatsapp, or Facebook this shows that most people get their information from social media.

80% of people in the world get information of corona virus from social media, most of them involved fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of corona virus because most of them were published without the authorization of any medical practitioner which is very dangerous to the audience.

Media is a very powerful tool that can affect the audience psychologically, physical, mental health which can be harmful sometimes. Like the agenda setting theory media controls the consumption of news feed. Social media can pass wrong information about the virus.

Well, the most trending topic is Corona virus which has affected numerous countries around including Nigeria. In the wake of an international crisis like covid 19 pandemic, avoiding fake news and consuming information from legitimate, trusted sources is visually important, today, bad acting organizations with ulterior motives and misinformed individuals can easily spread disinformation at lightning speed and with potentially serious impact through social media.

Corona virus started from a city in China, Wuhan. The disease has so far affected over 375, 498 people and claimed over 16,362 lives globally. The covid 19 is a new virus linked to the same the family of viruses as severe acute respiratory syndrome (sars) and some type of common cold.

The symptoms include common fever, cough, and shortness of breath, in more severe cases. Infection can cause pneumonia or breathing difficulties. More rarely, the disease can be fatal.

Actually citizenship reporting has given room for fake news of this virus. New media improved the use of individuals sharing their views and opinions about certain things but they are the one spreading misinformation, if you check Channels, punch or any other news outlet you can’t find any wrong information about them but if you check blogs they are quite plenty wrong information about the virus.

Fake news can cause death to some people before the virus knock at their door, one of the disadvantages of the internet is fake news, Internet gives room to some people to share their views through blogs and millions of people around the world can see it, the connection is wide. One example of fake news that happened this corona period in Nigeria is that ‘’the driver of the Italian Man that had corona has escaped from isolation center with the aim of spreading the virus to other people if the government doesn’t compensate him and his family’’. This news went round Nigeria and caused panic to the people but that information was never true, Social media increased the spread of the fake news, But that news would have really affect people with high blood pressure.

Another Fake news was that ‘’the Italian man was never happy with the isolation center that he wants to leave that place that there is too much mosquito’’. This information was never true in fact no media organization were given any chance to interview the man because of the virus can easily be spread so how did they get the information, it is obviously citizenship reporters that started spreading the information. This news made 8people attack the government officials for their lack of adequate health care services and was really a black lash to the government. Some fake news has been going round that the virus was used to reduce the population of china, this part is actually funny.

Fake news spread more rapidly on social media network Twitter than real news does. The world health organization is collaborating with tech giant like Goggle, twitter, Facebook, Pinterest and Tiktok to limit the spread of harmful rumors.

Health advise that have not been verified have been circulating round the globe for example drinking water will flush out the virus that information is not true, drinking water the virus will flush from your throat to your stomach where gastric acids can destroy it, staying hydrated is important but the idea that virus can be removed this way is unscientific, the virus can find its way into the cells of the respiratory system, as well as transmitting through nostrils or eyes. Another one Gargling with salt water or disinfectant will kill the virus this information is also false.

Another dodgy health advice is if you can hold your breath for 10 seconds and doing this regularly without coughing means you’re in the clear, but this advice is false while shortness of breath and coughing are sometimes symptoms of Covid 19, the ability to hold your breath for 10 seconds will vary from person to person, for a myriad reasons. It isn’t an indicator that you do or don’t have the virus.

The information that the virus can be killed with sun and sunbathing can prevent you from having the virus also the virus hate sun is not true, The fact is that Covid 19 being a seasonal flu have not been proven.

Drinking hot water not iced water can prevent you from having the virus is false because hot water does not change your body temperature, the only thing that can fight the corona virus is your immune system.

 Moreover, there are also fake cures about Covid 19 which have not yet been accepted. Currently speaking Covid 19 doesn’t have a vaccine yet but there have been rumors speculating round about the cure.

A global effort coordinated by Interpol known as operation pangea found 2,000 online advertisements related to Covid 19, including some touting “corona virus medicine’’. It also intercepted more than 34,000 take corona virus related products, such as corona spray.

Some news about Chloroquine and Hydroxyl chloroquine are Covid 19 cures but there is no definite proof that chloroquine can work against Covid 19. Fake news about Garlic curing Corona virus or prevent it is absolutely wrong and it have been going round social media platforms there is no scientific evidence that it can proof it. Drinking alcohol kills Covid 19 and is also a substitute for hand sanitizer is fake news, it will even damage the immune system strength of the person.

Adutwumwaa bitters cure corona virus, this claim was shared predominantly on Twitter. Some people may take this as a joke why some may seriously believe and try it, but it is not true, the producers of Adutwumwaa bitters said that their product can’t cure corona virus is just fake news.

The world health organization says that there are no cures or antiviral that can present corona virus at the moment. The prevention of the virus include social distancing, washing your hands regularly and have your hand sanitizers with you, avoid touching your mouth, nose and eyes most importantly stay at home.

There is a need for fake news vaccine, I don’t know what the authorities are doing to debunk these information but they need to act fast if not many lives will be affected by these rumors. Although social media has helped the nation grow but it also increased the proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures about corona virus.

Developments in the last few years have placed journalism under fire. A range of factors are transforming the communications landscape, raising questions about quality, impact and credibility of journalism. Journalism have faced a lot of challenges today because of the fake news affecting it most people don’t bother to listen to news because they believe everything they hear on television is not true.

The world health organization is working against all the fake information about the virus through their social media platforms to advice people and their website has all the necessary information about the virus.

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