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Question: Social media and proliferation of fake news, dodgy health advice and fake cures of Covid-19.

Some would say that in any situation exists the inevitability of fake news, be that as it may, the world is fighting a health battle across board and it is the globe versus coronavirus (Covid-19). Many lives have been lost in this development, a lot of jobs have been lost too, a pressing economic recession is set to roll out globally and all super economies of scale have been shut down concurrently. In all of these, there is a dire need for one to be kept abreast and not ignorant of the workings of this period, thus the reason why one needs to avoid any misinformation whatsoever. Atleast if Covid-19 doesn't take your life, it is very much important that fake news shouldn't too.

**Key Terms**

**Background on Covid-19**
According to the World Health Organisation (W.H.O), Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus.
Coronavirus is a respiratory illness, that can spread from person to person through respiratory droplets. This strain is believed to have emerged from an animal source and was first identified during an investigation into an outbreak in Wuhan, China. SARS (severe acute respiratory syndrome) and MERS (Middle East respiratory syndrome) are also types of Coronaviruses, but this current version of the virus is a different strain. It’s unknown at this point if the new virus is as severe or as contagious as SARS.

Most people infected with the COVID-19 virus will experience mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without requiring special treatment.  Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, and cancer are more likely to develop serious illness.

**Social Media Defined**
forms of electronic communication (such as websites for social networking and microblogging) through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content (such as videos).

There are so many pieces of information that has surfaced the social media cyberspace as a result if the novel Coronavirus, these pieces of information could either be true, not ascertained or false as the case maybe; whichever way it is, it is important to sift the fact from the fancy and they could come as false preventive measure, cure, health advice, and generally, fake news about the entire Covid-19 situation.

**Youthful Immunity**
Accordin g to The Africa Report, the virus doesn’t just impact the elderly, although being in a fragile state influences the body’s ability to fight infection. The fact that statistics show that a higher number of persons killed as a result of complications from the virus are persons above 60 years of age, it is important that it is discovered at an early stage and patient attended to swiftly. There is no truth in the fact that young persons are immune to the virus. This could be viewed from the angle of being both a fake news and a dodgy health advice.

**The big pharma conspiracy**
Again taking a cue from The Africa Report, According to this theory, pharmaceutical giants that have made lots of money off drugs, are hiding simple, effective coronavirus treatments so that they can profit from the sale of a future vaccine. The anti-vaccine movement piggybacks on the delayed treatment conspiracy which they believe that at a later date will be released and mass produced which everyone would see as a must-have. This can be viewed as a fake news
Also worthy of note is that the World Health Organisation(WHO), has warned that there could be an infodemic as a result of this epidemic. Due to the fact that excessive information has been made concerning Covid-19 and could alter every possible solution to it. "Internet users are at once targeted by and purveyors of false information. The WHO asserts that rumours contribute to triggering unnecessary panic. Fighting an epidemic also involves tackling an infodemic".

**SHAVING**
According to BBC, An old graphic created by the US health authorities about facial hair and respirators has been used incorrectly to suggest men should shave off their beards to avoid catching the coronavirus.
The Nigerian Punch newspaper's headline said: "To be safe from coronavirus, shave your beard, CDC warns". online
The US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) image shows dozens of examples of facial hair and which ones to avoid when wearing a respirator mask.
The graphic is genuine - but it was created in 2017 (well before the coronavirus outbreak) for workers who wear tight-fitting respirators. Contrary to what's been reported, the CDC has not published it recently and it does not recommend that people shave off their beards.
Likewise, similar headlines have appeared in other countries, generating thousands of shares. Australian news outlet 7News posted on Twitter: "How your beard may unknowingly increase your risk of coronavirus." This again is both an example of a dodgy health advice and fake news.

**Africans as 'laboratory rats'**
Again, according to findings made by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), there are widely-shared social media posts claiming that African people are to be used as guinea pigs to test a new coronavirus vaccine.
However, such claims are false - there is no vaccine for Covid-19 and only a number of clinical trials are taking place, none of them currently in African countries.
This erupted on social media again after an interview featuring two French scientists on 1 April went viral and they were accused of calling for a vaccine to be tested on Africans first.
One of them asks if tests to see if a tuberculosis vaccine is effective against the coronavirus could be done in Africa where "there are no masks, no treatments, no resuscitation?" The comments were widely criticised, by among others the World Health Organization (WHO) and football stars Samuel Eto'o and Didier Drogba who said "Africa isn't a testing lab."
WHO chief Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said: "Africa can't and will not be a testing ground for any vaccine, we will follow all the rules to test any vaccine or therapeutics all over the world using exactly the same rules." This is definitely a fake news of Covid-19.

**Climate and Skin Immunity**
Al- Jazeera Media has it that there has been persistent suggestions on social media particularly on the WhatsApp platform about skin colour and resistance to the illness. It claimed that Blacks are immune to the virus but on March 13, 2020, the Kenyan health minister dismissed the rumours that "those with black skin cannot get coronavirus". Furthermore it was said that Coronavirus doesn't survive in extremely cold or hot climes, AccuWeather, the US-based forecaster, quoted Dr John Nicholls, a pathology professor at the University of Hong Kong, saying there are three things coronavirus does not like: sunlight, temperature and humidity.

But, Dr Edsel Maurice Salvana, Director at the Institute of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology at the University of the Philippines, told Al Jazeera that a direct correlation between warmer countries and the slower spread of the virus "is a myth".

"It might deactivate the virus faster if it is in on surfaces, but it won't affect people who get sick from inhaling droplets from someone's cough or sneeze," said Salvana, who is also an adjunct professor for Global Health at the University of Pittsburgh in the US.