EDITORIAL

Combating Fake News through Media and Information Literacy in India

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The advent of mass media has almost transformed the idea of *Public Sphere* which was emphasized largely by the renowned sociologist *Jurgen Habermas*. The Indian society, as we know, has witness a massive growth in case of New Media. India is a land of mixed reactions to all the events happening here. Various social media platforms have not only made it easier to connect with people but have also provided a network which has become dominant in discussing the political narrative of our country. New media has acted chiefly as a catalyst for political parties especially during election campaigns.

Until late 2016, the term Fake News often referred to parody TV news shows like *The Daily Show* or *The Colbert Report*, or more generally about the dangers of the Internet, but the 2016 election season in United States, campaign, and aftermath have breathed new and far more impactful life into what fake news means and how it can affect politics and daily life.

The universe of fake news is much larger than simply false news stories. Some stories may have a nugget of truth but lack any contextualizing details. They may not include any verifiable facts or sources. Some stories may include basic verifiable facts, but are written using language that is deliberately inflammatory, leaves out pertinent details or only presents one viewpoint. Fake news exists within a larger ecosystem of misinformation and disinformation. Fake News and Disinformation skips the procedure that makes real news trustworthy. Ireton & Posetti, (2018) wrote that '*Disinformation and Misinformation are both different to quality journalism which complies with professional standards and ethics*'.

The mission of fake news content isn't typically for financial gain — or at least not completely for profit — but a belief is polarized with certain motives. The individuals who are playing this hazardous game are exceptionally aware of the way this can be extremely sensitive for the social texture of the general public. The prominent social platforms have in fact empowered societies massively at the grassroot level, however, that doesn't take away from the fact that information is spreading without anyone being able to control it. Senior political pioneers are appearing over fake news in the nation yet individuals from their own associations are proceeding to be blameworthy of posting, sharing and spreading such messages.

Today, journalists are not just bystanders watching an evolving avalanche of disinformation and misinformation. They find themselves in the pathways too. The teaching and study materials focuses on raising awareness about the importance of Media and Information Literacy in tackling disinformation and misinformation. It will also comprise of tools for critical thinking to detect news that has been fabricated. It will also highlight the significance of participating exercises in MIL in their own daily lives.

In almost all the parts of the world, people seem to be losing trust in media and journalism including India. With the advent of Digital Revolution, it's decisive to include Media and Information Literacy in the Indian Education system. This system needs to focus on building awareness regarding the importance of Media Literacy and how to make better decisions with more information. In this edition, we have focussed on the various issues related to Fake News, Disinformation as well as Media and Information Literacy to fight against the various challenges prevailing in the country.

References

Ireton, C., & Posetti, J. (2018).*Journalism, fake news & disinformation: handbook for journalism education and training* (1st ed.).