

The Use of Whatsapp Platform in Spreading Fake News among Mass Communication Students of Abdu Gusau Polytechnic, Talata Mafara

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Abstract : In every educational institution, students of mass communication receive training to report events and issues accurately and objectively in accordance with official controls. However, the complex nature of society today made it possible to use WhatsApp platform that revolutionizes the means of sharing information, ideas, and experiences. This paper examined how students in the Department of Mass Communication, Abdu Gusau Polytechnic, Talata Mafara used WhatsApp platform in spreading fake news. It used in depth interview techniques and focus group discussion with students as well as the use of published materials to gather related and relevant data. Also, the paper used procedures involved to analyze long interview content. This procedure includes observation of a useful utterance, development of expanded observation, examination of interconnection of observed comments, collective scrutiny of observation for patterns and themes, and review and analysis of the themes across all interviews for development of thesis. The result indicated that inadequate and absent of official controls guiding the conduct of online information sharing, inaccuracies and poor source verification, lack of gate keeping procedures to ensure ethical and legal provisions, bringing users into the process, sharing all information, availability of misinformation, disinformation and rumor and problem of conversation strongly encouraged the emergence of fake news. Surprisingly, the idea of information as a commodity has increased, and transparency of a source as new ethics emerged.

Keywords : disinformation, fake news, group, mass communication, misinformation, WhatsApp

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