

**AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS OF INFORMATION DISORDERS AMONG  
STUDENTS OF KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN, NIGERIA**

*By*

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ND/23/LIS/FT/0040**

**SUBMITTED TO  
DEPARTMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE,  
INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY,  
KWARA STATE POLYTECHNIC, ILORIN**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF  
NATIONAL DIPLOMA (ND) IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE**

**JUNE, 2025**

## CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project titled “*Awareness and Perceptions of Information Disorders Among Students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria*” by **Elizabeth Oluwateni OGUNBANWO** meet the regulations guiding the award in National Diploma in Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin and is approved.

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## **DEDICATION**

My research work is dedicated to Allah (SWT) for being my ultimate source of strength and inspiration. In Him, I derived all powers needed to live, weather the storms and become an embodiment of hope to myself and the people around me.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

All praise is to Allah (SWT), the most beneficent, the most merciful and my peace and blessing of Allah be upon his messenger, prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H). My sincere appreciation goes to my parents for their concern, prayers and words of encouragements towards the completion of this programme. My utmost gratitude also goes to my supervisors Mr. Sulyman, S. A. for his moral and intellectual guidance and contribution towards the possibility of this project and all other lectures of the department.

To be given the privilege to contribute stream of knowledge make me appreciate the entire management of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, and my noble department of Library and Information Science and my fellow colleagues that made my stay on the citadel more interesting and all my friends without whom this great work could not be achieved.

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## **Abstract**

*This study examines the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted in this study. The population of this study are students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. Sample size of this study is 218 HND II students of Institute of Information and Communication technology, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. Sample Size Calculator ([www.calculator.net/sample-size-calculator.html](http://www.calculator.net/sample-size-calculator.html)) was used to determine the sample size. The Confidence level used was 95%, Margin error – 0.05%, Population proportion was 80%. Questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents. Data obtained was then presented and analysed using simple percentage and frequency table. Furthermore, result of findings revealed that students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria are aware of rumors, fake news and satire or parody. More so, findings point that friends, family and relatives, governments and politicians and journalists are the sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. However, findings of this study indicated that urge to share current information, for financial benefits and to feel a sense of belonging are the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. Finally, this study recommended that management of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria and other stakeholders should endeavor to sensitize the students on the danger of information disorders to the society.*

**Keyword:** Awareness, Perceptions, Information Disorders, Students, Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 Background to the Study**

Students are individuals who enrolled in institutions to gain theoretical and practical knowledge of their desire field or discipline of interest. These individuals are information consumers and are liable to engage in information disorders unconsciously or unaware. Anyaoku and Osuchukwu (2022) report that students who engage in information disorders spread inaccurate or biased information to their naive peers, who are incapable of recognising trustworthy sources, evaluating the veracity of information and confirming its authority and authenticity.

One of greatest strengths of human beings lies in their ability to collaborate to achieve more than they can achieve individually. Just as collaborations can be important strengths, human beings' inability to detect deceptions in information is one of their greatest weaknesses. Recently, the struggles of human beings with information's deceptions' detection have been the subject of scholarly and public attentions with the rise and spread of information disorders, which threatens public health and civic society (Jia, Lee, Moore & Decature, 2024). This implies that accuracy and quality of information have recently become fundamental issues of concern.

Basically, the need to educate or orientate the necessitates information. It is as a result of this that Sulyman, Adeyemi and Kolawole (2020) explained information as the end-product of processed and analysed data which contains meaning when communicated. Kolawole and Igwe (2016) extended information's purview to connote concepts that contain different meanings in different contexts. Information is an essential commodity needed to make



informed decisions in all spheres of human endeavours, including education, health, commerce, finance, and others (Eiriemiokhale & Sulyman, 2024).

The prevalent in the improper handling of information has become a scourge in societies globally. This is why Nasidi (2021) posited that the rise in contamination of the content of information and abnormalities in the production, distribution and consumption of information pose challenges to the worlds of academics specifically students, practitioners, policymakers and the entire community of media consumers. Similarly, Anyaoku and Osuchukwu (2022) claimed that students who engage in information disorders spread inaccurate or biased information to their naive peers, who are incapable of recognising trustworthy sources, evaluating the veracity of information and confirming its authority and authenticity.

Apparently, the mishandling of information is gaining traction among the students. The reason for this may be due to their poor awareness or perceptions. In describing the importance of awareness of information disorders in every engagement of students, Nwankwo et. al. (2019) explained awareness as the ability of students to know or realize the existence of information disorders. Awareness of information disorders constitutes the knowledge about its existence or understanding of it (Suleiman et. al, 2018).

In recommending ways to minimizing information disorders among students, Pasquetto, Lim and Bradshaw (2024) suggested that promoting the awareness of information disorders among students will enhance curbing its proliferation. This implies that if there is no awareness of information disorders, there will be no way to curb its proliferation. In other words, awareness triggers perceptions. Perceptions are the organization, identification, and interpretation of sensory information in order to represent and understand the presented information, or the environment. It is the way which information disorders is understood or interpreted among students.

For almost a decade, the study of information disorders has taken priority among policy circles, political elites, academic institutions, non-profitable organisation and the media. Substantial resources have been dedicated to identifying its effects, how and why it spreads and how to mitigate its harm. Yet, despite these efforts, it can sometimes feel as if the field is no closer to answering basic questions about information disorders' real-world impacts.

Information disorders have been a major challenge in risk communication and management of natural hazards. It creates obstacles by misleading the public about natural hazards, including risks and consequently can adversely impact individual citizens' behaviours. The origin and spread of information disorders involve a range of social, psychological and academic factors. The issue of what is regarded as valid or invalid information boils down to socially constructed persuasions and agreements about what is true and what is not (Shou, Kuru, Newman & Smithson, 2024).

The field of information disorders is facing several challenges, from attacks on academic freedom to polarising discourse about the nature and extent of the problem for digital wellbeing. Wardle and Derakshan (2017) wrote about information disorders with mis-information, mal-information and dis-information and the recent dil-information propounded by (Nasidi, 2022) as major issues or anomalies in information.

Kolawole (2022) submits that mis-information is false information being passed as true without a motive. Mal-information, on the other hand, is information that is based on reality, but used to inflict harm on a person, organisation or country. It is also the calculated fabrications or manipulations of information to achieve a purpose, while dis-information is seen as false information, and the person disseminating it knows it is false. It is a deliberate, intentional lie and points to people being actively dis-informed by malicious actors (Pace University, 2022; Staats, 2021; Wardle & Derakshan, 2017).

To foster credible research and informed public policy, Pasquetto, Lim and Bradshaw (2024) affirmed that research on information disorders should be locally focused, self-reflexive and interdisciplinary. Thus, addressing critical questions about what counts as information disorders and why it does, the vulnerabilities of specific communities and the socio-technical and sociopolitical conditions that shape information interpretation.

Since the time immemorial, information has never been free from different forms and tactics of manipulations by individuals and states, yet the current trend is beyond human expectations due to the influence of new information technologies (Wardle & Derakshan, 2017). Presently, proliferation of information disorders has made the issue more pressing and calls for urgent address. Hence, to combat the menace of information disorder, a deeper and critical understanding of the information disorder ecosystem is necessary. This study tends to examine the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

One of the most important aspects of knowing the source of information disorders is its motivation (Eiriemiokhale & Sulyman, 2024). Students rely heavily on information to solve problems and make decisions regarding their academic achievement, personal survival and improving their standard of living. In an attempt to demonstrate their mastery of information sourcing and access, majority of students are tempted to produce and spread inaccurate, non-factual and unverified information, with no accountability for the consequences on their socio-cultural, political, economic, cultural or educational affairs (Nasidi, 2022).

Furthermore, Nasidi (2021) stressed that technological affordances and excess of information are examples of novel anomalies that make it easier to fabricate, manipulate information and

make information consumption more difficult. The issues are unique in the sense that they are unprecedented in the world and are constantly evolving like chameleons. Meanwhile, Anyaoku and Osuchukwu (2022) reported that students who engage in information disorders spread inaccurate or biased information to their naive peers, who are incapable of recognising trustworthy sources, evaluating the veracity of information, and confirming its authority. These issues must be addressed because they are growing more widespread among students.

Numerous researches such as Kolawole (2022); Hamzat (2021); Wardle and Derakshan (2017); Anyaoku and Osuchukwu (2022) have reported varieties of reasons for students' involvement in information disorders; but the reasons were categorised under the political, economic, and psycho-social domains. However, these studies do not address the tendency to overgeneralise findings on information disorders among students. Thus, to fill this void, this study aims to examine the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to examine the awareness and perceptions of information disorders by students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

1. determine the level of awareness of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria,
2. ascertain the sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria,
3. assess the perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria, and;

4. determine the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

The following are the research questions that this study will seek to answer:

1. what is the level of awareness of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria?
2. what are the sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria?
3. what is the perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria?
4. what are the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This study is significant because it will create awareness of the subject understudying among students, lecturers and the polytechnic communities at large. The research will examine awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students which will provide more resources and knowledge to be shared among different institutions. More so, the study will add to the existing literature, a research study that focuses on methods of creating awareness of information disorders among students that can lead to accurate collection, evaluation, utilization and maintenance of information in the society.

This research is going to be significantly effective to various individuals, namely researchers, stakeholders, polytechnics, universities and the field of library and information science. The

findings of this study will expose students to various types, level of awareness and perceptions, sources and causes of information disorders.

## **1.6 Scope and Limitations**

This study will examine the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. Also, this study will be limited to the students of the Institute of Information and Communication Technology (IICT), Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. This study will adopt descriptive survey design. This study will be conducted between December, 2024 and July, 2025.

## **1.7 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Awareness:** this is the level of knowledge, view, well-informed, interest or perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

**Perceptions:** this is the ability to see, hear or the way which information disorders is understood or interpreted among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

**Information Disorders:** this is the production, distribution and consumption of unverified, inaccurate and non-factual information, which its awareness and perceptions will be examined among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

**Students:** these are individuals who are enrolled in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin where awareness and perceptions of information disorders will be examined.

**Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin:** this is a diploma-awarding institution of teaching and learning in Ilorin, Kwara State, Nigeria where the students engages in information disorders.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is set out to review the existing body of literature relating to the topic understudying by citing the works, definitions, revelations, positions, arguments, notions, views, recommendations or submissions of scholars, authorities and researchers. Hence, this chapter will be arranged in the following order:

2.2 Concept of Information Disorders

2.3 Information Disorders and Students

2.4 Types of Information Disorders

2.5 Level of Awareness of Information Disorders

2.6 Perceptions of Information Disorders

2.7 Sources of Information Disorders

2.8 Perceived Causes of Information Disorders

2.9 Summary of the Literature Reviewed

#### **2.2 Concept of Information Disorders**

Historically, the concept of information disorders was coined by Wardle and Darakhshan in 2017. One of the aims of Wardle and Darakhshan (2017) was to provide an inclusive concept about the new phenomenon that disrupts the quality and safety of information. Wardle and Darakhshan (2017) tried to explain information disorders; however, they did not give a comprehensive conceptual definition of the concept. Therefore, Nasidi (2021) defined

information disorders as the rise in the novel abnormalities that imperil the accuracy and safety of the intent and the processes of information production, distribution and consumption.

Information disorders is a complex phenomenon that has rented the air of information space (Hamzat, 2021). It applies to all cases of false information and is not limited to a specific topic. It encompasses distorting facts, manipulating information, sharing information without understanding the consequences, vilifying others' beliefs and faiths, and running behind propaganda and fake news with or without a vested interest in some kind of disorders (Kondel, 2020).

Lim and Bradshaw (2023) submitted that information disorders broadly refers to the outcome of the information revolution, wherein people are supplied with contaminated information, which is of less importance, irrelevant, unreliable and unauthentic, which lacks exactness and precision, always has an adverse effect on the society at large. It was a related concept that shares similar conceptual work with information pollution which was first used by Paek-Jae-Cho in 2002 during his speech at a 14<sup>th</sup> biennial conference of the International Telecommunications Society (ITS).

Information disorder is a manifestation of broader issues in today's information-saturated world. Pavilion (2025) defines it broadly as any distortion of information that can be classified into three types, namely misinformation disinformation and malinformation. Disinformation misinformation and malinformation are the categories of harmful information that make up information disorder. These categories have similarities and differences. The author further explains that the mechanism behind persuasion about misinformation could benefit from understanding persuasion about information in general. Some key psychological



aspects of people's susceptibility to mis- and disinformation centre around how people accept or reject knowledge, process information and perceive knowledge and truth (Pavilion, 2025).

Meanwhile, critical social and environmental aspects such as media and group dynamics facilitate the transmission and generation of mis- and disinformation (Pavilion, 2025). Wu et al. (2019) argued that in the spectrum of media containing Information Disorder, distinguishing between "Mis-information" and "Dis-information" is relatively difficult. The key difficulty lies in determining whether the content was intentionally and deliberately constructed to deceive, to mislead or to cause harm. Disinformation, misinformation, and fake news are hence important due to the role they play in terms of forging and sustaining misperceptions (Pavilion, 2025; Wu et al., 2019). However, information disorders have been further distilled by Nasidi (2022) to unravel more challenges they pose to society.

Nasidi (2022) posited that dil-information is also inherent in information disorders. The author defined dil-information as genuine information diluted with false information, misinterpreted or misrepresented with or without intent to harm. Terms like "mostly true"; "half true"; "mostly false" and "misleading" are used to classify claims of dil-information. Information disorders could cause misjudgments, unrest and wrong choices by students, particularly when they do not have the media literacy skills to evaluate the content; this could have dire consequences on a nation's production and consumption levels (Tayo, 2022). Misperceptions, in turn, have an impact both on students' opinions and behaviors.

However, these are not the first review of research on misinformation and related areas, most reviews thus far have neither been systematic nor interdisciplinary (Krishna & Thompson, 2021; Tandoc et al., 2018). Kapantai et al. (2021) focused on more conceptual issues such as creating a unified taxonomical framework. Jerit and Zhao (2020) provided a detailed (non-exhaustive) account of sources of and solutions to misinformation, with a particular focus on

the importance of corrections. Lazer et al. (2018) followed a similar strategy, examining the history and prevalence of information disorders as well as interventions to fake news.

These studies especially highlight means to empower individuals in terms of media literacy and algorithmic detection. On the more empirical side, there are several small-n studies, especially in specific topic areas such as health and education. Suarez-Lledo and Alvarez-Galvez (2021) assessed the prevalence of health misinformation on social media, conducting a review of 69 studies. Similarly, in a non-systematic review, Swire-Thompson and Lazer (2020) investigated how individuals interact with misinformation in academic environment, its consequences for educational outcomes as well as potential countermeasures.

Both theoretical and empirical small-scale reviews are of course highly valuable. They provide a window to specific subsets of misinformation, disinformation and broad information disorders research. What is harder to come by in extant research are, however, larger systematic research reviews. The review by Arqoub et al. (2020) is based on 103 studies on fake news that were published between 2000 and 2018. Among other things, their findings showed that research on fake news increased sharply in 2017–2018, that research in the area is done in several disciplines but dominated by communication research. Furthermore, the study revealed that most research is quite theoretical and that qualitative methods were more than twice as common as quantitative methods. It also showed that by far the most studies focused on North America, with Europe as a far second.

Ha et al. (2021) review is based on 142 journal articles on fake news and misinformation published between 2008 and 2017. In terms of scope, number of investigated articles and investigated aspects, their study is more comprehensive. Among other things, their findings confirmed that research in this area is interdisciplinary, but mostly published in communication and psychology journals. In contrast to Arqoub et al. (2020), they find that

quantitative methods are the most common, followed by conceptual articles and articles applying qualitative methods.

However, the most common topic was “effects of fake news/misinformation,” followed by solutions/strategies to combat or reduce “fake news/misinformation” and “audience’s determination/recognition of fake news/misinformation.” Similar to the findings by Arqoub et al. (2020), most studies focused on North America.

Furthermore, the review by Madrid-Morales and Wasserman (2022) is based on an analysis of about 3,800 articles that mention misinformation, disinformation or fake news in the abstracts and that were published between 2000 and 2020. It is thus the most comprehensive review in terms of time period and number of articles. However, unlike other aforementioned studies, they focused on the discipline of the journals publishing the articles, how often the key terms were used and whether the articles refer to countries in the Global North versus the Global South. Among other things, their findings show a large increase in the number of published articles, that most articles are published in communication journals and that most research focuses on countries in the Global North.

Recently, the study of Eirimiokhale and Sulyman (2024) assessed the prevalence of information disorders among undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete. The study adopted the descriptive survey design and its population consisted of 25,277 Kwara State University undergraduate students in Malete. The study's findings revealed that lack of awareness of information disorders and the desire to be respected by colleagues were the major causes of information disorders among students. Also, findings of the study revealed that the prevalent information disorders among students were clickbaits, hoaxes, biases and imposter websites. Fake reviews, rumours, hoaxes and propaganda were the highest information disorders rampant among students and some of the strategies to reduce the

prevalence of information disorders are identifying the sources of information and those that can be victimised by such information (Eirimiokhale & Sulyman, 2024).

While these systematic and interdisciplinary literature reviews have provided many important insights, from a contemporary vantage point, they suffer from two shortcomings. Firstly, only one of them includes research on disinformation, which can be argued to be a very if not the most important type of false and misleading information. Secondly, none of them examined student's awareness and perception of information disorders as the present study. Lastly, overall, they are rather descriptive, stopping short of using the results to identify key research gaps and outstanding research problems.

### **2.3 Information Disorders and Students**

Young people's lives are dominated by the Internet. According to McGrew et al. (2017), young adults spend an average of 9 hours online and students have a high chance of learning about the world through their social media platforms than through traditional media sources. It is important that students know how to make a difference between false and true information from the flashy contents that appear on their screens.

From a study conducted at the Stanford History Education Group, it was demonstrated that students have a hard time making a difference between real news and fabricated news (Staffers & Hackett, 2017). The study included students from middle school, high school and college students from 12 states of the United States of America. These students were presented information from articles, tweets and comments. A total of 7804 responses was collected (McGrew et al., 2017). Domonoske (2016) stated that a shocking observation was made by the researchers, of the failure that students presented to distinguish real news from false news and how consistent the responses were.

The majority of middle school students (80%) believed that sponsored contents were real information. The researchers said that many people assume that because young people spend a large amount of their time on social media, they might have more knowledge on what they find there, but this was contradicted by the results they got from their study. Another observation made by the researchers was that an “about” section of a web page, if well-presented and polished, was able to persuade the students that the site was legitimate and they would tend to naively believe the content without any supporting evidence (Domonoske, 2016).

Many of the high school students were unable to differentiate real from false information on Facebook. Two posts about the announcement of Donald Trump candidacy for president were presented to the students. One post was from the Fox News account and it had a blue checkmark to indicate that it was verified. The other post was from an account that looked similar to Fox News, but was a fake account. Only 25% of the students recognized and explained the meaning of the blue checkmark. More than 30% of the students claimed that the fake account was more truthful (Wineburg & McGrew, 2016).

A link to a tweet from a source called MoveOn about gun owners’ feelings on background checks was sent to undergraduate students. They were asked to evaluate the tweet and state the reason why it might or might not be a decent data source. Few students noticed that it was based on a poll done by a professional polling firm, therefore increasing its chance of being a decent source. Less than a third of the students mentioned that the source had political agenda behind the tweet, and that is reason enough to consider the source as unreliable. More than half of the students did not consider checking the links contained in the tweet before they could evaluate the worth of the data (McGrew et al., 2017).

At Stanford, undergraduates were asked to evaluate articles from two organizations’ sites.

One organization is the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), which publishes the journal of Pediatrics, has a following of 65,000 members and started in 1930. The other organization is the American College of Pediatricians (ACPed). It separated from AAP in 2002, is against the parenting of same-sex couples and claims that homosexuality has a link with pedophilia. The students spent up to 10 minutes to evaluate the articles from the two organizations and were not restricted to access anything they wished online. The results from this exercise showed that more than half of the students came to a conclusion that the article from ACPeds was more trustworthy. Also, the students who preferred the article from AAP, were unable to find the difference between the two organizations (Domonske, 2016).

## **2.4 Types of Information Disorders**

Presently, we live in a post-truth world where fake, half-truths and alternative facts are increasingly commonplace (Cooke, 2017). The sheer speed and volume at which information is produced and consumed make the lines between news and entertainment, fact and opinion harder to discern. In today's online and offline environment, news stories from reputable sources can be displayed side-by-side with opinions and sensationalism (Figueira & Oliveira, 2017).

There is a significant amount of ambiguity surrounding the precise delineation between malinformation, disinformation, misinformation and dilinformation. While misinformation refers to the unintentional sharing of false or inaccurate information, disinformation is the “deliberate creation and sharing of information known to be false” (Mele et al., 2017). To achieve greater visibility, purveyors of information disorders have at their disposal an arsenal of methods, such as "feeding inaccurate quotes or stories to intermediaries or knowingly amplifying biased or misleading information" and further categories such methods into several terms (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017).

Santos-d'Amorim and Miranda (2021) extensively discussed various information disorders, noting that because the information has numerous properties, intentionality is a huge factor in its causes and use. The authors further highlighted bias, fake reviews, rumours, misleading information, propaganda, retraction of papers, conspiracy theories, clickbait and hoaxes. More so, satire or parody, imposter websites, fake reviews, phishing, political use of sensitive information, misuse of personal/confidential information, filter bubbles and echo chambers are also information disorders people engaged in. Meanwhile, Wardle and Derakshan (2017) identified satire and parody, false connection, misleading content, false context, imposter content, manipulated content and fabricated content as information disorders. The meaning each form of information disorders are further explained below:

### **Fake Review**

A fake review is any review that is misleading, fabricated or incentivized in a way that doesn't represent a genuine customer experience. These can include reviews written by paid individuals, AI-generated reviews or even disgruntled competitors looking to harm a business's reputation (InMoment, 2025).

Social Institute (2023) submitted that the prevalence of fake reviews and misinformation online presents significant challenges for students and it is on the rise. Earlier this year, U.S. PIRG, a consumer research advisory group and researcher, found that 30% to 40% of online reviews are fabricated or not genuine. Fake reviews can deceive students, who are particularly susceptible to the influence of online information. With limited purchasing experience and often tight budgets, students rely heavily on online reviews to make informed decisions. However, when confronted with fake reviews, they risk being deceived, leading to misguided purchases and wasted money and resources reputation (InMoment, 2025; Social Institute, 2023). Fake reviews not only deceive students but also perpetuate the cycle of

misinformation, making it more important than ever to teach students how to identify fake reviews. By equipping them with the skills to discern between genuine and fabricated content, you can help your students protect themselves and others from falling prey to misleading information (The Social Institute, 2023).

### **Satire or Parody**

This form of information disorders has no intention to cause harm but have potential to fool. Although, satire or parody can even be treated as forms of art, they can also be used to intentionally spread rumors and conspiracies and in case of any accusations, they can get off lightly as something that shouldn't be treated seriously/ literally among students. It can also be easily get re-shared or distorted and start functioning outside its original or humorous context among students.

### **Misleading Content**

Misleading content means the use of information to frame an issue or individual. It's about cropping photos, or choosing quotes or statistics selectively in order to support an argument.

### **Click Bait**

Students can often see this kind of manipulated content without even knowing about it, as spotting it requires having some specific knowledge, doing research and checking the sources (for example, the source of a quote in a given message).

### **Imposter Content**

This refers to a when genuine sources are impersonated. This form of information disorders takes advantage of the trust students may have in a specific organization, person, brand etc. Many phishing and smishing (phishing of mobile phones via messages) attempts are created



this way: some well-known brand's logo or name is used in order to create an impression that you're receiving a legit content. And it's enough to be distracted or in a hurry, to sometimes fall victim to such manipulation.

### **Fabricated Content**

Fabricated content means when the content of an information is 100% false, designed to deceive and do harm. The only limit is the imagination of the creator's of such content. Distinguishing between the real and fabricated content is extremely difficult to the naked eye. If students have seen any "deepfakes," that can be often categorized as "fabricated content", you know how deeply it impacts our trust in the messages we see (HiveMind, 2025).

### **False content**

This is when genuine content is shared with false contextual information. It is when a picture is re-shared to fit a new narrative would be an example here. It is a powerful form of information disorder, as the content used is genuine, so it cannot be denied, but is reframed in a dangerous way to support a certain point.

### **Hoaxes**

A hoax can be defined as current issues that are used as political weapons, irrelevant truths or deliberately spread false news (Awaliyah et al., 2021). Thus, it is better if the hoax can be explained, identified and classified to reduce the danger posed (Brianna et al., 2019). Many types of research related to hoaxes have been carried out in the last five years, due to the increase in the number of hoax news in the community.

Hoax is news that is intentionally made to disguise the original news (Stanley et al., 2021). The first hoax news recorded in history began in 1661. The spread of hoax news can also be spread in any form, ranging from words that come out of the mouth, news printed on paper

and others (Bonet-Jover et al., 2021). Along with the development of communication technology, the spread of hoax news occurs very quickly, which was initially only known by a small area, can develop in the wider community (Saputra, 2020). Hoax news can enter any field, for example in the academic, religious, health, technology and political fields (Sumardi et al., 2019).

Hoaxes can influence many students and can easily tarnish an image and credibility (Broder & Kunert, 2021). Hoaxes can aim to influence readers with false information so that readers take action according to the contents of the hoax. As a message of false and misleading information, hoaxes can also frighten people who receive them (Martens et al., 2018).

### **Bias**

According to the Oxford English Dictionary, bias is an inclination, leaning, tendency, bent; a preponderating disposition or propensity; predisposition towards; predilection; prejudice. Bias is a point of view that may influence how information is conveyed and processed. Bias as a form of information disorders means that an expression of opinion or position without taking into account or including any counters argument or evidence to the contrary. The content is therefore unbalanced. Sometimes bias can be easy to spot. On other occasions it can be much more subtle. Either way, bias reflects its creator's world view and particularly if strongly expressed, an unwillingness to change regardless of accuracy or evidence to the contrary. This bias is dangerous because it can mislead student's perception by conveying false information as truth (Bonet-Jover et al., 2021).

### **Conspiracy Theories**

Conspiracy theories are usually conceived as explanations for events that provoke widespread social anxiety and uncertainty, conditions under which people are eager for explanations.

Conspiracy theories about Jews spread by individuals and groups since at least the Middle Ages, often for religious reasons. Christians discriminated and even persecuted Jews as outliers.

## **Rumors**

A rumor is unverified information passed from person to person. It has negative connotations, often being dismissed as idle talk or gossip. But rumors are neither good nor bad. They can be true or false, or partly true. Rumors are stories of uncertain truth. They often spread in communities during epidemics when people feel fear or anxiety about the disease. Rumors often provide an explanation for what is unknown about the disease, even if the explanation is not true (IFRC, 2023).

## **Phishing**

Phishing schemes often use spoofing techniques to lure students in and get them to take the bait. These scams are designed to trick students into giving information to criminals that they shouldn't have access to. In a phishing scam, students might receive an email that appears to be from a legitimate business and is asking to update or verify personal information by replying to the email or visiting a website (FBI, 2025).

These attacks often exploit the credibility crisis created by fake news, tricking individuals with emails that mimic legitimate offers, such as significant discounts, thereby luring them into clicking on malicious links designed to steal personal information.

## **Propaganda**

Propaganda often has a negative connotation, but propaganda may not always be harmful or untrue. Propaganda is information disseminated to promote a particular cause or point of view to encourage a certain attitude, response or action. People have utilized propaganda to

advocate positive actions such as rationing and enlisting in the military during the world wars and in more recent times, to encourage greater seatbelt usage and reduce smoking (Pavillon, 2025). However, propaganda is often used by our adversaries to promote negative attitudes against us or initiatives against our interests. Propaganda can, and often does, include disinformation or malinformation.

### **Echo Chamber**

Nguyen (2020) described echo chamber in an epistemic environment in which students encounter beliefs and opinions that coincide with their own; that is, “a self-reinforcing mechanism that moves the entire group toward more extreme positions” (Cinelli et al. 2021). Echo chamber describes “a situation where only certain ideas, information and beliefs are shared.”

### **Filter Bubble**

Dubois and Blank (2018) defined filter bubble as “algorithmic filtering which personalizes content presented on social media. The authors explained filter bubble as a state of intellectual isolation that can result from personalized searches, recommendation systems, and algorithmic curation. The search results are based on information about the user, such as their location, past click-behavior, and search history.

### **Fake news**

The term "fake news" is often used as a catch-all to refer to these three types of information disorder and conflates their definitions, thus is not a useful term. Furthermore, fake news has been highly politicised and used as more than just a label for false and misleading information. The widespread use of the term “fake news” has been recognized to be problematic on a few accounts. Firstly, the term has been highly politicized and used as more

than just a label for false and misleading information. Fake news has been deployed as a weapon against news agencies as a way of undermining reporting that people in power do not like<sup>13</sup>. Secondly, the term also conflates the various definitions of Information Disorder. These definitions were constructed to quantify and discuss a phenomenon that is more complex than what “fake news” is able to envelop.

## **2.5 Level of Awareness of Information Disorders**

Digital information revolution has fundamentally disrupted our society. Besides subverting traditional hierarchical models of information flow, it raised widespread concerns over the quality of the information in the post-truth era (Douai, 2019). In late 2016, Oxford Dictionaries nominated “post-truth” as the word of the year, defining it as “relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief” (Oxford Dictionaries, 2016). A post-truth society is one in which subjective viewpoints and unverified assumptions rival valid scientific facts. In a time when truth is networked by peers, there is a counter-fact for every fact, adding to the confusion of navigating the sea of information (Anderson & Raine, 2017).

Furthermore, dissemination of information through various media channels is prone to tertiary institution’s students because of their high media usage activities. This aligns with the submission of Guess (2018) that media has experienced a significant surge in popularity among the younger generation. Thus, it is crucial to comprehend the dynamics of information disorders awareness within this specific demographic.

In higher education institutions, students are usually psychologically open to new ideas. This is a critical stage for their learning and it is important to offer them the instruction and reasoning that will allow them to use their critical thinking skills in their learning environment. Skills that concern information disorders can be taught at any time because it is

a big topic even in the non-academic world and students can apply what they have learned in their personal lives (Bahige, 2019).

Subsequently, as the old saying goes; “knowledge is power.” In relation to this affirmation, Banks (2017) argued that if students are aware that they are psychologically programmed to believe the first version of information that they hear, they can learn to insert skepticism into their way of analyzing information. This makes it harder to believe information disorders since there will already be an assumption that the news might be fake. It becomes easier to reject the first information knowing that the brain tends to hold to it (Burkhardt, 2017). Making them aware of the functioning of their brains can improve their performance in the acquisition of news (Banks, 2017).

Furthermore, whether the aim of any form of information disorders is bad or good, the public should understand that these practices still exist until now, although it is rarely apparent in communication. Yani (2020) argued that an information disorder practice is veiled in many communication practices, such as public relations and journalism. Therefore, the public should be capable of detecting and understanding the exercise of information disorders. Typically, it is called information disorders awareness.

Although, information disorders awareness has not been a popular term despite the urgency. One of the institutions that realize the importance of this awareness is the Peace and Conflict Journalism Network (PECOJON) that frequently conduct training for journalists to understand information disorders practices in their surroundings. This institution also aims to make the journalists not to be information disorders agents that spread false or inaccurate information in their coverage (Yani, 2020). Information disorders awareness is defined as individuals’ knowledge and recognition of the existence and prevalence of fake news, fake reviews, propaganda and phishing in the media landscape (Vosoughi et al., 2018). Contrarily,

Guess et al. (2018) affirmed that this awareness encompasses the ability to identify deceptive techniques employed to manipulate information and the skill to distinguish between genuine and false news.

Torres et al. (2018) opined that when individuals recognize the potential for misinformation in news from a specific source, they may perceive that source as incompetent, leading to doubts about its integrity. This suggests that high level of information disorders awareness may diminish the inclination to share false information (Torres et al., 2018). In the same vein, Apuke and Omar (2020) affirmed that those possessing the necessary skills and awareness of information disorders may approach dubious or inaccurate content with greater skepticism, thereby mitigating the impact of false information on society.

Consequently, studies have raised the theme of students as subjects because they are the largest users of social media and have intense digital access (Saddam et al., 2021). Saputra (2020) pointed that in accessing information as to their main information medium, they use news from the internet compared to other formal news. Especially when teenagers are in a developmental and impulsive phase so they are quite vulnerable to hoax news if they are not balanced with a good understanding (Yaddarabullah & Permana, 2021).

In line with this, studies are needed that help in interpreting students' abilities in understanding information disorders. This is necessary as an initial step of prevention through mentoring students to understand more deeply in analyzing information, especially those obtained on social media (Weeks et al., 2015). However, to assess individuals' levels of information disorders awareness, researchers have developed various scales and indices, covering dimensions such as familiarity with common information disorders tactics, the capability to spot misleading headlines and proficiency in fact-checking (Guess et al., 2018; Weeks et al., 2015).

Additionally, experimental studies have been conducted to investigate how interventions aimed at enhancing information disorders awareness impact individuals' behaviors and decision-making processes (Pennycook & Rand, 2019a). Guess et al. (2018) opined that several factors contribute to shaping individuals' levels of information disorders awareness. Firstly, higher levels of media literacy have been linked to greater information disorders awareness. This aligns with the postulation of Bergstrom et al. (2018) that media literacy programs aim to enhance critical thinking skills and instruct individuals on how to evaluate information sources, making them less susceptible to information disorders.

Furthermore, Guess et al. (2018) argued that there is a positive correlation between educational attainment and information disorders awareness. This correlates with the view of Khan and idris (2019); Kumar and Geethakumari (2014); Pennycook and Rand (2019b) that individuals with higher levels of education tend to be more discerning consumers of news and better equipped to identify information disorders. The authors finally submitted that research older individuals often have higher levels of information disorders awareness than younger generations. Younger individuals, who are more immersed in digital media, may be exposed to a greater volume of fake news and misinformation (Pennycook & Rand, 2019b).

In spite of the importance of information disorders awareness in the reduction of false and malicious information circulation, the study on information disorders awareness among young people, particularly tertiary institution's students, are very rare. Previous research has either investigated why people share fake news, pre-editors of fake news sharing among social media users or social media users' intention to verify news before sharing on social media (Apuke & Omar, 2020; Pundir et al., 2021). Hence, limited studies have investigated on the sources and perceptions of this phenomenon, with a focus on students, who are often the most active users of major media platforms.



## **2.6 Perceptions of Information Disorder**

Scholarly inquiries on students' perception date back to the turn of 21<sup>st</sup> Century, that is to say, nearly three decades have passed since researchers emphasized that systematic inquiry of information disorders should be seen from students' perceptions. Perception is a key component of several theoretical frameworks used in social sciences research. It involves recognizing and interpreting sensory stimuli.

Bahige (2019) posited that perception is closely associated with attention processes in that perception is the ability to make sense of the surrounding environment, while attention is the ability to concentrate on the perceived stimuli. Rai, Sidhu and Sharma (2022) affirmed that perception simply refers to "a person's evaluation of any psychological object." These perception judgments are made mainly by items of knowledge, which are dependent on three general categories of information, information about past behaviour, own cognitive information and psychological information.

Furthermore, student perception of information disorders refers to the way students view and interpret information, experiences and interactions within an educational setting. It encompasses their understanding, beliefs, and attitudes towards learning, teachers and the environment. However, Jawaid et al. (2018) opined that academic environment includes departments, faculty and institution. In this sense, not only in-class activities but also off-class pedagogical happenings fall within the purview of students' perception.

Scholars have stated along this line that student-based information is important "to reveal patterns of student satisfaction" (Jawaid et al., 2018). After three decades of such advocacy, irrespective of various doubts cast against the usefulness of such research on contribution to the level of students' satisfaction, students' perception as useful indicator of quality information has drawn attention of numerous scholars.

To frame this notion, recent studies are considered. Gómez-Diago (2022) analysed university students' perspectives on AI based on research and teaching experiences in the Journalism Degree programme. García-Marín (2021) investigated Generation Z journalists' opinions on information disorders. Quevedo-Redondo et al. (2022) also evaluated encouraging Degree students to acquire competencies by applying a pre-bunking strategy with news games. Additionally, Pérez-Escoda et al. (2022) examined the strategies and deficiencies within the university community for combating information disorders, proposing digital literacy as a solution to the problem.

Furthermore, a study on undergraduates' news evaluation was conducted on 91 undergraduates at Purdue University (Zakharov et al., 2019). Most participants identified fake news as “phony facts, false information, misinformation, fabricated news, both intentional and unintentional”. This result aligns with most scholars' definitions, which also emphasize the content aspect of information disorders. In terms of purpose, 47 percent of the students defined information disorders from the aspect of intention. They believe information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of amusement, to draw attention, for financial gain, to mislead or to advance a political or personal agenda.

More so, the findings of the study further revealed that most students believe that information disorders is used to “draw attention and mislead people.” Some scholars believe that, in most of the cases, by drawing notice and misleading people to believe certain propaganda, the real intention behind fake news might be to seek either political or financial gain. Likewise, students also see advertisements and “pop-up links” that include sponsored content as a kind of information disorders. They appear to have problems discerning between news articles and commercials on news sites because they encounter both in the same context (Zakharov et al., 2019).

Bahige (2019) also conducted a study which was aimed at investigating the perceptions of South African students on the propagation of news on social media. Findings of this study showed that the students indicated that they trust their social media platforms as news sources. They also indicated that they can recommend them to their friends, but also that they can consider acquiring news from social media if they friends or family recommended them. The results also showed that students indicated that they trust the news they acquire from social media.

Some of the respondents indicated that they would share news on social media if they were convinced of the credibility of the news. However, some of the respondents indicated that they would share interesting news on social media even if they are not sure of the credibility of the news. The perspective that students have on the security of social media applications is also presented in this study. Thus, it is essential to ascertain the sources of information disorders to further unravel the perception of information disorders among students particularly in higher institution of learning.

## **2.7 Sources of Information Disorders**

The spread of information that is false or misleading whether by word-of-mouth, media or otherwise is an age-old phenomenon. Yet advances in technology, increasing access to both traditional and media changes in how people interact with information (e.g. declining levels of trust in news, people becoming more active producers and sharers of content and wishing to create a ‘social identity’ through information sharing) are propelling the spread of false information at a speed and scale not seen before (BBC Media Action (2025)). This has resulted in information ecosystems that are dangerously affected by information disorder.

Reid (2022) submitted that governments and political actors have long been fans of public manipulation techniques to serve their agenda. This correlates with the affirmation of BBC

Media Action (2025) who opined that the sources of information disorders vary, from governments or politicians, scammers, conspiracy theorists or celebrities, to religious or traditional leaders, relatives and friends. More so, Jawaid (2018) posited that trusted public figures (e.g. journalists, celebrities, politicians, local or religious leaders) can amplify false or misleading information that might have remained ‘fringe’ by drawing attention to it among large audiences. Although, democracy and a free press can hold them to account, it doesn’t stop attempts to deceive.

Reid (2022) further affirmed that activists, marketers and businesses are prone to be the sources of information disorders. Furthermore, individual hoaxers is one of the most famous examples of a hoaxer in the social media age which came during Hurricane Sandy, when one well-connected Twitter user gleefully spread lies of unfolding chaos as the storm hit New York (Reid, 2022).

Bahige (2019) affirmed that fake news sites are worrying because of recent development that enables the ability of anyone to publish anything online. The growth in fake news sites which publish spurious or ‘satirical’ stories to feed on people’s fears, interests or passions (Reid, 2022). Additionally, unintentional propagators are by far the most common sources of information disorders. Apuke and Omar (2020) and Pundir et al. (2021) submitted that the rate at which people share things and push them out and that causes them to go viral. Thus, Students are more likely to trust their friends and family on social media than journalists by more than 30 percentage points.

In addition, the availability and accessibility of large-scale information sources have complicated the process of assessing the credibility and the believability of information, thereby prompting a rethinking of long-standing assumptions and narratives (Jawaid, 2018). As social media are becoming the main vehicle of information production and consumption

online, students have shifted from being passive consumers of information, to being active content producers (Pundir et al., 2021).

Layering of sources on the Internet has overshadowed the role of professional gatekeepers. Against this background of decentralized media production, individuals tend to rely more on cognitive heuristics rather than systematically processing information to assess the credibility of information sources (Metzger, et al., 2010). This is consistent with recent research of Kang and Sundar (2016)) which shows that users instead of systematically processing the content of a website tend to rely on peripheral cues of a website to assess its credibility.

Furthermore, the study showed that twenty-two students (24.7 percent) indicated information disorders comes from sources that are less known, have no peer review, have non-credible or untraceable authorship, or some combination of the three. Most student remarks associate information disorders with online stories, especially on social media (some mentioned Facebook postings and online chat groups). Some students considered well-known traditional media, such as CNN or Fox, as credible sources and tended to believe that they do not report information disorders (Kang & Sundar, 2016).

However, the rate of change has outpaced measures that could curb the problem, leaving students susceptible to consuming, sharing or acting on false and misleading information. This matters for students making critical decisions about their lives and livelihoods and influences how they participate in society and interact with each other. Furthermore, the sprouting of information disorders tends to have a tendentious influence on information's genuineness, accuracy and factuality with various sources such as the aforementioned ones.

## **2.8 Perceived Causes of Information Disorders**

In our digital age, with easy access to a vast array of information, one would think that readers would naturally be exposed to a wide range of perspectives. However, the opposite seems to be happening, especially in countries like the Nigeria, where people often seek out news that reinforces their existing beliefs and avoid content that challenges them.

Interacting with familiar and predictable individuals facilitates communication and enables behavioral change in various spheres, including nation-building processes (Bazzi et al., 2019, Mousa, 2020, Lowe, 2021), financial decision-making (Fisman et al., 2017, Fisman et al., 2020) and experimental games (Habyarimana et al., 2007, Bicchieri et al., 2022). These studies has showed that people tend to prefer information that is congruent with existing beliefs and attitudes (confirmation bias, selective exposure), as well as counter-argue or avoid information that is contradictory (disconfirmation bias, selective avoidance) and that motivated reasoning biases their interpretation of information (Flynn et al., 2017; Sude & Knobloch-Westerwick, 2022).

However, BBC Media Action (2025) affirmed that there are numerous reasons why students create, consume and share false or misleading information. For instance, students engage in information disorders to be helpful or cope with uncertainty, to feel a sense of belonging, for fun, to discredit it or to cause harm. This information can originate in face-to-face conversations in a community and spread online, or it can spread from online to offline, potentially reaching groups with no internet access at all (Sude & Knobloch-Westerwick, 2022).

This is consistent with the postulation of Anderson (2019) that students have consciously or unconsciously engaged in information disorders, using it to create and spread false messages, fake photos, false audio, edited videos, old and unrelated videos widely shared and circulated

in the abundant social media groups. This spread of false and misleading information has become a social malady, causing panic, tension, fear, distrust and social disharmony.

Students are involved in information disorders because of their poor awareness of them, often leading to unconscious misrepresentation of the truth. The reason for people to be involved in information disorders is contextual, and the context determines the types of information disorders people are involved in (Hassan, 2023). Eirimiokhale and Sulyman (2024) assessed the prevalence of information disorders among Undergraduates of Kwara State University, Malete, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that the desire to be respected by colleagues is one of the major causes of the prevalence of information disorders among the respondents because most students are driven by the urge to earn the respect of their colleagues and in the course of doing this, they end up involving in information disorders.

Furthermore, prior scholars have studied various motivators behind information disorders including enjoyment, financial benefit, political gain, social relationships, celebrity worship, competition (Apuke & Omar, 2021; Baptista & Gradim, 2020; Bernal, 2018; Burkhardt, 2017; Osmundsen et al., 2021). For example, propaganda with a lot of political disinformation has been used as a powerful tool for politicians to influence public opinion, enhance their influence, create confusion among public and weaken opponents (Melchior & Oliveira, 2023).

Additionally, financial gain is another important reason for information disorders dissemination due to online advertising ecosystem (Altay et al., 2022). People use these attention-grabbing tactics to spread fake news, luring viewers into clicking, sharing and generating more traffic (Aïmeur et al., 2023; Silverman, 2016). This increased traffic can lead to better search engine rankings and more opportunities for advertising revenue. More so, the desire for social approval, including seeking status, attention, identity or entertainment, plays

a role in the dissemination of fake news and various forms of information disorders (Islam et al., 2020; Kalsnes, 2018).

Kalsnes (2018) posited that people on social media connect by sharing fake information. The author further buttressed his point that the platform's reward system like; likes and shares, pushes users to create content that boosts their status, even if it means manipulating information. Studies like Alt (2015) and Talwar et al. (2019) have linked the fear of missing out (FoMo) to social media dissemination of information disorders.

However, those who seek to spread false or misleading information deliberately to cause harm may create any form of information disorders themselves or as is increasingly the case, they may focus more on amplifying existing false and misleading information already circulating. BBC Media Action (2025) backed this notion by explaining that those who feel marginalised, excluded or unrepresented by those in positions of power may be more susceptible to false or misleading information, particularly if the perpetrators of it seek to take advantage of their vulnerabilities. Hence, understanding these various factors can help in shaping the responses to the issue (BBC Media Action, 2025).

## **2.9 Summary of the Literature Reviewed**

This chapter presents literature on the concept of information disorders. It is important to note that the concept of information disorders is not new and the reason why it was spread in the past remains the same as the one of this era. However, with the presence of ICT, the techniques to the spread of information disorders have changed. Nowadays, the spread of information disorders has increased using various forms such as bias, fake reviews, rumours, misleading information, propaganda, retraction of papers, conspiracy theories, clickbait, hoaxes etc. Information disorders awareness is then paramount for students to have the



knowledge and recognition of the existence and prevalence of fake, false and malicious information.

The various perceptions and ways in which they can identify any form of information disorders are discussed in this chapter. This chapter further presents sources of information disorders such as governments or politicians, scammers, conspiracy theorists, celebrities, religious or traditional leaders, relatives and friends. Governments all over the world, along with groups of people, are using various channels to help them spread fake news in more intelligent and efficient ways. The chapter concludes with the different perceived causes of information disorders among students in tertiary institution.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents all the scientific methods adopted in the process of carrying out this research work. According to Kolawole and Ijebor (2018), methodology outlines the systems or ways and the scientific justifications used in carrying out research. Thus, the following sub-headings will be discussed:

#### 3.2 Research Design

#### 3.3 Population of the Study

#### 3.4 Sample and Sampling Techniques

#### 3.5 Instrument for Data Collection

#### 3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

#### 3.7 Data Collection Procedure

#### 3.8 Methods of Data Analysis

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Research design is to indicate the ways to be followed or patterns of how the study will be conducted. Descriptive survey design will be adopted for this study. The reason for the choice of descriptive survey design is because the researcher aims at gathering quantitative data, which will be used to measure the opinions of the respondents on the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin.

### 3.3 Population of the Study

Population is the total area, environment, scope or aspect a study is expected to cover. According to Issa (2012), population of a study is referred to as all the members or elements of a particular group of people, animals, or things in a defined area. Hence, the population of this study will be 1,913 HND II students of the Institute of Information and Communication Technology (IICT), Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. The reason for the choice of HND II students of IICT is because the researcher believe they have spend more time in the academic environment and will have adequate experience or knowledge on the topic understudying.

The population table is presented below:

**Table 1: List of Selected Departments**

Departments	Population
Computer Science	588
Mass Communication	1,217
Office Technology and Management	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,913</b>

### 3.4 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Sample is the unit, portion or element of the population, which will provide data that are relevant to the study. In this study, Sample Size Calculator ([www.calculator.net/sample-size-calculator.html](http://www.calculator.net/sample-size-calculator.html)) was used to determine the sample size. The Confidence level used was 95%, Margin error – 0.05%, Population proportion was 80%. The Calculator advised that 218 respondents should be chosen. Thus, simple random technique was used to select the samples in order to give all participants equal opportunities to be involved in this study.

### **3.5 Instrument for Data Collection**

This study will adopt an adapted questionnaire as its data collection instrument. The questionnaire, according to Issa (2012) is a data collection instrument containing series of questions and other prompt responses for the purpose of gathering information from respondents. The use of questionnaire will allow this study to gather measurable data from the respondents by availing them structured responses to the options provided to them.

The questionnaire, titled *“Awareness and Perceptions of Information Disorders Among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin”* was arranged into two major sections. The first section was meant for respondents’ demographic data, while the second section was dedicated to obtaining data on the awareness and perceptions of information disorders among students in Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin. The demographic data will be analyzed in frequency counts and percentages, while the objectives’ response categories were ranked on the scales of 1 – 5, representing the order of Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Undecided, Agree and Strongly Agree.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument**

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument accurately measures what it intends to measure (Li, 2016). The questionnaire was given to two subject experts for assessment of the quality of presentation of the contents of the property the researcher measured. Their expert opinions were impacted before the questionnaire was presented to the supervisor for assessment and corrections before it was later administered to the respondents.

Reliability, on the other hand refers to the degree to which an instrument yields consistent result. Internal consistency is used to determine the reliability of the instrument for this study because it helps the researcher to get the same results from different parts of the respondents.

### **3.7 Administration of the Instrument**

The questionnaire will be designed with Google Form. The link to filling the questionnaire will be sent to the WhatsApp groups of the selected departments' students and some of their personal contacts on WhatsApp. The link will be left active for four (4) weeks between April and May, 2025 in order to allow the researcher get an acceptable response rate.

### **3.8 Data Analysis Procedure**

The descriptive data that will be collected will be presented and analysed in simple percentage, frequency table and mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) using the IBM SPSS Statistics, 26<sup>th</sup> edition. The reason for the choice of simple percentage and frequency tables is because it allows the presentation, analysis and comparison of multiple attitudes, opinions and ideas to enhance easy understanding of tables and the data they contained (Schweigert, 2021), while mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) will be used to analyse the responses of the respondents on the research questions. The reason for this choice is that it enabled the researcher to calculate the extent to which the values differ from the average (Dudovskiy, 2019). This enabled the researcher to easily identify the higher score from the scales being measured and appropriately used them for the study's discussion.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses, discusses and interprets the data obtained from field. For the sake of clarity, this chapter is further arranged in the following order:

- 4.2 Questionnaire Administration and Response Rate
- 4.3 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
- 4.4 Analysis, Presentation of Data and Discussion of Findings

#### 4.2 Questionnaire Distribution and Response Rate

From the 218 copies of questionnaires administered, only 167 were returned and out of the questionnaire returned, 163 were fully filled and adequate for analysis. According to Ramshaw (2021), questionnaire is suitable for analysis if the response rate is more than average for physically administered questionnaires and can be used to represent majority of the characteristics intended to describe by the researcher. Hence, the data of this study is valid for analysis with questionnaire response rate of 74.98%.

#### 4.3 Demographic Information of the Respondents

**Table 2: Characteristics of the Respondents**

Options		F	%
<b>Gender</b>	Male	85	52.1
	Female	78	47.9
	<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Age range</b>	15 – 19 years	37	22.7
	20 – 24 years	86	52.8
	25 – 29 years	26	16.0
	30 – 34 years	9	5.5
	35 years and above	5	3.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Marital status</b>	Single	126	77.3
	Married	37	22.7
	<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Respondent department</b>	Computer science	59	36.2
	Mass Communication	71	43.6
	Office Technology and Management	33	20.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 shows that majority (85 52.1%) of the respondents are males, while (78 47.9%) are females. Also, 86 (52.8%) are between 20 – 24 years, followed by 15 – 19 years with 37 (22.7%) and 25 – 29 years (26 16.0%). Furthermore, 126 (77.3%) of the respondents are single and 37 (22.7%) are married. Finally, respondents from Mass Communication has the highest representation with 71 (43.6%), followed by Computer Science with 59 (36.2%), while Office Technology and Management has 33 (20.2%).

#### 4.4 Presentation, Analysis, Discussion and Interpretations of Results

##### 4.4.1: What is the level of awareness of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria?

**Table 3:** Level of awareness of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria

Statements	VHA		HA		MA		PA		NA		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
I am aware of unverified information passed from one person to another (Rumors)	72	44.2	16	9.8	35	21.5	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.61	1.45
I am aware of false and misleading information (Fake news)	71	43.6	16	9.8	35	21.5	20	12.3	21	12.9	3.59	1.47
I am aware of intentionally sharing of unverified information (Satire or parody)	40	24.5	48	29.4	35	21.5	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.42	1.31
I am aware of prejudice information (Biases)	30	18.4	52	31.9	40	24.5	21	12.9	20	12.3	3.31	1.26
I am aware of information disseminated to promote a particular cause or point of view (Propaganda)	44	27.0	29	17.8	41	25.2	29	17.8	20	12.3	3.29	1.36
I am aware of genuine sources that are impersonated (Imposter content)	43	26.4	24	14.7	51	31.3	25	15.3	20	12.3	3.28	1.34
I am aware of information conceived as explanations for events that provoke widespread social anxiety and uncertainty (Conspiracy theories)	45	27.6	21	12.9	49	30.1	28	17.2	20	12.3	3.26	1.37
I am aware of information made to disguise its original (Hoaxes)	44	27.0	16	9.8	38	23.3	45	27.6	20	12.3	3.12	1.39
I am aware of content of information that are 100 false designed to deceive and cause harm (Fabricated content)	28	17.2	20	12.3	75	46.0	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.10	1.19
I am aware of reviews that is misleading and fabricated in a way that doesn't represent a genuine customer experience (Fake reviews)	32	19.6	16	9.8	67	41.1	28	17.2	20	12.3	3.07	1.25

I am aware of manipulated content without knowing (Click baits)	44	27.0	16	9.8	42	25.8	25	15.3	36	22.1	3.04	1.49
I have encountered an information that coincide with mine (Echo chambers)	35	21.5	15	9.2	51	31.3	42	25.8	20	12.3	3.02	1.31
I am aware of false contextual information (False context)	27	16.6	17	10.4	58	35.6	41	25.2	20	12.3	2.94	1.23
I am aware of information design to steal personal information (Phishing)	34	20.9	16	9.8	51	31.3	26	16.0	36	22.1	2.91	1.41
I am aware of information that frame an issue or individual (Misleading content)	23	14.1	16	9.8	35	21.5	45	27.6	44	27.0	2.56	1.36
I am aware of algorithmic filtering which personalizes content presented on social media (Filter bubbles)	26	16.0	16	9.8	35	21.5	20	12.3	66	40.5	2.48	1.49

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 reveals that respondents are highly aware of unverified information passed from one person to another (Rumors) ( $3.61 \pm 1.45$ ), false and misleading information (Fake news) ( $3.59 \pm 1.47$ ) and of intentionally sharing of unverified information (Satire or parody) ( $3.42 \pm 1.31$ ). However, the respondents claimed to be partially aware of information that frame an issue or individual (Misleading content) ( $2.56 \pm 1.36$ ) and algorithmic filtering which personalizes content presented on social media (Filter bubbles) ( $2.48 \pm 1.49$ ). This indicates that the respondents are aware of unverified information passed from one person to another (rumors), false and misleading information (fake news) and intentionally sharing of unverified information (satire or parody).

Findings of this study aligned with the assertions of Santos-d'Amorim and Miranda (2021) that bias, fake reviews, rumours, misleading information, propaganda, conspiracy theories, click bait and hoaxes are information disorders students are aware of and engage in. For instance, among the students, rumours seem to be rampant as they share untrue, unverified, refined and filtered information about something they are not sure of.

It is also interesting to discover that the awareness of fake news among the respondents was high. The awareness of fake news among the respondents indicates a shift from the era



information disorders was coined, when people lack awareness of the different information disorders. The improvement in the respondents' awareness negates the points of Domonoske (2016) who shockingly observed that students failed to distinguish real news from fake news.

More so, it can be understood from the findings that the respondents are aware of satire or parody. The situation in the study area aligns with the notion of Santos-d'Amorim and Miranda (2021) that intentionality is a huge factor in information disorders causes and use.

However, the point that the respondents are partially aware of information that frame an issue or individual (Misleading content) and algorithmic filtering which personalizes content presented on social media (Filter bubbles) is worrisome.

The respondent's claim contradicts the affirmation of Dubois and Blank (2018) that students are prone to use false information to frame their colleagues in order to be identified as a trustworthy person. Likewise, the authors explained filter bubble as a state of intellectual isolation that can result from personalized searches, recommendation systems and algorithmic curation. The search results are based on information about the user, such as their location, past click-behavior and search history.

#### 4.4.2: What are the perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria?

**Table 4:** Perceptions of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
I perceived information disorders as fake information mainly shared for drawing attention	51	31.3	33	20.2	39	23.9	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.46	1.37
I perceived information disorder as fabricated information mainly shared for financial gain	51	31.3	33	20.2	39	23.9	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.46	1.35
I perceived that information disorders as information used to mislead people	59	36.2	24	14.7	35	21.5	22	13.5	23	14.1	3.42	1.45

I perceived information disorder as fabricated information mainly shared for personal agenda	43	26.4	30	18.4	45	27.6	25	15.3	20	12.3	3.31	1.34
I perceived information disorders as fabricated information mainly shared for amusement	40	24.5	25	15.3	54	33.1	24	14.7	20	12.3	3.25	1.31
I perceived information disorder as fabricated information mainly shared to advance political agenda	47	28.8	16	9.8	45	27.6	35	21.5	20	12.3	3.21	1.39
I perceived advertisements and pop-up links that include sponsored content as a kind of information disorders	34	20.9	30	18.4	55	33.7	24	14.7	20	12.3	3.21	1.27

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 indicates that the respondents agreed that information disorders is fake information mainly shared for drawing attention ( $3.46 \pm 1.37$ ), information disorder is fabricated information mainly shared for financial gain ( $3.46 \pm 1.35$ ) and that information disorders is used to mislead people ( $3.42 \pm 1.45$ ). However, the respondents couldn't decide if information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of personal agenda ( $3.31 \pm 1.34$ ), fabricated information mainly for the purpose of amusement ( $3.25 \pm 1.31$ ) or fabricated information mainly for the purposes of advancing a political agenda ( $3.21 \pm 1.39$ ). This shows that the students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria perceived information disorders as an information mainly for the purpose of drawing attention, fabricated information mainly for the purposes of financial gain and that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people.

It can be understood from the findings of this study that the respondents agreed that information disorders is mainly for the purpose of drawing attention, information disorder is fabricated information mainly for the purposes of financial gain and that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people. It is quite fascinating that the findings of this study are consistence with the findings of previous studies. For instance, Zakharov et al. (2019) perceived information disorders from the aspect of intention. The authors believe

that information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of amusement, to draw attention, for financial gain, to mislead or to advance a political or personal agenda.

More so, findings of the study further revealed that most students believe that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people. This indicates that in most cases, students draw notice and mislead people to believe certain propaganda or the real intention behind students engaging in fake news might be to seek either financial gain. Likewise, they appear to have problems discerning between news articles and commercials on news sites because they encounter both in the same context.

However, the points of the respondents that they do not perceived information disorders as fabricated information mainly for the purposes of personal agenda and fabricated information mainly for the purpose of amusement is worth addressing. The students may engage in fabricating information to further their personal agenda be it social or political agenda. Contrarily, Bahige (2019) opined that students fabricated information mainly for the purposes of advancing personal agenda. The author also claimed that students engaged in information disorders for the purpose of amusement, to draw attention, for financial gain, to mislead or to advance a political agenda.

#### 4.4.3: What are sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria?

**Table 5:** Sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic Ilorin, Nigeria

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
I am aware of information disorders through friends	66	40.5	18	11.0	36	22.1	22	13.5	21	12.9	3.53	1.45
I am aware of information disorders through family and relatives	62	38.0	16	9.8	35	21.5	24	14.7	26	16.0	3.39	1.51
I am are of information disorders through governments or politicians	56	34.4	22	13.5	37	22.7	25	15.3	23	14.1	3.39	1.45
I am aware of information disorders through journalists	56	34.4	23	14.1	36	22.1	24	14.7	24	14.7	3.39	1.45

I am aware of information disorders through scammers	52	31.9	20	12.3	42	25.8	25	15.3	24	14.7	3.31	1.43
I am aware of information disorders through religious or traditional leaders	46	28.2	16	9.8	61	37.4	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.29	1.33
I am aware of information disorders through non-credible or untraceable authorship on the internet	46	28.2	16	9.8	61	37.4	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.29	1.33
I am aware of information disorders through conspiracy theorists	43	26.4	16	9.8	64	39.3	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.26	1.31
I am aware of information disorders through celebrities	47	28.8	22	13.5	40	24.5	27	16.6	27	16.6	3.21	1.44
I am aware of information disorders through Hoaxers	45	27.6	16	9.8	35	21.5	47	28.8	20	12.3	3.12	1.41

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2025

Table 5 shows that the respondents are aware of information disorders through their friends ( $3.53 \pm 1.45$ ), through their family and relatives ( $3.39 \pm 1.51$ ), through governments or politicians and through journalists ( $3.39 \pm 1.45$ ). However, the respondents are aware of information disorders through celebrities ( $3.21 \pm 1.44$ ) and through Hoaxers ( $3.12 \pm 1.41$ ) has the lowest figure. This implies that the students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria are aware of information disorders through their friends, family and relatives, governments and politicians, and journalists.

Findings of this study reveal that the source of information disorders among students is through their friends. It is not shocking to find out that information disorders proliferation among tertiary institution students comes within the circle of these individuals because these students become more active producers and sharers of false content to create a social identity through information sharing among their peers. This is consistent with the notion of Jawaid (2018) who posited that trust in friends can amplify false or misleading information that might have remained 'fringe' by drawing attention to it among their colleagues.

More so, it is interesting to find out that government or politicians are also sources of information disorders among the students. It is of no doubt that government or politicians are

a fan of public manipulation especially during election or political activities. These individuals have contributed immensely to the proliferation of information disorders among the students and the general public through false, prejudice, malicious and misleading information. This point validates the affirmation of Reid (2022) who submitted that governments and political actors have long been fans of public manipulation techniques to serve their agenda. This also correlates with the affirmation of BBC Media Action (2025) that the sources of information disorders vary, from governments or politicians, scammers, conspiracy theorists or celebrities, to religious or traditional leaders, relatives and friends.

However, it is discouraging to find out that the respondents are aware of information disorders through celebrities and Hoaxers rank the lowest among the sources of information disorders among students in the study area. This contradicts the notion of Reid (2022) that celebrities, activists, marketers, Hoaxers and businesses are prone to be the sources of information disorders. With the above point, it is of no doubt that hoaxers gleefully spread lies of unfolding chaos on campus which creates panic and unrest among students. Celebrities on the other hand, propelled student remarks to engage in information disorders with online stories, especially made by their favourite celebrities on social media (Reid, 2022).

#### 4.4.4: What are the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria?

**Table 6:** Perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria

Statements	SA		A		U		D		SD		M	SD
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%		
I engage in information disorders because of urge to share current information	61	37.4	20	12.3	42	25.8	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.50	1.41
I engage in information disorders for financial benefits	58	35.6	23	14.1	42	25.8	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.48	1.40
I engage in information disorders to feel a sense of belonging	55	33.7	21	12.9	43	26.4	22	13.5	22	13.5	3.40	1.42

I engage in information disorders through unconscious misrepresentation of truth	50	30.7	15	9.2	58	35.6	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.34	1.35
I engage in information disorders because I am unaware of information disorders	56	34.4	15	9.2	43	26.4	25	15.3	24	14.7	3.33	1.45
I engage in information disorders to gain Political positions	52	31.9	10	6.1	61	37.4	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.33	1.36
I engage in information disorders to be helpful or cope with uncertainty	68	41.7	0	0.0	31	19.0	44	27.0	20	12.3	3.32	1.53
I engage in information disorders through conscious misrepresentation of truth	51	31.3	18	11.0	47	28.8	22	13.5	25	15.3	3.29	1.43
I engage in information disorders because of competition	54	33.1	12	7.4	50	30.7	20	12.3	27	16.6	3.28	1.46
I engage in information disorders for social relationships	47	28.8	12	7.4	64	39.3	20	12.3	20	12.3	3.28	1.33
I engage in information disorders because of celebrity	54	33.1	14	8.6	35	21.5	40	24.5	20	12.3	3.26	1.45
I engage in information disorders because I am unaware of sources to get accurate and current information	47	28.8	13	8.0	35	21.5	39	23.9	29	17.8	3.06	1.48
I engage in information disorders to discredit it or to cause harm	25	15.3	2	1.2	35	21.5	81	49.7	20	12.3	2.58	1.20

**Source:** Researchers' Field Survey, 2025

Table 6 implies that the respondents engage in information disorders because of their urge to share current information rank the highest with  $(3.50 \pm 1.41)$ , followed by for financial benefits with  $(3.48 \pm 1.40)$  and to feel a sense of belonging  $(3.40 \pm 1.42)$ . However, the respondents engage in information disorders because they are unaware of sources to get accurate and current information  $(3.06 \pm 1.20)$  and discredit it or to cause harm  $(2.58 \pm 1.20)$  rank the lowest. This implies that the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria are urges to share current information, for financial benefits and to feel a sense of belonging.

Is it interesting that the findings of this study shows that the major cause of information disorders among the students is the urge to share current information. It is of no doubt that student urgency to share current information among themselves propelled them to create

unverified, false and misleading information. The result of this further widens the spread of information disorders in tertiary institutions because when there is an enormous circular of malicious information, the information ecosystem in the area becomes unreliable. This point is closely related to the position of Anderson (2019) who posited that the spread of false and misleading information will become a social malady, causing panic, tension, fear, distrust and social disharmony.

Furthermore, the findings of this study further reveals that students engaged in information disorders for financial benefits. Out of the numerous reasons why students create, consume and share false or misleading information, it is interesting to find out that the respondents point out for financial benefits as another major cause of information disorders in the study area. Contrarily, Osmundsen et al. (2021) affirmed that the major motivator behind information disorders is for financial benefit. For example, students has been using powerful tools to influence public opinion, enhance their influence, create confusion among to efficiently make money on the digital space.

However, the point that the respondent engage in information disorders because they are unaware of sources to get accurate and current information and discredit it or to cause harm ranking the lowest is worth discussing. This results contradicts the findings of Hassan (2023) that students involved in information disorders because of their poor awareness of sources to get accurate and current information. Thus, it is explicit that the students might invovle in the proliferation of information just simply because they don't know the sources of accurate information. More so, the result of this study is not in alignment with previous studies such as Apuke and Omar (2021), Baptista and Gradim (2020), Bernal (2018) and Burkhardt (2017) that the major causes of the prevalence of information disorders in the society is because most people are not aware of relevant sources to gather factual information.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarises the findings of this study, draws conclusion from those findings and makes appropriate recommendations. This chapter is arranged in the following order:

5.2 Summary of findings

5.3 Conclusion

5.4 Recommendations

#### **5.2 Summary of findings**

Results of this study revealed that:

1. Students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria are aware of unverified information passed from one person to another (rumors), false and misleading information (fake news) and intentionally sharing of unverified information (satire or parody).
2. Students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria perceived information disorders as information mainly for the purpose of drawing attention, fabricated information mainly for the purposes of financial gain and that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people.
3. Friends, family and relatives, governments and politicians and journalists are the sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.



4. Urge to share current information, for financial benefits and to feel a sense of belonging are the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Information is an essential commodity needed to make informed decisions in all spheres of human endeavours, including education, health, commerce, finance and others. However, the prevalent in the improper handling of information has become a scourge in societies globally. Thus, the struggles of human beings with information's deceptions detection have been the subject of scholarly and public attentions with the rise and spread of information disorders, which threatens public health and civic society.

This study has brought into fore that students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria perceived information disorders as information mainly for the purpose of drawing attention, fabricated information mainly for the purposes of financial gain and that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people. More so, friends, family and relatives, governments and politicians and journalists are the sources of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria. Meanwhile, causes such as urge to share current information, for financial benefits and to feel a sense of belonging are the perceived causes of information disorders among students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria.

### **5.4 Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Management of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria should endeavor to orientate students on the use of information. This will positively influence how students gather and make use of information in their respective endeavors.

2. Journalists should endeavor to verify information before disseminating them to the general public. This will reduce the rate at which information disorders spreads.
3. Management of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria and other stakeholders should endeavor to sensitize the students on the danger of information disorders to the society. This will ensure students just do not share information they come across, but verify its authenticity and credibility before sharing it with their friends, family and relatives.

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## APPENDIX I

**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**Department of Library and Information Science**  
**Institute of Information and Communication Technology**  
**Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria**

Questionnaire on “**Awareness and Perceptions of Information Disorders among Students of Kwara State Polytechnic, Ilorin, Nigeria**”

Dear Respondent,

**Request for Response to Questionnaire**

I am an undergraduate of the above-named institution, carrying out research on the above-mentioned topic. My research is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of National Diploma certificate in Library and Information Science (ND).

Your assistance is hereby requested for timely completion of this questionnaire. I am assuring you that all data provided will be treated with utmost confidentiality and used for academic purpose only.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

**Mubarak Oladimeji ADEBAYO**  
**ND/23/LIS/FT/0001**  
**Researcher**

**Section A: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

**Kindly select the option of your choice by ticking from the answers below**

1. Gender: Male ( ) Female ( )
2. Age range: 15 – 19 years ( ) 20 – 24 years ( ) 25 – 29 years ( )  
30 – 34 years ( ) 35 years and above ( )
3. Marital Status: Single-parent ( ) Married ( )
4. Respondent Department: Computer Science ( ) Mass Communication ( )  
Office Technology and Management ( )

**Section B: Your level of awareness of information disorders**

What is your level of awareness of information disorders?

Kindly tick (✓) VHA for “Very Highly Aware,” HA for “Highly Aware,” MA for “Moderately Aware” PA for “Partially Aware” and NA for “Not Aware.”

S/No	Statements	VHA	HA	MA	PA	NA
1.	I am aware of unverified information pass from one person to another (Rumors)					
2.	I am aware of prejudice information (Biases)					
3.	I am aware of reviews that is misleading and fabricated in a way that doesn't represent a genuine customer experience (Fake reviews)					
4.	I am aware of information disseminated to promote a particular cause or point of view (Propaganda)					
5.	I am aware of manipulated content without knowing (Click baits)					
6.	I am aware of information made to disguise its original (Hoaxes)					
7.	I am aware of intentionally sharing of unverified information (Satire or parody)					
8.	I am aware of algorithmic filtering which personalizes content presented on social media (Filter bubbles)					
9.	I have encountered an information that coincide with mine (Echo chambers)					
10.	I am aware of information design to steal personal information (Phishing)					
11.	I am aware of information conceived as explanations for events that provoke widespread social anxiety and uncertainty (Conspiracy theories)					
12.	I am aware of false and misleading information (Fake news)					
13.	I am aware of false contextual information (False context)					
14.	I am aware of genuine sources that are impersonated (Imposter content)					
15.	I am aware of information that frame an issue or individual (Manipulated content)					
16.	I am aware of content of information that are 100% false designed to deceive and cause harm (Fabricated content)					
Others, please specify.....						

**Section C: Your perceptions of information disorders**

What are your perceptions on information disorders?

Kindly tick (✓) SA for “Strongly Agree,” A for “Agree,” U for “Undecided,” D for “Disagree” and SD for “Strongly Disagree.”

S/No	Options	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	I believe that information disorders is used to draw attention and mislead people					
2.	I perceive information disorders as fabricated information mainly for the purpose of amusement					
3.	I believe information disorders is fake mainly for the purpose of drawing attention					
4.	I believe information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of financial gain					
5.	I believe information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of advance a political agenda					
6.	I believe information disorder is fabricated mainly for the purposes of personal agenda					
7.	I perceived advertisements and pop-up links that include sponsored content as a kind of information disorders					
Others, please specify.....						

**Section E: Your sources of information disorders**

What are your sources of information disorders?

Kindly tick (✓) SA for “Strongly Agree,” A for “Agree,” U for “Undecided,” D for “Disagree” and SD for “Strongly Disagree.”

S/No	Options	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	I am aware of information disorders through my friends					
2.	I am aware of information disorders through scammers					
3.	I am aware of information disorders through conspiracy theorists					
4.	I am aware of information disorders through celebrities					
5.	I am aware of information disorders through religious or traditional leaders					
6.	I am aware of information disorders through my family and relatives					
7.	I am are of information disorders through governments or politicians					
8.	I am aware of information disorders through Hoaxers					
9.	I am aware of information disorders					

	through journalists					
10.	I am aware of information disorders through non-credible or untraceable authorship on the internet					
Others, please specify.....						

### Section F: Your perceived causes of information disorders

What are your perceived causes of information disorders?

Kindly tick (✓) SA for “Strongly Agree,” A for “Agree,” U for “Undecided,” D for “Disagree” and SD for “Strongly Disagree.”

S/No	Options	SA	A	U	D	SD
1.	I engage in information disorders to feel a sense of belonging					
2.	I engage in information disorders for financial benefits					
3.	I engage in information disorders through conscious misrepresentation of truth					
4.	I engage in information disorders through unconscious misrepresentation of truth					
5.	I engage in information disorders to gain Political positions					
6.	I engage in information disorders for social relationships					
7.	I engage in information disorders because of celebrity worship					
8.	I engage in information disorders because of competition					
9.	I engage in information disorders because of urge to share current information					
10.	I engage in information disorders because I am unaware of information disorders					
11.	I engage in information disorders because I am unaware of sources to get accurate and current information					
12.	I engage in information disorders to be helpful or cope with uncertainty					
13.	I engage in information disorders to discredit it or to cause harm					
Others, please specify.....						