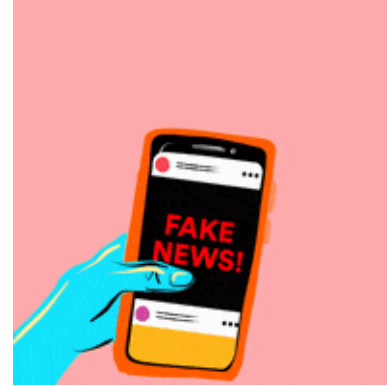# Examining Source Effects on Perceptions of Fake News in Rural India

Farhana Shahid

Shrirang Mare

Aditya Vashistha

Eleanor Whitney
1h · 🌐

My friend did not feel well after receiving the Covid vaccine. Should I be worried?

Image source: Tech Crunch

Who posted the content?

Do Sources Impact Our Perceptions of Online News?

Trusted news media

Person who shared the post

Trustworthy friend and family

Global North

Government sources

Scientists

Global South

Do Sources Impact Our Perceptions of Online News?

How do different sources impact people's trust in online news?

Does source effect vary for users from different demographics?

Misinformation in India

Increasing popularity of social media platforms

How misinformation on WhatsApp led to a mob killing in India

By Elyse Samuels
Video authentication editor

February 21, 2020

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What was set to be an idyllic vacation for friends quickly turned violent — and illustrated how online misinformation can lead to dangerous consequences. (Video: Elyse Samuels/The Washington Post, Photo: The Washington Post)

Image Source: Washington Post

Our Research Questions

Do social media users in rural and urban areas perceive credible and fake news differently?

How do source effects impact their trust in credible and fake news?

How do source effects impact their attitude towards sharing credible and fake news?

Methodology

319 urban social media users
(Amazon MTurk Workers)

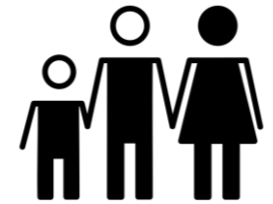159 rural social media users

6 credible and 3 fake news

No source

Stranger

Friend

Family

News media

Journalist

Celebrity

Methodology

Post displayed to participants in Celebrity source condition

Post displayed to participants in News Media source condition

Methodology

Time remaining for this post: **80 seconds!**

Facebook post 1/10

Priyanka Chopra
July 1

Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal has said that the number of coronavirus-related deaths has declined.

A post displayed to participants in Celebrity source condition

- How much do they trust the post?
- Will they share the post or not?
- If yes, with whom will they share the post?
  - Public, Friends, Friends except, Specific friends

Differences Between Rural and Urban Social Media Users

Urban social media users

Rural social media users

	Urban social media users	Rural social media users
Distinguish between credible and fake posts	✓	✗
Sharing tendency	Shared credible posts more than fake posts	Shared both types of posts equally
Sharing audience	Broader audience (e.g., public)	Social circle (e.g., friends)

Source Effect on User Perceptions of Trust and Sharing Tendency

Trusted and shared fake posts from Family more

Urban social media users

Family

Trusted and shared fake posts from Journalists and News media more

Rural social media users

Journalist   News media

Design Interventions to Counteract Source Effect

Reminder that shared content might represent the views and biases of the post creators

Reminder to cautiously approach posts from verified accounts

Fact-checking organizations may prioritize news from hyper-partisan websites and journalists

For rural users create credibility indicators citing journalistic sources

Thank You!

✉ fs468@cornell.edu