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AN ANALYSIS OF MISINFORMATION ON FACEBOOK: CAUSES, DETECTION, AND MITIGATION

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ABSTRACT

Recent “fake-news” occurrences have raised attention and concern about the social and political impacts of misinformation spreading on the internet. These occurrences include substantially impactful reports surrounding the spread of misinformation related to the 2016 presidential election and the COVID virus, treatments and vaccines. This research is qualitative in nature, offering a perspective from which to consider the social media platform Facebook as a catalyst for the spread of misinformation. It explores factors that stimulate and promote discovery and alleviation of misinformation on this platform. This study hopes to contribute to the extant literature on misinformation by providing insight and a unique perspective from which to consider the techniques used to spread misinformation, misinformation detection methods, and mitigation techniques specifically related to the social media platform Facebook.

Keywords

Misinformation, detection, mitigation

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

Misinformation has been a problem since the beginning of time; however, with the advent of the Internet and especially with social media platforms like Facebook, misinformation has become more widespread and more dangerous than ever before. As of 2017, 67 percent of Americans get some of their news on social media, with Facebook, YouTube, and Twitter making up the largest share at 45%, 18%, and 11%, respectively (Geeng et al., 2020). Propaganda, conspiracy theories, and hoaxes are not new. However, events like the 2016 United States election have brought global concern over online misinformation. Besides misinformation's impact on elections, it also has the potential to impact public health and public safety (Geeng et al., 2020). Therefore, given rising concerns over the impacts of misinformation on Facebook and other social media sites, there is a significant need for possible solutions to this growing problem. This poses an opportunity for in-depth research to emerge related to varied perspective related to the causes, detection methods and mitigating techniques that can be employed to address issues related to misinformation on social media platforms like Facebook.

Subsequently, this research paper seeks to examine the techniques used to disseminate misinformation on Facebook including some of the psychological methods used to manipulate users as well as other applied methods. It will discuss methods for identifying misinformation from a philosophical standpoint as well as how one can determine the accuracy of information shared on social media. In addition, it will explore in detail some of the more promising methods that Facebook could use to detect misinformation and mitigate related damage. Moreover, given that, Facebook (in particular) is facing problems related to how it has chosen to address the problem of misinformation, the findings of this research will be used to offer a unique perspective from which to consider possible solutions that Facebook could employ to address misinformation.

REFERENCES

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