

**COVID-19 INFODEMIC: PERCEPTION OF FAKE NEWS AMONG RESIDENTS OF
IKEJA, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

**NEJO, OMOTOLA ELIZABETH
(19PBE01929)**

2021

**COVID-19 INFODEMIC: PERCEPTION OF FAKE NEWS AMONG RESIDENTS OF
IKEJA, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA**

BY

NEJO, OMOTOLA ELIZABETH

(19PBE01929)

B.Sc. Mass Communication, Caleb University, Imota

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE (M.Sc.) DEGREE IN MASS COMMUNICATION IN THE
DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION, COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT AND
SOCIAL SCIENCES, COVENANT UNIVERSITY.**

2021

ACCEPTANCE

This is to attest that the dissertation is accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Mass Communication in the Department of Mass Communication, College of Management and Social Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria

Mr. John A. Philip

(Secretary, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams

(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

DECLARATION

I, **NEJO, OMOTOLA ELIZABETH (19PBE01929)** declares that this research was carried out by me under the supervision of Dr. Lanre Amodu of the Department of Mass Communication, College of Management and Social Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Nigeria. I attest that the dissertation has not been presented either wholly or partially for the award of any degree elsewhere. All sources of data and scholarly information used in this dissertation are duly acknowledged.

NEJO, OMOTOLA ELIZABETH

Signature and Date

CERTIFICATION

We certify that this dissertation titled “**COVID-19 INFODEMIC: PERCEPTION OF FAKE NEWS AMONG RESIDENTS OF IKEJA, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA** is an original research work carried out by **NEJO, OMOTOLA ELIZABETH (19PBE01929)** in the Department of Mass Communication, College of Management and Social Sciences, Covenant University, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria under the supervision of Dr. Lanre Amodu. We have examined and found this work acceptable as part of the requirements for the award of Master of Science in Mass Communication.

Dr. Lanre Amodu
(Supervisor)

Signature and Date

Dr. Kehinde O. Oyesomi
(Head of Department)

Signature and Date

Prof. Adepoju Tejumaiye
(External Examiner)

Signature and Date

Prof. Akan B. Williams
(Dean, School of Postgraduate Studies)

Signature and Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate the success of my Master journey to the Almighty God who sustained me all through the programme.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My acknowledgement goes to my sponsor, Mr. Tom Ogboi for his financial support throughout the program. To my Supervisor; Dr. Lanre Amodu, for his patience and for working thoroughly with me to ensure this research work came out to be a better piece. God bless you Sir. Also, to Aramide Aluko, thank you for assisting me proofread throughout this project.

I want to extend my gratitude to my husband, Mr. Olufemi Ogunbola for his support, words of encouragement and understanding. At a time, I had reasons to travel back and forth - thanks for holding the fort. Also, I am deeply grateful to my beloved Parents, Late Pastor Oluwole and Deaconess Mrs. Kehinde Nejo who were the motivating drivers for my academic progress and success. Dad, I am sure you are happy with me right now. To my siblings – thank you for the love, encouragement and prayers. And to my Parents-in-law, thanks for constantly calling to check up on me to find out this programme progress.

Furthermore, I sincerely want to appreciate my lecturers who journeyed patiently with us through the programme, the teachings will never be forgotten. Thank you Sirs and Mas! Finally, to my Head of Department - Dr. Kehinde Oyesomi, Post Graduate Coordinator - Dr. Oscar Odiboh, Distinguished Professors and Senior Colleagues in the Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University, Ota as well as Caleb University, Imota; Thank you for your understanding, support and giving me the wings to be a better version of me. I do not take any of these for granted. My course mates; knowing you all have been a privilege and I love every bit of the memory we share.

God bless.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT

COVER PAGE	i
TITLE PAGE	ii
ACCEPTANCE	iii
DECLARATION	iv
CERTIFICATION	v
DEDICATION	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	vii

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Objectives of the Study	5
1.4 Research Questions	6
1.5 Research Hypothesis	7
1.6 Significance of the Study	7
1.7 Scope of the Study	8
1.8 Operational Definition of Terms	8
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.1 Conceptual Framework	9
2.1.1 Fake News	9
2.1.2 Media, Media Literacy and Social Media	11
2.1.3 Understanding Covid-19	13
2.1.4 Infection Prevention and Control	14
2.1.5 The World's Reaction to Coronavirus	15

2.1.6	Covid-19 Infodemic Claims	16
2.1.7	Social Media Role in the Management of the spread of Fake News	19
2.2	Theoretical Framework	21
2.2.1	Agenda Setting Theory	22
2.2.2	Health Belief Model	23
2.3	Review of Empirical Studies	25
2.4	Gap to Fill	26
2.5	Summary of Literature Review	26
 CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY		 28
3.1	Philosophical Foundation	28
3.2	Research Design	28
3.3	Study Population	28
3.4	Sample Size Determination	29
3.5	Sampling Technique	29
3.6	Instrument of Data Collection	32
3.7	Validity of Instrument	32
3.8	Reliability of Instrument	32
3.9	Method of Data Collection	33
3.10	Method of Data Presentation and Analysis	34
3.11	Ethical Consideration	34
 CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS		 35
4.1	Demographic Data	36
4.2	Research Questions and Findings	38

4.3 Hypothesis Testing	44
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION	46
CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION	51
6.1 Summary	51
6.2 Conclusion	52
6.3 Contribution to Knowledge	53
6.4 Recommendations	54
6.5 Suggestion for Further Studies	54
REFERENCES	
Appendix I	

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

B.B.C	British Broadcasting Corporation
L.B.S	Lagos Bureau of Statistics
N.C.D.C	Nigeria Centre for Disease Control
W.H.O	World Health Organisation
U.N.D.P	United Nations Development Program
U.N.E.S.C.O	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Title of Tables	Pages
3.1	Table showing the List of Streets in Each Ward	34
4.1	Respondents' Demographic Data	36
4.2	Research Questions and Findings	38
4.2	Respondents' exposure to Covid-19 related news on social media	38
4.3	Respondents' Social Media Surfing	39
4.4	Exposure to news during the Covid-19 outbreak	40
4.5	Social media platforms visited for news content relating to Covid-19	41
4.6	Social media platforms respondents' encounter fake news relating to the Covid-19	42
4.7	Respondents' knowledge concerning Fake news regarding the Covid-19 pandemic on social media	42
4.8	Respondents' perception of fake news regarding the Covid-19 pandemic	43

ABSTRACT

Infodemic is an admixture of accurate and inaccurate information that makes the solution to a problem more difficult to solve. The impact of the covid-19 pandemic cannot be overlooked due to the influx of false information relating to the virus which has the tendency to create panic and cause the people to make uninformed decisions as a result of the emergence of the internet that has opened up a whole new space that is accessible as day via the social media platforms. The aim of this study is to examine the level of media literacy and the perception of fake news among Ikeja residents of Lagos, State. The descriptive survey research design was adopted involving the use of questionnaire. The sample size for this study was 378 respondents selected from the total number of population in Ikeja residents of Lagos state which was sectioned into wards and thereafter, streets adopting the multi-stage sampling technique. To arrive at a sample selection, Taro Yamane formula was adopted to calculate it while in answering the hypothesis, Chi-square was adopted. In order to proceed in filling of the questionnaire, firsthand question on their understanding regarding fake news was sought purposively. Study shows that WhatsApp and Facebook were the most source of fake news. Also, the respondents negatively perceive fake news relating to the Covid-19 pandemic as it is viewed as alarming and shouldn't be overlooked. The study recommends that the respondents should discourage others from relying solely on social media for news on important issues as Covid-19.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic, Fake News, Infodemic, Media Literacy, Social Media Platform

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION