Perception of Fake News on Social Media among Residents of Offa Local Government, Kwara State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was designed to investigate the perception of fake news on social media among residents of Offa Local Government in Kwara State, Nigeria. The objective of this study was to determine whether the people in Offa were aware of the spread of fake news on social media. Survey research design was adopted, while questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The findings revealed that more than half of the respondents had been exposed to fake news on social media, but were unable to put appropriate measures in place to determine the authenticity of such news. Though majority of the respondents were aware of the negative implications of fake news on Nigeria‟s democracy and the stability of the nation, the lack of confidence in Government's regards for their fundamental right of freedom of expression made many respondents reject the idea of using legislation to curb its spread. It was recommended that Nigerians should develop reliable means of verifying news got from social media and the government should be transparent in governance so as to win the support of Nigerians on critical issues like the Social Media Bill to check the spread of fake news.

Keywords: Perception, Social Media, Users, Fake News, Offa Residents