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Assignment: social media and proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of “COVID 19”

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Social media and proliferation of fake news and dodgy health advice and fake cures of COVID 19

 Social media refers to websites and applications that are designed to allow people to share content quickly, efficiently and in real time. It has become an integral part of our daily lives, People depend on social media to communicate, share and receive information. Social media over the years have become a powerful tool that can influence the society both positively and negatively. As positive tool, social media has the ability to bridge the distance in getting a wide range of information from different sources. However, it can also be a potential breeding ground for fake news if those information gotten from the social media are not accurate and properly verified. It can also cause harm to people.

 Since the outbreak of the global pandemic called coronavirus, A highly infectious respiratory disease caused by a new strain of coronavirus, social media has served a useful platform for people to create awareness, share their opinions about the causes and cures of the virus. Sometimes those information shared by social media users could be fake, misleading and inflammatory. This has caused a lot of people to shun preventive measure and guidelines given by appropriate health authorities and agencies eg World Health Organisation,(W.H.O) Nigeria Centre For Disease Control (NCDC) etc.

 According to “W H O” coronavirus has no cure. But some social media users have adduced some fake cures of COVID 19 and they are as follows;

* Consumption of garlic, ginger and onions is a cure for COVID 19 (Facebook)
* Drinking water every 15mins is a preventive measure for COVID 19 (Twitter)
* Snake oil, a traditional Chinese medicine was advertised by Xinhua News Agency as a treatment for coronavirus (wikipedia)
* A you tuber claimed that a miracle mineral solution, which effectively only contained chlorine dioxide wipe out coronavirus
* Cocaine is a cure for coronavirus (Facebook)
* Juice of bitter gourd, a vegetable used in traditional medicine is a cure for COVID 19 (wikipedia)

 In essence the thoughts, actions and reactions of people are greatly influenced by social media. That means the importance of social media cannot be over emphasized; because you get all legit information from the social media and also get all unreliable information, therefore, we are asked to seek proper information verification so as not to be misled by unhealthy information.

References; Google, Wikipedia, Facebook, Twitter, W.H.O, NCDC