

The Biggest Threat of Current Age is Fake News and Propaganda

Outline:

A. Introduction

Thesis Statement: Although internet increased global connectivity, it also opened way for faster transfer of fake news and propaganda which infects minds of people posing a major threat to current age.

B. Evolution of means of transfer of data

i) Since ancient times, fake news and propaganda transferred through letters and travellers posing threat of misinformation.

ii) Recent technological advancement not only hastened the communication process, but introduced new ways of propagation of propaganda and fake news.

C. Threats of fake news and propaganda in current age

i) Fake news and propaganda used as tools to create required perception for achieving malicious goals.

ii) Spread of fake news and propaganda are well equipped to gain popular support by widening

already existing fault lines between ethnic and religious groups.

iii) It is the tool to degrade opponent & to gain personal gains, which otherwise, impossible to achieve.

iv) Leaders use tool of propaganda to diverge public from domestic-ills and gain their support for war.

D. Conclusion

Worldwar I eruption cost near 2 million lives around the world. Yet another worldwar happened, despite the outcome of last worldwar which were ugly. Although reasons for second worldwar vary, if different dimensions are evaluated. ~~But~~ hypernationalism among citizens of parties of war was an important reason. Hypernationalism is the term used to describe state of extreme perception of one's nation as "supreme" and others as "lesser nations". It is necessary to put forth the exact cause of its rise. In the early twentieth century, print media played major role in propagation of nationalism. States coined the terms like "supreme being" and "best nation" to influence their cause and gain popular support on wars. Here comes the major role of propaganda and fake news. ~~However~~ Propaganda or the propagation of particular cause which favors a particular institution i.e states, and fake news or wrong news propagation to achieve one's malicious goals were the two tools which ignited hypernationalism within states. Thus, people wholeheartedly supported the cause of engagingⁱⁿ warfare. This tells us that even ugly wars can get support of masses if the perception is done for the cause through propaganda. After the Worldwar 2, world went through initial phases of interconnectness and interdependence; internet played major role in that cause of globalization. Eventually, technology upgraded to extent where everyone could get benefits of

of internet. Current age has hundred times ~~much~~ faster connectivity than it was in during twentieth century. Moreover, launching of social media apps in early twentyfirst century has resulted in much faster circling of fake news and propaganda. Even states themselves are worried on this issue. Although internet increased global connectivity, it also opened way for faster transfer of fake news and propaganda which infects the minds of people. Thus, it poses major threat to perception creation of masses.

Historically, fake news and propaganda infected minds with the early means of information transfer. In the middle ages, information was transferred through letters and by people who travelled across lands. Many myths and fake news ~~are~~ were mainly because of people movement to other regions. For instance, news about King's behavior was spread by travellers. If that particular person was badly treated, he would share her perception leading to fake news. On the otherhand, Kings themselves used to send envoys to praise them and circulate the propaganda. But with advancement of technology, means of information transferring were also transformed.

One of the significant ~~any~~ adverse effect of internet was its hand in faster circulation of fake news & propaganda. Twentieth century reshaped the means of data transfer. It went from

physical letters which took days to reach, to emails delivered in moment. Later, twenty first century ~~reach~~ saw the advancement of easily available and processed data in almost all hands through handheld devices i.e. mobile phones. Evolution of data transfer to current level possesses many advantages like time saving and quicker processing. Similarly, it possesses the threat of fake news and propaganda propagation. It is propagated at much faster speed and enormous amount of data which is malicious is spread every second. This evolution created many hurdles and posed threats to current age which we will see in coming paragraphs.

Besides many threats, fake news and propaganda affects the ways in which people make perception about something. Moreover, it diverts people from their original perception to seeded perception of ~~perpetrator~~ perpetrator. Recent example of Israel's hiring of Israeli and U.S. youths to spread the word that Israel has done more than enough to provide basic humanitarian aid; it is rather Hamas who steals aid. This is clearly fake news and propaganda example, as United Nations already declared "famine level 5" in Gaza, Palestine. Point of argument is not what Israel wanted, rather through propaganda it changed perception of peoples primarily in its own country, where there were protests against war.

Apart from perception making, it is very useful in gaining popular support. Elites, for personal gains, campaign on the basis of ethnic discrimination and try to widen the gap which already exists through fake news and propaganda. Though stable democracies are sometimes able to control propaganda, but not fully as sometimes it is confused with freedom of speech. On the other hand, developing countries in global south are prone to fake news and propaganda narratives of populist leaders. Pakistan, particularly, consists of many populist and religious parties which takes votes on subjugating opponents' ethnic and religious identity (sect) by encouraging their type of narratives.

Additionally, weak democracies fall prey to another threat similar to populist propaganda, which is degrading of opponents to lowest level of humanity. There are various means to degrade opponents, but most common is what is generally known as "Social media trial". It is term prevalent in most developing nations which means using personal/private information of person to expose a cruel and ugly side of person, which may never exist. Social media is full of such posts which carry a common persuasive message. Outcome perceived through such propaganda is achievement of particular ambition which, otherwise, could not be achieved by level-playing field. It is worth mentioning, that young and transitioning democracies (which transition from dictatorship to democracy)

are affected the most through propaganda and fake news posing major threat to people's private life which is publically damaged on social media.

Not only propaganda kills domestic democratic process, it is well equipped to diverge the nation's worries and ill-treatment views to support war with neighbor. To simply understand this particular argument, let us take example of recent, may-2025, conflict of Pakistan and India. Although "war is culture of death", but recent conflict was full of military propaganda and fake news that Indian national media not only supported this, but encouraged to take innocent lives of civilians. Leaders of India just wanted to diverge public from local hostilities which were about to come - voters' list mismanagement - and fill their mind with threat of war so, as they should avoid talking about real issue.