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**ASSIGNMENT:** Social Media and proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of covid-19

**Social media and proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of Covid-19**

Social media is a website and application that enables users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

COVID-19 also known as Coronavirus disease is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered virus called Coronavirus. Coronavirus is a group of RNA( ribonucleic acid) viruses that cause a variety of diseases in humans. People infected with the virus are most likely to experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and sometimes recover without requiring special treatment. Older people and those with underlying medical problems like diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, cancer etc are more likely to develop serious illness. The virus is spread primarily through droplets of saliva or discharge from the nose when an infected person coughs or sneezes.

The first case of COVID-19 was recorded in Wuhan, Chin until it began to spread all over the world. As the virus began to spread, rumours and fears also began to spread with it most especially through the social media.

It was first believed that the virus was a genetic mutation in the fusion between a bat and a snake and a few days later, it was said that the virus was man made as it was seen in a Korean movie.

This brought out a lot of negative reactions from people around the world.

When the first case of Coronavirus Disease was recorded in Nigeria, former President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo was reported to have doubted the fact that there was a case of CoronaVirus in Nigeria, This was reported to be a rumour few days after an increases in the number of cases in the country. After a few weeks of the first case in Nigeria other rumours began to surface on the social media. There were fake news and fake cures for the virus.

These are some of the rumours that surface one the social media

1. **The virus recedes in warmer weather**: We all know the disease still manages to spread through African countries and we all know how warm the weather condition is in Africa during this period.
2. **Staying hydrated, and drinking hot liquid because it will flush down the virus from the throat and the acid in the stomach will kill the virus**: People are advised to stay hydrated at all times but not because it will flush the virus down. This was a rumour that circulated on social media.
3. **The virus can be cured by spices** : Different cures of the virus were being spread and it was said that the combination of ginger, garlic, cloves and turmeric can cure the virus and also putting a bulb of onions by your bed side
4. **Holding your breath for 10 seconds**:An article came up of how if you’re unable to hold your breath for 10 seconds without difficulties, you have the virus. This was regarded as a lie.
5. **The virus cannot survive in the body of younger children:** There are reported cases of children who have been infected with the disease which makes it a rumour but it is said the children don’t get as affected as the older ones and children are one of the main transmitters of the virus.

And many more rumours which have been debunked.

The World Health Organisation(WHO) asserts that rumours contribute to triggering unnecessary panic.

Social media has caused a lot of tension in the whole of this pandemic situation, coming down to our own country.

This disease spreads with fear, a deadly fear and the social media is now a place used to share fake news about the the virus

It is said that the fear of this disease spreads faster than the disease itself and everyone is advised to avoid reading or watching any article or video that isn’t from a confirmed source.

The National Centre For Disease Control(NCDC) and the WHO still keep trying to debunk the rumours.

Sources: who.int

Qz.com

Thejarkatapost.com

Theafricanreport.com