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## SOCIAL MEDIA AND FAKE NEWS PROPAGANDA

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### Abstract:

The regular spread of fake news on social media platforms has resulted in serious impacts on the world and its users. It is constantly mounting concerns among users globally which is drawing the concerns of researchers widely. With the growth of the internet and social media platforms, the news is being spread at a faster rate and somewhere this is the reason which plants the seed of mistrust and misinformation. Fake news tend to force people to act in an aggressive manner further persuading them to accept false beliefs towards different agendas happening in society. It has led to changes in the opinion of people which may not be true and genuine. So, the motive of this study is to analyze how social media is contributing to the spread of fake news and propaganda in society that might emerge due to it and with some cases studies.

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### 1.0 Introduction:

The term 'Fake news has been characterized as something false, frequently electrifying, data dispersed beneath the pretense of news reporting'. social media played a vital part in going viral of expansive number of fake news. It damages the reputation of a person or entity through false information. The development and advancement of web, particularly after Web 2.0 innovation, and social media as 21st-century mediascape came beneath genuine manhandle of scams and misrepresentations. It limits the impact of real news as fake news captures the social media handles and gains much popularity. Numerous cyber troop groups run fake accounts to veil their character and interface. The foremost critical truth is that the devices and administrations for stream of fake news whether free or paid, for the apparatuses and administrations to be of any utilize, the social media stages got to exist and be dynamic to spread propaganda. Social media as the branch of up-to-date implies of communication to be manhandled to spread lies on and deception completely different fronts such as military, political, trade, social, instruction, etc. The uncommon development and advancement of 21st-century mediascape have been seen as the key reason for the scale and power of purposeful publicity to develop in a simple and keen way. Numerous studies are being carried out to find relevant strategies for fighting fake news. Self-the

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regulation on the use of social media and understanding which news is fake is needed on individuals' part.

## **2.0 Review of Literature:**

### ***2.1 Initiatives for Countermeasures:***

Looking at the greatness of harms delivered, the governments or specialists totally different parts of the globe have as of now begun to battle effectively against fake news. In January 2015, the British Armed force reported that its 77th Brigade would "focus on non-lethal mental operations utilizing social systems like Facebook and Twitter to battle enemies by picking up control of the story within the data age" (Solon, 2015). A few methods to recognize and expose purposeful publicity message have been worked out. The open mindfulness to distinguish and dishearten such fake messages has been advanced by a few government offices. The thought for forcing boycott and regulate web locales that do distribute deception are in prepare. The most target of these unused controls would be to control the stream of purposeful publicity through social organizing administrations. As of now, the activities just like the suspension of bot, suspicious accounts, expansion of highlights to distinguish and report fake news and hiring more personnel to help dealing with these reports have been introduced in various levels.

Understanding Fake News and Rumors "Talk is a mind boggling wonder. It very well might be temporarily viewed as the result of a progression of witnesses, every one of whom bears declaration to an assertion bestowed to him by his archetype (Hart, 1916)." Gordon Allport and Allan Chase (1947) in their way breaking book, *The Brain science of Gossip* state: "Gossipy tidbits are rash in nature. They spread quickly in light of the fact that they manage a prompt danger. Inundating a local area in an incredibly brief timeframe, they incorporate bits of gossip about brutality, or mishaps, fiascoes. Beginning in a profoundly charged climate, bits of gossip about this class are probably going to impel expeditious and enthusiastic activity since they depend on forceful feelings of frenzy, rage." Counterfeit news is accordingly a compounding interaction. Counterfeit news is generally popular imaginary stories that are introduced as "news". The repercussions of phony news change dependent on the socio-political texture of the general public in which it is hawked. In a proficient society, data (news) assumes a significant part in its working that is the reason counterfeit news has caused a buzz in our social orders. A general public took care of with counterfeit data will in general capacity unusually. The uncontrolled circulation of phony news brings up to a sociological issue that is weakening each day. The idea of phony news represents a test not exclusively to the way media associations disperse data yet in addition to the whole data arrangement of a general public. b) Motivation Behind Fake News The explanation behind the creation of phony news can be political, efficient or social in nature. Individuals with political interests utilize counterfeit news to do promulgation against their adversaries or control general assessment in regards to a specific issue. Ideological groups and legislators hawk counterfeit news to dishonor resistance especially during political race time or elevated political turmoil. Government officials once in a while control news in support of themselves to acquire compassion from crowd or electors. A few gatherings of sites and online media handles, displayed on newsroom arrangement, have been set up to get out phony word at the command of individuals with ulterior intentions. For instance, during 2016 Official Races in USA, a few phony news sites were followed to Russia (Timberg, 2016). Notices, offers and snaps produce a large number of dollars of income for counterfeit news sites, in this way making it a worthwhile business (BBC, 2017).

Counterfeit word is gotten out purposefully to activate individuals, cause alarm, or delude individuals. In nations like India, conservative gatherings have coursed counterfeit news reports to make widespread panic and an environment for savagery to threaten a minority populace (BBC, 2018). Role of Social Media in Dissemination of Fake News Online media is the minefield of phony news.

The majority of the phony news arises via online media first before it assembles individuals and assessments. Because of the shortfall of idiot proof component on various web-based media stage, it turns out to be simple for web-based media clients to sell counterfeit news. "The degree of conniving data via web-based media is unsettling (Shyrokykh, 2018)."

There is considerably more to counterfeit news and it needs various components to finish the cycle. Other than (mis)information and inspiration, web-based media is expected to get out phony word (Pattern Miniature, 2017).

Via online media, counterfeit word isn't gotten out by regular clients just however by bots and savages (CITS, n.d.), who are here and there paid for their work. Under tension for not handling the hazard of phony news, Web-based media locales like Twitter and Facebook frequently think of measures to check its spread on their destinations.

Facebook has gone into association with other reality checking associations and has constructed and whole group to check the course of information on their foundation (Chang and Brackett, 2018). Additionally, Twitter has obstructed great many phony records answerable for getting out phony word (Confessore and Dance, 2018). WhatsAppn courier carried a few changes to its application for the sole reason for having more control on phony news. It welcomed correspondence researchers to help fabricate a framework to diminish the application's part in the scattering of phony news (Jalan, 2018). Be that as

### **3.0 Objectives:**

- To study the effects of fake news in present times
- To analyze the case studies supporting fake news propaganda.

### **4.0 Research Methodology:**

Case study is research methodology that has commonly used in social sciences. Case studies are based on in-depth analysis of a single, individual, group or event to expose the causes of underlying causes of principles. A case study is descriptive and exploratory analysis of a person, group or event. I have selected fake news as a case study to analyze the fake news in Social Media. To get it and assess the impact, five distinctive modern cases of fake news made viral through social media have been chosen. The consider of the cases will primarily concentrate on the influences of these campaigns created. The taking after focuses have been identified to ponder each case closely.

- instruments and administrations utilized to spread fake news,
- inspiration for social media clients and
- reason behind the maker to spread the message. In common, it is watched that the devices utilized for each publicity campaign are comparable, paid followers/fans, enticed social media

clients to like, repost, comment and observe and share recordings. As it were distinction may the quality of the substance, a few with moo or direct or tall quality forms of these items.

## 5.0 Discussion:

The phenomenon of fake news is increasing gradually. Though social media a great platform for everyone globally, still, there exists distrust among all those who are using it. With nearly 2bn Facebook users it can be imagined at what rate fake news is being spread. Every second large number of eyeballs come in contact with fake content and it is very obvious that these social media platforms are the medium that encourages to share like as well as comment on different posts that people come across. As per the case studies analyzed by Manash P Goswami in his research, he studied fake content being highly spread on Twitter but numerous other platforms such as Facebook, Google are the carrier of propaganda messages over the internet. Many critics of social media say that numerous sites are designed purposefully to spread fake content which is unverified and attempts to draw emotional reactions from its viewers or receivers thus making it viral. Moreover, most of the content on social media is politically motivated which directly or indirectly influences the behavior of the common public towards that content. Chinese originated social media sites float with a lot of fake content which is shared by influential users and is being paid to promote it on social media platforms or sites. So, the pace of lies being spread through social media is turning into a grave concern for everyone globally. Talking about the news or information the users consume, they need to be extra vigilant on what they are watching, believing, and sharing. So, the intentions of fake news can never be good or productive rather it tends to benefit only those who propagate it for their own personal interest (Dr. Manash Pratim Goswami, July 2018)

The impact of fake news has become a very prominent and noticeable issue these days. Technological advancements and the use of the internet have constructed a very easy and fertile environment in spreading fake information within seconds all around the globe. Social media platforms are a high contributor to the spread of fake news and it is also very important to understand how the common public is using the social media platforms to interact. Social issues as well as political issues spread with tremendous speed leading to misinforming the public and thus creating havoc in the society. By and large, the motive of spreading fake news is to influence people's opinion by giving a push to political agenda and creating confusion. Users should be aware enough to understand and act as what news to consume and what not. Building a better news ecosystem requires the active role of audiences in seeking out true data and sources which helps in eliminating the spread of fake news by varied media outlets. Moreover, the study conducted by George Mavridis, indicated that there are consumers who consume news actively and are against the spread of fake news. Well educated and informed public might play a role in putting end to the spread of fake news or at least decrease it. (George Mavridis, June 2018)

A platform that acts as a double-edged sword plays the role of dissemination of news and informing people while on the other hand enabling the spread of fake news on a massive scale. A large section of people uses social media platforms to consume news instead of traditional media platforms. Misinformation among people through the means of social media is generally spread by propagandists to manipulate users and their views related to any trending issue. There are malicious accounts on various social media platforms to spread propaganda which are very difficult to identify as fake accounts. So, the study on "Fake news detection on social media" concluded that social media is used in spreading fake news and misinformation which have a negative impact on individuals and society at large.

Talking about online platforms especially social media platforms for consuming information which also acts as a means of advertisement may sometimes be false and misleading. There is very little fact-checking or content judgment on what is being shared on social media platforms and this turns to be worrying among the common users. The study focused on misinformation being spread on the internet which surrounds stories related to childhood vaccines. This case study examined the role of different anti-vaccine groups on Facebook that spreads fake information. False information was being spread in relation to vaccines through the means of advertisement. (Lesley Chiou, Catherine Tucker, November 2018)

## **6.0 Case Studies Supporting Fake News Propaganda:**

### **6.1 Misinformation About COVID-19:**

Lots of Covid-19 related misinformation was being spread on social media platforms ranging from the peddling of fake cures such as gargling with lemon or saltwater and injecting yourself with bleach to many other false conspiracy theories. Much other fake news about the virus has been actively promoted by a number of political elites such as President Trump and Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro who falsely claimed that hydroxychloroquine is working in all places as a treatment against the virus. Moreover, the misinformation is not only limited to the information that is merely true or false which only widens the scope of the problem. Though there is a lot of misinformation that is proliferated on social media but no one has gone to the insights of whether causes and treatment of the virus will develop overtime or not. Most of the YouTube videos also spread a huge chunk of misinformation and it is found that 25% of the top videos have misleading information about the virus which has the maximum number of views.

### **6.2. Farmer's Protest:**

A number of fake cases were emerged because of the Farmer's protest in Delhi which raised concern among the social media users. Two of them are listed below:

**a. Old Image of Canadian PM Justin Trudeau Shared with Claim Of Him Participating In Farmers' Protest Against New Farm Laws:** Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau supported the farmer's protest and criticized the Indian government for not being able to address the farmer's issues effectively. Moreover, a very old picture from his visit to gurudwara was viral falsely claiming that he participated in an anti-farm bill protest.

**b. Old Photos of Police Using Water Cannon Viral Amid the Ongoing Farmers' Protest:** Images of farmer's protest that took place in 2018 went viral on social media where it the seen that the police force is using water cannons and tear gas against the farmers at Delhi-Uttar Pradesh border. These pictures are actually of the 'Dilli Chalo' protest. The images were shared by prominent personalities like AAP MLA Raghav Chaddha, Journalist Arfa Khanum, Actor and singer Diljit Dosanjh, Congress leader Manish Tewari, etc.

### **6.3. Twitter account hack of Associated Press (AP):**

A case associated with fake news put through the Twitter account of the Associated Press (AP) having a huge following of more than 2 million followers shook the world. On the 23rd of April, 2013, Tuesday, at 1:07 pm, the Twitter account reported two explosions within the White House and also reported the injury of Barack Obama. This created chains of re-tweets and a sudden surge of tensions.

In just a single minute, Dow Jones had a short-lived nosedive, the marketplace dropped by one hundred fifty factors. Then it was discovered that the information was faux and the account was hacked.

Just after this affirmation, the marketplace recovered, however, by that time, the panic of terrorist assault wiped away \$136 billion greenbacks within the fairness marketplace value.

The case associate with the hacking of the Twitter account and spreading of false news openly in the social world left the sector concerned, regarding the dangers associated with cyber frauds and fake news and their impact on the operation of the overall market.

#### ***6.4. Fake information of Syrian president Assad's loss of life:***

On the 6th of August, 2012, 9:59 am, European Standard Time (EST), a Twitter message from the account of Russian Interior Minister, Vladimir Kolokoltsev revealed the upward thrust in cage hike through \$1 for crude oil according to the barrel. In the primary tweet from @MinisterRussia, later deleted, defused information regarding the loss of life of Syrian President Bashar al- Assad.

Russian Interior Minister answered to the fake news by denying the news. As a result of the fake news spread, the marketplace panicked in only sixteen minutes after the primary tweet. Dragging the marketplace with faux information, the charges of crude oil began to increase, reaching \$91 a barrel.

Later, whilst the archive of @MinisterRussia account, which turned into by no means the respectable account of Kolokoltsev, was examined, it turned into that it frequently tried to unfold loss of life rumors, including lives of Nelson Mandela, Francis Ford Coppola, and novelist Gabriel Garcia Marquez. Kim Jong etc. and many more.

#### ***6.5. Kiran Bedi's tweet with faux video:***

A tweet was published from the account of a retired Indian Police Service officer, social activist, flesh presser, and the present-day Lieutenant Governor of Pondicherry, Kiran Bedi, on 20th of October, at 9:49 am IST. It had a video of a female dancing to a well-known Navratri song, mistaking her as PM Narendra Modi's 97-year- mom, Hiraben. which has given her quite a critical embarrassment.

There, she wrote, "Spirit of Deepavali at smooth age of 97. She's the mom of @narendramodi (Hiraben Modi-1920) celebrating Diwali at her own domestic @SadhguruJV,".

The tweet containing the video suggests an old lady, who was draped in a white saree, dancing to the famous song. Mrs. Bedi also tagged Sadhguru and PM Modi in her tweet. However, neither of them has answered the tweet.

Bedi's tweet turned into shared 3.5K times and has been liked by 9.9K human peoples, later it was recognized that it turned into a video uploaded on YouTube on October three with the title 'Old female doing Garba dance'.

Later, at 1:38 p.m. IST, Mrs. Bedi issued an apology after the mistake and saluted that old female and was hoping to be as lively as her age. Despite an apology, she was criticized for her tweet because of posting a video with such an incorrect identification.

## 7.0 Conclusion:

The 21st century is the era of technology and it is very necessary that we all use social media platforms in an effective and healthy manner because spreading fake news on social media platforms may gain popularity for some time but its ill effects last for a longer period of time. It can be highly destructive for people watching it.

In the event that we see at the insights as it were among the social media mammoths, there are about 2bn Facebook and 330m twitter account holders. With such a tremendous number of Facebook and Twitter account holders investing an impressive sum of time each week, it is unquestionably conceivable that a huge number of eye balls have come into contact with fake news stories or campaigns with deception. Presently, let's envision, in the event that a fake message is coming to over at slightest 1 billion individuals a day, the nexus of the merchants of fake news have been winning billions of dollars each year. In spite of the fact that, the three cases examined within the paper of spreading fake news over as it were prevalent social media site-twitter, but it's not continuously twitter to fault for spreading such fake news. Social media destinations like Facebook, Goggle and various others have been the carrier of such purposeful publicity messages It is essentially since of social media locales energize to share, like, take after, etc. In this manner, permitting what may be an exponential spread of such messages with small endeavors from those capable to proliferate such wrong news. Indeed, the pundits of social media have the conclusion that such destinations are deliberately created and outlined with capacity to go viral something that comprises of emotionalism, unsubstantiated truths and episodes endeavoring to draw passionate responses from recipients. The locales of social media are moreover blamed of making "filter bubbles", the wonder of displaying individuals with plausible choices that they frequently like or tend to concur with and stowing away those that they don't. The current consider watched that the lion's share of fake news are politically propelled since such messages can be effectively be utilized to control businesses. In expansion, the stream of fake news can antagonistically contribute to defame the picture of a company or advantage a company monetarily within the stock advertise

Moreover, when we talk about news, we believe it to be authentic. But fake news propaganda tries to trap people and make them consume the news as an authentic one where the original news story stays hidden.

So fake news propaganda needs to be stopped immediately and it is only possible when social media users become aware and think before believing any news, they come across on any social media platform. So being social media users we need to think critically and understand the issue before believing any news item that is being circulated on social media platforms.

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