Citizen Journalism and Media Laws and Ethics in Post Truth Era: An analytical survey

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Abstract

The "post-truth era" is what we might call the era of false news and rumors. In the past, in the presence of specific and limited media, the continuity of news and the selection process was complete and standardized, due to which the media of the past were ethical, credible, complete and selected. The "post-truth era" is in fact a term that covers the prevalence of misinformation and fake news and the consequent unpleasant accidents and the consequent adverse effects on society over the last ten years. The exchange of substandard, unsubstantiated and fake news in less time than true, standard and authentic news in itself is a disruptive process in itself. With the advent of modern times and developmental stages, the growth of the media is a continuous constructive process, logically and theoretically it is a good change but in practice the result has been different from the expectations. Social media is working as a complete modern media channel, and is now being used extensively for communication and news coverage. To properly interpret the term post-truth era, writers should be asked to know the rules and ethical linguistic boundaries. What percentage of writers know these rules or not? Karachi- based bloggers and who are running YouTube channel from about 100 male and female were asked to fill out a survey form and were asked to analytical questions about the relevant boundary laws and response to their content.

Keywords: *Post truth era, false news, misinformation, bloggers.*

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INTRODUCTION

We should focus on key areas of apprehension within social media research. It is fact that the social media platforms are open for everyone who has access to the internet with full version communication skills. But it is another fact that the thin line between private and public media is fading. A password-protected "private" Facebook group might be considered private, whereas as an open discussion on Twitter in which people broadcast their opinions using a hashtag means in order to associate their thoughts on a subject with others' thoughts on the same subject it might be considered public. Another thing is that the data is public or private relates to the extent to which we are ethically bound to seek informed consent from social media users Informed consent refers to the logical and critical part that accompanies ethical limitations in all types of research. Similarly, the sources of information which are very difficult to know the truth. Because the people who post it are considered as unknown people and such post or information is called "anonymity" or "anonymous post "Another thing to keep in mind is that when we examine an ethical content, at the same time, we collect the personal information of the participants or the sample participants in the analysis and then discuss it in a public meeting. That sometimes the chaos spreads and becomes dangerous. - (Townsend and Wallace, 2018).

Dialogues, statements, information and distribution on social media sites in terms of ethics and laws, content has been slowly becoming the cause of social change, the biggest reason for all such forms of communication term. Has taken the form of what has been called the "post-truth era".

Post-Truth Era means the period after the truth in which it is very difficult and logical process to identify the true lie. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as an adjective "relating to or identifying situations in which objective facts have little effect, while instead forming public opinion of emotions and personal beliefs." Flood, 2016). These time distances are getting shorter by the day. In 2016, the editors said that the use of the term "post-truth" has increased by almost 2,000% in 2016 compared to the previous year. It said the increase in usage was "more pronounced in the EU referendum in the UK and in the US presidential election" (Flood, 2016).

Media CODE of Ethics

 In Pakistan, Council of Pakistan Newspapers Editors, All Pakistan Newspapers Society and Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists have developed code of ethics to follow. Similarly, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has developed rules to follow but implementation in this context is the weak link. Media in Pakistan is is not fully mature yet.

Journalism is a profession based upon commitment to principles of honesty, fairness, credibility and respect for the truth. A journalist is obliged to uphold the highest professional and ethical standards and shall at all times defend the principle of freedom of the press and media.

A journalist shall ensure that information he/she provides is fair, accurate and not subject to falsification, distortion, inappropriate selection, misrepresentation or any form of censorship. A journalist shall avoid the expression of comment and conjecture as fact. A journalist shall protect confidential sources of information.

A journalist shall not distort or suppress the truth for commercial, institutional or other special interests.

A journalist shall not accept personal favours, bribes, inducements, nor shall he/she allow any other factor pertaining to his/her own person to influence the performance of his/her professional duties.

A journalist shall disclose any potential conflict of interest where they involve financial gain or political affiliations.

A journalist shall mention a person's age, sex, race, color, creed, illegitimacy, disability, marital status, or sexual orientation only if this information is strictly relevant.

A journalist shall neither originate nor process material, which incites discrimination, ridicule, prejudice or hatred.

A journalist shall not take prior advantage of information gained in the course of his/her professional duties for private gain.

A journalist shall obtain information, data, photographs, and illustrations only by straightforward means. The use of other means can be justified only by overriding considerations of the public interest.

A journalist is entitled to exercise a personal conscientious objection to the use of such means.

A journalist shall avoid intrusion into private life, grief or distress, except when there are overriding considerations of public interest.

A journalist shall not exceed the limits of ethical caution and fair comment because of time constraints or to gain competitive advantage.

A journalist shall not glorify the perpetrators of illegitimate acts of violence committed under any garb or cause, including honor and religion.

A journalist shall never indulge in plagiarism. Using or passing off the works of another as one's own and without crediting the source is a serious ethical offence. Commercial interest of media to generate revenue never let it to observe public service message time. News channels dramatize the event to make them saleable which is against media ethics.

A journalist shall strive to ensure that his writing or broadcast contains no discriminatory material or comment based on matters of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, age, sex, marital status or physical or mental handicap.

A journalist shall respect and uphold principles of gender equality both in performance of his/her professional duties and in his/her relations with fellow journalists.

A journalist shall not discriminate and shall avoid sex-role stereotyping and exploitation in his/her work.

A journalist, while reporting on communal, ethnic, or sectarian violence shall not identify victims by race, ethnicity or sect unless it is in the public interest. When this is the case he/she shall ensure that information is not presented in any manner, which may incite hatred or social disharmony. A journalist, when reporting on sectarian or communal disturbance, including broadcast media, shall be aware of the danger of publishing images (or words) that may incite public discontent and anger.

A journalist shall not publish or broadcast extreme images of violence, mutilation, corpses or victims of tragedy irrespective of the cause unless it is necessary in the public interest.

A journalist shall respect the rights and needs of vulnerable members of society including women, children, marginalized communities and people suffering from disability. A journalist shall not identify or photograph minor children, infants who are the offspring of sexual abuse, forcible marriage or illicit sexual union, or where they are victims of trafficking or forcible drafting into conflict.

A journalist shall always be conscious of the need for safety and shall take no action that endangers themselves or their colleagues in their work.

A journalist shall at all times respect other journalists and shall defend journalists where they suffer discrimination or are victimized for the exercise of their profession. A journalist shall respect the public right to know and shall always act quickly to correct errors of fact or omission.

A journalist shall honor the decisions of the Media Complaints Commission.

LITERATURE REVIEW

We, as independent people, have freely decided that we are in a post-truth world," Tesch wrote in The Nation newspaper in 1992, writing about the Iran-Contra scandal and the Persian Gulf War. We want to live and we are fast becoming an example of people about whom the absolute monster can only see in his dreams (Kreitner, 2016). "

The communication that takes place through social networking sites and the people under their influence who are weak in information and unaware of many accidents and incidents, spread these false and baseless information very fast. Sometimes there is chaos and mass destruction. At the same time, despite having no experience in journalism in a very short period of time, it is devoid of ethics, and against the law, which is designed to bind the media institutions and strictly enforce them. Social media has gone too far and given it a bad shape, and post-truth has become known as the "post-truth" cognitive therapy, but sometimes its meanings vary, but most Such as fake or false news, rumors, fraud and political lies. They also point to reasons such as polarization and unethical politicians or unorganized social media. One thing in which there is no doubt that poor journalism; Or just the inevitable chaos triggered by digital media technologies. Post-Truth, if examined more critically, is actually a source of social distrust on social media, including large institutional truth revelations or publicity. Social media, which is considered as a news media, has in fact emerged as a weak form of knowledge which has spread distrust in the minds and it is mostly in the hands of those who are only speculating. Critical scholars have also pointed out a more complex history of factors, with the more popular and proposed solutions being more unrealistic (Harsin, 2018).

In Nigeria, the media is being used for misinformation aimed at disseminating material full of ideological elements aimed at deceiving the public. Before independence, the story from independence to post-independence has remained the same. In the age of social media, the so-called "post-truth" era, misinformation in the realm of media, even as the mainstream media, through social media, together with some elements, Spread lies, truth, deception, propaganda, and all kinds of fake news. The study examines the views of communication practitioners and members of the public about the post-truth era, how it is affecting the functioning of the centrally run media, and how it can increase public acceptance of the legacy media narrative. Is affecting The analysis proves that "the sensationalist predictions of the mainstream media, the need for constant renewal, and the emphasis on profit over civic responsibility, have made them victims of strategic manipulation." However, the post calls for the joint efforts of all stakeholders including government, policy makers, media owners, media professionals and democracy lovers to tackle the threat of misinformation, fake news and all forms of information disorder. Truth is characteristic of the era and emphasizes the role of media professionals in preventing the dangers of misinformation (Okoro and Oguche, 2019).

The Production-Signification-Consumption (PSC) method is also an interdisciplinary, semantic and post-digital response to non-analytical and non-critical engagement with digital images in the current post-truth era. It gives rise to the philosophical foundations of the Paris Triangle and practical analytical questions that can be applied to curriculum and research. How do these signs make sense (to the human mind) and how do they relate analytically to digital images? It reflects the role of symbolism in interpreting solid and abstract concepts in offline and online environments. The proposed semantic analysis emphasizes the symbolic correlation between perception, materialism, abstract concepts, thought and knowledge (Lacković, N. (2020).

The source of the information and the type of story are effective in influencing the audience's positive feedback on the news. This is significant in that the study commented on the Heuristic Systematic Model (HSM) or the research organized model in a new news message mode, (Social Networking sites) SNS. In particular, Twitter's comments with the Internet were analyzed to effectively increase audience perceptions about journalistic quality and credibility. And the credibility of the news has been instrumental in increasing the audience's reaction to both. News has set a high standard on quality concepts with Twitter comments using the Internet lingo in traditional news and online news. In addition, Twitter and Facebook comments, along with traditional news and common language, set a good standard for professional credibility. Given this, SNS comments seem to work better (Gearhart, & Kang, 2014). Social media and networks are valuable tools for transmitting and exchanging information due to their flexibility, democratic character and low cost. However, their abusive or misleading use, as well as the moral and legal violations associated with the difficulty of controlling their use, can lead to serious damages and court decisions (Orthod, 2019).

More literature approaches from the Digital media and researcher's work on misinformation. Likewise, Information security researcher Rafay Baloch has been revealed out live on the reputed channel for explanatory statement.
Link: https://twitter.com/rafaybaloch/status/1521986547008118786
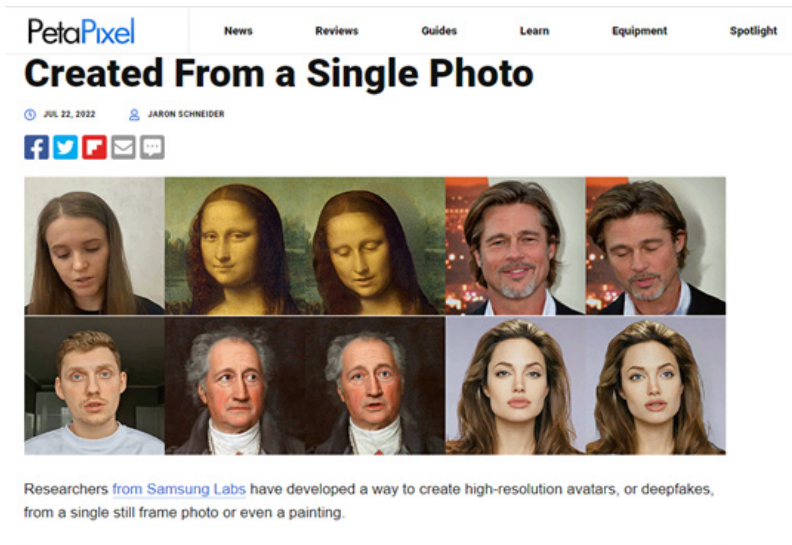

Source: Official twitter handler of Rafay Baloch

There is another fake video act unveiled by the researcher they identified fake video making by single picture. This procedure is very high demanding in fake and dark web.
Link: https://petapixel.com/2022/07/22/megaportraits-high-res-deepfakes-created-

from-a-single-photo/

Source: Website Petal Pixel image of video according to their research work on deep fake video

In this tweet we can see an attempt to downplay the damages from Russian missiles attacks. If it will be considered as confusion with doubts in against of other images from this zone. This kind of images or fake videos will be very dangerous in war situations.
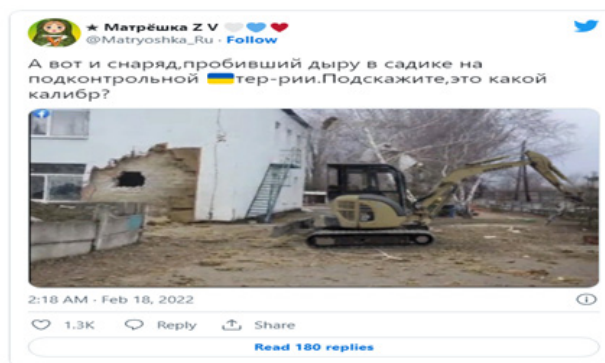
https://theconversation.com/fake-viral-footage-is-spreading-alongside-the-real-horror-in-ukraine-here-are-5-ways-to-spot-it-177921

Source: Website The conversion Fake viral footage is spreading alongside the real horror in Ukraine. Here are 5 ways to spot it Published: February 26, 2022 5.02am GMT

SIGNIFICANCE OF RESEARCH

This research is based on analysis of understanding of code of ethics and media laws among social media influencers. According to the previous studies some facts are need to unveil.

Social media is an apparatus of less informed people or limited informed people. Social networking sites express irrational and emotional views, which sometimes have nothing to do with the truth or are found to be confusing(Flood,2016). Scholars point out a complex history of factors, of which only those who offer the most popular and proposed solutions are more deprived of realism (Harris, 2018). Demands the joint efforts of all stakeholders including government, policy makers, media owners, media professionals and democracy lovers to tackle the threat of misinformation, fake news and all forms of information disorder (Okoro and Oguche, 2019).

Main purpose of this research is Social networking sites are becoming a weapon of mass destruction in society through flaws, lies, misinformation and chaos; because the social media handlers are less informed about code of ethics and media laws. It is the strong part of the post truth era.

OBJECTIVES
1. To know the average percentages of the knowledge in law and ethics in citizen journalism by social media influencers.
2. To know the impact of citizen journalism by social media influencers in the light of post truth terminology.

HYPOTHESIS

1. Citizen journalism by social media influencers in more unlawful and dangerous for law and ethics societies.
2. A few social media influencers are working with law and ethical manners.
3. Citizen journalism by social media influencers changing media ethics but wrongly.

THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Algorithms are highly regarded in the functioning of social networks. There are a few platforms that publish content completely indiscriminately without advertisement, Twitter is the best example of this where every piece of content is posted in chronological order on one's feed. Algorithms are an important aspect of social networks because they help platforms keep their users as busy and active as possible. For businesses, these algorithms are used to maximize access and influence. Facebook, in particular, minimizes access to business page content, and forces them to cover it. The concept of social media is understood in two parts, which reinforces the notion of how media laws and ethics can affect social media, or in other words, how social media can be influenced by media laws and ethics. Can be brought under the influence of Social media content consists of three

different elements. Self-promotion - Anything that sells goods directly or promotes a brand to its audience. Value Adding - Entertaining the audience in some way; Creating a positive response. Interaction - The purpose of having a real two-way conversation with people online. Similarly, the theory of social media strategy in which the development of social media strategy is modeled on three supporting factors. Social media targets, brands and audiences. Social media is such a unique marketing channel due to its ability to interact. Instead of broadcasting corporate messages, brands have the ability to engage consumers on an individual basis as well as generate leads in a highly targeted manner. The challenge for marketers is how it translates all the content and communication we see on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, which are complex. (Unknown, 2020).

METHODOLOGY

This research is quantitative & Qualitative. In Sampling Frame Sampling area is Karachi city, sampling type is Non probable convenience sampling and the sampling technique is survey method

DATA COLLECTION

This research contains variety of data which is based on needs of research topic and full fill the requirement of compilation, there is some facts about the data of both surveys 1st form Social media influencers as the mentioned it already in the first chapter, we have sent survey to the 100 respondents but very few respondents filled out approximate 37 respondents were willing to fill it. Second survey was for social media users to verify and response to understand the actual facts of ethics and laws on social media platforms. In order to know the average understanding of social media influencers in Laws and ethics on social media platforms were analyzed by different past studies and examine of code of conduct.

Basically there are two steps Data analysis
1. Survey to Social Media Influencers
2. Examine to events

Post truth era combine all factors of social media malfunction with different types of erroneous contents. And it is only just because of less information of ethics and laws regarding publications and broadcast. Percentage of population who know the media law and ethics revealed by the Questions with social media influencers.

1. Understanding with their own perception about other social media influencers.
2. Understanding with basic laws and code of ethics of media
3. Understanding with Need for training of Media Laws and code of ethics

As per the survey with respondents, social media influencers need to get the information and training for ethics and laws or at least know about social media code of ethics and laws.

1. Responses for Need of code of laws and ethics

Data			
	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
what do you think, social media activist/influencers should know law and ethics about media handles?	Yes	33	91.7
	No	3	8.3
Have you ever studied or trained for media Laws and ethics?	Yes	12	33.3
	No	24	66.7
What do you think in ratio how much Social Media Influencers are working with Law and ethics	20% +30%	30	83.3
	50%	6	16.7
Total For Need training and know code of ethics and laws		30	

As per 91% influencers of social media accepted that they should know law and ethics. Among 36 influencers, 24 means 66.7 influencers admitted that they are not trained for media and laws. As per social media influencers they think only 20% or 30% social media users and influencers are working with code of ethics.

2. Responses on Knowledge of Laws and ethics

Data			
	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
The best define law of Libel and Slander	Pass the Question	27	75
	A1+A2+A3	9	25
The best define law of Copyright and Intellectual Property	Pass the question	30	83.3
	B1+B2	6	16.3
The best define law of Freedom of Information Act	Pass the question	24	66.7
	C1	12	33.3
The best define law of the Digital Millennium Copyright Act	Pass the questions	33	91.7
	D1	3	8.3
Do You report gender sensitive issues with	Pass the questions	27	75
	E1	9	25
Describe any rule of laws of Social media and electronic media with regards of humans rights	Pass the questions	36	100
	F1	0	0

According to the analysis theme to know the understanding and information about laws. All respondents informed us their knowledge about Social media laws only 25% respondents know Libel and Slander law, only 16.3% know Copyright and intellectual Property law, 33.3% know law of freedom of information act, 8.3% influencers know Digital Millennium copyright act, 25% knows Report Gender sensitive and 0% know Social media law means 100% of respondents didn't know social media laws.

DISCUSSION

Hypothesis1: as per H1 the Citizen journalism by social media influencers in more unlawful and dangerous for law and ethics of societies, examined through survey and recent past studies that
As per
2.   A few social media influencers are working with law and ethical manners.
3.   Citizen journalism by social media influencers changing media ethics but wrongly.

The post-truth era is very misleading. Instead, we find clue of the tractability of the communal sphere. What we see is that because we live in a state of ambiguity, digitalization trusts even more on the method of establishing the truth of the communal sphere. Given the historical context of the development of the democratic communal sphere, what we are sighted at the moment is not rare or distinctive to our digital age. On the contrary, we are now more in covenant on what the truth is and the right way to get to the truth. Though, protective measures are needed to certify that scientific knowledge methods and techniques are developed, reviewed and scattered. This is where journalists come in: they are the translators and mediators who make sure the procedure is safe.

For the justification we analyzed recent previous studies and now we have to discuss about the most notable media platform being criticized for false news Identification as information disorder (Michailidou and Trenz, 2021).

According to Users' responses False News Claims

Average percentage of False claims	
Media Source	**percent of False News Claims**
WhatsApp	31%
Snapchat	28%
Instagram	23%
Twitter	20%
YouTube	20%
TikTok	20%
Trump's press briefing	18%
Fox News	18%
Facebook	16%
Trump administration	15%
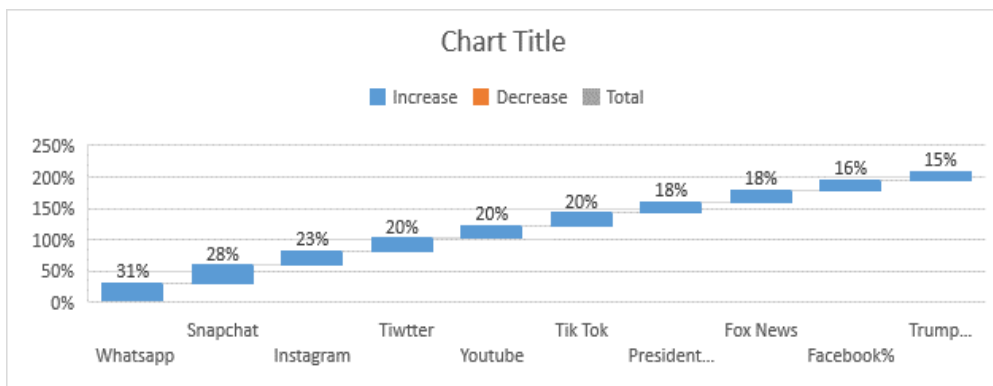
4. Understanding with Post truth by analysis of events

Most of incidents are very popular by social and electronic media, COVID-19 the period of Fake news and Post had been posting on social media since 2019.

Misinformation in Electronic

While downplaying the threat of coronavirus, Sean Hannity displays a graphic showing zero deaths in the United States. [Hannity, 2/27/20]

Laura Ingraham uses Benghazi attacks in 2012 to defend Trump's record on coronavirus. [The Ingraham Angle, 3/10/20]

Ingraham L. (2020)," Trump's record on coronavirus", Fox News

MISINFORMATION BY SOCIAL MEDIA

In the form of statement, a fake statement or misleading information is quite dangerous than a bomb blast. Recent era is being occupied by social media users and influencers, in my view actually "a social media influencer is, who have accessed to the internet and has a great skill to write or create a content for public interest".

In another word social media influencers are free from any eligibility, background authenticity and credibility, because we haven't any gate keeping on such misleading

and manipulated contents. In order to keep informed people, we should take part in gatekeeping by self-Intelligence (SI).
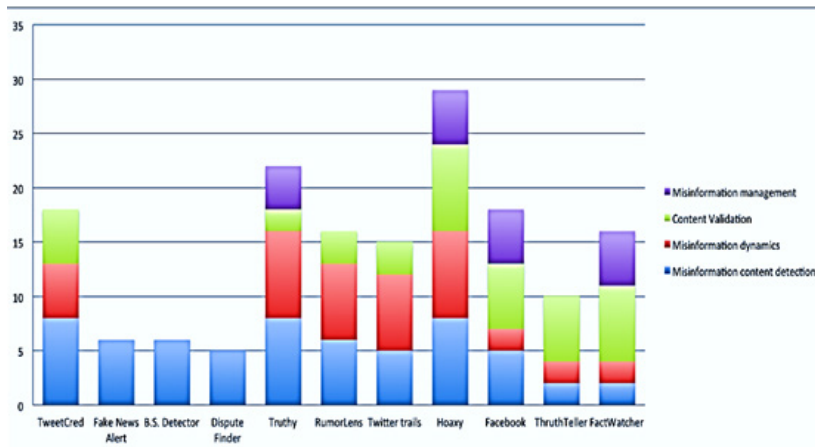

Figure 2: Comparison of relevant platforms according to the four identified dimensions (Miriam and Harith 2018).

In against of other perception, we calculate the amount of misleading, misinformation, and disinformation from the previous studies during Pandemic period of COVID-19. Approximate 20 studies revealed out and they define health and different topics and social media tools.

Topics contained as categories,

Categories	Percentages
Vaccines	36%
Drugs or smoking	18%
Uncommunicable Diseases	20%
Pandemics	26%

Studies were mainly based on a few approaches

Categories	Percentages
Social networking	32%
Manipulated content	30%
Content/text analysis	26%
Sentiment analysis	12%

Summary of the prevalence of misinformation by topic and social media platform.(there are few of recent studies included in this)

Authors	Year	Topic	Social media platform	Prevalence of health misinfor-mation posts
Abukaraky et al	2018	Treatments	YouTube	30%
Ahmed et al	2019	Pandemics	Twitter	N/A[a]
Al Khaja et al	2018	Drugs	WhatsApp	27%
Blankenship et al	2018	Vaccines	Twitter	24%
Bora et al	2018	Pandemics	YouTube	23%
Broniatowski et al	2018	Vaccines	Twitter	35%
Cavazos-Rehg et al	2018	Drugs	Twitter	75%
Ekram et al	2018	Vaccines	YouTube	57%
Erdem et al	2018	Treatments	YouTube	0%
Gimenez-Perez et al	2018	NCDs	YouTube	50%
Goobie et al	2019	NCDs	YouTube	N/A
Harris et al	2018	EDs	Twitter	N/A
Helmi et al	2018	NCDs	Different sourc-es	N/A
Leong et al	2018	NCDs	YouTube	33%
Loeb et al	2018	NCDs	YouTube	77%
Martinez et al	2018	Drugs	Twitter	67%
Morin et al	2018	Pandemics	Twitter	N/A
Mueller et al	2019	NCDs	YouTube	66%
Porat et al	2019	Pandemics	Twitter	0%
Schmidt et al	2018	Vaccines	Facebook	4%
Yang et al	2018	Drugs	YouTube	98%

Townsend. And Wallace, C (2018)

6· We have few questions arise here for self-Intelligence gatekeeping and detection.

1- How to make a fake video and how to identify it?

- In a recent study, participants were not able to recognize Tom Cruise's fake video despite warnings. The videos, made by visual effects artist Chris Om, show Tom Cruise performing magic tricks and telling jokes about Russian politician Mikhail Gorbachev. A study has found that most people, despite knowing that the content they are shown has been digitally modified, are unable to tell if they are watching 'deep fake' videos. The term 'deep fake' is used for videos that use computer software and deep learning (an algorithm used to teach computers) to tell a person's face what he or she said. Happens. (independent Urdu,2022)
- Notable examples include Richard Nixon's Apollo 11 presidential address and former US President Barack Obama's video in which he is shown insulting Donald Trump. Some researchers say that the illegal use of technology could make it the most dangerous crime in the future.

How are misinformation spreaders spreading misinformation and attracting attention?

Fake News

1. Satire and parody …. the daily with Jon Stewart
2. Wrong linkage…. Border Clash Stories
3. Misleading Content…...Click Bait
4. Wrong Context…. Mostly Political reporting
5. Fraudulent and authors…….... COVID-19 Vaccine Videos
6. Manipulated Content……. Social Media Trends
7. Invented Content……self-created

(Husnaian Jamal, 2022)

CONCLUSION

In this pilot analyzed research detected few of pointers from digital media for explanation.

Firstly, we have to understand the code of laws about social media, and the social media influencers should know the code of ethics.

Secondly, we should apply self-intelligence in the most appealing content. As well as those contents, which can spread anarchy.

And we should deeply understand all or few of fake and misleading contents detection tools, especially video and pictures. One picture contains 1000 words, if this is true then it can be harmful in the sense of spreading anarchy.

Last but not least most challenging issue will occur in future is to self-identity Disorder on online content.

At last the best recommendations for future Research is examine practically.

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