FAKE NEWS: MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION DURING THE PANDEMIC OF COVID-19

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Abstract

In recent times, news media and social networks have played an important role in disseminating public health content. During the COVID-19 outbreak, disinformation and false news became major issues, causing misunderstanding and fear in the populace. Also, peoples are started using more social media in which starting of the covid-19 peoples started spreading fake news like Corona is in air, Corona will spread in physical touch, everyone should drink cow urine to increase metabolism and corona will go while drinking it, etc. Because of all this things people are started getting anxiety and fear. In this research, I have look at how the media played a key role in the COVID-19 epidemic, influencing public understanding of harm and also how media and other social media sites have misinform and disinform in this pandemic. Will also gone a suggest how to not fall in this fake news and also what laws are there.

Keyword: *Covid-19, Fake News, Media, Public Health.*

Introduction

Fake news disrupts human contact, causing tension, miscommunication, and denial. It is gaining new traction globally in this era of digital media and social networking. With half a million people killed as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the country is in mourning, and healthcare services around the world are in disarray. Fake news disrupts human interaction, resulting in stress, miscommunication, and denial. In this age of modern media and social networking, it is gaining new momentum worldwide. With half a million people killed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the government is in shock, and healthcare systems worldwide are in disrepair.[1] Throughout the latest pandemic, people have been looking for research on coronavirus infection. In certain ways, people

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[1] *F. Mayhew According to a poll, the transition from paper to digital would last past the pandemic.*

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have been overburdened by news containing false claims and misconceptions, which can be difficult to understand for someone without the necessary expertise. For some years, India has been blighted with fake news. Disinformation not only annoys people, but also kills them, frequently sparking sectarian strife and public violence.[2]

There has been a lot of misinformation about COVID-19 that has been hampered successful reacted into the public health since its inception. The World Health Organization (WHO) issued an early warning about such a internet infodemic disinformation.[3] As far as public health is concerned, authorities urged the public to stay at home and help to compact or raze the path, also the analysts cautioned that whosoever tweets would be drowned out by a wave of misinformation and disinformation on the twitter.[4] The quotes about the coronavirus, combined to the strong global threaten for facts, generated a massive stalk of doubt, plot twist , and the spread of false or even harmful information. To make it worse, prominent public personalities and in early 2020, celebrities and politicians, among others, were among the key sources of contact with COVID-19 disinformation.[5] During the COVID-19 pandemic, like in the rest of the planet, false news poses an undeniable danger to India's public health. For example, false news is causing religious minorities to be denied healthcare.[6] Given these considerations, the current analysis of false news in the Indian sense is significant and important. Although the spread of false news has become a living crisis in India, the responsible authorities have failed to take appropriate action to address the problem. Successful false news mitigation programmes, such as bills, rules, and punishments, are becoming more common in many nations, including Canada, China, the United States, and France. whereas, to monitor the issue, the Indian government frequently shuts down the internet (95 times in 2019).[7] Furthermore, the country's growing population of media-illiterate netizens contributes to the issue to some degree (Raj and Goswami 2020). Recently, a few other topics, such as nutrition, medicine, cancer, faith, and politics, have been involved in the country's unfolding COVID-19 false news crisis, which necessitates a deeper understanding.

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[2] *Arun, Chinmayi Rumors and Lynchings on WhatsApp Economic and political considerations.*
[3] *Munich Security Conference Remarks: Transcript of Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus Address at the World Health Organization's.*
[4] *These deception researchers saw the coronavirus 'infodemic' coming, writes Brandy Zadrozny.*
[5] *Using Misinformation as a Political Weapon: COVID-19 and Bolsonaro in Brazil, Julie Ricard and Juliano Medeiros.*
[6] *S. Menon. 2020. The human expense of false news in India, according to Coronavirus.*
[7] *S. Nazmi. 2019. Why does India censor the internet more than any other democracy?.*

CONTEXT

Social networking sites should look for ways to contextualise messages about the coronavirus epidemic. Through this COVID-19 epidemic YouTube started displaying "fact-check panels" of information from registered publishers above COVID-19 searches. Snapchat has a COVID-19 filter sequence of vetted information. Facebook is also responding to these epidemic period of time by established a COVID-19 Information Centre at the top of each newsfeed to centralise and elevate authoritative sources on the coronavirus.

LAWS AND REGULATION

Under the statute, law enforcement officers have the authority to take disciplinary action against someone who spreads misinformation about the epidemic which creates widespread hysteria in the general public. Even though India does not currently have a clear law to deal with the threat of false news, we do have existing legal rules under the Indian Penal Code, 1860, and others that can be used in the event of misinformation. Some provisions are as follows:

- In India, there is no clear law against false news. The right to free press stems from **Article 19** of the Constitution, which guarantees freedom of expression.

- **Press Council of India**, a disciplinary body, considers that a newspaper or a news agency has breached journalism ethics, it can advise, reprimand or criticise the media, news source, publisher, or freelancer, or it can condemn its editor's or journalist's behaviour.

- **News Broadcasters Association** (NBA) is an organisation that serves private tv news and current affairs broadcasters. The self-regulatory agency investigates concerns about electronic media.

- Certain provisions of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) may be used to combat false news: To combat false news under **Sections 153** of the Indian Penal Code (carelessly providing aggravation with the aim to incite riot) and also under **295** of the Indian Penal Code (harm or defiling a religious building with the aim to insult any class's faith) may be invoked.

- The **Broadcasting Content Complaint Council** (BCCC) accepts lawsuits against television broadcasters for objectionable television content and misleading news.

- Another option for people and organisations harmed by false news is to file a civil or criminal case for defamation. **Sections 499** under Indian Penal Code (defamation) and **500** (Anyone who

defames another is penalised by simple imprisonment for a term of up to two years, a fine, or both) of the Indian Penal Code (IPC) provide for a defamation suit.

- **Section 505(1) of the Indian Penal Code, 1860:** The penalty for making, printing, or spreading any statement, rumour, or article that may cause panic or alarm to the general public or any segment of the general public.

  Punishment: Imprisonment for up to three years, or a fine, or both.

- **Section 54 of the Disaster Management Act of 2005** states that someone who makes or distributes a false alert or notice about a disaster or its seriousness or size, causing fear, is guilty of a misdemeanour.

  Punishment: Imprisonment for up to one year or a fine.

COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

In this research we are going to compare two countries which are China and India. How they have controlled when the pandemic started and how those government have tried to stop fake news and information in corona time. But before that there are some recent actions taken by the authorities around the world against fake news, which are:

- **India, Uttar Pradesh, Lucknow:** A false Godman Ahmad Siddiqui, also known as **"Corona Wale Baba,"** said that anyone who couldn't wear a mask could use the talisman to hold the corona at bay. He was investigated for forgery and theft. Odisha: A man has been arrested for spreading false information on Facebook about a Kerala-returned citizen who tested positive for coronavirus and was being treated in a hospital.

- **The Palestinian:** government has also taken stringent measures to combat the dissemination of false information about the coronavirus. The Palestinian Authority General Intelligence Service detained two Palestinians, one for making an audio message about the discovery of coronavirus cases and another for publishing a false statement on his Facebook page alleging that 12 new coronavirus cases had been discovered in their area.

- **Morocco:** Thousands of people have been arrested for spreading coronavirus rumours. One such arrest involved a woman who used her YouTube channel to promote a false message that the disease did not exist.

- **Coronil Tablets by Patanjali India:** Coronil has been sold in various Asian countries as well as in European countries. As those tablets gives a recover from corona virus these was stated by

Patanjali Co-owner and he also stated that his tablets have been given green certificate by WHO. Later the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that the WHO has not granted any certificate or validation to 'Coronil' or any other conventional medicine for the treatment of Coronavirus disease. This news comes amid rumours that Coronil has earned WHO certification.

During the COVID-19 epidemic, China's totalitarian political structure and tighter media management effectively limited the spread of false news/rumours. During the crisis, the totalitarian government abandoned the 'freedom of speech' ethos in favour of 'social accountability,' 'public defence,' and as well as 'status quo' with justifications for redacting details in social media networking sites. During a crisis, these aspects are widely publicised in order to provide the image of a responsive and responsible administration. Whereas India's track record as a state has been mixed and unpredictable when it comes to combating false news. Despite the government's ongoing collaboration with major media firms to combat the dissemination of false information's, somehow the Legislators were able to undermine the government's effectiveness by disseminating unproven and untrustworthy health data.[8] Many believe that the Indian government stepped over the line into authoritarianism when it asked the Supreme Court to order that no COVID-19-related news be reported without prior approval.[9] However, the Supreme Court dismissed the order and said that people of Indian have their fundamental right to "free speech and expression". However, the central and state governments have continued the order of restriction of internet in different parts of India. So that, the flow of information could go in a right way, which some say is all about suppressing political dissent and civil liberties. This also implies that the universally condemned Internet filtering and shutdown of repressive states is likely to be used in special cases by liberal and progressive countries. During COVID-19, the dissemination of fake news, rumours, and corruption compelled each government to strike a delicate balance between state power and citizens' freedom of speech. The reactions of the Indian and Chinese governments to combating fake news in the midst of a major health crisis provide insight into how different political institutions deal with the complex relationship of their citizens.

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[8] Mohan, R. (2020). "Coronavirus: false news keeps pace with COVID-19 spread in India."
[9] The Indian Supreme Court rejects the government's appeal for prior censorship of COVID-19 news, and a committee to protect journalists is established.

Suggestion

- Platforms can track, identify, and suspend algorithmic amplification of going viral coronavirus content displaying correct false information flags, which may be retrieved erroneously from the existing COVID-19 database.

- Frameworks should incorporate privacy-sensitive functionality to review draught posts, recognise draughts addressing the coronavirus, and prescribe quality content to consumers, as well as provide alerts on being careful or aware of these COVID-19 viral information before publication.

- Quality information and related fact checking should be embedded in articles on coronaviruses on social media sites.

- Italy, for example, has experimented with including 'recognising false news' in school curricula. India should also place a strong emphasis on cybersecurity, internet education, and fake news education across all stages of academic curricula.

Conclusion

The accelerated progression of the COVID-19 pandemic has made immediate and certain empirical evidence impossible. Given this, it follows that, particularly in the case of pandemics, doctors must provide the public with only evidence-based facts in a simple and shared format in order to prevent misinterpretation and confusion. Better cooperation between the medical establishment, states, and the mainstream media is therefore needed to prevent the propagation of lies across various outlets, minimising the spread of false news, and thus better engaging the general population to stick to correct guidelines. Long-term solutions to misinformation and disinformation would necessitate regulatory reforms aimed at making the internet more transparent, competitive and reights-respecting. However, throughout the near term, the set of options available to deal with this crisis is incredibly small.