A CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF FAKE NEWS; A PORTRAYAL OF PREDATORS OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract

Fake news is an unlawful human activity that occurs globally and is not verified by a specific boundary. It is considered a potential danger to all the governmental bodies, law enforcement organizations, and legal authorities to completely stop it both inside and beyond the boundaries. The purpose of this study is to examine how fake news spreads in national and international publications like BBC or 24News. Using Van Dijk's CDA paradigm, the study examines false news articles in the context of textural, cognitive, and social critical perspectives. Production, consumption, presentation, manipulation, and categorization in several newspapers, including BBC and Samaa News, were analyzed using Van Dijk's CDA model. After conducting a thorough analysis of five false news stories out of many, the researchers have concluded that the fake news articles in newspapers are modified for social, cultural, and ideological reasons. The reporters purposefully used the story's structure in many instances of false news to further elaborate their own social and ideological agendas. In order to prevent the propagation of fake news, it is anticipated that this study would enable the publisher and editors to put an end to such biases, prejudices, and manipulation.

1. Introduction

Language plays a crucial role in developing people's perception. The language of news used by the reporters also effects the mind of the reader. In today's digital world, fake news spreads like wildfire very quickly. It's all-over social media, the internet, and regular news sources(Syed, Atta, Nazeer, & Anwar, 2023). Sharing content online is easy, but it makes things worse because fake or fabricated news is easily passed around. This fake news doesn't just mess with the truth; it also really messes with how we feel and how we function every day. It makes people unsure of what is right, which can leave them anxious and confused. This makes it hard to believe what we see or read, which affects how we make decisions and see things(Harper, Gibbons, & Bates, 2023). Fake news undermines our trust in news and how we communicate with each other. Understanding how fake news messes with our emotions and our daily lives is important to prevent it from causing more problems(Wall*, 2008). The researchers have examined fake news reports published globally, particularly in Pakistan, using Van Dijk's model of CDA(Onuche, 2021). Van Dijk's method examined the author's copy of the text as well as the linguistic use of the text. Social cognition, social context, and textual structure form the foundation of Van Dijk's model. Van Dijk's method divides the text into three parts and enables us to thoroughly examine and evaluate the data(Suleimanu & Funmilola).

The expansion of media channels in the modern environment of information delivery affects the dynamics of how individuals engage with and access news and information. The purpose of this study proposal is to examine the roles and effects of print media, electronic media, and social media as information sources. Print media, traditionally associated with newspapers and magazines, has long been the foundation of journalism(Das & Nayak, 2013). Its historical importance in informing the public is undeniable. Electronic media has rapidly expanded its

reach, providing real-time news coverage and in-depth commentary. The visual and audio components of electronic media provide a dynamic experience.

Social media is a significant force in the digital age, affecting how people receive and exchange news. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram allow for the rapid distribution of information(Deora & Chudasama, 2021). Fake news has emerged as a serious challenge. This research proposal aims to look at the complex web of fake news propagation and its specific impact on individuals, examining how the impact varies across different social media platforms. Fake news is often characterized as information that is intentionally misleading but presented as true news. The impact of fake news can vary greatly depending on the platform's design, user interface, and the type of interactions enabled. Understanding these differences is important for understanding how people respond to misinformation as well as for developing effective interventions to limit its negative effects(Bidgoli, Knijnenburg, & Grossklags, 2016).

Additionally, this research attempts to contextualize these misrepresentations within the socio-political and cultural landscape of Pakistan, exploring how these portrayals affect public perceptions and social attitudes and potentially perpetuate stereotypes or stigma. By examining specific case studies and analyzing media content, this paper aims to unveil the underlying power dynamics, ideological biases, and agendas that drive the spread of such fake news. Furthermore, this study intends to shed light on the potential consequences and ethical implications of this misrepresentation, not only for individuals or groups labelled as 'predators' but also for wider social trust in media and information sources(Rizvi & Imran, 2023).

1.1 Research Questions

1. How does fake news is represented in Pakistan through different discourse?
2. What are the elements that contribute to the spread of fake news in today's media?
3. What is the public's view and attitude towards fake news and how they react to fake news?

1.2 Research Objectives

1. To analyze the discourse representing fake news in Pakistan.
2. To define and scrutinize different elements which contribute in spreading false news through various platforms.
3. To study people's opinions about fake news and how people respond to fake news in their daily lives.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Our Society encounters significant challenges due to the fast pace of fake news. As a result of grapevine, the credibility of reliable sources is undermining. It's also effecting the public's opinions, decision making, thoughts etc. There should be an increases awareness and understanding among the people to stop contributing in spreading of fake news.

1.4 Significance of the Research

It is evident that the use of media is increasing day by day and media has given the opportunity to exchange the information. That's why in this digital era it is very important to check the credibility of the information (Raza, 2023). This research is helpful for new researchers as the study highlights the different aspects of fake news based on different discourse and can have different impact on every individual which can greatly affect and influence them. Checking the source of information and authenticity of the information can reduce the spread of fake news and protect people from being misguided. Secondly, by studying how people react to fake news and what are their responses can help us to understand that how people take information in this digital era. Research on fake news ensure that everything you see on media is not true.

2.   Literature Review

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) has emerged as a prominent field in the social sciences since the late 1980s. CDA refers to a range of approaches, each with its own theoretical frameworks, research strategies and objectives. (Ruth Wadak, 2014) Emerging from critical linguistics and critical semiotics, and a generally oppositional and socio-politically aware approach to language, discourse and communication. The term "Critical discourse Analysis" (CDA) has come to be the general term for a unique approach to the text and speech. (Van Dijk, 1995)

In previous decades many famous authors including Van Dijk (1983, 1989, 1993, 1995) Andrew Moemeka (1988), McCombs (2004) and Routledge (2012) admitted the power of media and domination of mass media and the relationship between media and society.

The research dips the phenomenon of fake news. The fake news is spread on the basis of popularity. People use media as a source of information and the image of one can be change by trusting the fake news spread about them. The research presents the way to identify fake news and their classification according to the degree of falsity. The result aims were to solve the problem of recognizing and controlling the spread of fake news (Oksana N Berduygina,2019)

 Anabella Gradim (2020) said it is becoming more and more important to comprehend the fake news because stopping false information from spreading is still a challenging issue. The analysis seeks to understand why fake news spreads so widely on social media and why some individuals fall   for   it. Its structure and the components that contribute to belief in false news can be explained by the w ay it is presented, including the titles, wording, and images selected.   It is demonstrated how fake news uses every conceivable tactic to grab the readers attention from the way the title is written to the language employed in the body of the content.

The accuracy of information either on printed or social media has been an issue for a long time, affecting the business and the society. The effects of information spread at social media is tremendous, it occurs at a fast pace. in the recent times many publics seemed concerned about this global problem and some of them expressed their wish of mitigating this problem of fake news. (Alvaro Figuerio,2017). Catherine Beauvais said that many fake news spread during the Pandemic of Corona and during the US presidential elections. The research shows the production, consumption and the detection of the fake news and how people counteract with it and how people can be prevented from sharing and believing fake news. Sometimes the consumers of the fake news become the creators of the news. People with slow education levels

are also involved in the spread of fake news. This problem can be solved by media literacy, showing warning messages on media, the partnership of social media regulations and the digital detection solution(Gelfert, 2018).

The huge spread of fake news has become a global risk and become a threat to election and democracies. Cognitive and computer scientists has been busy to study the major cause of viral spread of misinformation and are trying to develop solutions, while social media platforms are taking corrective measures. Accounts that actively spread misinformation are the main cause of the problem. Main sources of fake news are supported by artificial intelligence. These outcomes suggest that restraining artificial intelligence may prove an effective solution for mitigating the spread of fake news. (CHENGCHENG SHAO,2017)

Fake news has become a common word in the era that we live in. this word itself is often blamed on having adverse impacts on the results of election and democratic debates. It has also been the cause of spreading hate speech and violence. It has become a major occupation of international organizations, national policy makers the media as a whole and civil society. (Talarch McGonagle,2017)

3. Methodology

A broad methodology has been established to maintain dependability and validity. The study investigates the spread of fake news and how it impacts society's points of view and its link with critical discourse analysis to explore fake news spread across the world(Muhammad, Zafar, & Raghuvanshi, 2006). A qualitative research method has been adopted for the analysis of the data. Qualitative research analysis is carried out by following Van Dijk's CDA model, which focuses on social cognition and social context. A sample of 5 fake news stories was selected for data analysis, 4 from Pakistani news channels and 1 from American news channels, Pakistan Today, Geo News, NBC News, 24 News HD, and BBC News, during the period of different years(S. Iqbal & Batool, 2022).

Social cognition

Portrayal of Fake news in Pakistani media; its consumption
and comprehension through cognitive method

Textual Structure   **Social Context**
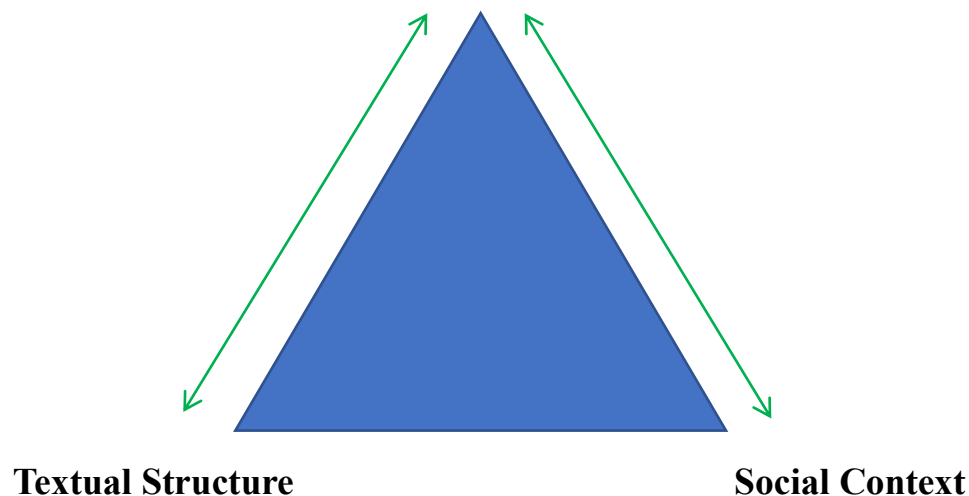
4. Data Analysis

Using Van Dijk's CDA model, the researchers have examined data from several newspapers based on context at the social level, ideology at the cognitive level, and macrostructure, superstructure, and microstructure at the textual level. Various tables were presented in the analysis.

Newspapers selected for analysis.

Selected Newspapers	No of News Reports
Pakistan Today	1
24 News	1
BBC News	1
Geo News	1
NBC News	1
Total number of selected Newspapers	Total number of cases
5	5

4.1.1 STORY 1

Table 1.1: A. Macrostructure of the Text	
Theme/topic	The news moves around the Minar-e-Pakistan incident, where Ayesha Akram was sexually harassed. Later, some mysterious elements were discovered by the police, indicating that it was a planned incident and that. her agenda was to take money from arrested suspects. This incident affects real cases of sexual assault and highlights how our justice system deals with gender-based violence.

Table 1.2: Superstructure of the Text	
Introduction	The choice of words used by the writer for the heading grabs the attention of readers. The heading "Minar-e-Pakistan sexual assault case: Alleged extortion racquet comprises credibility" based on twelve words, just tells the readers what the news is going to be about. The incident took place at Minar-e-Pakistan, where a girl named Ayesha Akram was harassed by hundreds of men on Independence Day. This incident got a lot of public attention because of the hype the media and the girl created.
Content	When police investigated the case, they realized that it was a pre-planned incident and that her agenda was to get fame and extract money from arrested suspects. The incident created a lot of problems for real cases, and people who are sexually abused are not getting fair treatment.
Closing	In the last two concluding paragraphs, the reporter highlights the bitter truth of our Pakistani society that the police don't deal with these sensitive cases carefully, and they just believe in whatever they see in the media and the

	rumors they have heard. The reporter also gave reference to the report by the advocacy group Sustainable Social Development Organization (SSDO), in which they say that the cases of sexual abuse are very low, which makes women feel less safe in their society. Cases of sexual harassment are still taboo in Pakistan, and this type of thinking has to change now. Incidents like Minar-e-Pakistan usually affects the progress of real cases. Pakistani society needs to change how it thinks about victims. There is no shame in talking about sexual harassment, and victims who are demanding justice want the police to change their behavior towards victims because they often blame victims for sexual harassment.
Table 1.3 microstructure of the text	
Semantic	The vocabulary used in the news is formal (i.e. "assaulted" "mysterious" "Extortion", and "defamation") and analytical (i.e. "collaboration" "victim-Blaming", and "perception"). Crime investigation language has been used. The choice of words aims to deliver their news in a serious and informative tone, explaining why it is important and related to society.
Syntax	Both past and present tenses are used in the news story. The past tense is used to describe what happened during the Minar-e-Pakistan incident. The present tense is used to talk about the things that are still happening to victims. The mixed use of tenses helps us show what happened in the past and why it still matters now.
Stylistic	From a stylistic perspective, the story's content is expository in nature. The reporter is unbiased and tries to shed light on the harsh reality of the Minar-e-Pakistan incident. The reporter added some quotations, like "Experts suggest that cases linked to women are sensitive, and it takes only one incident in a case to destroy the progress of other cases" "Unfortunately, rape and sexual assault are still taboo subjects in Pakistan" , and "Cases of rape are underreported, and convictions are even lower, at under 3% across the country" to show how victims are affected by these false cases.
Source: (Pakistan today, Nov 1, 2021)	

4.1.2. STORY 2

Table 2.1: A. Macrostructure of the Text	
Theme/topic	The main theme of this story is based on the rumored gay marriage of Ali Sethi and Salman Toor. The news spread like a fire in the jungle and created curiosity among the critics.
Table 2.2: Superstructure of the Text	
Introduction	**"Rumored gay marriage of Ali Sethi with Salman Toor creates pasori on social media."** The reporter writes the headline in a captivating way. The headline provides the basic idea that rumor of the gay marriage of two artists has created fire on social media and has been the main topic of discussion among the netizens and followers.
Content	A lot is being said about Ali Sethi's marriage news to rumored boyfriend

	Salman Toor. The news went viral, and this situation created an outcry in their own motherland as well as among their admirers globally. The rumor mongers truly believed that the couple had tied the note in a private ceremony with only a few close people, whereas such gay marriages are note supported in Pakistan. No word of clarity is creating more eagerness among people to know the truth among the news. Ali Sethi is renowned Pakistani singer, whereas Salman Toor is a painter by profession. Both of their queer personalities have been a matter of public interest for a long time, and this rumor added fuel to the fire. People said that they are promoting LGBTQ, which is Haram in Islamic religion. A change in the dynamics of public conversations can be seen surrounding LGBTQ identities and relations, according to Pakistani culture.
Closing	The afore-stated rumor managed to evoke debates and heated arguments among netizens. Some are encouraging the union, while the others are disliking them and their unusual relationship the speculation continues to spark conversations about identity and acceptance.
Table 2.3 microstructure of the text	
Semantic	The vocabulary used in this text is expository, which is determined by the words "The speculations about the marriage have surfaced on social media". Moreover, the reporter uses the artist's song 'Pasoori" in the headline in a sarcastic way.
Syntax	The present indefinite and present perfect tenses are used in the text. The words like although and while determine the relative pronoun and also coherence in the text. Moreover, the reporter uses different types of pronouns including personal pronouns for instance (he, his) demonstrative pronouns for instance (that, this).
Stylistic	The reporter writes the text in a narrative way. The reporter shed light on the case of the marriage of Ali Sethi and Salman Toor, which raises questions about their sexuality. Some people are in their favor and encourage freedom of their identities. Such news can harm the reputations of both artists.
Source: (24 news HD August 11,2023)	

4.1.3. STORY 3

Table 3.1: A. Macrostructure of the Text	
Theme/topic	The theme of the story is based on the case in which an FIR was registered against a fake campaign by the family of an eight-year-old girl about the rape and murder of the girl.
Table 3.2: Superstructure of the Text	
Introduction	The headline of the article is written in a standard manner, giving the main point of the news in the most concise and appealing way "**as case has been registered for fake news of the rape and murder of a girl on social media**" The reporter in the leading paragraph describes that a fake campaign ran on social media using WhatsApp shared pictures of a girl and two boys and

	purported that those two farads raped and killed the girl. The post states that "This is the height of cruelty".
Content	The FIR was registered at Manchi police station in Peshawar, the capital of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The police started the investigation, and the officer, **Imdad Khan**, said that the girl was safe and alive and also came to the police station. The family of the girl also registered a case under the Telegraph and Child Protection Act. One of the boys in the picture is the nephew of the girl's father.
Closing	The whole propaganda was done to damage the reputation of the boy and the girl`s family. The police said that an unknown accused spread the news. A team has been formed to investigate the case, and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) is working to catch the real suspect.
Table 3.3 microstructure of the text	
Semantic	The vocabulary used in the text is formal and analytical, which is determined by words like FIR was lodged. The language of crime investigation is determined by words like "FIR, FIA, telegraph act, and child protection act".
Syntax	Past indefinite, present perfect tense, and future indefinite tenses are used in this text. Both dependent and independent clauses are used. The sentences with words like that which is used as relative pronoun, and is used as coordinating conjunction, whose is used as possessive pronoun and these words also derive cohesion from within a sentence.
Stylistic	The nature of the text is expository in stylistic terms. The reporter tries to shed light on the harsh reality of our society's spreading and sharing of fake news without checking the authenticity of the news or the effect of sharing the fake news on the alleged victim and the survivor. Due to this, the real survivors, the real cases, are being ignored by people who think they are fake.
Source: BBC news (9 July 2020), Journalism Pakistan (9 JULY 2020)	

4.1.4. STORY 4

Table 4.1: A. Macrostructure of the Text	
Theme/topic	The basic theme of this story is based on a fake separation rumor about the Udaari couple. Urwa Hocane and Farhan Saeed ended the separation rumors by posting beautiful pictures on Eid.
Table 4.2: Superstructure of the Text	
Introduction	The reporter starts the story with fake separation rumors about the famous showbiz couple known as the Udaari couple. Since the couple had been keeping off being seen together and didn't pair up for a single picture on social media for a long duration. All of this generated hype about whether the couple is together or not. However, the couple had not spoken openly about their separation.
Content	The separation rumors shocked the fans and left them upset and disappointed, as they are known as the power couple of the industry. However, they did a project together and were seen together in a single frame at the promotions of

	their movie **Tich Button**. In an interview with Dawn News, Farhan was asked about his relationship status, and he said No, we are alright" He further added that they want to keep some parts of their lives private.
Closing	In her final remarks, the reporter concluded that the lovebirds have finally reunited and put the separation rumors to rest by posting adorable Eid pictures together on Instagram accounts captioned "Eid Mubarak". This news sent a wave of happiness into fans hearts, and they want to see them together. Several celebrities also praised the couple.
Table 4.3 microstructure of the text	
Semantic	The reporter of the story chose the vocabulary considering the material of the news story about how the fake rumors spread and was later proven false. He used three words of the same meaning: divorce, separation, and split.
Syntax	The headline and lead are based on a similar pattern of presentation of the content of the new story. Passive voice, past indefinite, and past perfect tenses are used, but due to providing the current status of the story, the reporter added quotation marks by Farhan Saeed.
Stylistic	From a stylistic point of view, the story is descriptive. The reporter of this story Is quite objective and moderate in providing the data from the beginning of the story until the conclusion of the story. The reporter claimed that the fake rumors described in the story has proven false and that the couple is now reunited.
Source: (Geo News 11,2023)	

4.1.5. STORY 5

Table 5.1: A. Macrostructure of the Text	
Theme/topic	The theme of the story is based on the case in which Amber Heard accused Johnny Depp of domestic violence and claimed his property, yet he proceeded with the government.
Table 5.2: Superstructure of the Text	
Introduction	The headline of the article is written in a formal way as "John C. Depp vs. Amber Laura Heard". In the leading paragraph, the reporter describes that the trial was held in Fairfax County, Virginia, from April 11 to June 1, 2022.
Content	In this case, Heard claimed that Depp abused her physically, which he denied in the US trial. In the Virginia trial, Depp claimed Heard caused new damage to his reputation and career. In Depp's complaint, Heard was found liable in all three matters of defamation raised. Depp was awarded $10 million in compensatory damages and $5 million in punitive damages. In Heard's complaint, Depp was found liable in one of three matters of defamation raised, and she was awarded $2 million in compensatory damages and $0 million in punitive damages.
Closing	At the end of the trial, the jury ruled that the accusations of sexual violence and domestic violence against Depp were false.
Table 5.3 microstructure of the text	

Semantic	The vocabulary used in the text is formal, which is determined by words like claim, liable, defamation, accusation, and compensatory damage. These words are used in a legal way.
Syntax	Past indefinite tenses and present perfect tenses are used in this text. The sentences with words like that and are the conjunctions and at the end derive cohesion.
Stylistic	From a stylistic point of view, the reporter described the story in a descriptive way. Depp vs. Amber Heard's case attracted large number of viewers and a considerable social media response. The majority of the social media response was sympathetic to Depp and critical of Heard.
Source: NBC news (June 1, 2022)	

4.2. Social Cogitation

Data analysis alone is not enough to understand discourse. We need to examine their cognitive elements to truly understand how people think and what their ideologies are(M. S. Iqbal, Batool, Kausar, & Iqbal, 2022). How people in society see and understand things plays a crucial role in this analysis. Whether a text succeeds or not depends on the producer's ideologies, political beliefs, and social goals regarding news(Moriarty, 1987). Analysing news is not only about the words; it also includes the study of how people rea(Rizvi & Imran)ct to news and how they shape their thoughts when they read news(S. Iqbal & Batool, 2022).

4.2.1 Story No.1. The reporter wrote this news story from the perspective of the real victims and how they suffer from these types of incidents, which only creates difficulties in bringing justice to the victims. The quote used by the writer, "Victim blaming and shaming do not only cause trauma to be retriggered or made more acute, they also prevent other victims from speaking up," exactly explains the typical society and mentality of Pakistan's. How long will harassment be considered a taboo subject in Pakistan? We, as a part of Pakistani society, literally need to break this chain, support the real victims to get justice, and try not to give these fake cases such much importance so that the real victims don't have to struggle a lot and face different challenges to get justice(Catalan-Matamoros & Peñafiel-Saiz, 2019).

4.2.2 Story No. 2. Social apprehension plays a very important role in the good perception of the stanza. The reporter writes the headline of the news in a manifesting manner, which is obvious from the word "created commotion on social media". This story is based on a fake rumour about Ali Sethi and Salman Toor being married to each other. The reporter added to the report that the decision by both of them to keep the event private has spread more nosiness. Fans were always interested in knowing about their relationship and also wanted clarity about their genders, and the rumour turned the internet into chaos, with some people encouraging their relationship while others daunted them. Moreover, the writer uses the word queer for both of their personalities in a declaratory manner. Lastly, it was added that the rumour evokes debates and heated arguments among people on Twitter(Kamalakannan, 2018).

4.2.3 Story No. 3. The cognitions play a very important role in the fabrication and expenditure of the text. The biasness of the reporter can be predicted by saying that ''there are only a few

people who shared serious content or posts by verifying them from authentic sources". The writer also highlights the misuse of social media, saying that sometimes it is used to expose injustice but is also used for fraud and to spread fake news. The main focus of the writer of this story is to highlight the impact of sharing fake news without authentication.

4.2.4. Story No. 4. Socio-cognitive elements are important in the production and consumption of the text. This new story is based on a fake rumour spread against Farhan Saeed and Urwa Hocane, who are a well-known celebrity couple in Pakistan. For the past few years, in the showbiz industry, their relationship has been the grist for the mill. Fans were always interested in knowing about their personal lives. None of them had confirmed or denied their separation in these years. The reporter praises the couple's reunion news and uses the words "Udaari couple" and "love birds" for this celebrity couple, which shows the biasness of the reporter towards this celebrity couple. Moreover, the reporter also added some comments from fans and other celebrities at the end, which shows their appreciation for this couple.

4.2.5. Story No. 5: From a social cognitive point of view, reporters produced the news story based on their claims and counterclaims about each other. The reporter chooses words like accusation, compensatory damage, etc. according to the legal point of view. Moreover, the reporter highlighted that the case ended with the note that all the accusations against the DEPP were false, and even society was showing a positive response throughout the case to the DEPP.

4.3. Social Context

The social role of text generation and consumption in a society is explored by social context (Meifilina, Umanailo, & Fachruddin, 2019). In order to understand how context, circumstance, social standing, major events, history, and social condition affect language usage, social analysis is also conducted. In this regard, actor descriptions are also required. Actor description refers to comprehensive knowledge of a location, person, action, or object that has significant influence on social and political context, both positively and negatively. An individual is illustrated ideologically in discourse. The in-group makes a favourable or neutral presentation, while the out-group makes a negative presentation about others, which serves as an example of how the in-group and out-group are polarised(Robie & Abcede, 2015).

4.3.1. Story No. 1: The news story's topic is based on the societal issue of sexual harassment and how the Minar-e-Pakistan incident caused several issues for actual victims. Such sensitive material should undergo several levels of verification before being aired because, after spreading false information, people lose faith in the media, the police, and the legal system. The producer of the story also mentioned a report by advocacy group Sustainable Social Development Organisation (SSDO) based in the country that cases of women's violence are going underreported in the media. Women feel apprehensive about their social security and safety due to the poor reporting of events.

4.3.2. Story No.2. Socially, this fake news of gay marriage among two famous personalities left some people in wonder and some in shock. A debate started among netizens and critics about this rumour. Some people were in favour of this marriage and said that everyone has the right to choose their life partner and has the liberty of choice, while others stood against this news and

said that this type of marriage is not even allowed in our religion and that two of them are promoting the wrong impact on the youth. The concept of LGBTQ is not so common in Pakistani culture, and thus most of the population criticises Ali Sethi and Salman Toor. People don't want LGBTQ to become the new normal, at least in Pakistani culture.

4.3.3. Story No. 3: Social context is an essential thing in order to represent a news story. The news producer has used the term "allegation of rape and murder" in a social context on several occasions. In a few hours, this story made social media headlines. The news producer is purposefully informed on the history and societal ramifications of the subject for the audience.

4.3.4. Story No. 4: A news story cannot be represented without social context. This news story is related to the Pakistani social context. According to reporters, social media is the main source of news. A fake divorce rumour was propagated in this particular news story. Urwa Hocane and Farhan Saeed are two well-known celebrity couples in the Pakistani showbiz industry. They reportedly parted ways in 2020 and, after some months, cleared the air about their fake divorce rumour. The producer of this news uses a special perspective in this story. The reporters and readers are aware of the background of the story and its context in the social order of this society, which also affects the discourse of the story.

4.3.5. Story No. 5: Social situation and context are the important elements, and they are based on the mentality of the reporter and the readers. The reporter collected the news from their different trials. According to the producer, in the early stages, there was a smaller chance of winning Depp. The trial sparked new discussions on domestic abuse, the #MeToo movement, and women's rights. A sizeable audience watched the livestreamed trial, and there was a sizeable social media reaction. Most of the social media reactions defended Depp and attacked Heard. However, several commentators expressed doubt about the trial's long-term effects.

5. Findings and Discussion

The results show that murders, rapes, divorces, and fake marriages are the most reported fake news in Pakistan, and these types of information are spreading faster than real news(Zhang & Ghorbani, 2020). First, the makers reported all the stories without any authenticity, then the celebrities claimed it was all fake, and the allegations were the same as the fifth story heard about Johnny Depp and Amber as well as Ali Sethi and Salman Toor's fake marriage stories about new attacks on artists' reputations. Such stories have left a deep impression on public opinion and on all those who are emotionally connected to the people involved in these cases. Sometimes, people who are wrongly accused suffer psychologically. The Pakistan Today article uses formal vocabulary such as "abused, mystified, and defamatory," and the 24 News article uses expository vocabulary. Some reports show bias; others do not. All story sources have been cleaned, from fake to authentic. The content and conclusions of all stories are journalistic in style and tone, and they use simple language to convey the message to the audience(Pennycook & Rand, 2021).

6. Conclusion

The study concludes on that note that producers of fake news stories have the power to manipulate facts to propagate ideological, political, and social agendas through utilising textual, social cognitive, and social context. It involves using language to control how reporters talk about fake news. This relates to discussing specifics, subjects, or data that are not really relevant to the story's central idea. By including unrelated details or diverting attention from the main subject, it is a tactic used to change how others view or comprehend the news. The news stories are taken from different platforms, like Pakistan Today, 24 News, BBC News, Samaa, and NBC News. In addition, each news story's reporter uses a unique and different style to accomplish different aims and objectives. Especially the reporters use their style to propose their mindset about reality, for example, femininity, gender discrimination, social beliefs, national superiority, and ideological struggle within society. After examining the data, the researchers have concludes that some reporters portray their news in a vibrating, energised, and monopolised way. And on the other hand, some reporters are more concerned with using the journalistic craft of communication to spread ideas in a polished, persuasive manner. There are few elements that contribute in spreading fake news. Results have shown that deception, misleading information to harm anyone's reputation, unsubstantiated evidence, exaggeration, and to make controversial statement, reporters spread fake news. From the cognitive and social perspective of news stories, all platforms where the news is taken protect cultural and national interests and highlight social and ideological elements. Though every journalist has their own way to report such stories, the reporters of all the newspapers that are used in this research use cognitive and social aspects when providing information about fake news in Pakistan.

7. Suggestions

The rapid dissemination of misinformation has become a serious problem in the current digital age. We can easily let wrong information into our lives, which can affect our judgement and outlook. However, we can all work together to limit and reduce the spread of misinformation by implementing certain practices. Here are some recommendations to help us navigate this digital environment more responsibly.

- Please check the information for accuracy before clicking the share button. To make sure the news is accurate, check it out from some trusted sources.
- Develop your media literacy to empower yourself and others. Identify potential fallacies, distinguish reliable sources, and critically evaluate information.
- Rely on reliable, well-established news sources. Sharing information from unknown sources should be done with caution, especially if they have a track record of disseminating false information.
- Fake news is often spread through social media. Be careful when broadcasting news on these platforms, and verify the accuracy of the information before spreading it widely.
- Engage in active opposition to misinformation. Report to the platform where you see misleading content about it. Many social media platforms have tools to report and flag false information.
- Encourage responsible reporting. Urge media outlets to put accuracy first, thoroughly fact-check their stories, and quickly correct any errors they find.

- Promote the inclusion of critical thinking instruction in the curriculum of educational institutions. Give students the tools they need to critically evaluate information and distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources.

We can help stop the spread of fake news by adopting these practices in our digital lives. Let us promote an informed society where truth and accuracy are valued above all else. When we work together, we can significantly limit the spread of misinformation in the digital age.

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