
Fake News as a Threat to Social Resilience

Submitted 20/12/21, 1st revision 19/01/22, 2nd revision 19/02/22, accepted 01/03/22

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Abstract:

Objective: The aim of the research inquiry was to find out about fake news, the manipulation of its recognition by social media users with the question formulated as follows: what might be the social resistance to fake news as a media product in the post-truth era? The hypothesis was put forward that fake news causes a lack of social resistance to fake news despite the declared knowledge of users regarding fake news. The research was conducted under a grant from the Ministry of National Defense.

Design/Methodology/Approach: The presented results of combining the analysis of secondary sources (literature, studies, reports) with the empirical part (questionnaire survey) allowed us to confirm the main thesis of the article, which is that fake news as a media product in the post-truth era causes lack of social resistance to false content.

Findings: The results of the study indicate the vulnerability of social media users to fake news despite their knowledge on the subject. The conclusion points to the need for appropriate media courses, trainings, and media campaigns that will improve the knowledge of social media users making them more resistant to fake news.

Practical implications: The article synthetically presents the conclusions from the research, pointing out the directions of research in the field of information security in the context of national security, indicating the necessity of education and training in this area, as well as social campaigns.

Originality/value: The presented research results have not been previously shown in this form, they provide knowledge about the increasing risk of false content in social media. They recommend the necessity of monitoring, repeating the research, implementation of specific actions that should be taken by the government to ensure social resilience to fake news.

Keywords: Social resilience, fake news, post truth, manipulation techniques, public opinion.

JEL codes: D91, F52, O33.

Paper type: Research study.

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1. Introduction

The usage of Internet communication channels to spread false information and manipulation has become quite common. The emergence of social networks has made each user a self-publisher with no obligation to verify the accuracy of facts and clearly no responsibility for the information published. Facts are presented without reference to any authority or scientific research, and for millions of users the sight of so-called influencers on a computer screen is in itself a testimony to the veracity of the information presented to them.

The use of technology by people to spread and support lies, to mislead, to manipulate, to use propaganda, proved itself when online social networks such as Facebook and Twitter were taken advantage of for purposes for which they were not originally intended. The widespread availability of social networks has also been exploited by professional companies that acted out of a profit motive and pursued specific political objectives of specific stakeholders to spread propaganda and false information.

The spread of information or misinformation in online social networks is context-dependent, and research has uncovered that topics such as health, politics, finance and technological tendencies are major sources of misinformation and information in a variety of contexts, including business, government and everyday life (Report, 2019). The dissemination of information on social networks as misinformation or false, manipulated information may follow different propagation patterns and may be the result of an organised campaign to emulate common dissemination behaviour. The lack of accountability and verifiability provides users with an excellent opportunity to spread specific ideas of manipulation online.

Analyses of events in the last few years have shown that public opinion is being manipulated through social media platforms - this is becoming a growing threat to public life in every country. Government agencies and political parties around the world are using social media platforms to manipulate public opinion and spread false information. Trust in public institutions, science and media suffers (New report reveals growing threat of organised social media manipulation world-wide). This is even more evident when we look at how social media work. Instead of bringing people together, their architecture reinforces divisions and tribal instincts, fostering thinking in terms of "us vs. them" which in itself is a good tool for social control (Świeboda *et al.*, 2021).

Tribalism is expressed by the creation of interpretive communities or digital ghettos which facilitates the selection of the group to which the information message is to be directed. Users are prone to select information that reinforces their worldview and ignore dissenting information (Quattrociochi, Scala, and Sunstein, 2016; Bessi *et al.*, 2015) this triggers the formation of polarised groups - so-called echo chambers -

where interaction within like-minded individuals can even reinforce polarisation (Zollo *et al.*, 2015; Sikorski and Kubin, 2021; Peters *et al.*, 2018).

The phenomenon of false information has particularly intensified since 2015 and 2016, although societies have always had to deal with this type of information. But we have been coping with the rapidity and intensity of information since the dynamic development of modern information and communication technologies, social media with the possibility of access from any type of device.

There has never been greater concern about dishonesty in public life (Davis, 2021). The opportunities brought by online media are disrupted by the dangers of disinformation phenomena, exemplified by fake news, bots and fake accounts and trolling used to manipulate any group or society. It is vital for security to be able to detect when online content is false and intended to mislead.

Recognition is technically difficult. Firstly, social media tools facilitate the generation and rapid spread of information which leads to a large amount of content to analyse. In the second place, online information is very diverse, covering a large number of issues which contributes to the complexity of the task. Collaboration between people and technology is necessary, as the veracity and intention of any statement cannot be assessed by software alone, as it cannot yet assess intentions and motivations.

Large amounts of fake news online can cause serious problems in society - they can lead to a loss of confidence in the state, cause unrest, disorganization and destabilization of the state. The events related to the 2016 US presidential election were an example of a critical impact on society.

The facts were confirmed by research which showed that the fake news spread by Donald Trump's supporters was the reason for Hilary Clinton's defeat. In this case, we are still dealing with the activities of Cambridge Analytica (Wylie, 2020), which manipulated Facebook users by creating psychological profiles in order to deliver appropriate profiled messages.

Many processes and phenomena around the world have experienced similar disruptions, such as the anti-vaccination movements, against 5G, the processes that led to Brexit.

The article presents findings concerning fake news on the basis of research completed under a grant from the Ministry of Defense. In the perspective of the characteristics of fake news, as well as possible and probable threats to the state, the recognition of manipulative methods and fake news by social media users was analysed, responding to the question: what is the social resistance to fake news as a media product in the era of post-truth. The hypothesis was accepted that fake news causes a lack of social resistance to counterfeit information.

2. Characteristics of Fake News

Erich Fromm, wrote that "there are groups of people in the world who care about spreading lies" (Fromm, 2001, p. 233). It is useful to propagate a lie, but in this case it is not the process itself but what it is used for. We function in times termed post-truth defined as times "relating to or denoting circumstances in which objective facts have less influence on shaping public opinion than appeals to emotions and personal beliefs" (<https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/post-truth>).

This is the ground for the recognition of lying as something natural. The very first Fake News, as we know it today, appeared in 2015. It is not an unheard of phenomenon before but it has never had the dimension that it has now, there has always been information that deliberately misled the audience and affected reality, but it was slower to spread and had a smaller scope it was easier to verify.

In 2017, the word appeared in Webster's dictionary:

<https://mashable.com/article/fake-news-politics-dictionary>,

<https://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english/fake-news>,

becoming the word of the year. The term fake news is a neologism meaning "false news" and it is difficult to capture it in a definitional framework as evidenced by the rich literature on attempts to define the phenomenon (Volkof, 1991; Gillin, 2017; Lalik, 2017; Tandoc, Wei Lim, and Ling, 2017). It means a media message that is at the same time neither true nor a lie, it is based on disinformation, often containing parts that are true (Gilin, 2017). Fake news is intended to intentionally mislead the recipient, the purpose is to achieve benefits e.g., financial, political or propaganda and this is also the motive for the action.

Some definitions refer to the phenomenon of psychological warfare, in which fake news is a tool to manipulate public opinion in order to implement and diffuse specific content (Aldwairi and Alwahedi 2018). Many authors define fake news as a tool of propaganda, which by means of false information is consciously and deliberately intended to create social attitudes (Barclay 2018; Świeboda *et al.*, 2021).

An apt, rather concise definition is formulated by Lalik recognizing fake news as a type of transmitted information, considered false, introduced into the media environment, including the Internet, in order to disinform or improve humour (Lalik, 2017). All these activities are related to the manipulation of information and for their establishment the authors draw from a catalogue of methods and techniques of manipulation based on the use of psychological knowledge about the behaviour of the addressees (users) and the ability to create a message. In the case of fake news, the task is often facilitated by bots that recognise user habits in cyberspace.

Fake news is also an action intended to change the meaning of a given situation, e.g. by over-interpretation or by introduction of additional, false information in order to enrich e.g. the message of an article or news item. Fake news is a media message

with a very diverse form, which appears on purpose in order to introduce chaos in the information space, to confuse the audience, and at the same time to affect their perception of various phenomena with the intention of persuading the audience to make a decision consistent with the intention of the entity using propaganda actions.

As fake news has a dimension of a modern propaganda tool, it has become a method and a tool of manipulation, influencing the hierarchy of values and beliefs, imperceptibly interfering in the emotional sphere and the professed world view of people. The spread of false information has never been so cheap and so effective as in the age of social media. In the past, propaganda was very expensive. Research confirms the fact that social media is primarily a source of false information. More than 58% of respondents - when asked where they most often find false information - indicated social media, where anyone can be a "journalist", and 25% of respondents believe that false information is spread deliberately - by specially trained people from abroad (Report IABP, 2018).

3. Selected Results of Social Research

In 2020, at the time of the peak in the occurrence of false information about the COVID virus, research was conducted from February 2021 to April 2021 in the form of an online survey published on Facebook. The survey was made available as a link to a form, the use of which allowed the results to be automatically saved. The aim of the study was to determine awareness of the manipulative methods by which fake news is disseminated, as well as knowledge of fake news and its identification among social media users. Statistical analyses were conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 and Excel. With its help, descriptive statistics were calculated, tests of consistency with normal distribution were carried out, a series of Chi-square / Cramer's V analyses were performed for cross-tabulations, correlations, regressions and Student's t-tests for independent data, Mann Whitney's U and Kruskal-Wallis were calculated. The classical $\alpha = 0.05$ was used as the significance level.

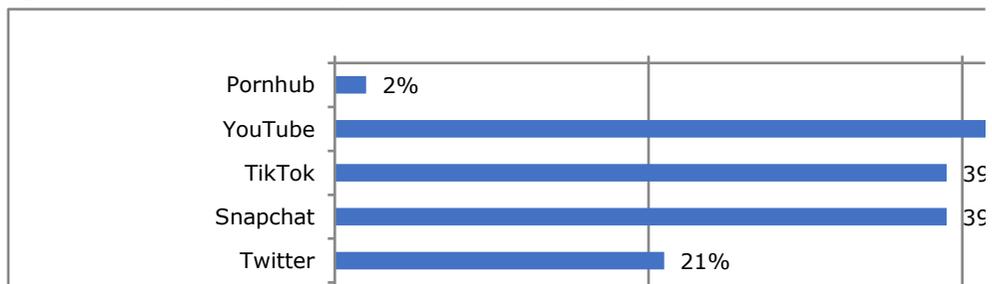
Answers were obtained from 283 users (no questionnaire was rejected), the group consisted of 48% of men and 52% of women. The most numerous group of 54% were people aged 18-30, the other groups for which the age groups were distinguished were: 31-45 years old was 14%, the 46-55 group was 11% and the same number was included in the 56-64 age group and over 60 10 percent. Half or 50% of the respondents were people with higher education, 35% with secondary education, 10% with vocational education and 5% with primary education.

Among the surveyed population, the largest group of respondents, 27% (76), were people from cities with 100,000 to 500,000 inhabitants. Another group of 21% (60 people) are living in cities with 50,000 to 100,000. For cities with more than 500,000 inhabitants, the respondents constituted a group of 20% (57 people), cities from 10,000 to 50,000 inhabitants represented 21% (42 people), and cities of up to 10,000 inhabitants represented 11% (31 people) and a village 6% (17 people). The

respondents were asked about the number of social networks on which they have an account. The results of this question are quite unambiguous and it can be concluded that the presence of social networking sites in the lives of many people is a natural need, especially in younger generations, and it can be considered essential, as evidenced by having accounts on more than three social networking sites (67% of respondents). Among the respondents, only two declared the lack of social media accounts.

The most frequently used social networking site was Facebook - 75% of respondents, followed by Instagram, which was used by 68% of respondents during the day. 47% of the respondents use YouTube during the day, while Snapchat and TikTok are 39% of the respondents. The least visited portal is Twitter - 21%. Additionally, the use of the "Pornhub" portal was indicated by 2% of users is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1. The most frequently used social networking sites



Source: Own study.

The research reveals that fewer and fewer respondents use the press (11%), a tendency which particularly concerns older respondents. Younger respondents in the 18-30 age group (78%) use the Internet and social media (46%), they declare that they most often obtain information from the country and the world through these media, and 55% of respondents get their daily information through TV services, most often they are between 46 and over 60 years old.

Respondents admit (89%) that information manipulation occurs in social media. Respondents declare familiarity with rules of influence (Figure 2) and manipulation techniques. The principles of authority and liking and liking and reciprocity are most often mentioned as known. However, for 30 percent of respondents the topic of rules of influence is unknown - this situation affects the ease of infecting not only themselves, but also spreading fake news among friends.

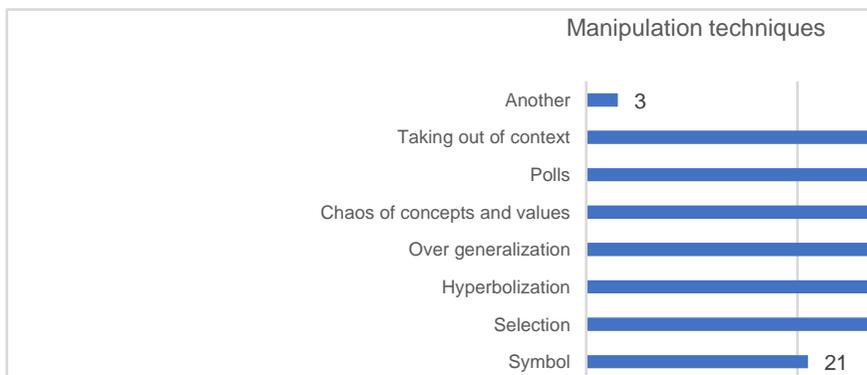
The manipulation techniques that are applied to create fake news are better recognised than the manipulation methods depicted in Figure 3.

Figure 2. Knowledge of the rules of exerting influence



Source: Own study.

Figure 3. Knowledge of manipulation techniques by social media users



Source: Own study.

Taking things out of context was found to be the most well-known manipulation technique for 74% of respondents. Another, slightly less known technique was the method of overgeneralization, indicated by 59% of respondents, the method of repetition was indicated by 57% of survey participants. Most of the manipulation techniques mentioned in the survey are known to the respondents.

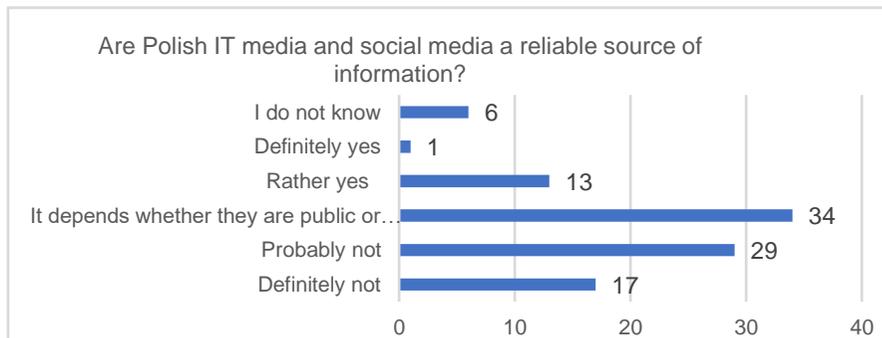
However, the least known manipulation technique for the surveyed (10% of responses) was the ingratiation technique (action aimed at gaining sympathy) and manipulation by means of cliché (message that deforms the image of a person or institution by presenting it exclusively in a negative category). Only 3% of the population surveyed do not know manipulation techniques.

This means that respondents know which negative media treatments to look out for when reviewing information on a daily basis. Despite knowing methods and techniques of manipulating information, 47% of respondents know that they are manipulated, compared to 53% of those who believe that they are not.

In response to the question about the trustworthiness of the Polish media, 34% of respondents believe that their credibility depends on whether they are public or private. For 46% of respondents, the Polish media are not a reliable source of information, as shown in Figure 4. The vast majority of respondents are aware that the phenomenon of manipulation exists and is a serious problem (96% of respondents). For the recipient, it is no longer important whether the media are private or public, because manifestations of manipulation can be found everywhere.

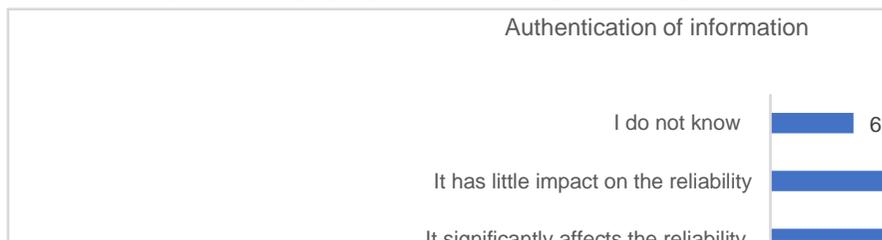
The majority of respondents, 59%, always compare information from different news services. Only 4% of respondents never do this. The above survey shows that for most respondents comparing and analysing news is essential in the process of obtaining reliable and factual information. For 44% of respondents information provided by experts and specialists is considered credible. In comparison, less than 26% of respondents believe that using experts' opinions affects, but only to a small extent, the credibility of information provided, as presented in Figure 5.

Figure 4. Assessment of the reliability of Polish media in the opinion of the respondents



Source: Own study

Figure 5. Assessment of credibility of information by experts and specialists

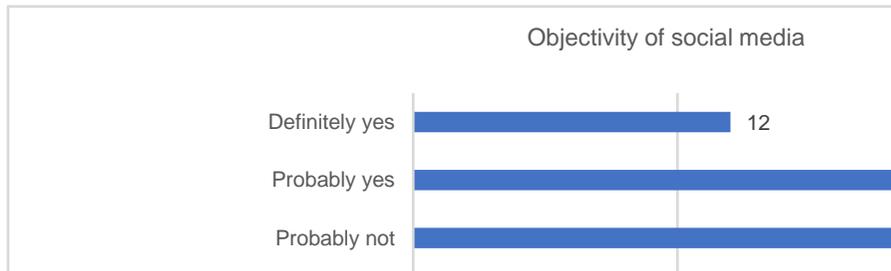


Source: Own study.

The information provided on the websites is almost the same, according to the respondents. The difference that emerges is the altered order of the information

provided, which is infused with emotional messages in line with the preferred worldview. The objectivity of social media is questioned by 47% of respondents, with 45% saying it is more objective than TV programmes, as shown in Figure 6.

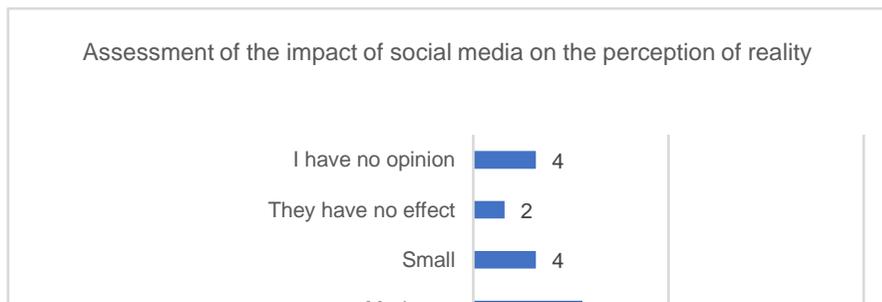
Figure 6. Assessment of the objectivity of social media



Source: Own study.

It is a fact that they are aware of the perception and impact of social media on the perception of reality, as many as 83% of respondents admit that this impact is very large or significant. The information message is reflected in the perception of politicians, current and historical events, but also values and ideas, which often results in ideological quarrels is presented in Figure 7.

Figure 7. Assessment of the impact of social media on the perception of reality

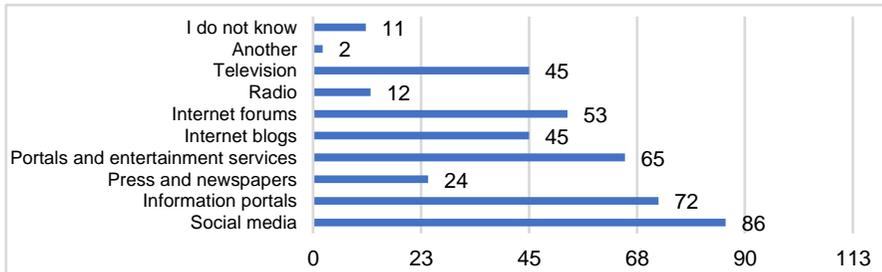


Source: Own study.

In the follow-up part of the survey, questions were asked about identifying fake news. Analysis of the responses shows that a total of 52% have ever had contact with the concept of fake news, and awareness of this phenomenon decreases as the age of interviewees increases. In the case of older people, awareness of the phenomenon is present only in one in three people aged 56-64 and only in one in ten people over 64. People who had contact with fake news associated this phenomenon with false information (243 answers, i.e., 86% of respondents), the answers oscillated within error limits for all age groups, and were statistically independent of the variable place of residence and education. Manipulation was also indicated in the answers with 175 answers, i.e., 62%. Dissemination of fake news is associated with

social media in the age group up to 45 years old, in the older age groups, the indication of television dominates is presented in Figure 8.

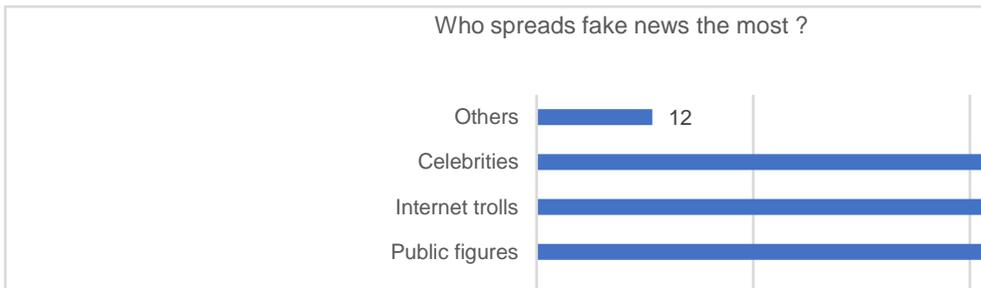
Figure 8. Where do the respondents most often encounter false information?



Source: Own study.

The answers to the question, who spreads fake news most often? clearly indicate that the respondents blame, above all, social media, politicians, celebrities, journalists and public figures. The analysis of answers to the question: "other", which included specific indications, e.g. giving a name, is presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Percentage of answers to the question who spreads fake news most often



Source: Own study.

As the main reason for creating fake news, respondents indicated influencing the opinions of the audience. Subtle differences can be seen when analysing the responses by age bracket. For those between 56 and 64 and 65 and over, the willingness to influence public opinion as the primary reason for creating fake news is not as obvious as it is for other, younger age groups. The opposite is true when assessing the reason as a political objective. In the advanced age groups, this reason was selected first. In comparison, trolling as a reason for creating fake news was emphasised by the younger age groups, 18-30 years and 31-45 years - this is shown in Figure 10. 77% of respondents claim to be able to identify fake news and 56% refrain from spreading it, but when when questioned about ways to verify information from social media, 22% of respondents said they do not verify news coming through other media at all, 29% of respondents check the source of

information, as many as 56% of respondents look for information about a given news item on several websites, and 33% of respondents compare information coming from the Internet with that shown on television.

Figure 10. The reasons for fake news in respondents' opinion



Source: Own study.

There is a significant difference due to the age of social media followers and education. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Assessment of fake news threats for state security

Risk assessment in connection with fake news															
Very big (n = 34)		Significant (n = 61)		Moderate (n = 65)		Small (n = 32)		It has no effect on me (n = 15)		I have no opinion (n = 2)		χ^2	p	ϵ^2	
M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD				
Przedzi															
ał	2,7	1,2	3,3	1,0	3,57	1,03	3,3	1,1	3,7	1,5	2,5	0,7	15,2	0,00	0,0
wiekow	4	1	6	2			1	2	3	3	0	1	9	9	1
y															

M – mean; SD – standard deviation; χ^2 – result of the test Kruskal-Wallis; p – relevance test Kruskal-Wallis; ϵ^2 - strength of the effect

Source: Own study.

The analysis revealed significant differences in the assessment of the risks of disseminating fake news between people from across age groups. The strength of this effect is poor. A post hoc analysis was conducted to notice how the groups differ. This analysis shows that people aged 65+ rate the risk of fake news far lower than those aged 18-30, 31-45, 46-55 and 56-64.

Kruskal-Wallis tests and Cramer's V analysis for cross tabulations were used to assess the development of false information in the future. Due to the inequality of

the groups, non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis tests were conducted. It was found that this variable depends on the age of the respondents (significant test result $V = 0.24$; $p = 0.001$, which means that the observed numbers differ significantly from the expected numbers) (Table 1). On the other hand, a non-significant test result $V = 0.13$; $p = 0.560$, examining the dependence on the variable "place of residence", which means that the observed numbers do not differ from the expected numbers. The result is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The relationship between the assessment of the development of the phenomenon of false information in the near future and the age of the respondents

		Age					Overall
		18 - 30 years	31 - 45 years	46 - 55 years	56 - 64 years	65 + years	
Assessment of the development of the dissemination of false information	The situation will be worse	28	14	11	5	14	77
		13,4 %	6,7%	5,3%	2,4%	6,7%	36,8%
	The situation will not change	15	1	5	5	5	37
		7,2%	0,5%	2,4%	2,4%	2,4%	17,7%
	The situation will improve	9	5	4	15	13	57
		4,3%	2,4%	1,9%	7,2%	6,2%	27,3%
	Hard to say	15	4	7	6	0	38
		7,2%	1,9%	3,3%	2,9%	0,0%	18,2%
Overall	67	24	27	31	32	209	
	32,1 %	11,5 %	12,9 %	14,8 %	15,3 %	100,0 %	

Source: Own study.

There is also no meaningful correlation with the variable "education" (V test = 0.13; $p = 0.592$). The analysis of dependencies for the variable "gender" is similar (non-significant test result $V = 0.07$; $p = 0.782$). The selected research results presented here highlight the challenges faced by users of social media, where false information spreads fastest. The age of users is a variable that differentiates attitudes towards risks and the future of their development. The dissemination of false information, such as fake news, the use of manipulative methods in messages, the use of a whole set of tools and methods from the field of propaganda in the broadest sense, is a handy tool for achieving political and military objectives, while causing social divisions and distrust of those in power. This dangerous phenomenon, which should be counteracted, primarily through the implementation of appropriate education

from an early age, was also highlighted by the survey participants (92%), regardless of age, gender and place of residence.

4. Discussion

Many types of fake news have been distinguished in the literature, in taxonomic attempts to characterise them, common features emerge, which are referred to in the table below. The result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Types of fake news

Types	Characteristic
False relationship	Uncorrelated headings, titles or visual elements (this is a feature that makes it possible to identify information as false)
False context	Genuine content presented in a false context
Manipulated content	Manipulated original information or images
Misleading Content	Real information that represents a problem or person in a specific light
Pretending to be real	Information content that pretends to be genuine original sources
Fabricated content	Completely fake content
Satire and parody	Content created for humorous purposes, has the potential to be misleading, and is not directed at doing harm

Source: Own study.

False information is generated through methods of manipulation that use techniques that perfectly exploit the frailties of human nature, its emotionality and cognitive errors and lack of knowledge, which makes its dissemination fast and effective (Kucharski, 2020). The result is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Selected techniques for creating false information

Creation technique	Characteristic
Inversion of the facts	Reversing and denying the facts are methods that are not used very often nowadays because, unfortunately, it is now very difficult to hide certain
Negation of facts, which is not true	Statements where the proclamation of an untruth which is obvious, but assuming that there are no selected number of witnesses, it is impossible to establish what the truth is;
Mixing truth and lies	Used when the public has already been adequately informed about what has happened in a situation, but does not know all the details of the situation;
Blur	Called flooding mainstream information with facts that are irrelevant to the given situation;

Camouflage	A detailed description of a given situation solely to conceal the main
Interpretation	Used when a particular situation cannot be denied, camouflaged or blurred, it can only be described with appropriate words;
Generalization	Shows that a certain individual fact is not a unique phenomenon, but it occurs frequently and is not a deviation from the norm;
Illustration	It primarily involves using an individual fact as an illustration of a particular social phenomenon;
Unequal representation	Mostly used during a political fight, when the opponent is deprived of the opportunity to speak;
Equal representation	Most commonly used in the final phase of a disinformation campaign, when the majority of the public is convinced of the theses propounded by the disinformation.

Source: Own study. Based on Vladimir Volkoff, Disinformation - War Arms, ed. Delikon, Warsaw 1991, pp. 8., pp. 157-172.

The fake news paradigm requires three elements: (1) tools and services, (2) social media platforms, and (3) motivation (Gu, Kropotov, and Yarochkin 2017). Tools and/or services are used to manipulate and spread fake content on social media platforms. Followers, i.e., followers or, for example, online polls, are used for this purpose. Social media platforms are where instruments and applications are used.

Platforms invoke the psychological mechanisms of the viewer, confirming their hierarchy of needs and even prejudices, often use bots based on algorithms that model user data, adapting to social norms, make them more convincing and difficult to identify, track user actions, also hint and suggest Content to read or watch works continuously and can be activated, can adapt to the situation, recognizing the context - does not require human intervention. The most active bots are on Twitter. Fake news is a tool, so the motivation is based on the objectives, which may be financial or political gain or intensification of propaganda, deepening social divisions and creating information confusion.

Structured fake news networks are designed for sophisticated and unidentifiable manipulation. The term is ambiguous, covering many types of disinformation, distortion of facts and circumstances. One of its varieties is the so-called FUD (Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt) - situations, events, information that cause doubts about something. The aim of such messages is to provoke fear and spread social panic. Ideologically saturated messages present a particular view of politics, so to speak, programming users who become the next link in the message. Such actions are called computational propaganda. It is one of the latest specialist strategies used to maintain social control (Woolley and Howard 2016).

On the Internet, we are facing campaigns steered by the so-called trolls, i.e., people who are active online and deliberately attract the attention of other users by arousing emotions - an ideological form of interaction (Hardaker and Claire 2010).

They create fake accounts on social networks and represent a particular political ideology. Campaigns are thought to be the most harmful behaviour on the Internet, used by extremist, nationalist, racist and xenophobic groups to harass and ridicule their opponents. The following groups are distinguished: haters, lolcows, socials and viewers (Eyeballs) (Musiał, 2017). The most common activities are, denigrating government opponents, avoiding controversial topics, and raising money for support. There are organisations that employ trolls, creating 'troll farms' (e.g., Internet Research Agency funded by Putin's backers - case of Jenny Abrams, Wjite Trolls in Turkey and China 'ziganwu') (Lange Ionatamishvili, 2016).

False information in online news spreads like viruses and repeatedly emerges in mainstream media, posing a threat to state security in various areas of human activity (Table 5).

Table 5. *Selected effects of the diffusion of false information in communities*

Area	Threat targets
Economic	Influence on decisions of the government, enterprises and companies
	Impact on the stock market values of companies, the possibility of manipulating the
	Restriction of investors' choice or withdrawal of investors
	A decline in the reputation or brand of traders
	Disruption or breakdown of foreign cooperation in the economic area
	Quarrel of workers and trade unions
Social	Deterioration of public mood and changes in public opinion - disrupted state stability, strikes, protests
	Deepening social and ethnic divisions, sharp polarization
	Radicalization of social groups - religious, left / right, anti-vaccination, feminist, racist and xenophobic movements
	Lowering confidence in the government
	Inciting social unrest - distorting historical and scientific facts driving the activities of various types of radical groups, including xenophobic groups
	Mobilizing the potential of protesters

	The breakdown of unity and national sense significantly influencing the building of a healthy society, including civil society
	Promoting selected content (websites, services) can be a powerful tool for influencing moods, lifestyle
Political	Influencing the election results, the long-term effect of which may be the destruction of the political system
	Disrupting economic and financial policy
	Attacks on key decision makers in the country
	Legislation and regulations
	Investment climate - the image of the state
	Economic and geopolitical projects
	The role of the state in the geopolitical arena
	Information confusion

Source: Own study.

Users of the Internet, social media, information platforms, whose users also remain politicians and those in power, are at risk. As politics has already acquired a digital dimension, information often appears faster on Twitter than in official communications, making it all the more dangerous. The daily exposure of social media users to propaganda and disinformation campaigns has revived the need to study the phenomenon of fake news, including deep fake (fake fabricated videos), as well as local and global patterns of dissemination of different (mis)information content on social media. To be objective, it should be noted that virtually every side of the political spectrum is involved in the creation of fake news.

5. Conclusions

In summary, social media enables manipulation, misrepresentation, distraction and confusion of the public thanks to the speed of the spread of information, which is available 24 hours a day and has unlimited reach while not being lost online. The high quality of the techniques used and the broad spectrum of activities suggest that the actors who spread false information and manipulation are well-trained Internet communication specialists. In the face of such a threat, it is necessary to strengthen both one's own communication capacity and social resilience to this phenomenon.

The presented results, the combination of the analysis of secondary sources (literature, studies, reports) with the empirical part (surveys) allowed to confirm the main thesis of the article, that fake news as a media product in the post-truth era causes the lack of social resistance to fake news. Despite the respondents'

declarations of knowledge and familiarity with manipulation tools and recognition of fake news by social media users, in reality they have problems with their recognition. 23 percent of users cannot recognize fake news, more than 30 percent spread it on social media and 22 percent do not verify the information they receive if it seems false.

Many types of media, of which social media is one, are accountable for spreading fake news. The analysed examples of fake news and online campaigns came from different types of messages. The majority of these materials are available in the boarding school. The public perception is that the media with the widest reach are also responsible for publishing fake news and are expected to have a higher level of content verification. In order to maintain social resilience and not to be manipulated by false information, educational and social awareness campaigns are needed - social campaigns educate the public, increasing the level of social resilience, and are easier to receive.

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