

Informing Science: the International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline

An Official Publication of the Informing Science Institute InformingScience.org

Inform.nu

Volume 27, 2024

EXAMINING THE EFFECT OF FAKE NEWS AWARENESS ON SOCIAL MEDIA USERS' NEWS SHARING BEHAVIOR

Pallavi Negi *	University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India	pallavinegi.ubs@gmail.com
Monica Bedi	University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh, India	monica@pu.ac.in

* Corresponding author

ABSTRACT

Aim/Purpose	Despite the widespread presence of fake news on the internet, many individuals continue to share information without verifying its accuracy. In response, this study examined two types of news-sharing behaviors, Unverified News Sharing and Authenticating News Before Sharing, and their influence on the spread of fake news on social media. Fake news awareness was also incorporated into the paper as a moderating factor.
Background	The proposed conceptual model illustrates how an individual's general approach to news sharing can predict the behavior of fake news sharing. The model was further expanded to include the construct of fake news awareness to under- stand how it moderates the behavioral intention to share fake news.
Methodology	A survey method was employed to collect data from 450 respondents in India and to test the conceptual model. Structural equation modeling was employed.
Contribution	It contributes by developing a framework to examine the multifaceted nature of news-sharing behavior and its role in the dissemination of false information on social media. The study expands on the fake news literature and offers practical recommendations for policymakers aiming to reduce the spread of fake news on social media.
Findings	The findings revealed that unverified news sharing is a strong predictor of fake news dissemination while authenticating news before sharing reduces fake news sharing. Moreover, fake news awareness was found to weaken the link between unverified news sharing and fake news distribution.

Accepting Editor Eli Cohen | Received: September 10, 2024 | Revised: November 8, November 10, 2024 | Accepted: November 11, 2024.

Cite as: Negi, P., & Bedi, M. (2024). Examining the effect of fake news awareness on social media users' news sharing behaviour. *Informing Science: The International Journal of an Emerging Transdiscipline, 27*, Article 14. https://doi.org/10.28945/5397

(CC BY-NC 4.0) This article is licensed to you under a <u>Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International</u> <u>License</u>. When you copy and redistribute this paper in full or in part, you need to provide proper attribution to it to ensure that others can later locate this work (and to ensure that others do not accuse you of plagiarism). You may (and we encourage you to) adapt, remix, transform, and build upon the material for any non-commercial purposes. This license does not permit you to use this material for commercial purposes. Examining the Effect of Fake News Awareness on Social Media Users' News Sharing Behavior

Recommendations for Practitioners	Given the problem of fake news, the government can develop training pro- grams and policies to oversee digital content. Public awareness efforts can be launched to educate individuals on the real-life consequences of spreading mis- information. Additionally, embedding fact-checking tools and resources within public media and incorporating media literacy initiatives into educational curric- ula can help prevent the sharing of unverified information.
Recommendations for Researchers	It is recommended that researchers investigate how different cultures, regions, or countries respond to fake news, including variations in awareness, susceptibility, and methods of combating it. Researchers could also explore the psychological factors that make individuals more susceptible to fake news and the role of fact-checking and algorithm changes in improving user awareness of fake news.
Impact on Society	Sharing fake news, even unintentionally, can have serious consequences, damag- ing reputations, creating fear, spreading misinformation, and even influencing elections and public health decisions. Awareness is our first line of defense; therefore, it is essential that each of us develops the ability to critically evaluate the information we encounter daily.
Future Research	Integrating moderating variables like demographic factors and conducting lon- gitudinal studies will strengthen the model's reliability and adaptability, provid- ing a more detailed insight into news-sharing behavior.
Keywords	social media, fake news awareness, verified news, authenticating news

INTRODUCTION

The growing dependence on social media has contributed to the spread of information disorder, particularly through the dissemination of fake news (Castioni et al., 2022; Omar et al., 2024). Fake news is any information created with the intention to deceive or mislead readers and is often presented in a legitimate news format (Duffy et al., 2020).

This study aims to analyze the impact of fake news awareness on social media users' news-sharing behaviors, specifically focusing on the roles of authenticating news before sharing (ANS) and unverified news sharing (UNS). By exploring these dynamics, the research seeks to contribute valuable insights to the discourse on media literacy and strategies to mitigate the spread of fake news.

There is a growing body of studies on 'fake news,' with the majority of publications issued in 2018, after the US presidential elections 2016 (Abu Arqoub et al., 2022). The sharing of unverified information emerged as a significant issue during the COVID-19 pandemic (Laato et al., 2020). Research has identified several factors contributing to the online spread of fake news, including information sharing, information seeking, and altruism (Apuke & Omar, 2021a), time constraints and religiosity (Islam et al., 2020) as well as social interaction (Malik et al., 2023; Sampat & Raj, 2022). Predictors like information overload (Gordon et al., 2022; Matthes et al., 2020) have also been highlighted. The rise in incidents of fake news dissemination has undermined trust in the media and damaged the credibility of news sources (Ouedraogo, 2020). Despite various fake news intervention studies that focus on identifying news characteristics to distinguish fake from real news (Raj & Meel, 2022) and although machine learning techniques and algorithm-based models have been used to identify fake news (Gururaj et al., 2022; Palani & Elango, 2023; Vasist & Krishnan, 2022), the issue of fake news sharing continues to be a challenge. Studies also emphasize the importance of media literacy (Adjin-Tettey, 2022; Jones-Jang et al., 2021) and fake news knowledge and awareness (Apuke et al., 2023; Jahng et al., 2020; Pundir et al., 2021) to combat the spread of fake news. Even though policy actors and social media companies are putting effort into fact-checking, flagging, and removing suspicious bots to curb fake news, it is still important to understand intentions when sharing news (verified or unverified). It is difficult to detect false newsmakers and spreaders, with human creators/spreaders being more challenging to counter than human-like creators/spreaders (X. Zhang & Ghorbani, 2020).

This study seeks to fill the gap by creating a model to examine the effects of two news-sharing behaviors – authenticating news before sharing (ANS) and unverified news sharing (UNS) – on the dissemination of fake news on social media.

The research model incorporates the social identity theory (Tajfel, 1982) and social exchange theory (Malinowski, 2013), explaining how the social group influences an individual's self-image and behavior of which the individual is a part. The following are the research questions that guide this study:

- RQ1: What roles do ANS and UNS play in the dissemination of fake news on social media?
- **RQ2:** How does fake news awareness affect the relation of UNS and ANS with fake news sharing, respectively?

The study is important because the spread of fake news on social media has significant implications for public trust in media sources and the overall integrity of information. Understanding how awareness of fake news affects users' sharing behaviors can help develop strategies to mitigate misinformation and enhance media literacy, which is crucial in today's information landscape.

The sections that follow provide a summary of the theoretical background and proposed hypotheses, research methods, data analysis, and results, as well as address the paper's shortcomings and potential suggestions for future studies.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Social identity theory proposed by Tajfel (1982) explains how individuals' sense of belonging to a social group boosts their self-esteem. One of the reasons for sharing news is the need to stay updated and instantly forward information on social networks (Talwar et al., 2020), which may lead to sharing unverified information and inadvertently sharing fake news (Valencia-Arias et al., 2023). The principles of social exchange theory (Malinowski, 2013), which describes how people interact with social groupings for long-term gain, are congruent with the authenticating behavior in addition to the need for self-enhancement and earning the trust of group members (Talwar et al., 2020; Valencia-Arias et al., 2023). Based on these theories, the present study proposes a comprehensive model to understand the link between UNS and ANS and fake news sharing.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Research on attitudes and intentions regarding the spread of false information online remains scattered (Talwar et al., 2020). Existing studies have not incorporated theoretical frameworks that consider attributes of social media to understand the behaviors associated with both intentional and unintentional dissemination of misleading information (Kumar et al., 2023). Increased awareness of fake news is included as an intervention strategy to examine its moderating effect on the proposed relationships. The subsequent sections outline a review of the different constructs in the conceptual model.

UNVERIFIED NEWS SHARING

According to Talwar et al. (2020), unverified news sharing refers to the practice of instantly disseminating any news or information upon receiving it. Instant news-sharing behavior is spontaneous and automatic and is more likely done without prior evaluation (C. Wang et al., 2017). People share news without verifying it because they believe the information to be true (Hunt, 2016). Research has indicated that the dissemination of false information is also significantly influenced by political and religious beliefs (Marwick, 2018; Talwar et al., 2020). Socialization and a sense of belonging are what drive people to share information on social media sites (Doise & Lorenzi-Cioldi, 2020), which often leads to the sharing of fake news (Tandoc et al., 2019). According to studies, people mostly share news on social networking platforms for entertainment, information sharing, information seeking, and socializing purposes (Apuke & Omar, 2021a; Lampos et al., 2021; Malik et al., 2023; Sampat & Raj, 2022; Waruwu et al., 2021). Other factors driving the instantaneous sharing of information on social media include anxiety, perceived herd mentality, and information overload (Huang et al., 2022; Laato et al., 2020). Altruism also emerged as a strong predictor of unverified news sharing (Apuke & Omar, 2021b; Balakrishnan et al., 2021; C. Zhang et al., 2022). Based on these studies, the researchers propose the hypothesis that UNS may lead to sharing fake news.

H1: Unverified news sharing (UNS) has a positive and significant association with sharing fake news.

AUTHENTICATING NEWS BEFORE SHARING

The concept of ANS stems from the individual's underlying self-enhancement bias and social exchange theory, which suggests that preserving one's reputation and maintaining a level of trust among social groups encourages the behaviors of validating news before sharing (Talwar et al., 2020; Torres et al., 2018). Collective authentication or social validation is encouraged when people are aware of the negative social effects of disseminating incorrect information (Waruwu et al., 2021). Individuals evaluate news either through internal sources based on news attributes or external sources of feedback and consult alternate forms of media (Prakash et al., 2019). Source credibility is considered a significant factor in determining news verification (Mican et al., 2022). As a result, this study postulates that people are less likely to spread false information on social media platforms if they regularly verify content before sharing it.

H2: There is a negative *and* significant correlation between sharing fake news and authenticating news before sharing (ANS).

FAKE NEWS AWARENESS

Fake news awareness is characterized by expertise in the field, knowledge of the problem, and a practical comprehension of the detrimental effects of fake news (Omar et al., 2024). Humans are identified as the key propagators of false information on social media (Rodrigo et al., 2024). Therefore, to stop fake news from spreading, it is vital to inform people about its existence and promote critical thinking (Aoun Barakat et al., 2021; Pennycook & Rand, 2019). The desire to confirm news before sharing is greatly impacted by one's knowledge and awareness of fake news (Jahng et al., 2020; Pundir et al., 2021). According to a study, people who are aware of fake news have a more favorable attitude toward checking the news before sharing it (Apuke et al., 2023). News verification behavior is more prevalent in those who are aware of fake news than in people who have trouble telling the difference between fake and true information. However, some studies found that, despite having sufficient knowledge, people still share fake news (Papapicco et al., 2022; Z. Zhang et al., 2022). Thus, the purpose of this study is to examine the potential indirect effects of awareness of fake news on UNS and ANS's respective relationships with fake news sharing.

H3: Fake news awareness moderates the link between unverified news sharing (UNS) and fake news sharing, such that this relationship is weaker among individuals with high awareness of fake news.

H4: Fake news awareness moderates the connection between authenticating news before sharing (ANS) and fake news sharing, making this relationship stronger among individuals with high awareness of fake news.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present research followed a quantitative approach to measure fake news-sharing behavior. The data was collected using a self-administered survey, and the mall-intercept technique was used to approach participants in busy marketplaces. Non-probability sampling techniques such as mall intercept are inexpensive and ensure anonymity (Bush & Hair, 1985) and quick accessibility (Korukcu et al., 2021; Sharma, 2017). The geographical scope of the survey was confined to the Chandigarh Tricity, which includes Chandigarh, Panchkula, and Mohali. The criteria for participation were that each respondent was above 18 years of age and familiar with fake news. The data collection occurred over a span of three months, from February to May 2024. A total of 575 people were approached, but only 450 questionnaires were filled in as some were disinterested and refused to participate. The demographic characteristics of the respondents are shown in Table 1. The items were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale with "1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree." The questionnaire was pre-tested by subject experts first, and then a pilot survey was conducted, in which 50 responses were collected. Based on the results, the survey instrument was finalized.

Demographic Analysis of Respondents

As shown in Table 1, the study sample consisted of 53.6% (241) males and 46.4% (209) females. The majority of respondents, 58% (261), were between the ages of 25 and 44, followed by the 18–24 age group, which made up 34.9% (157) of the sample, while the remaining 7.1% (32) were 44 years and above. Regarding the educational background of the respondents, 73.3% (330) were graduates/post-graduates, while 26.7% (120) were undergraduates. In terms of employment status, 56.4% (254) of the respondents were employed, 36.7% (165) were students, and 6.9% (31) were unemployed. Concerning the preferred social media platform, most respondents chose Instagram (28.4%, 128), followed closely by WhatsApp (26.3%, 118), YouTube (22.4%, 101), Facebook (12.1%, 54), Twitter (7.5%, 34), and 3.3% (15) preferred platforms other than those mentioned above.

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	241	53.6
Female	209	46.4
Age		
18-24	157	34.9
25-44	261	58
45 and above	32	7.1
Employment Status		
Student	165	36.7
Employed full/part-time	254	56.4
Unemployed	31	6.9
Education		
Undergraduate	120	26.7
Graduate/Postgraduate	330	73.3
Frequently used social media		
Facebook	54	12.1
Twitter	34	7.5
Instagram	128	28.4
Youtube	101	22.4
WhatsApp	118	26.3
Other	15	3.3

Table 1. Demographic profile (N= 450)

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Time			
Everyday	426	94.7	
2-4 times a week	15	3.3	
Once a week	9	2	

SCALE RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

SEM (structural equation modeling) was done using AMOS 23.0 software. The methodology involved two steps: first, the validity and reliability of the measurement model were assessed, and then the structural model was examined to analyze the relationships between the latent constructs (J. Wang et al., 2023).

The goodness of fit of the model was examined using AMOS 23.0 software. The sample was evaluated for reliability and validity (discriminant validity and convergent validity). All of the measures' composite reliability (CR) was greater than 0.70, and Cronbach's alpha was likewise greater than the 0.70 cutoff value, indicating sufficient internal consistency.

Table 2 shows that the average variance extracted (AVE) was more than the cutoff value of 0.50, indicating convergent validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Constructs	Items adapted from	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha (CA)	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Unverified News Sharing	Laato et al. (2020)	UNS1: I share information or news without checking facts through trusted sources. UNS2: I share information or news without checking facts through trusted sources. UNS3: I share information or news	0.904 0.905 0.779	0.840	0.849	0.656
		even if sometimes I feel the information may not be correct.				
		ANS1: I ask my friends to check the authenticity of any message before	0.813	0.753	0.746	0.543
Authenticat- ing News Before Sharing	Talwar et al. (2020), Sampat and Raj	ANS2: I ask my family/relatives to check the authenticity of any message	0.826			
		ANS3: I rely on TV news channels to check the authenticity of any message	0.689			
	(2022)	before sharing it. ANS4: I authenticate news before sharing it so that my social	0.670			
		image/reputation and trust are not maligned.				

Table 2. Convergent validity results

Constructs	Items adapted from	Items	Factor loadings	Cronbach's alpha (CA)	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Fake News Awareness	Majer- czak and Strzelecki (2022)	FNA1: I am aware of the existence of fake news and the social consequences it entails. FNA2: I am concerned about the phe- nomenon of fake news. FNA3: I am aware that I may come across fake news when using social media. FNA4: I have sufficient knowledge about fake news and its social impact. FNA5: I understand the concerns about fake news and its negative im- pact on society.	0.847 0.855 0.873 0.807 0.831	0.904	0.905	0.657
Sharing Fake News	Obadă and Dabija	NS1: The news I shared on social me- dia platforms seemed accurate at the time, but later, I found out it was made up. NS2: The news I shared on social me- dia platforms was exaggerated, but I was not aware of this at the time of sharing. NS3: The news I shared on social me- dia platforms seemed to be real news	0.706 0.666 0.765	0.887	0.888	0.614
News	(2022)	at the time of sharing, but later I found out that it was fake news. NS4: The news I shared on social me- dia platforms initially seemed accurate but was later proven to be a hoax. NS5: The satirical news I shared on so- cial media platforms was presented as real news.	0.738 0.568			

As demonstrated in Table 3, the square root of AVE was greater than the correlation coefficients, confirming the discriminant validity of the model.

Table 3.	Discriminant	validity	results
----------	--------------	----------	---------

Construct	Fake news awareness	Unverified news sharing	Authenticating news before sharing	Sharing fake news
Fake news awareness	0.811			
Unverified news sharing	0.190	0.810		
Authenticating news before sharing	0.221	0.017	0.666	
Sharing fake news	0.149	0.547	0.194	0.784

Hypothesis Testing

Measurement model

A good model fit was ensured by the model fit indices meeting the measurement conditions (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2023). Some key model fit parameters for the current study are presented in Table 4. The CMIN/DF was 2.09, the comparative fit index (CFI) was 0.977, the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was 0.964, the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) was 0.0514, the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) was 0.049, and the PClose value was

,

0.516. All these indices met the measurement criteria, supporting the model and confirming a good fit for the data.

Measure	Estimate	Threshold	Interpretation
CMIN/DF	2.090	Between 1 and 3	Excellent
CFI	0.977	>0.95	Excellent
GFI	0.964	>0.95	Excellent
SRMR	0.0514	< 0.08	Excellent
RMSEA	0.049	< 0.06	Excellent
PClose	0.516	>0.05	Excellent

Table 4.	Model	fit indices
----------	-------	-------------

Structural model

Path analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses, and the results are shown in Table 5. The findings supported hypotheses H1 and H2, indicating that ANS ($\beta = -0.174$, p < 0.001) had a significant but negative relationship with fake news sharing behavior, while UNS ($\beta = 0.397$, p < 0.001) showed a significant and positive relationship with fake news sharing.

Figure 1 illustrates the structural model, including independent variables UNS and ANS, the dependent variable of fake news sharing, and the moderating variable of fake news awareness.



Figure 1. Structural model

Hypotheses	Path	Estimate	Std. error	C.R.	Sig.	Result
H1	Unverified news sharing> Sharing fake news	0.397	0.044	8.998	***	Accepted
H2	Authenticating news before sharing > Sharing fake news	-0.174	0.43	- 4.042	***	Accepted
H3	Unverified news sharing*Fake news awareness> Sharing fake news	-0.118	0.037	- 3.212	0.001***	Accepted
H4	Authenticating news before sharing* Fake news awareness> Sharing fake news	0.083	0.042	1.973	0.048*	Accepted

Table 5. Structural model results

Note: *p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p<0.001

Moderation hypothesis

The relationships between UNS and fake news sharing, as well as ANS and fake news sharing, were examined, with fake news awareness serving as a moderating factor. The results supported hypothesis H4, showing that fake news awareness has a positive and significant impact on the link between authenticating news before sharing and the sharing of fake news ($\beta = 0.083$, p < 0.05). In other words, when people become more knowledgeable about fake news, they are more likely to carefully check the news before sharing it. The study also found strong support for hypothesis H3, indicating that fake news awareness has a significant negative impact on the connection between sharing unverified news and sharing fake news ($\beta = -0.118$, p < 0.001). Thus, people who are more aware of fake news are less likely to share unverified information, making the link between sharing unverified news and sharing fake news weaker. As a result, there is a greater need to educate people on fake news, which helps to reduce the spread of false or misleading information.

DISCUSSION

MAIN EFFECTS

The results indicated that UNS was a strong predictor of fake news sharing, and this was consistent with prior research (Apuke & Omar, 2021b; Sampat & Raj, 2022; Talwar et al., 2020; Valencia-Arias et al., 2023), implying that when people forward information instantly, they tend not to verify it first which results in sharing fake news.

Conversely, it was discovered that ANS was inversely correlated with the sharing of fake news, supporting previous research findings that sharing fake news is decreased when information is verified before being shared (Sampat & Raj, 2022; Talwar et al., 2020; Valencia-Arias et al., 2023).

MODERATION EFFECTS

The relationship between UNS and sharing fake news is weakened among users who possess a high level of fake news awareness, which suggests that people with more awareness tend to be a little more skeptical when sharing information. Conforming to the researchers' expectations, ANS was more significant for users with high fake news awareness, which means that people who verified information were even more cautious when disseminating news or information on social media, as shown in Figures 2 and 3.



Figure 2. ANS and fake news sharing with fake news awareness as a moderator



Figure3. UNS and fake news sharing with fake news awareness as a moderator

IMPLICATION

The paper offers theoretical insights into the growing body of literature on fake news. It contributes by developing a conceptual model to understand news-sharing behavior in relation to the spread of fake news on social media. It also broadens the scope of fake news awareness as a moderator to study its effect on individuals' news-sharing behavior. In terms of practical implications, the study found that users who shared unverified information on social media invariably spread fake news, unlike those who verified news before sharing. Thus, the study emphasizes the necessity of governmental oversight to prevent the instantaneous dissemination of information and news items on social media. The results confirmed that fake news awareness can counteract sharing fake news. Therefore, the researcher recommends policymakers promote news literacy and awareness initiatives to inform individuals of the dangers of spreading false information.

CONCLUSION

The study offers insights into news-sharing behavior, which forecasts the spread of fake news on social media. The results find human behavior as the primary source of fake news distribution, as indicated by the results that not verifying news before sharing strongly predicted the dissemination of fake news. It also offers a countermeasure against disinformation, as evidenced by the findings that fake news awareness weakens the sharing of fake news. This emphasizes how crucial it is to possess the skill and knowledge required to recognize and analyze fake news on social media.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH RECOMMENDATIONS

Although the present study offers a novel understanding of news-sharing behavior, it has some limitations. First, the generalizability of the results may be questioned because the study focused exclusively on social media users from the Chandigarh Tricity area in India. Future research could evaluate the model in other geographical locations or countries with different cultural backgrounds. Second, the study employed a non-probability sampling technique for data collection, which had its own shortcomings (Berndt, 2020). Future researchers could employ random sampling techniques to check the robustness of the proposed model. Third, cross-sectional studies suffer from self-reporting and under-reporting bias (Behl et al., 2021); therefore, researchers can conduct longitudinal studies to overcome this problem. Finally, while this study explored the moderating effect of fake news awareness, future research could examine other moderating variables, such as age, gender, and so forth.

REFERENCES

- Abu Arqoub, O., Abdulateef Elega, A., Efe Özad, B., Dwikat, H., & Adedamola Oloyede, F. (2022). Mapping the scholarship of fake news research: A systematic review. *Journalism Practice*, 16(1), 56-86. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1805791</u>
- Adjin-Tettey, T. D. (2022). Combating fake news, disinformation, and misinformation: Experimental evidence for media literacy education. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 9(1), 2037229. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2037229</u>
- Aoun Barakat, K., Dabbous, A., & Tarhini, A. (2021). An empirical approach to understanding users' fake news identification on social media. Online Information Review, 45(6), 1080-1096. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-08-2020-0333</u>
- Apuke, O. D., & Omar, B. (2021a). Fake news and COVID-19: Modelling the predictors of fake news sharing among social media users. *Telematics and Informatics*, 56, 101475. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2020.101475</u>
- Apuke, O. D., & Omar, B. (2021b). User motivation in fake news sharing during the COVID-19 pandemic: An application of the uses and gratification theory. Online Information Review, 45(1), 220-239. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/OIR-03-2020-0116</u>
- Apuke, O. D., Omar, B., & Tunca, E. A. (2023). Effect of fake news awareness as an intervention strategy for motivating news verification behaviour among social media users in Nigeria: A quasi-experimental research. *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, 58(6), 888-903. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/00219096221079320</u>
- Balakrishnan, V., Ng, K. S., & Rahim, H. A. (2021). To share or not to share–The underlying motives of sharing fake news amidst the COVID-19 pandemic in Malaysia. *Technology in Society*, 66, 101676. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2021.101676</u>
- Behl, A., Sampat, B., & Raj, S. (2021). Productivity of gig workers on crowdsourcing platforms through artificial intelligence and gamification: A multi-theoretical approach. *The TQM Journal*. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/TQM-07-2021-0201</u>
- Bentler, P. M., & Bonett, D. G. (1980). Significance tests and goodness of fit in the analysis of covariance structures. *Psychological Bulletin*, 88(3), 588-606. <u>https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.88.3.588</u>

- Berndt, A. E. (2020). Sampling methods. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 36(2), 224-226. https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334420906850
- Bush, A. J., & Hair, J. F., Jr. (1985). An assessment of the mall intercept as a data collection method. Journal of Marketing Research, 22(2), 158-167. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378502200205</u>
- Castioni, P., Andrighetto, G., Gallotti, R., Polizzi, E., & De Domenico, M. (2022). The voice of few, the opinions of many: Evidence of social biases in Twitter COVID-19 fake news sharing. *Royal Society Open Science*,9(10), 220716. <u>https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.220716</u>
- Doise, W., & Lorenzi-Cioldi, F. (2020). Patterns of diffrentiation within and between groups. In J.P. van Oudenhoven & T. M. Willemsen (Eds.), *Ethnic minorities* (pp. 43-57). Garland Science. <u>https://doi.org/10.1201/9781003077381-4</u>
- Duffy, A., Tandoc, E., & Ling, R. (2020). Too good to be true, too good not to share: The social utility of fake news. Information, Communication & Society, 23(13), 1965-1979. https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2019.1623904
- Fornell, C., & Larcker, D. F. (1981). Evaluating structural equation models with unobservable variables and measurement error. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 18(1), 39-50. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/002224378101800104</u>
- Gordon, I. D., Chaves, D., Dearborn, D., Hendrikx, S., Hutchinson, R., Popovich, C., & White, M. (2022). Information seeking behaviours, attitudes, and choices of academic physicists. *Science & Technology Libraries*,41(3), 288-318. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/0194262X.2021.1991546</u>
- Gururaj, H. L., Lakshmi, H., Soundarya, B. C., Flammini, F., & Janhavi, V. (2022). Machine learning-based approach for fake news detection. *Journal of ICT Standardization*, 10(4), 509-530. https://doi.org/10.13052/jicts2245-800X.1042
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural Equation Modeling: A Multidisciplinary Journal*, 6(1), 1-55. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/10705519909540118</u>
- Huang, Q., Lei, S., & Ni, B. (2022). Perceived information overload and unverified information sharing on WeChat amid the COVID-19 pandemic: A moderated mediation model of anxiety and perceived herd. Frontiers in Psychology, 13, 837820. <u>https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.837820</u>
- Hunt, E. (2016). What is fake news? How to spot it and what you can do to stop it. *The Guardian*, 17(12), 15-16. https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/dec/18/what-is-fake-news-pizzagate
- Islam, A. N., Laato, S., Talukder, S., & Sutinen, E. (2020). Misinformation sharing and social media fatigue during COVID-19: An affordance and cognitive load perspective. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 159, 120201. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2020.120201</u>
- Jahng, M. R., Lee, H., & Rochadiat, A. (2020). Public relations practitioners' management of fake news: Exploring key elements and acts of information authentication. *Public Relations Review*, 46(2), 101907. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2020.101907</u>
- Jones-Jang, S. M., Mortensen, T., & Liu, J. (2021). Does media literacy help identification of fake news? Information literacy helps, but other literacies don't. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 65(2), 371-388. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764219869406</u>
- Kline, R. B. (2023). Principles and practice of structural equation modeling. Guilford Publications.
- Korukcu, O., Ozkaya, M., Faruk Boran, O., & Boran, M. (2021). The effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on community mental health: A psychometric and prevalence study in Turkey. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 29(5), e204-e213. <u>https://doi.org/10.1111/hsc.13270</u>
- Kumar, A., Shankar, A., Behl, A., Arya, V., & Gupta, N. (2023). Should I share it? Factors influencing fake newssharing behaviour: A behavioural reasoning theory perspective. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 193, 122647. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2023.122647</u>

- Laato, S., Islam, A. N., Islam, M. N., & Whelan, E. (2020). What drives unverified information sharing and cyberchondria during the COVID-19 pandemic? *European Journal of Information Systems*, 29(3), 288-305. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/0960085X.2020.1770632</u>
- Lampos, V., Majumder, M. S., Yom-Tov, E., Edelstein, M., Moura, S., Hamada, Y., Rangaka, M. X., McKendry, R. A., & Cox, I. J. (2021). Tracking COVID-19 using online search. *npjDigital Medicine*, 4, Article 17. <u>https://doi.org/10.1038/s41746-021-00384-w</u>
- Majerczak, P., & Strzelecki, A. (2022). Trust, media credibility, social ties, and the intention to share towards information verification in an age of fake news. *Behavioral Sciences*, 12(2), 51. <u>https://doi.org/10.3390/bs12020051</u>
- Malik, A., Mahmood, K., & Islam, T. (2023). Understanding the Facebook users' behavior towards COVID-19 information sharing by integrating the theory of planned behavior and gratifications. *Information Development*, 39(4), 750-763. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/02666669211049383</u>
- Malinowski, B. (2013). Argonauts of the western Pacific: An account of native enterprise and adventure in the archipelagoes of Melanesian New Guinea [1922/1994]. Routledge. <u>https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315014463</u>
- Marwick, A. E. (2018). Why do people share fake news? A sociotechnical model of media effects. Georgetown Law Technology Review, 2(2), 474-512. <u>https://georgetownlawtechreview.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/2.2-Marwick-pp-474-512.pdf</u>
- Matthes, J., Karsay, K., Schmuck, D., & Stevic, A. (2020). "Too much to handle": Impact of mobile social networking sites on information overload, depressive symptoms, and well-being. *Computers in Human Behavior*,105, 106217. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2019.106217</u>
- Mican, D., Sterie, L. G., & Sitar-Taut, D. A. (2022). User perceptions of fake news sharing behavior on social media through social networking sites. *The Business and Management Review*,13(1), 120-128. <u>https://doi.org/10.24052/BMR/V13NU01/ART-13</u>
- Obadă, D. R., & Dabija, D. C. (2022). "In flow"! Why do users share fake news about environmentally friendly brands on social media? *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 19(8), 4861. https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19084861
- Omar, B., Apuke, O. D., & Nor, Z. M. (2024). The intrinsic and extrinsic factors predicting fake news sharing among social media users: The moderating role of fake news awareness. *Current Psychology*, 43(2), 1235-1247. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s12144-023-04343-4</u>
- Ouedraogo, N. (2020). Social media literacy in crisis context: Fake news consumption during COVID-19 lockdown. SSRN 3601466. <u>https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3601466</u>
- Palani, B., & Elango, S. (2023). CTrL-FND: Content-based transfer learning approach for fake news detection on social media. *International Journal of System Assurance Engineering and Management*, 14(3), 903-918. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s13198-023-01891-7</u>
- Papapicco, C., Lamanna, I., & D'Errico, F. (2022). Adolescents' vulnerability to fake news and to racial hoaxes: A qualitative analysis on Italian sample. *Multimodal Technologies and Interaction*, 6(3), 20. <u>https://doi.org/10.3390/mti6030020</u>
- Pennycook, G., & Rand, D. G. (2019). Lazy, not biased: Susceptibility to partisan fake news is better explained by lack of reasoning than by motivated reasoning. *Cognition*, 188, 39-50. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cognition.2018.06.011</u>
- Prakash, G., Verma, R. K., Ilavarasan, P. V., & Kar, A. K. (2019). Authenticating fake news: An empirical study in India. In Y. Dwivedi, E. Ayaburi, R. Boateng, & J. Effah (Eds.), *ICT Unbounded, Social Impact of Bright ICT Adoption* (pp. 339-350). Springer. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-20671-0_23</u>
- Pundir, V., Devi, E. B., & Nath, V. (2021). Arresting fake news sharing on social media: A theory of planned behavior approach. *Management Research Review*, 44(8), 1108-1138. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/MRR-05-2020-0286</u>
- Raj, C., & Meel, P. (2022). People lie, actions Don't! Modeling infodemic proliferation predictors among social media users. *Technology in Society*, 68, 101930. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techsoc.2022.101930</u>

- Rodrigo, P., Arakpogun, E. O., Vu, M. C., Olan, F., & Djafarova, E. (2024). Can you be mindful? The effectiveness of mindfulness-driven interventions in enhancing the digital resilience to fake news on COVID-19. *Information Systems Frontiers*, 26(2), 501-521. <u>https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-022-10258-5</u>
- Sampat, B., & Raj, S. (2022). Fake or real news? Understanding the gratifications and personality traits of individuals sharing fake news on social media platforms. *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, 74(5), 840-876. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/AJIM-08-2021-0232</u>
- Sharma, G. (2017). Pros and cons of different sampling techniques. *International Journal of Applied Research*, 3(7), 749-752. <u>https://www.allresearchjournal.com/archives/2017/vol3issue7/PartK/3-7-69-542.pdf</u>
- Tajfel, H. (1982). Social psychology of intergroup relations. Annual Review of Psychology, 33, 1-39. <u>https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.ps.33.020182.000245</u>
- Talwar, S., Dhir, A., Singh, D., Virk, G. S., & Salo, J. (2020). Sharing of fake news on social media: Application of the honeycomb framework and the third-person effect hypothesis. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Ser*vices, 57, 102197. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jretconser.2020.102197</u>
- Tandoc, E. C., Jr., Jenkins, J., & Craft, S. (2019). Fake news as a critical incident in journalism. *Journalism Practice*, 13(6), 673-689. <u>https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2018.1562958</u>
- Torres, R., Gerhart, N., & Negahban, A. (2018). Epistemology in the era of fake news: An exploration of information verification behaviors among social networking site users. ACM SIGMIS Database: The DATABASE for Advances in Information Systems, 49(3), 78-97. <u>https://doi.org/10.1145/3242734.3242740</u>
- Valencia-Arias, A., Arango-Botero, D. M., Cardona-Acevedo, S., Paredes Delgado, S. S., & Gallegos, A. (2023). Understanding the spread of fake news: An approach from the perspective of young people. *Informatics*, 10(2), 38. <u>https://doi.org/10.3390/informatics10020038</u>
- Vasist, P. N., & Krishnan, S. (2022). Demystifying fake news in the hospitality industry: A systematic literature review, framework, and an agenda for future research. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 106, 103277. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2022.103277</u>
- Wang, C., Zhou, Z., Jin, X. L., Fang, Y., & Lee, M. K. (2017). The influence of affective cues on positive emotion in predicting instant information sharing on microblogs: Gender as a moderator. *Information Processing* & Management, 53(3), 721-734. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ipm.2017.02.003</u>
- Wang, J., Zareapoor, M., Chen, Y. C., Shamsolmoali, P., & Xie, J. (2023). What influences news learning and sharing on mobile platforms? An analysis of multi-level informational factors. *Library Hi Tech*, 41(5), 1395-1419. <u>https://doi.org/10.1108/LHT-11-2021-0408</u>
- Waruwu, B. K., Tandoc, E. C., Jr., Duffy, A., Kim, N., & Ling, R. (2021). Telling lies together? Sharing news as a form of social authentication. *New Media & Society*, 23(9), 2516-2533. <u>https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444820931017</u>
- Zhang, C., Cao, T., & Ali, A. (2022). Investigating the role of perceived information overload on COVID-19 fear: A moderation role of fake news related to COVID-19. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 930088. <u>https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.930088</u>
- Zhang, X., & Ghorbani, A. A. (2020). An overview of online fake news: Characterization, detection, and discussion. Information Processing & Management, 57(2), 102025. <u>https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ipm.2019.03.004</u>
- Zhang, Z., Akhter, S., Al-Abyadh, M. A., & Cong, P. T. (2022). Determinants of unverified news sharing on social media and its effects on corporate image. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 937104. <u>https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.937104</u>

AUTHORS



Pallavi Negi is currently dedicated to her PhD studies at the University Business School, Panjab University, Chandigarh, and is actively immersed in her research endeavors. She obtained her bachelor's degree in Electronics and Communication Engineering before completing her master's degree in Business Administration at Panjab University.



Dr. Monica Bedi has an MBA (Finance) and a PhD (Marketing). She is currently working as an Associate Professor at University Business School, Panjab University Chandigarh. She has teaching and research experience of 18 years. She has conducted many workshops on Research Methodology in different management institutions. Her areas of research are consumer behavior, marketing research, retail marketing, and international marketing. Her research publications are Scopus-indexed articles, UGC Care papers, and peer-reviewed articles in international and national journals.