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Assessing Urban Women's Perception of the Credibility of Health Information Shared on Social Media Platforms

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Abstract- In recent years, social media has emerged as a significant source of health-related information among urban women, providing rapid and convenient access to a wide range of content through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube. Despite its accessibility and popularity, the credibility of such information remains a critical concern due to the prevalence of misinformation, underlying commercial interests, and the lack of verification by qualified health professionals. This study aims to examine urban women's perceptions regarding the credibility of health information disseminated through social media platforms. Specifically, it seeks to analyze the influence of demographic variables such as age and educational background on credibility perception; to identify the criteria employed by urban women in assessing the trustworthiness of health-related content; to determine the most trusted social media platforms for obtaining health information; to evaluate the role of source authority—particularly the distinction between healthcare professionals and social media influencers—in shaping perceived credibility; and to assess the impact of misinformation and conflicting content on users' trust. A descriptive research design was adopted for the study. Primary data were collected through an online survey administered using a structured questionnaire. A total of 160 respondents were randomly selected from urban areas to gather insights into their social media usage patterns, trust determinants, and perceptions regarding the credibility of health information.

Keywords- Credibility, Health Information, Social Media, Urban Women.

I. Introduction

In the digital age, social media platforms have transformed the landscape of health communication. Millions of users, including women in urban settings, now rely on platforms like WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube to seek and share health-related information. This transition has reshaped how individuals perceive, validate, and act upon health advice, especially in environments where traditional healthcare access may be delayed, limited, or supplemented by online sources (Moorhead et al., 2013).

Urban women, owing to their greater digital literacy, mobile access, and proactive health-seeking behavior, represents a significant demographic in online health content consumption. They often use social media to explore topics such as reproductive health, nutrition, fitness, mental well-being, and chronic illness management (Chou et al.,

2009; Ahmad & Rani, 2020). However, the open and unregulated nature of social media platforms makes the credibility of shared health information a crucial concern.
The perception of credibility in influenced by various factors such as the source of the information, presentation style, community feedback (Likes, shares, and comments), and alignment with pre-existing beliefs (Metzger & Flanagin, 2013). For instance, information shared by medical professionals or verified accounts tends to be trusted more than that circulated by influencers or anonymous pages. However, misinformation ranging from unverified home remedies to conspiracy theories also spreads widely, creating confusion and sometimes resulting in harmful health practices (WHO, 2020).

In India, the rapid penetration of smartphones and widespread adoption of digital platforms have significantly enhanced the accessibility and visibility of health-related information among urban women. Social media applications such as Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and YouTube have become prominent channels for seeking health advice, sharing experiences, and accessing wellness-related content. Despite this growing dependence, there remains a limited body of research focusing specifically on how urban women in India evaluate the credibility and reliability of such information.

Women often occupy central roles as caregivers and primary health decision-makers within households, influencing not only their own well-being but also that of children, elderly family members, and the wider community. Therefore, their perception of online health information carries broader implications for public health outcomes (Saxena & Singh, 2022). Studies have shown that while digital platforms increase health awareness, they also expose users to misinformation, unverified remedies, and commercially driven content that may lack scientific validation (Chou et al., 2018; Vraga & Bode, 2020). This dual nature of social media—as both an enabler of information and a source of misinformation—necessitates a deeper understanding of how users assess credibility.

Furthermore, existing literature suggests that factors such as educational background, digital literacy, prior health knowledge, and trust in sources (e.g., healthcare professionals versus influencers) play a crucial role in shaping individuals' evaluation of online health content (Diviani et al., 2015; Zhao et al., 2021). In the Indian context, where cultural practices and informal knowledge systems often intersect with modern healthcare information, the evaluation process becomes even more complex.

This study seeks to address this research gap by examining how urban women perceive and evaluate the credibility of health information on social media. By analyzing their usage patterns, trust determinants, and content evaluation strategies, the research aims to generate insights that can contribute to the development of more reliable, accessible, and effective digital health communication tailored to urban female audiences. Ultimately, such insights may support policymakers, healthcare professionals, and media practitioners in designing interventions that promote informed health decision-making and reduce the spread of misinformation.

II. Review of Literature

Hadeel Daham Habow and Radhwan Ibrahim (2024) in their study 'investigating the Dynamics of Women's Health Information on Social Media: Nursing Perspective', the finding of this study highlights the pivotal role social media plays as a source of health information among female university staff. The high level of engagement and trust in credible sources underscores the platform's potential in shaping future strategies for health information dissemination. However, the risk of misinformation remains a significant concern, emphasizing the urgent need to strengthen digital health literacy and critical evaluation skills an essential area for future research and targeted interventions.

Leanne Chang et al (2023) in their research 'Strategies for Assessing Health Information Credibility Among Older Social Media Users in China: A Qualitative Study', indicates that how older adults in China use Heuristic cues and Self-judgment to evaluate the credibility of health information encounter on WeChat, influencing their everyday health practices. While susceptibility to misinformation is not confined to any specific age group, the findings highlight the particular strengths and limitations of older Chinese adults in processing health-related content on social media. These insights are valuable for informing future interventions aimed at combating health misinformation in China and may also have broader applicability in similar digital and cultural contexts.

Moaz Abdelwadoud and et al (2024) in their study 'Women's Health Information-Seeking Experience and Preference for Health Communication on FDA-Regulated Products: A Qualitative Study in Urban Area', it is indicates that the FDA can improve health communication about regulated medical products for women. The study identified four key strategies: leveraging public trust in the FDI logo to strengthen its role as a reliable health information source, promoting in-person and live interaction, which were preferred by participants, enhancing visibility on major search engines and improving website navigation and offering diverse communication methods that reflect the varied preference of women, including representation across race, ethnicity, and age. These insights can guide future national surveys to develop more effective, inclusive, and targeted health communication strategies for women in the United States.

Andrew Flanagin and Miriam Metzger (2007) in their research 'The role of site features user attributes, and information verification behaviors on the perceived credibility of web- based information', the study found that perception of website credibility varied significantly by type. News organization websites rated highest in message, sponsor, and overall credibility, while personal websites received the lower rating. E-commerce and special interest sites generally fell in between. Credibility assessments were influenced more by websites features such as design, content and complexity- than by user's familiarity with the sites sponsor. Additionally, there was a negative relationship between self-reported and observed information verification behaviors, but a positive relationship between self-reported verification and user's internet experience. These insights contribute to the theoretical framework of perceived web credibility.

Statement of Problem

With the growing use of social media as a source of health information, urban women are increasingly exposed to a wide range of health related content from various sources, including medical professionals, influencers, peers, and commercial entities. While these platforms offer accessibility and convenience, they also present challenges in terms of verifying the credibility of shared information, especially in the absence of regulatory oversight. The spread of misinformation and conflicting health messages poses significant risks to informed decision-making and personal well-being. Despite the rising reliance on digital media, there is limited research on how urban women evaluate the trustworthiness of such content. This study seeks to address this gap by examine the perceptions and criteria urban women use to assess the credibility of health information shared on social media platforms.

Objectives

1. To determine demographic factors (e.g., age, education) that affect credibility perception among urban women.
2. To examine the criteria urban women use to evaluate the credibility of health information on social media.
3. To identify which social media platforms are most trusted by urban women for health-related content.
4. To explore the influence of source authority (e.g., health professionals vs influencers) on perceived credibility.
5. To assess the impact of misinformation or conflicting information on trust in social media health content.

III. Methodology

To Assessing Urban Women's Perceptions of the Credibility of Health Information Shared on Social Media for this study descriptive and quantitative research design was adopted. The descriptive research method describes the characteristics of the population and phenomenon is being studied. The primary data is collected through a survey by using a structured interview schedule. A Total of 160 women were selected randomly for the collection of primary data through a structured questionnaire. The collected data was analyzed using simple statistical tools such as Respondents and percentage, and the results were presented in the form of table for clear interpretation of the respondents perception regarding the credibility of health information shared on social platform.

Data Analysis:

Table 1: Age

Age	Respondents	Percentage
18 to 20	28	17.5%
21 t 25	52	32.4%
26 to 30	38	23.8%
31 to 40	26	16.3%
Above 41	16	10%
Total	160	100

Table 1 reveals the age distribution shows that 32.5 percent of respondents belong to the 21-25 age groups, followed by 23.8% in the 26-30 age groups. Respondents aged 18-20 years constitute 17.5%, while 16.3% are between 31-40 years. Only 10 percent of the respondents are above 41 years of age. This indicates that younger urban women, particularly those in their early twenties, are more active in accessing health information on social media platforms.

Table 2: Education qualification

Education Qualification	Respondents	Percentage
Primary or secondary	18	11.3%
Pre University	30	18.8%
Under Graduation	55	34.4%
Post Graduation	42	26.3%
Others	15	9.4%
Total	160	100

Table 2 the educational profile indicates that 34.4% of respondents are undergraduate, while 26.3% are postgraduates. About 18.8 have completed pre-university education, and 11.3% have primary or secondary education. A smaller proportion, 9.4%, belongs to other educational categories. This shows that most respondents are well educated, which may positively influence their ability to evaluate the credibility of health information shred online.

Table 3: Occupation

Occupation	Respondents	Percentage
Students	50	31.3%
Self Employee	28	17.5%
Under Graduation	22	13.8%
Post Graduation	40	25%
Other	20	12.5%
Total	160	100

Table 3 the occupational distribution reveals that 31.3% of respondents are students, making them the largest group in the sample. Private employees account for 25%, while 17.5% are self-employed, Government employee constitute 13.8%, and 12.5% belong to other occupational categories. These results suggest that both students and working professionals are actively engaged with social media health information.

Table 4 the income distribution shows that 36.3% of respondents fall within the 20,000-50,000 income group, which represents the largest segment. 25% earn between 50,000 and 1,00,000, while 21.9% earn less than 20,000. A smaller proportion, 16.8%, belongs to the higher-income category earning above 1,00,000 per month. This indicates that the majority of respondents belong to middle-income households.

Table 4: Family Monthly Income

Family Monthly Income	Respondents	Percentage

Less than 20,000	35	21.9%
20000- 50000	58	36.3%
50000-1,00,000	40	25%
Above 1,00,000	27	16.8%
Total	160	100

Table 5: Marital Status

Marital Status	Respondents	Percentage
Married	72	45%
Unmarried	88	55%
Total	160	100

Table 5 the marital status data reveals that 55% of respondents are unmarried, while 45% are married. The higher percentage of unmarried respondents reflects the greater participation of younger women who are generally more active users of social media platforms .

Table 6: Verifying Health Information on Social before trusting on it

Health information on social trusting on it	Respondents	Percentage
Always	48	30%
Sometimes	70	43.3%
Rarely	28	17.5%
Never	14	8.7%
Total	160	100

Table 5 The results indicates that 43.8% of respondents sometimes verify health information before trusting it, while 30% always verify such information. However, 17.5% rarely verify the information, and 8.7% never verify it. This suggests that although many urban women attempt to confirm the reliability of health information, a significant proportion still rely on partially verified or unverified content.

Table 7: Checking health related posts on social media

Health related posts on social media	Respondents	Percentage
The source (who posted it)	58	36.3%
The content accuracy	44	27.5%
The comments or users/share	32	20%
I don’t check anything specific	26	16.2%
Total	160	100

Table the finding show that 36.3% of respondents check the source of the health post, while 27.5% examines the accuracy of the content. About 20% consider the comments and number of shares, whereas 16.2% do not check any specific factor before trusting the information. This indicates that while some respondents evaluate the credibility of posts carefully, others rely on superficial indicators.

Table 8: Spelling and grammatical errors in a post affect your trust in the health information

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, it reduce my trust	82	51.3%
No, Content matters more	48	30%
I don't notice such things	30	18.7%
Total	160	100

Table 8 the results reveals that 51.3% f respondents believe that spelling or grammatical errors reduce their trust in health information. However, 30% feel that the quality of content is more important than language accuracy, while 18.7% stated that they do not notice such errors. This suggests that presentation and language quality influence credibility perceptions to a considerable extent.

Table 9: The Following factors in determining whether to trust health information on social media N=160

Factors about health information	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
Credential of the author/poster	8 (5.0%)	18 (11.3%)	62 (38.7%)	72 (45.0%)
Presence of reference or source	12 (7.5%)	20 (12.5%)	58 (36.3%)	70 (43.7%)
Presentation style (inforgraphics, videos)	20 (12.5%)	42 (26.3%)	50 (31.2%)	48 (30.0%)
Number of likes/Comments/Share	35 (21.9%)	45 (28.1%)	40 (25.0%)	40 (25.0%)
Peer review or testimonials	28 (17.5%)	40 (25.0%)	46 (28.7%)	46 (28.7%)
Platform use (e.g., Facebook vs. WhatsApp)	30 (18.8%)	38 (23.7%)	45 (28.1%)	47 (29.4%)

Table 9 the data shows that the credentials of the author or poster are considered important by 83.7% of respondents, while 11.3% consider them somewhat important, and 5% believe they are not important. Similarly, 80% of respondents consider the presence of references or source important, while 12.5% consider them somewhat important, and 7.5% consider them not important. Regarding presentation style, 61.2% consider them not important and 12.5% not important. The number of likes, comments, and shares is considered important by 50% of respondents, somewhat important by 28.1%, and not important by 21.9%. Peer testimonials are regarded as important by 57.5%, somewhat important by 25%, and not important by 17.5%. The platform used is considered important by 57.5%, somewhat important by 23.7%, and not important by 18.8%.

The findings from Table 9 indicate that urban women place a strong emphasis on source credibility and authenticity when evaluating health information on social media. A significant majority of respondents consider the credentials of the author or poster (83.7%) and the presence of references or sources (80%) as highly important factors. This suggests that users are inclined toward information that is backed by professional

expertise and verifiable evidence, reflecting a relatively high level of awareness regarding reliable health communication. In contrast, factors related to presentation and popularity, such as the number of likes, comments, and shares, are given comparatively less importance. Although half of the respondents (50%) still consider engagement metrics as important, a notable proportion either view them as only somewhat important (28.1%) or not important (21.9%). This indicates a cautious approach among users, where social validation alone is not sufficient to establish credibility.

Similarly, peer testimonials and platform choice are considered moderately important, suggesting that while users do value experiential insights and platform reputation, these factors are secondary to professional validation. The relatively lower importance assigned to presentation style further reinforces that aesthetic appeal does not significantly influence trust in health-related content. The study reveals that respondents prioritize professional credibility, evidence-based information, and source reliability over superficial or popularity-driven indicators. This highlights a discerning attitude among urban women, emphasizing the need for accurate, well-referenced, and expert-backed health communication on social media platforms.

Table 10: Ever cross-checked health information see on social media with others source N=160

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, I search Google	72	45%
Yes, I Consult a doctor or health app	38	23.7%
No, I Just follow the suggestion if it seem logical	28	17.5%
No, I ignore most health content	22	13.8%

Table 10 the findings indicates that 45% of respondents verify health information by searching on Google, while 23.7% consult doctors or health applications. Above 17.5% follow the advice if t appears logical, and 13.8% ignore such information entirely. This suggests that online verification methods are more common than professional consultations.

Table 11: Type of format that they found most trustworthy for health content N=160

Types of Health Contents	Respondents	Percentage
Written articles	34	21.2%
Short Video	42	26.3%
Expert interviews	46	28.7%
Infographics	23	14.4%
Personal experience/Stories	15	9.4%

Table 11 the result that 28.7% of respondents consider expert interviews the most trustworthy format of health content, followed by 26.3% who prefer short video. 21.2% trust written articles, while 14.4% prefer infographics, and 9.4% trust written articles, while 14.4% prefer inforgrphics, and 9.4% trust personal stories. This indicates that respondents prefer content that feature expert knowledge.

The findings from Table 11 reveal that urban women demonstrate a clear preference for health content formats that incorporate expert knowledge and professional validation. A majority of respondents (28.7%) consider expert interviews as the most trustworthy format, indicating a strong reliance on information delivered directly by qualified professionals. This is followed by short videos (26.3%), suggesting that while users value credibility, they also prefer content that is concise, engaging, and easy to consume. Additionally, written articles (21.2%) continue to hold relevance, reflecting trust in detailed and structured information sources. In contrast, infographics (14.4%) and personal stories (9.4%) are perceived as less trustworthy, possibly due to their simplified or subjective nature, which may lack depth or scientific backing.

The results suggest that respondents prioritize content formats that combine expert authority with clarity and accessibility. While visual and narrative-based formats attract attention, credibility is primarily associated with the presence of professional expertise and informative depth, highlighting the importance of integrating expert-driven communication in digital health content.

Table 12: Type of Social Media platforms they regularly use to access health related content N=160

Types of Social media Platforms	Respondents	Percentage
Facebook	36	22.5%
Instagram	34	21.2%
WhtasApp	52	32.5%
YouTube	24	15%
Twitter/X	06	3.8%
Telegram	03	1.9%
LinkeIn	03	1.2%

The data presented in Table 13 indicates that WhatsApp is the most widely used platform for accessing health information among respondents, with 32.5% reporting its usage. This is followed by Facebook (22.5%) and Instagram (21.2%), which also serve as significant sources of health-related content. YouTube accounts for 15% of usage, indicating a moderate preference for video-based information. In contrast, platforms such as Twitter (3.8%), Telegram (1.9%), LinkedIn (1.9%), and health-specific applications (1.2%) are minimally utilized. This suggests that respondents are less inclined to rely on specialized or professional platforms for health information. The findings highlight a clear inclination toward easily accessible, familiar, and socially integrated platforms, particularly messaging and general social networking applications.
The results suggest that messaging platforms, particularly WhatsApp, play a dominant role in the dissemination and consumption of health information among urban women. The preference for such platforms may be attributed to their convenience, widespread adoption, and the ease of sharing information within personal networks such as family and peer groups.

However, this trend also raises concerns regarding the potential spread of unverified or misleading information, as messaging platforms often lack formal content regulation and verification mechanisms. While social media platforms like Facebook and Instagram also contribute significantly, their role appears secondary to interpersonal sharing channels. The findings indicate that health communication strategies targeting urban women should prioritize platforms with high user engagement, especially messaging applications, while simultaneously emphasizing the need for credible, verified, and professionally endorsed content to counter misinformation.

Table 13: Followed or subscribe to a health page/channel/account on these platforms

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	98	61.3%
No	62	38.7%
Total	160	100

Table 13 the majority of respondents, 61.3%, reported that they follow health-related pages or channels on social media, while 38.7% do not. This indicates that social media platforms serve as a major source of health information for urban women.

Table 14: Types of content on social media that trust most for health advice

Types of contents	Respondents	Percentage
Live sessions or webinars by doctors	44	27.5%
Health tips shared/stories	36	22.5%
Video demonstrations or tutorials	40	25%
Question-answers forums or groups	20	12.5%
Inforgraphics and health news	20	12.5%

The data in Table 14 indicates that live sessions or webinars conducted by doctors (27.5%) are considered the most trustworthy format of health information among respondents. This is closely followed by video tutorials (25%), which combine visual explanation with practical demonstration, making them both informative and engaging. Further, general health tips (22.5%) are also trusted by a considerable proportion of respondents, suggesting a preference for easily understandable and directly applicable information. In contrast, question-and-answer forums (12.5%) and infographics or news-based content (12.5%) receive relatively lower trust levels, possibly due to concerns about authenticity, depth, or lack of expert verification. These patterns indicate a clear inclination toward formats that involve professional expertise and direct interaction, along with content that provides clarity and practical guidance.

The findings suggest that professional involvement and interactive communication significantly enhance the perceived credibility of health information among urban women. Formats such as live sessions and webinars conducted by doctors are particularly trusted, as they offer real-time engagement, opportunities for clarification, and direct access to expert knowledge. While video tutorials also enjoy substantial trust

due to their clarity and accessibility, less interactive or generalized formats—such as infographics and Q&A forums—are perceived as less reliable. This highlights that credibility is strongly associated with both the presence of qualified professionals and the ability to engage interactively with the content. The results emphasize the importance of promoting expert-led, interactive, and user-engaging formats in digital health communication to enhance trust and effectiveness among urban women.

Table 15: Acted based on health content they saw on social media

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	48	30%
No	46	28.7%
Sometimes	66	41.3%
Total	160	100

Table 15 the finding indicates that 41.3% of respondents sometimes act on health advice obtained from social media, whiles 30% regularly act on such advice. However, 28.7% do not follow health advice from social media platforms. This suggests that social media has a moderate influence on health-related decision making.

Table 16: the main reasons behind their opinion regarding about mistrust a platform for health contents

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Too many fake or forwarded messages	52	32.5%
Lack of credible source	36	22.5%
Over-commercialized or sponsored posts	24	15%
Conflicting advice	28	17.5%
Poor quality content	20	12.5%

The data indicates that the primary reason for mistrust in health information among respondents is the prevalence of fake or forwarded messages (32.5%), highlighting the widespread circulation of unverified content on digital platforms. This is followed by the lack of credible sources (22.5%), suggesting that users are skeptical of information that is not supported by authentic or authoritative references. Additionally, conflicting health advice (17.5%) emerges as a significant concern, reflecting the confusion caused by inconsistent or contradictory information across different platforms.

Sponsored or promotional posts (15%) also contribute to mistrust, as respondents may perceive such content as biased or commercially motivated rather than informative. Furthermore, poor-quality content (12.5%) indicates dissatisfaction with the accuracy, clarity, or professionalism of available health information. The data reflects multiple dimensions of mistrust, ranging from content authenticity to presentation quality and underlying intent.

The findings clearly demonstrate that misinformation and lack of authenticity are the major factors undermining trust in social media-based health information among urban women. The dominance of fake or forwarded messages as a source of mistrust highlights the risks associated with peer-to-peer sharing on unregulated platforms, where verification mechanisms are often absent.

Moreover, the lack of credible sources and the presence of conflicting advice indicate a pressing need for standardized, evidence-based, and professionally validated health communication. The influence of sponsored content further suggests that commercial interests may negatively impact perceived credibility, leading users to question the intent behind the information. The results underscore the importance of strengthening content verification, source transparency, and quality control in digital health communication. Addressing these challenges is essential to building trust and ensuring that social media serves as a reliable source of health information for urban women.

Table 17: Health related posts they usually believe more on social media

Health related posts	Respondents	Percentage
Certified doctors/medical professionals	68	42.5%
Hospitals or health organization (e.g.,WHO, AIIMS)	38	23.8%
Health influence or fitness bloggers	20	12.5%
Celebrities sharing health advice	10	6.2%
Friends or family	24	15%

Table the data shows that 42.5% of respondents trust health information share by certified doctors, while 23.8% trust hospitals or health organizations. 15% trust information shared by friends or family, 12.5% trust bloggers, and only 6.2% trust celebrities. This clearly demonstrates that professional sources are considered more credible than influencers.

Table 18: The Credibility of the following source for health-related information on scale of

Opinion of the respondents	Credible	Very credible	Not credible
Certified doctors (MBBS, MD, etc)	48 (30.0%)	90 (56.3%)	22 (13.7%)
Government Health Departments (e.g., WHO, CDC)	42 (26.3%)	82 (51.2%)	36 (22.5%)
Fitness influencers or bloggers	60 (37.5%)	32 (20.0%)	68 (42.5%)
Celebrities or actors	28 (17.5%)	18 (11.3%)	114 (71.2%)
YouTube health channels	50 (31.3%)	38 (23.7%)	72 (45.0%)

Table 18 the findings indicates that 56.3% of respondents consider certified doctors very credible, while 30% consider them credible, and 13.7% consider them not credible. Government health department are regarded as very credible by 51.2%, credible by 26.3%, and not credible by 22.5% of respondents. Fitness influencers are considered credible by 37.5%, very credible by 20%, and not credible by 42.5%. Celebrities are considered not credible by 71.2%, while 17.5% consider them credible and 11.3% very credible. YouTube health channels are considered not credible by 45%, credible by 31.3%, and very credible by 23.7%.

Table 19: Opinion regarding health content shared by a non-expert or influencer

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	32	20%
No	88	55%
Not sure	40	25%
Total	160	100

Table 19 the result reveals that 55% of respondents do not trust health information shared by non-experts or influencers, while 25% are unsure, and only 20% trust such content. This suggests that urban women generally prefer information provided by qualified health professionals.

Table 20: Ever come across conflicting health advice on different social media platforms

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, Frequently	28	17.5%
Sometimes	74	46.3%
Rarely	38	23.7%
Never	20	12.5%
Total	160	100

Table 20 the findings show that 46.3% of respondents sometimes encounter conflicting health advice on social media, while 17.5% encounter it frequently. About 23.7% experience it rarely, and 12.5% have never encountered such situations. This indicates that contradictory health information is a common issue on social media platforms.

Table 21: opinion regarding response when they see contradictory health information on social media N=160

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
I ignore both source	18	11.2%
I look for official source to verify	72	45%
I believe the one that seems more popular or convincing	24	15%
I ask others or consult a doctor	46	28.8%

Table 21 the finding reveals that when faced with contradictory health information, 45% of respondents verify the information through official sources, while 28.8% consult doctors or others for clarification. 15% believe the more popular post, and 11.2% ignore both pieces of information. This suggests that most respondents attempt to confirm the authenticity of conflicting information.

Table 22: Exposure to misinformation of fake health news affected their overall trust in social media health content

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes, T trust less now	86	53.8%
No, I Continue to trust reliable source	48	30%
Not Sure	26	16.2%
Total	160	100

Table 22 More than half of the respondents, 53.8%, reported that exposure to fake health news has reduced their trust in social media health information. However, 30%

still trust reliable sources, while 16.2% remain uncertain. This highlights the significant impact of information on credibility perception.

Table 23: Following health advice from social media that turned out to be incorrect or harmful

Opinion of the respondents	Respondents	Percentage
Yes	24	15%
No	96	60%
I'm not sure	40	25%
Total	160	100

Table 23 the results show that 60% of respondents have never followed harmful health advice from social media, while 15% reported that they have, and 25% are unsure. This indicates that although most respondents remain cautions, some individuals may still be influenced by misleading information.

Table 24: Types of platform they felt that most prone to misleading or unverified health information

Types of Social media	Respondents	Percentage
Whatsapp	68	42.5%
Facebook	34	21.2%
Instagram	26	16.3%
YouTube	20	12.5%
Twitter	08	5%
Others	04	2.5%

Table 24 the majority of respondents (42.5%) believe that WhatsApp is the plstform where misleading health information is most commonly found. This is followed by Facebook (21.2%), Instagram (16.3%), YouTube (12.5%), Twitter (5%), and other platform (2.5%). This finding highlights the role of messaging platform in the spread of unverified health information.

IV. Conclusion

The present study examined the credibility and use of health communication on social media among women. The findings indicates that social media has become an important platform for accessing health- related information. A large proportion of respondents were young and well educated, which suggest that educated women are more active in using digital platforms to search for health information. Platforms such as WhatsApp, Facebook, and Instagram were found to be the most commonly used sources for health content, highlighting the growing role of social media in the dissemination of health awareness and information.

The Study also reveals that respondents place grater trust in health information shared by certified doctors, hospitals, and official health organizations compared to influencers, celebrities, or bloggers. Many respondents reported verifying health information by checking the source, content accuracy, or reference, and some cross-check information through Google searches or consultations with medical professionals. In addition formats such as expert interviews, live sessions by doctors, and video demonstrations and evidence-based communication increases credibility.

However, the findings also highlights challenges related to misinformation and conflicting health advice on social media platforms. Many respondents reported encountering fake or forwarded messages, particularly on messaging platform, which has reduced their overall trust in social media health content. Despite these concerns, social media continues to influence health behavior to some extent, as many respondents sometimes act on the advice they see online. Therefore promoting digital health literacy and encouraging credible health communication from verified medical professional and institutions is essentials to improve the reliability of health information on social media.

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