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Utilisation of Technological Based Approach of Misinformation Management and Curbing of Social Media Hysteria in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract **Original Research Article**

This study examine the extent to which the utilisation of technological based approach of misinformation management facilitates curbing of social media hysteria in South-South Nigeria. Four research questions were raised with one hypothesis formulated. The research design employed was correlational research design. The population comprised 103 library staff in the eight public universities in south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria from which sample of 103 was derived using census sampling technique. The data derivation was achieved using researcher's designed research instrument entitled: "Misinformation Management for Curbing of Social Media Hysteria Scale" (MMCSMHS)". Face-validation was used to ascertain the appropriateness of the items in eliciting requisite information. Reliability estimate of 0.88 was obtained using Cronbach Alpha coefficient. The collated data were analysed using percentage, chart, mean score, and linear regression R-square and F-value. Results showed that the prevalence of misinformation on social media was considered high (49.5%). Results also indicated that the level of knowledge on how to detect what constitute misinformation was very low ($\bar{x}$=2.66), especially in the ability to utilised fact checking tools to confirm accuracy of information ($\bar{x}$=2.04). Also, the results showed that the extent of utilisation of technology-based approach in identification and detection of misinformation among the library staff is very low. This aligned with the results that technology-based misinformation management strategies have a very low positive predictive influence on curbing of social media hysteria in South-South Nigeria. However it was revealed that technology-based misinformation significantly assists in the curbing of social media hysteria in South -South Nigeria. It is recommended that the Institutions' managers should incorporate routine digital training for library staff to update their knowledge on the real-time digitalisation skills for effective and efficient data science and quality information management that is devoid of disinformation and misinformation. Also, the library staff should embark of self-regulated training on technology-based approach of misinformation detection and verification to optimised their information management processes and skills.

Keywords: Technology-based Approach, Misinformation, Misinformation Management, Curbing Hysteria, Social Media.

Introduction/Review of Literature

Investment in quality information has been a blueprint for orderly society and the general emancipation of human race. Information plays vital roles in the coordination of human affairs, formulation of policies and programmes, and the implementation of tangible developmental projects. Quality information assists in decision making process as well as enabled effective project evaluation review. Deb (2014) acknowledged the significant of information in reducing uncertainty, understanding of situations, enhancing communication and learning, as well as knowledge acquisition. Other studies that eulogized the place of quality information maintained that it has the potencies to promotes quality decision making, enhancing values and quality conclusion as well as improving the performance of which it was meant for (Alshikhi and Abdullah, 2018, Houhamdi and Athamena, 2019). Every information emanates from a source with the intention of the originator. This intention could be qualitative to promote developmental growth or with undermining variables to distract or cause relative negative influence on the consumers.

In the twenty-first century society, information has faced series of challenges especially due to the segragational nature of the society. This becomes an inevitable experience as every society grows and contends with peculiar information in accordance with the societal emerging realities. In Nigeria for instance, every facet of the society experienced different sorts of hysteria contending with the realities of time and the diversities of divergence opinions. These occurrence are felt in the aspects of security, economy, politics, governance, religious affairs, as well as entertainment among others. Many of these aspects of the Nigerian society, faced series of undermining information rhetoric and misinformation which as acknowledged by various studies contributed immensely to erode epistemic trust, undermine markets and productivity, destroy human capital formation (Ayanbode and Ike, 2026), reduce or increase programs and initiatives effectiveness, degrade public safety, distort public perception, and fuel real-time conflicts (Brianna, 2020).

Global statistics revealed that the level of misinformation assume an alarming status (Cazzamatta, 2024)**.** According to the author, 74percent of people worldwide encountered misinformation in the media feeds. This concept of misinformation has been given different connotations. Wardle and Derakhshan (2017) defined misinformation as false or misleading information spread regardless of intent to deceive. In another perspective, it can be explained as inaccurate reporting that results from errors; nonetheless, it does not imply deceit (Onigbinde and Oloyede, 2024)**.** Hilary and Dumebi (2021) maintained that misinformation involves the dissemination that occurs unintentionally and often involves the propagation of false or misleading details that have the potential to misinform or deceive individuals. Adducing from these scholastic explanations, it could be said that misinformation is the misrepresentation of fact in variant with the source of the information with negative or unfavourable intention to cause confusion in the minds of the consumers of such information. Every misinformation has remote intention either to redirect the consciousness of the public, manipulate their attention, and or influence actionable reactions. The long run behavioural effect of misinformation could results to resistance to emerging realities, rejection of policies and programmes of government, agitations and chaos. Onigbinde and Oloyede (2024) inferred that misinformation promotes incorrectness of fact, undermines quality decision making, and eliminates trust**.** Other studies maintained that misinformation facilitate erosion of trust in government institutions and innovations, undermining significant social and political functions, and promotion and amplification of harmful conspiracy theories and hate speeches leading in certain cases to acts of physical violence (Colomina *et al*., 2021, Popken, 2020). Examples of what misinformation could cause include non-compliance with the COVID 19 drugs during the pandemic (Roozenbeek *et al*., 2020), rumours of already rigged election and

false voting information in USA being sent through text messaging to residents of several predominantly African-American communities in Alabama during the state's Senate special election in 2017 (Popken, 2020). In Nigeria situation, many false information abound that led to the spread of conspiracy theories, hate speech, and incitement to violence, which has serious implications for national security, social cohesion, and stability (Nwosu, 2019). Wilson and Umar in Onigbinde and Oloyede (2024) mentioned factors that promotes misinformation to include issue of self-aggrandizement or self satisfaction, concerns of attacking personalities, political ambition, issue related to ignorance as well as hate, jealousy, and mischief. Without doubt, the main essence of misinformation is always disadvantageous and the results are often debilitating to the individual's productivity, societal development and public orderliness. Although most of these negative implications of misinformation are not always quantitatively measured, its qualitative effect mostly have relative or remarkable impact on the social, economic, emotional, cognitive and psychological fabrics of the consuming public. The spread of negative implications of misinformation becomes alarming especially in this era of social media.

Social media is is a digital platform that enhances interpersonal communication, dissemination of news, shaping the dynamics of information flow and public opinion, as well as creating proficient boundaries between content creators and consumers. In the current era of technological advancement, social media presence is remarkable in rapid circulation of information, ideological positions, and intense debates. Thivakaran (2024) eulogised the strength of social media as the greatest information vehicle in twenty-first century, in terms of enabling individuals to take on the roles of reporters, critics, and opinion leaders without traditional gatekeeping. According to the author, social media achieved these roles using interactive features, such as likes, comments, and shares, encourage participation and conversation, making it a powerful tool for social engagement and collective action. This medium become remarkable as global statistics has shown that approximately 5.8billion subscribers stroll the social media daily (DataReportal, 2026). This implies that approximately 69-70percent of global population is on the social media daily (DataReportal, 2026) Therefore, a drop of information on the social media platforms assume an exaggeration stage which triggers responses and reactions with potency to escalate depending on realistic and idealistic nature of such information. On the negative perspective, Tandoc *et al*. (2018) opined that social media facilitate the rapid spread of misinformation and misleading contents, causing confusion, panic, or psychosocial harms as the case may be. Also, social media has algorithms that prioritize engagement over accuracy, making sensational or misleading content more visible to users (Vosoughi *et al*., 2018), and as well, create echo chambers, where users are exposed primarily to information that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs (Thivakaran, 2024). These according to the authors leads to increased political polarization and the reinforcement of biases (Flaxman *et al.,* 2016). When these challenges persist, social media is bound to constitute reasonable level of negative psychological effects, including anxiety, depression, and addiction (Thivakaran, 2024). Several studies emphasized that many information on the social media are unverified with no authentication, and reliable sources (Hamid and Abdulmalik, 2025, Cisternas and Vásquez, 2022, Mahamad *et al*., 2021). These attributes of such information made it assume the status of misinformation. Allcott *et al*. (2018), Wyorkson (2025), Ciboh and Ugondo (2025) maintained in their study that the rate of misinformation on social media is very high. According to the authors, many of such information often resulted to societal challenges such as distrust and disharmony, division and segregation in perception and ideology. However, to avert these challenges from becoming uncontrollable, scholars advocated for the need for effective management of misinformation (Zainudin *et al.,* 2024, Denniss and Lindberg, 2025).

Various benefits are attached to effective management of misinformation and efficient curbing of social media hysteria. Taguchi *et al*.

(2023) admonished that effective misinformation management facilitate building of quality institutional trust, resilience, and promoting individual's zeal in making inform decisions by swift detection and transparent correction**.** In real-time scenario, management of misinformation promote societal sustainability and development. Other potentials include strengthening national security, and reducing harming behaviour (Li and Chang, 2022, Jonathan and Watat, 2023). Therefore, due to the importance of effective misinformation management, many approaches had been strategized to manage such multidimensional impact of misinformation (Onigbinde and Oloyede, 2024, Pereira and Leithardt, 2024). One of such approaches is the utilisation of technological-based approach.

Technological based approach of misinformation management centred on utilising the power of digital tools and smart system to help social media identify and swiftly respond to misinformation online. Example of such technological-based approach is the use of artificial intelligence and machine language with feature extraction combining available information resources (Vysotska *et al*., 2024, Romein and Chudra, 2024). Two prominence cases in Nigeria that technology-based approach of misinformation management detection proved unverifiable and unreliable were Covid-19 misinformation in year 2020 where Dubawa and Africa check platforms were used to verify the information and debunk as falsehood (Dubawa, 2020). Another misinformation detected was the case related to the endorsement shared on media using 2023 general election which was checked by Dubawa, Africa Check and AFP Fact Checks to be doctored with fake collaboration (African Check, 2020, Dubawa, 2020, Agence France-Presse, 2023). Many studies acknowledged the significant roles played by technological-based approach in misinformation management in curbing social media hysteria (Romein and Chudra, 2024, Clemons *et al*., 2025)**.** This is especially in the aspect of detecting manipulated content and monitoring the spread of false information online, thereby supporting the protection of information integrity (Romein and Chudra, 2024, Clemons *et al.,* 2025)**.** Unfortunately, despite the remarkable potentials of technology-based approach (TBA) in misinformation management, several individuals are yet to embrace the innovation. It is highly worrisome that even the librarians that are professional information managers may be lagging in this direction. This contemplation is promoted by a study conducted by Nwonye, *et al*. (2025) on the level of information commutation technology (ICT) utilisation in Nigeria in the promotion of knowledge and information management which revealed an umpteen time low. Although the situation differs in the studies conducted by Oghoredafe and Ukaigwe (2025), Bello, *et al*. (2024) and Edegbo and Emumejaye (2025). Be that as it may, different assessment carried out by Nwonye, *et al*. (2025) and Micahel *et al*. (2025) on the extent to which the awareness and utlisation of technology-based approach of misinformation management strategy in effectively curbing social media hysteria is moderate. The results were similar with that of Sunday *et al*. (2024) which revealed a fair knowledge of how effective fact-checking technology is utilised in tackling the menace of fake news. According to the results, its pace of adoption was equally low in Nigeria with the trend growing only during election periods unlike the rate of adoption in Asian countries. Arising from these contradictory positions, it becomes pertinent to ask:

i. What is the respondents' view on the prevalent of misinformation on social media?

ii. What is the respondents' level of knowledge on how to detect what constitute misinformation?

iii. What is the extent to which the respondents utilised technological-based approach in the identification and detection of misinformation?

iv. What is the extent to which utilisation of technological-based approach of misinformation management predicts curbing of social media hysteria in south-south Nigeria

Research Hypothesis

The extent to which utilisation of technological-based approach of misinformation management predicts curbing of social media hysteria in south-south Nigeria is not significant.

Research Methods

The research design employed was correlational research design. This type of design, according to Putri *et al*. (2025), is used as a quantitative method of estimating the relationship of two or more variables without manipulating the variables.

The study was conducted in South-South Nigeria, which is one of the country's six geopolitical zones. Strategically located along the southern coast within the Niger Delta, it stretches from latitudes 4º00'N to 7º00'N and longitudes 5º00'E to 8º00'E, bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the south, the South-East zone to the east, the South-West to the west, and the North-Central to the north. The zone comprises six states: Akwa Ibom, Cross River, Rivers, Bayelsa, Delta, and Edo. Residents of South-South Nigeria actively engage with social media platforms for civil discourse, business promotion, and entertainment. mirroring national trends where WhatsApp and Facebook dominate everyday communication and information sharing among the residents. Platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Twitter/X are widely used by the people for civic engagement, business, and entertainment, reflecting broad digital adoption despite infrastructural constraints (DataReportal, 2023).This widespread adoption of information technology has enhanced knowledge and civil participation while also enabling the spread of misinformation across the area.

The population comprised 103 librarians in the eight public universities in south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria (Source: Directorate of Information of the Respective Institutions, 2026). Sample of 103 was used for the study. This was achieved using census sampling technique due to the management size of the population.

The data derivation was achieved using researcher's designed research instrument entitled: "Misinformation Management for Curbing of Social Media Hysteria Scale" (MMCSMHS)". The research instrument was designed on five sections eliciting information from the respondents on personal details, prevalent of misinformation on social media, respondents' level of knowledge on how to detect misinformation, respondents' utilisation of technology-based approach of misinformation management in the identification and detection of misinformation, and the approach in curbing social media hysteria. Section A has specification such as gender (male, female), age (21-30yrs, 31-40yrs, 41-50yrs, 51-60yrs, 61yrs and above), professional categories (professional librarian, clerical and administrative officer, technical staff, support), and work experience (1-10yrs, 11-20yrs, 21-30yrs, and 31yrs above). The Section B has four rating scale of very high (HE), high (H), low (L) and very low (VL) eliciting information on the prevalent of misinformation on social media. The Section C dealt with the respondents level of knowledge on what constitute misinformation which was anchored on five items structured using five modified rating scale of very high level (VHL), high level (HL), low level (LL), very low level (VLL), and I dont know (IDK). The options code line were 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1. The Section D had eight items of declarative statements format with five options including very high extent (VHE), high extent (HE), low extent (LE), very low extent (VLE), and not at all (NAA). The section's code lines were 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 for VHE, HE, LE, VLE, and NAA respectively. The section E had 10 declarative items structured on four rating scales of strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (D), and strongly disagreed (SD) eliciting information from the respondents on the curbing of social media hysteria. The items statements in section B, C, D, and E were presented in positive perspective to maintain uniformity and ensure accuracy in the discussion of findings and the conclusion drawn. Scale for five rating scale was interpreted as thus: 0-1.5=IDK, 1.51-3.0=VL, 3.01-4.5=L, 6;51-6=H, and 6.01-7.5=VH.

The validation of the research instrument

was done by three experts in library and information science, data science and communication using face-validation. The reliability assessment was done on 30 librarians from State-own universities and the coefficient was calculated using Cronbach Alpha which resulted at 0.88. Administration of the research instrument was through researcher's developed Google Form. The finalised Google Form link was distributed to all professional librarians through WhatsApp platforms in the various universities under study and the Nigerian Library Association platform. The process lasted for two weeks and the collated data were analysed using percentage, chart, mean score, and linear regression R-square and F-value.

Results

Table 1: Respondents' Personal Details

Variables	Percent
Age	
21-30yrs	5
31-40yrs	56.6
41-50yrs	17.2
51-60yrs	13.1
61yrsAbove	8.1
Gender	
Male	39.4
Female	60.6
Work Experience	
1-10yrs	11.1
11-20yrs	42.4
21-30yrs	29.3
31yrs Above	17.2
Staff Category	
Professional Librarian	26.3
Clerical/Admin Staff	14.1
Technical Staff	36.4
Support/Junior Staff	23.2

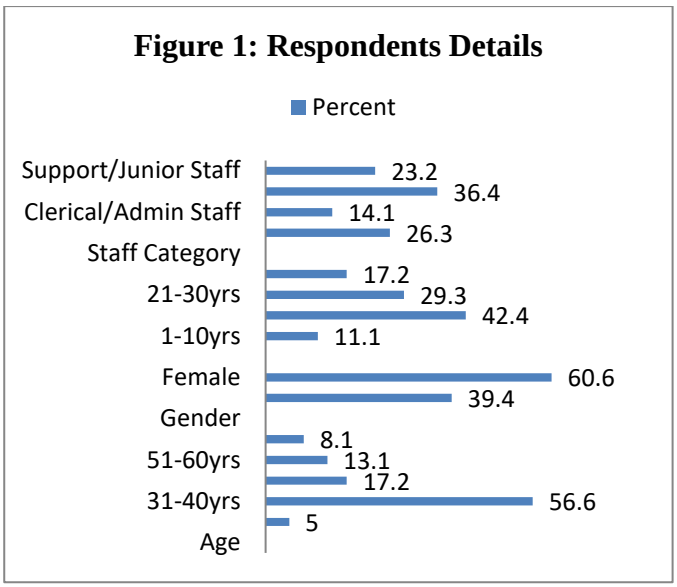

Table 1 and Figure 1 revealed that majority of the respondents were aged 31-40years (56.6%) closely followed by those 41-50years of age. Female staff were the majority (60.6%). In terms of work experience, those within the 11-20years were the majority (42.4%), while technical staff were the majority (36.4%) in the line of professional category.

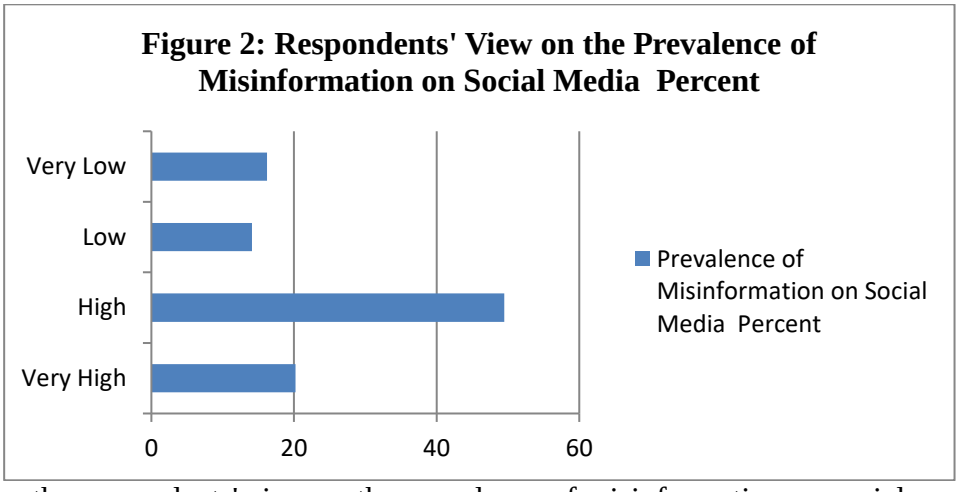

Figure 2 shows the respondents' view on the prevalence of misinformation on social media to be high (49.5%).

Table 2: Respondents' level of knowledge on how to detect what constitute misinformation

Items Description	Options						Remarks
Rate your knowledge on what constitute misinformation	VH	H	L	VL	IDK	x̄	
Verifying source of information using reliable	13	23	33	12	18	3.01	L

information sources.							
Compare information with reports from multiple credible sources.	14	11	23	37	14	2.74	VL
Examining evidence using fact, data, references, or experts opinion.	14	18	21	26	20	2.80	VL
Verifying when information was published in the correct content.	12	16	22	26	23	2.68	VL
Utilised fact checking tools to confirm accuracy of Information.	4	8	12	39	36	2.04	VL
`Average	**12**	**16**	**20**	**28**	**23**	**2.66**	**VL**

Table 2 revealed that the respondents level of knowledge on how to detect what constitute misinformation was very low ($\bar{x}$=2.66). Adducing from the analysed data, the respondents were more versed with the verifying source of information using reliable information sources more than other items under consideration with the least knowledge been the ability to utilised fact checking tools to confirm accuracy of information ($\bar{x}$=2.04).

Table 3: Respondents' extent of utilisation of technology-based approach in identification ad detection of misinformation (N=99)

Items Description		
Rate your knowledge of utilisation of technology-based approach in the identification of misinformation	**$\bar{x}$**	**Remarks**
AI-powered tools for effective analysis of social media posts	2.56	VL
Image verification tools for effective detection of manipulated content	2.92	VL
Network analysis tools for effective uncovering of manipulated content	2.33	VL
Browser extensions for effective verification of information	3.01	L
Open-source intelligence (OSINT) communities for identification	2.99	VL
Fact-checking websites for enhancement of information verification.	2.72	VL
Blockchain-based solutions creating tamper-proof records.	2.77	VL
Utilisation of any machine learning or natural language tools for identification of misinformation.	2.89	VL
Average Grand Mean	**2.77**	**VL**

Table 3 revealed that the extent o f utilisation of technology-based approach in identification and detection of misinformation among the library staff is very low.

Table 4: Summary of Regression Analysis on the extent to which technology-based misinformation management predicts the curbing of social media hysteria

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	r	R Square
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	30.36	1.84			

	Technology-based misinformation	.15	.05	.16	.16	.03

Table 4 presents a summary of the simple regression test for the extent to which technology-based misinformation management predicts the curbing of social media hysteria. The result reveals that the unstandardised coefficient is .15, indicating a very low positive predictive influence of technology-based misinformation management strategies on curbing of social media hysteria. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is .03, indicating that only 2.5percent change in curbing of social media hysteria is attributed to technology-based misinformation management strategies. The result shows that technology-based misinformation management strategies have a very low positive predictive influence on curbing of social media hysteria in South-South Nigeria.

Table 5: Summary of Regression test on the predictive extent of technology-based misinformation management on curbing of social media hysteria

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1629.23	1	1629.23	8.93	.00*
	Residual	64434.67	98	182.53		
	Total	66063.89	99			

*Significant at $p<.05_{.003}$

Table 5 shows the summary of the regression test. The probability value (p-value) is .00. Since the probability value is less than the alpha level of .05 ($P<.05_{.00}$), the result is statistically significant. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. Hence, Technology-based misinformation significantly predicts the curbing of social media hysteria in South -South Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The results revealed a relatively high prevalence of misinformation on social media as acknowledged by the library staff of tertiary institutions within the south-south geopolitical zone of Nigeria. This aligned with the position of Cazzamatta (2024) that the level of misinformation assume an alarming status. The increasing prevalence of misinformation as recorded could be due to divergence of aggrandizement of the people when utilising social media to showcase their visibility as well as aligned their belief for public validations.

The results also revealed that the level of knowledge on how to detect what constitute misinformation was very low. This is coupled with the extent of utilisation of technology-based approach which revealed a very low extent. The results could emanate from the continuous utilisation of manual library approach in the management of information in these institutions thereby depriving the library staff of privilege to advance to the adoption of digital resources in the data science and information management. The finding is slightly different from the Nwonye, *et al*. (2025) and Micahel *et al*. (2025) studies on the extent to which the awareness and utlisation of technology-based approach of misinformation management strategy which showed that the extent of it effectiveness in curbing social media hysteria is moderate. The results differ slightly with that of Sunday *et al*. (2024) which revealed a fair knowledge of how effective fact-checking technology is utilised in tackling the menace of fake news. According to the results, its pace of adoption was equally low in Nigeria.

Similarly, the results showed that the extent to which utilisation of technology-based approach of misinformation management facilitates curbing of social media hysteria was very low. The findings was supported by the results of an empirical study conducted by Nwonye, *et al*. (2025) on the level of information commutation technology (ICT) utilisation in Nigeria in the promotion of knowledge and information management which revealed an umpteen time low. However, the tested null hypothesis which states that the extent to which utilisation of technological-based approach of misinformation management predicts curbing of social media hysteria in south-south Nigeria is not significant was rejected. In other words, it could be said that though curbing of social media hysteria in south-south among the library staff using technology-based approach is very low, it is still significant in the management of misinformation and the associated challenges. This perhaps is due to its ability to detect and identify fact from fictions and deceptions, provision of avenues for cross-checking and authenticating sources, and facilitating swift assessment of experts opinions. The findings aligned with the results of Romein and Chudra (2024), Clemons *et al*. (2025) which acknowledged the significant roles played by technological-based approach in misinformation management in curbing social media hysteria. According to the authors, this is because of it potentials in detecting manipulated content and monitoring the spread of false information online, thereby supporting the protection of information integrity.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concludes that prevalence of misinformation is increasing with relatively very low level of library staff knowledge on how to detect misinformation, especially using technology-based approach of misinformation management. This therefore undermine the extent to which the utilisation of technology-based approach assists in curbing social media hysteria. However, it is concluded that technology-based misinformation management assists significantly in curbing social media hysteria when appropriately and knowledgably utilised by the library staff.

Arising from the conclusion drawn, it is recommended that the Institutions' managers should incorporate routine digital training for library staff to update their knowledge on the real-time digitalisation skills for effective and efficient data science and quality information management that is devoid of disinformation and misinformation. Also, the library staff should embark of self-regulated training on technology-based approach of misinformation detection and verification to optimised their information management processes and skills.

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