

Assessing the Effects of Social Media as Drivers of Fake News on Covid-19 among People of Western Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Since the emergence of social media and the evolution of smart phones, the world has become a global community but has been battling with the effect of fake news, disseminated by the social media. This study examined the effect of social media as drivers of fake news since the emergence of CoVID 19 pandemic among the people of south-western Nigeria. The study objectives were: to determine the level of contributions of social media to the spate of fake news about CoVid 19 among residents of Ede; to ascertain how social media contribute to the problem of CoVID 19 pandemic among residents of Ede. The study adopted quantitative design with cross-sectional survey method. The study area is Ede North and South local government area based on the NPC census (2006) and National Bureau of Statistics (2010) which put the population of Ede North and South at 83,818 and 75,489 respectively. The study adopted krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size table to arrive at 384 sample size from the total of 159,307 residents of Ede North and South. The data collected were analysed using SPSS version 21.0. the result revealed that social media drivers is significant at 0.008 at having significant impact at driving fake news in Ede North and South Local Government Area. The study recommended that government needs to create awareness on the effect of fake news as well as enact policies for the regulation of social media content.

Keywords: Covid 19, Fake news, Social Media, Information, Pandemic.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the first 3 months of 2020, worldometers.info reported Sixty-Four thousand Six hundred and Eighty Seven (64,687) death globally. At the time under review the World health Organisation (WHO) hinted that nearly 6000 people around the globe were hospitalized because of corona virus misinformation while at least 800 people may have died due to misinformation related to COVID-19. WHO's Director-General, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus said "We're not just fighting a pandemic; we're fighting an infodemic," at the 2020 Munich Security Conference.

Macmillan Dictionary defined infodemic as the spread of incorrect information, especially online.

Becker and Becker (2020) observed that fake news, misinformation, and conspiracy theories have become prevalent in the age of social media and have skyrocketed since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, for more than 5 billion people were Internet users in 2020, more than half of the global population (New Scientist, 2020). This makes the influence of the social media to be maximal. This situation is extremely of concern because it undermines trust in health institutions and programmes. The trend is of great concern to all as social media have generated unprecedented scale and speed in the dissemination of this type of made-up news. Its rise indicates the collapse of the traditional news order and the chaos of contemporary public communication (Waisbord, 2018).

Globally, efforts were made to stem the tide of infodemic, in Nigeria the Information and Culture Minister, Lai Mohammed said the government deployed many strategies to contain fake news among which were “campaigns to media houses and cooperation with Facebook and Google”. Similar efforts were made to fight both the virus and the fake news. According to Muhammed (2020) government would “not be distracted by fake news in the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic”. In the global efforts, United Nations Secretary General, Antonio Guterres said on his twitter handle that to overcome the #coronavirus, we need to urgently promote facts and science, hope and solidarity over despair and division” caused by fake news.

Depoux et al (2020) inferred that social media has played three main roles in the COVID-19 outbreak in most countries. First, facts about the outbreak were published on social media. Second, misinformation, fake news, and inaccurate information about the outbreak was published on social media. Third, social media created fear and panic about the outbreak worldwide. From the foregoing, this study is set to evaluate how Social Media was used to spread fake news on corona virus and its implications credibility of media messages.

1.1 Objectives of the study

This study is guided by the following objectives.

1. To determine the level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about CoVID-19 among the residents of Ede.
2. To ascertain how Social media contribute to the problems of the CoVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede.
3. To determine how social media are implicated in behavioral changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic
4. To determine the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about CoVID-19 behaviour.
5. To determine weather those who believed in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health- protective behaviour

1.2 Research hypotheses

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede.

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic.

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour.

H₀5: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour.

1.3 Significance of the study

The study would in no small measure contribute to array of studies on CoVID-19 pandemic, lay credence or lay to rest arguments on roles played by social media in promoting hoaxes and identify its implications on the flow of news. The study would also ascertain the success or otherwise of the measures put in place by government and its agency to curtail the pandemic, while it will be a check on the level of media literacy of the people and test the credibility on the social media messages.

1.5 Scope of the study

This study concerned about the use of Social Media for the spread of fake news in the early days of CoVID-19 and the impact of this on the credibility of the media messages and not any other thing. The study covers the residents of the two Local Government Areas in Ede: Ede North and South in Osun State, South West Nigeria.

II. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

Research design is either qualitative or quantitative. For this study, quantitative design was used, for Kothari (2004) writes that quantitative research is based on the measurement of quantity or amount. It is applicable to phenomena that can be expressed in terms of quantity. Anderson, cited in Keyton (2015) said the unit of analysis in quantitative is quantity. Keyton said Researchers use measurement and observation to represent communication phenomena as amounts, frequencies, degrees, values, or intensity. After phenomena are quantified, researchers compare or relate them using descriptive or inferential

statistics. By so doing, researchers bring greater measuring precision and as a result, some would argue, greater objectivity to the study of communication phenomena.

2.2 Research Method

The study adopted the Cross-sectional survey method. According to Ohaja (2003, p. 11) “survey is a study of the characteristics of a sample through questioning that enable the researcher to make generalization concerning his population of interest” while Kothari (2004) said cross sectional survey method gathers data from a relatively large number of cases at a particular time. Data collected through Cross sectional survey aids intensive analysis.

2.3 Population of the Study

Population refers to the total of items about which information is desired (Kothari, 2004). Keyton (2015) stressed that population consists of all units, or the universe possessing the attribute in which the researcher is interested. Therefore, the population that interest the researchers is that of Ede: Ede North and Ede South Local Government areas in Osun State, Nigeria. Quoting the National Population Commission (NPC) Census 2006, the National Bureau of Statistics’ Annual Abstract of Statistics (2010) put the population of Ede North and South at 83,818 and 75, 489 respectively. The summation of the two local governments’ population is 159,307 people.

2.4 Sample Size

Sample is a subset of a population. We study sample to make generalizations back to the population (Keyton, 2015). Sample size is the number of people from whom researcher need to observe or collect data to obtain precise and reliable findings (Fink, cited in Keyton, 2015). There are several ways of selecting Sample from a population but no matter what method applied, Kothara (2004) said the method must fulfil the requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. For this study, Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Sample Size Table was used to select 384 sample size from the 159,307 residents’ population of Ede: North and South local government areas.

2.5 Sampling Technique

Multi-stage sampling technique was adopted for this study. At first, Stratified sampling technique was adopted. Stratified is used to represent Sample in a situation where a sample to be drawn does not constitute a homogeneous group. According to Kothari (2004) the population is stratified into a number of non-overlapping subpopulations or strata and sample items are selected from each stratum. Ede municipal does not constitute a homogenous group for it is divided into two local government areas: North and South (sub-population) and from this sub-population or strata exist town and villages (stratum).

Table 2.1 Sample frame of towns and villages in Ede North and South Local Governments of Osun State.

Local Government Area	Town/Villages/Wards
Ede North	Abogunde/Sagba, Alusekere, Apaso, Bara Ejemu, Isibo/buari-isola, Jagun/jagun Ede, Olaba/atapara, Ologun/agbaakin, Olusokun, Sabo/Agbongbe I, Sabo/Agbongbe II
Ede South	Alajue I, Alajue II, Asunmo, Babanla/Agate, Babasanya, Kuye, Loogun, Olodan, Oloki/Akoda, Sekona

Source: manpower Nigeria

Secondly, Systematic sampling was used to select Sample Size for Ede: North and South Local Governments Area (see Table: 2.2) using 3th term.

Table 2.2 Distribution of Sample Size from the Sample Frame

Local Government Area	Town/Villages/Wards	Sample Percentage per (LG)	Sample size	Sample	Unit Sample size
Ede North	Abogunde/Sagba, Alusekere, <u>Apaso</u> , Bara Ejemu, Isibo/Buari-	53	204	Apaso	68

	Isola, Jagun/Jagu Ede , Olaba/Atapara, Ologun/Agbaakin, Olusokun , Sabo/Agbongbe I, Sabo/Agbongbe II			Jagun/Jagu n Ede, Olusokun,	68 68
Ede South	Alajue I, Alajue II, Asunmo , Babanla/Agate, Babasanya, Kuye , Loogun, Olodan, Oloki/Akoda , Sekona	47	180	Asunmo, Kuye, Oloki/Ako da	60 60 60
Sample Size		100%	384		384

From the foregoing, we arrived at Sample percentage (%) by dividing the population of each local government area by the total population and multiplied by 100 (simple %), while the percentage of each local government population was divided by 100 x the total Sample size (384). The Sample Size of each local government was later divided by sample selected (towns/villages) in each local government. Six towns and villages (three in each local government) were Systematically Selected while Sample Size of 384 was distributed to towns and villages selected and 68 and 60 Samples were distributed to each town/villages selected in Ede North and Ede South respectively. Streets in which the questionnaires were distributed were conveniently selected, while the household selected for the study was chosen systematically using 5th term. And the respondents that use smart phone (uses social media) were purposively selected.

2.6 Data collection and Variable measurement

Creswell (2012) described an instrument as a tool for measuring, observing, or documenting quantitative data. Creswell stressed that

instrument usually contain specific questions and response possibilities that you establish or develop in advancing a study. Survey questionnaire is apt and thus selected for this study. Kathari (2004) reiterated that instruments aids accuracy and standardisation. Bhattacharjee, cited in La'aro, Zakariyau, Mahamood, Ramli (2020) described questionnaire as a research instrument that consist of a set of questions intended to capture the respondent's response in a standardized manner. To achieve the accuracy and standard the researchers used questionnaire. The questionnaire designed for this study was divided into five parts. Part A contains demographic questions which were multiple choice and the other parts were placed rating scale of five.

2.7 Method of data analysis

Inferential statistic was used for this study. The researchers used Correlation, Regression and ANOVA to test the relationship of education on the implications of the spread of fake news on the residents of Ede. IBM SPSS 21.0 was used to analyse the data collected from the field.

III. DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING

3.1 Demography Distribution of Respondents

Table 3.1:

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender				
Male	218	56.8	56.8	56.8
Female	166	43.2	43.2	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	
Age group				
Under 18	77	20.1	20.1	20.1
19-29	114	29.7	29.7	49.7
30-39	113	29.4	29.4	79.2
40- 49	72	18.8	18.8	97.9
>50	8	2.1	2.1	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	

Job				
Trader	97	25.3	25.3	25.3
Artisan	84	21.9	21.9	47.1
Student	54	14.1	14.1	61.2
Farming	89	23.2	23.2	84.4
5	60	15.6	15.6	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	
Level of education				
Primary School	48	12.5	12.5	12.5
Secondary education	92	24.0	24.0	36.5
HND/ B.Sc., ND/NCE	194	50.5	50.5	87.0
MSc and above	50	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	384	100.0	100.0	

Table 3.1: showcase the distribution of respondents selected for this study in Ede metropolis.

3.3 Presentation of Data Based on Research Questions

Regression Analysis

3.1: To determine the level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about CoVID-19 among the residents of Ede

Research Hypothesis One

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede.

Table 3.2.1

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Correlations			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	
1	(Constant)	4.297	.157		27.344	.000			
	Level of my education attainment is	-.150	.057	-.134	-2.651	.008	-.134	-.134	-.134

a. Dependent Variable: People were manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but majority were fake

Formula for Linear regression equation: $Y = a + bX$

Where;

Y = People were manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but majority were fake

a = Constant

b = Slope of equation

X = Level of education attainment

People were manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but

majority were fake = $4.297 + (-0.150)$ Level of education attainment.

Since slope of equation (-0.150) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the people been manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but majority were fake. Therefore, education attainment cannot be attributed to manipulation of the people to believing that information about CoVID-19 emanating from social media was faked.

Table 3.2.2:
Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.134 ^a	.018	.015	.954

a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede are very weak with R = 0.134.

Table 3.2.3:

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.398	1	6.398	7.026	.008 ^b
	Residual	347.842	382	.911		
	Total	354.240	383			

a. Dependent Variable: People were manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but majority were fake

b. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

Since significant value (0.008) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede.

3.2 Objective 2: To ascertain how Social media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede.

Research Hypothesis Two

H₀2: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations			
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part	
1	(Constant)	4.447	.136		32.761	.000			
	Level of my education attainment is	-.134	.049	-.139	-2.738	.006	-.139	-.139	-.139

a. Dependent Variable: Messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 lead to misconception

Formula for Linear regression equation: $Y = a + bX$

Where;

Y = Messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 lead to misconception

a = Constant

b = Slope of equation

X = Level of education attainment

Messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 lead to misconception = 4.447 + (-0.134) Level of education attainment.

Since slope of equation (-0.134) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 that lead to misconception.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.139 ^a	.019	.017	.824

a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 that lead to misconception are very weak with R = 0.139.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	5.094	1	5.094	7.498	.006 ^b
	Residual	259.531	382	.679		
	Total	264.625	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 lead to misconception

b. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

Since significant value (0.006) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede

3.3 Objective 3: To determine how social media are implicated in behavioral changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic

Research Hypothesis Three (a)

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	3.988	.152		.000			
	Level of my education attainment is	-.042	.055	-.039	.446	-.039	-.039	-.039

a. Dependent Variable: Social Media is partly responsible for non-compliance to CoVID-19 protocol

Formula for Linear regression equation: $Y = a + bX$

Where;

Y = Social Media is partly responsible for non-compliance to CoVID-19 protocol

a = Constant

b = Slope of equation

X = Level of education attainment

Social Media is partly responsible for non-compliance to CoVID-19 protocol = 3.988 + (-0.042) Level of education attainment.

Since slope of equation (-0.042) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 that lead to misconception.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.039 ^a	.002	-.001	.925

a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic are weak with R = 0.039.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.497	1	.497	.581	.446 ^b
	Residual	326.750	382	.855		
	Total	327.247	383			

- a. Dependent Variable: Social Media is partly responsible for non-compliance to CoVID-19 protocol
- b. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

Since significant value (0.446) is greater than 0.05, we accept null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic.

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	3.312	.180		18.379	.000			
	Level of my education attainment is	.149	.065	.117	2.297	.022	.117	.117	.117

- a. Dependent Variable: Social media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine

Research Hypothesis Four

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour.

Formula for Linear regression equation: $Y = a + bX$

Where;

Y = Social media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine

a = Constant

b = Slope of equation

X = Level of education attainment

Social media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine = 3.312 + (0.149) Level of education attainment. Since slope of equation (0.149) is positive, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed positively to the Social Media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.117 ^a	.014	.011	1.094

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour are weak with R = 0.117.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.318	1	6.318	5.276	.022 ^b
	Residual	457.429	382	1.197		
	Total	463.747	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Social media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine

b. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

Since significant value (0.022) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour.

3.4 Objective 4: To determine the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about CoVID-19 behaviour.

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. Error				Beta	Zero-order	Partial
(Constant)	4.485	.151		29.629	.000			
Level of my education attainment is	-.287	.055	-.260	-5.272	.000	-.260	-.260	-.260

a. Dependent Variable: Government strictness about the compliance with the protocol on CoVID-19 make people to comply

Formula for Linear regression equation: $Y = a + bX$

Where;

Y = The campaign put up by government about CoVID-19 make people to believe in it

a = Constant

b = Slope of equation

X = Level of education attainment

The campaign put up by government about CoVID-19 make people to believe in it = $4.485 + (-0.287)$

Level of education attainment.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.260 ^a	.068	.065	.919

a. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment is

The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social

Research Hypothesis Four

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour.

Since slope of equation (-0.287) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the campaign put up by government about CoVID-19 make people to believe in it.

media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour are weak with $R = 0.260$.

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	23.489	1	23.489	27.797	.000 ^b
	Residual	322.800	382	.845		
	Total	346.289	383			

a. Dependent Variable: Government strictness about the compliance with the protocol on CoVID-19 make people to comply

b. Predictors: (Constant), Level of my education attainment

Since significant value (0.000) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health- protective behaviour.

I. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the demography data eighty percent of respondents were educated beyond primary level, while the National Bureau of Statistic ranked Osun State as the Eight most educated state in Nigeria. Ede municipal has two private universities: Adeleke University Ede and Redeemer’s University Ede, a Federal Polytechnic: the Federal Polytechnic Ede. Ede has history of high literacy level. This implies that the level of education of these peoples influence their perception of reality.

H₀1: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede. Since slope of equation (-0.150) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the people been manipulated to believe that those information about CoVID-19 were real but majority were fake. Therefore, education attainment cannot be attributed to manipulation of the people to believing that information about CoVID-19 emanating from social media was faked. The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede are very weak with R = 0.134. Since significant value (0.008) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede.

H₀ 2: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19

pandemic among the residents of Ede. Since slope of equation (-0.134) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 that lead to misconception. Since significant value (0.006) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media contribute to the problems of the COVID-19 pandemic among the residents of Ede.

H₀3: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic. Since slope of equation (-0.042) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively to the messages on Social Media about CoVID-19 that lead to misconception. The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic are weak with R = 0.039. Since significant value (0.446) is greater than 0.05, we accept null hypothesis and concluded that there is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and how Social Media are implicated in behavioural changes of residents of Ede during the pandemic.

H₀4: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour. Since slope of equation (0.149) is positive, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed positively to the Social Media misleading stories is responsible for reluctance in taking CoVID-19 vaccine. The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour are weak with R = 0.117. Since significant value (0.022) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that

there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and the extent to which the measures put in place by the government lead to reorientation about COVID-19 behaviour.

H₀₅: There is no significant relationship between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour. Since slope of equation (-0.287) is negative, the level of education attainment of the residents of Ede contributed negatively. The strength of the regression that exist between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour are weak with $R = 0.260$. Since significant value (0.000) is less than 0.05, we reject null hypothesis and concluded that there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and those who believe in conspiracy theory spread by the Social media about COVID-19 engage in health-protective behaviour.

II. CONCLUSION

Despite the fact that it has been established that social media contributes immensely to the spate of fake news about CoVID-19, the level of education of the residents has nothing to do with the spread or curtailment of the spread. Education attainment of the residents of Ede Metropolis cannot be attributed to manipulation of the people to believing that information about CoVID-19 emanating from social media was faked. However there is significant relationship between level of education attainment and level of contributions of the social media to spate of fake news about COVID-19 among the residents of Ede. Therefore, the level of the education of the residents make them to be critical of the information received from the social media, despite their initial believe in the messages they were able to jettison the believe spread by the social media and adopt the measures put in place by the government.

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study therefore recommends that social media content generators embrace health

communication as the most effective way of informing the public on safe and accurate measures to save lives during the outburst of a pandemic. It further recommends that the government come up with policies for the regulation of social media content to curtail the spread of fake news capable of misleading social media users. There is need for massive awareness by stakeholders to provide the populace with information that will reduce the spread of covid 19 as well as in the prevention and treatment.

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