UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

USERS MOTIVATION FACTOR IN FAKE NEWS SHARING ON SOCIAL MEDIA DURING COVID-19 ENDEMIC

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ABSTRACT

This study validates the effect of user's motivation factor on fake news sharing in social media during covid-19 endemic. Five constructs from Users and Gratification Theory namely altruism, entertainment, socialisation, self-promotion and instant news sharing was used in this study. Result from an online survey, with data collected in two months periods during endemic phase. 277 respondents were involved in this study and the findings supported the theoretical model. Particularly the researcher found that entertainment and instant news sharing predicted fake news sharing related to COVID-19 endemic among social media users in Malaysia. Specifically, entertainment was the strongest predictor to fake news sharing behaviour related to COVID-19, followed by instant news sharing. On the contrary, another three variables namely altruism, socialisation and self-promotion had no association with fake news sharing on COVID-19 endemic. UGT was tested using the primary data and producing 35% of the variance in fake news sharing (R^2 =0.41). The finding of this study provides the practical implication to related parties like policy makers (government) in order to set up the guidelines to avoid fake news sharing among citizens and give some enlightenment on how the policy content could be crafted in building and managing the situation.

Keywords: Uses and Gratification Theory (UGT), Fake News Sharing, Social Media, Altruism, Entertainment, Socialisation, Self-Promotion, Instant News Sharing, Malaysia, Covid-19

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