Spreading rumors on the social media site "Facebook" and mechanisms for confronting them.
An applied study on the publications of the " fatabayyano " platform from Augst 2021 to January 2022.

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Abstract:
the research addresses the issue of spreading rumors on social media sites and the mechanisms for confronting them and aims to identify the types of rumors published there, knowing the role of social media sites in spreading the rumor, the factors and sources of its spread on Facebook, through analyzing the rumors monitored by the "fatabayyano" platform during the study period. And revealing the mechanisms that the platform used to confront it.
Relying on the descriptive analytical approach and the content analysis tool, we finally arrived at results that answered the study's questions.
key words: rumors, social media site ,mechanisms for confronting rumors.

Introduction :
Rumors have many causes and multiple means, and the more they are linked to the media, the greater their negative effects. This negative impact has become more common and widespread with social media and instant messaging programs on smart devices, most notably Facebook, Twitter, and WhatsApp, because of the tools they possess. Interaction, spread, speed, and the extreme ability to quickly defame, create confusion, and influence public opinion Some may attribute this to weak legislation or a lack of seriousness in implementing it, as well as a lack of awareness of the danger of rumors, ways to avoid them, and ways to verify news, and the failure of some official bodies to use the same means to deny rumors or disseminate correct information and communicate with the public.

The problem
From the above, the study seeks to answer the following problem: What is the nature of the rumors published on Facebook pages based on the posts on the "fatabayyano" platform? What are the mechanisms for responding to it?
To answer the question of the problem, we focused on a number of points that raise questions about the categories of form and content of the rumors analyzed in this study:

1- In terms of form:

What are the templates for spreading studied rumors?

2- In terms of content:

– What are the types of rumors studying?

– What are the purposes of studied rumors?

– What are the sources to which the studied rumors are attributed?

– What are the mechanisms for responding to rumors used by the Fatabayyano platform?

Research objectives: This research seeks to achieve the following objectives:

• Identify the templates for spreading rumors on the social networking site Facebook.

• Detecting the types of rumors circulated by Facebook users.

• Show the expected purpose of the rumors circulated by Facebook users.

• Clarifying the sources to which the rumors circulated by Facebook users are attributed.

• Revealing the mechanisms for responding to rumors used by the Fatabayyano platform.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: In this study, we used the media survey method, both descriptive and analytical. This method was used to describe and analyze rumors and how to confront them.[1]

THE FIRST TOPIC: THE METHODOLOGICAL ASPECT

In this section, we discussed the data collection tool, the statistical method used, and the concepts of the study.

FIRST REQUIREMENT: STUDY TOOL

In this application, we discuss the definition of the study tool, which is content analysis.

1) **definition of content analysis tool**: In our research, we relied on the content analysis tool, which Professor Ahmed Ben Morsli defined as: "the method used in researching media and communication materials, through a quantitative description of the data targeted by the research, by converting it into digital data that helps its

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[1] - Imad Mahira al-Sabai, Issues (media perspective, reconciled crises), Cairo, 2018, Arabic.p:43,

statistical processing in a way that enables the inference of the underlying values and ideas, beyond these explicit statements, by expressing these conclusions qualitatively.

This tool helped us describe the apparent content of the studied rumors by extracting units and categories of analysis to answer the research problem and its sub-questions and emptying their content into quantitative analysis tables to draw final results. The content analysis form consists of five axes (journalistic techniques used to spread rumours, types of rumours, purposes of rumours, sources of rumours, and mechanisms of the Fatabayyano platform for responding to rumours).

SECOND REQUIREMENT: STATISTICAL METHOD USED

The content of the rumors was transformed from the qualitative method to the quantitative method through the analysis axes that were specified in the content analysis form, and then the data was recorded in tables. Simple statistics were used, namely frequencies and proportions.

1.   units of analysis:

They are units of counting and recording that are used to iteratively calculate the extent to which data appears in the content. In this study, we used the topic unit to count the topics covered by the rumors published on the Fatabayyano platform in order to respond to them.

2.   analysis categories:

A)   Form categories: How was it said? formal construction of the rumour.

Rumors Spreading Template Category: Includes (news template, photos, video, statement, film, post).

B)   categories: what was said? Constructing the content of the rumors.

a.   **Category of types of published rumors:** By this, we mean the type of topics covered by the rumors during the study period, and after a prior review of the analysis material, we divided the analysis categories for the rumor topics into sports, scientific, social, historical, medical, scientific, Corona developments, technological, and miscellaneous.

b.   **Rumor classification category**: By this, we mean the classification developed by the Fatabayyano platform for rumors whose credibility is verified, and it includes two categories: false (for the purpose of falsifying facts) and a misleading (for the purpose of misleading public opinion).

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c.   **Category of sources for spreading rumors:**By this, we mean Facebook pages or accounts that spread rumors collected by the Fatbaynoa platform, and they have been divided into:

a)   **Digital media website pages:** These are the pages bearing the name of a newspaper or digital television channel.

b)   **People pages:** These are the ones that contain the names of people.

c)   **Unknown pages:** those with strange and unknown names.

d)   **group pages:** These are pages bearing the names of specific groups active in a specific field, such as groups active in the sports field.

d.   **Category of mechanisms for responding to rumors:** By this, we mean those references and the methods that the Fatabayyano platform relies on to obtain the correct information and with which it responds to rumors. They are divided into the following categories:

    1. Refer to the source of the rumor.

2. Refer to people related to the topic by communicating with them or through their personal accounts.

3. Refer to the source of the rumor (data or document).

4. Search in: Google and Yandex, Tinye, Bing.

5. Reverse search on Google, Yandex and Tineye.

6. Search the movie database website.

7. Search the websites of official bodies.

8. Search using keywords.

9. Respond with a post, a video, a document, a photo, or a scientific study.

THE THIRD REQUIREMENT: CONCEPTS OF THE STUDY
firstly: rumor
1.   definition of rumor

A vague or inaccurate report, story, or description transmitted between members of a community, often through spoken word. Rumors tend to spread during times of crisis in society and are almost always about people or events that are important to members of the community.[1]

2.   definition of rumor from a procedural perspective:

a.   Unreliable news and its authenticity has not been confirmed.

b.   Not based on a responsible source.

c.   It is transmitted between people through social networking sites (Facebook).

d.   It relates to a person, idea, or topic.

e.   It has several types, which may be political, economic, religious, and others

f.   It is expressed through written texts, pictures, or video.

secondly: social networking sites

1.   definition of social networking sites:

The concept of social networking sites is defined as gatherings of people in the form of communication groups through social sites on the Internet, which attempt to present a virtual reality that attracts people of different ages and genders, and from all parts of the world. world. These groups are linked by common interests and activities despite their differences in age, awareness, thinking, culture, and location.[2]

2.   in procedural terms:

We can define social networking sites as those programs that rely on the Internet, which allow the creation and exchange of content. It offers a combination of technology and social interaction, including Facebook, which contributes to the formation of relationships, dialogues, and the exchange of opinions and ideas among them.

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[1]-Ali Abdullah al-Kalbani). Rumors and dangers under the new media. World of Books, Cairo,2017,p:12.

[2] -Abdul Latif Osama Djibril, A proposed enrichment strategy based on social construction through social networking sites to develop motivation for achievement. Journal of Scientific Education (14). (October, 2012)

thirdly: Facebook

1.   definition of facebook in terms

It is a social network that has received great acceptance and response from people, especially young people, all over the world. It does not exceed the limits of the personal blog that was created in 2004 at Harvard University in the United States of America.[1]

Practically: it is a site for communication. It allows its users to create personal files and publish them publicly through that site, and to form relationships with other subscribers to the same site who can access their personal files. It is used to transmit and receive information, ideas, and news whether true or false, such as rumors. It was prepared and transmitted by the pioneers of this site.

Fourthly: the Fatabayyano platform
Definition of the Fatabayyano platform

The Fatabayyano platform is an independent news verification platform. In 2014, it was introduce as a Facebook page, then continued to grow after that, and as of right now, it is regard as one of the top Arab platforms in this industr. It aims to purify Arabic content on the Internet from rumors, fake news, and myths. To be an essential source for readers in the Arab world, to distinguish real news from fake news.

THE SECOND TOPIC: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS
FIRST REQUIREMENT: RESULTS RELATED TO THE FORM OF RUMORS

Table01: Shows the template for spreading rumors through the Fatabayyano platform

Percentage %	Repetition	Template the news
% 17.24	10	the news
% 48.28	28	Image
29.31%	17	the video
%1.72	1	Published
%1.72	1	film
%1.72	1	a permit
100%	58	the total

Source: Prepared by the researcher

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[1] - Yassin Khader al-Bayat. New Media New Virtual State. Oman: Dar al-Jasr , (2014),p:390.

It is clear from Table and Figure No. 01 that the pictorial rumor represents the most common template for spreading rumors on Facebook at a rate of 48.28% compared to other publishing templates, and this result is consistent with the results of the study of Osama bin Ghazi Al-Madani.

The explanation for why the image is at the top of the list of other post templates is that it is easy to believe and gives credibility and legitimacy to those posts through visual excitement. The public may believe it because they are ignorant of the possibility of verifying its authenticity, and in many cases, they publish old photos that have nothing to do with the subject of the rumor and isolate it. from its context and then linking it to the event that is the subject of the rumor, or it may be fabricated and taken from YouTube videos.

followed by the video template at 29.31%. This is an indication that digital rumor makers rely on videos to support and convince the page's audience of the veracity of the published news. When a rumor is in video form, it is easy to edit and fabricate it. Then the news template received a percentage of 17.24%, and finally a percentage of 01.72% for each of the templates (film, statement, publication).

THE SECOND REQUIREMENT: RESULTS RELATED TO THE CONTENT OF THE RUMORS

Table 2 shows the topic of the rumors based on the fatabayyano page.

Percentage %	Repetition	the topic
03.44%	02	Mix
12.06%	07	medical
08.62%	05	Athlete
%03.44	02	Sciences
39.65%	23	social
%03.44	02	Historical
%06.89	04	technology
%22,41	13	Corona
%100	58	the total

Source: Prepared by the researcher

From the table and Figure No. 02, it is clear that social rumors are the most widespread rumors during the research period and were estimated at (39.65%). This type focuses on social matters and issues and what concerns and affects

society. The month of August recorded the spread of 12 social rumors that raised the issue of the fires that Algeria witnessed in the same month.

Followed by rumors dealing with Corona developments, at 22.41%, These rumors spread fear among people about a vaccine that may protect them from infection with a virus that may cause some people to develop serious diseases that may end their lives.

The third place was occupied by medical rumors with a percentage of 12.06%. These rumors are distinguished from other rumors in that they affect people and societies and harm the economy.

Sports rumors came in fourth place with a rate of 08.62%, then technological rumors with a rate of 06.89%, and the last place was ranked with a rate of 03.44% for the rumors that were classified by the Fatabayyano platform: miscellaneous, historical, scientific.

Table 3: Shows the classification of the purposes of rumors according to the Fatabayyano platform

Percentage %	Repetition	classification Rumors
53.44%	31	Spreading false facts
46.55%	27	Misleading public opinion
100%	58	the total

Source: Prepared by the researcher

As can be seen from Table and Figure No. 03, the percentage of fake information reached 53.44%. These are false claims where the basic ideas contained in the content are not accurate in terms of the facts stated therein.

This is followed by 46.55% of rumors with misleading headlines, where the main idea(s) in the text of the article are true; But the main idea in the title is not actually accurate.

The results of deception include weakening public morale, reducing confidence in leadership, destroying sources of honesty, and dispersing efforts and energies.

Table 4: Shows the source of spreading rumors

percentage %	Repetition	Publisher source

%10.34	06	Digital media pages
%32.75	19	People pages
%12.06	07	Groups pages
%44.82	26	Unknown pages
100 %	58	the total

Source: Prepared by the researcher

It is clear from the data in Table and Figure No. 04 that anonymous pages (fake accounts or so-called electronic flies) with strange and artificial names come in first place with a rate of 44.82%.

These accounts are targeted accounts managed by a single individual or specialized electronic groups, aiming to tweet about a specific issue, and these accounts may cross continents. Fake accounts often use photos. The fake account may be without a picture and an incomprehensible name. Most of the time, he is almost devoid of new posts and only reacts negatively to regular posts. It is noteworthy that many fake accounts sometimes create specific hashtags and follow them with many stories that may be fabricated with the aim of influencing social media users, and presenting the hashtags as common interests to a large group of tweeters, while in reality they are nothing but fake accounts aiming for negative things.[1]

1.   In second place was the percentage of 32.75 for people's pages.

2.   Then 12.06% for pages of groups active in the sports field.

3. In last place was 10.34% for digital media pages and websites.

Table 5: Shows the mechanisms for responding to rumors on the Fatabayyano platform

percentage	Repetition	Response source
4.29%	7	Return to the source of the claim
%14.72	24	Referring to people related to the topic by communicating with

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[1]- Al-Muqbali Mishal, Fake accounts, their concept, their harms, and how to detect them, Where You Are website, March 29, 2018, https://www.atheer.om/archives/465347, July 14, 2023.

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		them
%1.84	3	Referring to the source of the rumor (data, document)
%5.52	9	Searching in Google, Yandex, Tineye, Bing
%25,76	42	Reverse search in Google, Yandex, Tineye
%1,22	2	Searching the Movie Database website
%25,76	42	Searching on the websites of official bodiesbodies
%6,13	10	Search using keywords
%14.72	24	Reply with (post, video, document, photo, scientific study)
%100	163	the total

Source: Prepared by the researcher

It appears from Table and Figure No. 05 that the mechanisms that the fatabayyano platform relies on to respond to rumors are diverse and are estimated at 09 mechanism .

1.   The method of searching on the websites of official bodies, and reverse searching in Google, Yandex and Tineye, ranked first with a percentage of 25.76%.

2.   The method of communicating with people related to the topic was ranked second, as well as responding with (a post, a video, a document, a photo, a scientific study) with a percentage of 14.72.

3.   The third place was occupied by the response mechanism by searching for keywords, with a rate of 06.13%.

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4.   Google, Yandex, Teni, and Bing ranked fourth with an estimated percentage of 5.52%.

5.   In fifth place was the mechanism of referring to the source of the allegation, at a rate of 04.29%.

6.   In sixth place came the mechanism for referring to the source of the rumor (data, document) with a rate of 1.84%.

7.   Searches on the Movie Database website ranked last, with a rate of

01.22%.

THE SECOND REQUIREMENT: DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

first: discuss the results related to the content form

- What are the templates for spreading studied rumors?
The results of this question showed that the most widely used journalistic art in spreading rumors is the photo, due to its ease of believability, and to give credibility and legitimacy to those publications through visual excitement. This result is consistent with the results of Ghazi Al-Madani's study,[1] In many cases, they publish old photos that have nothing to do with the topic of the rumor, isolating them from their context, then linking them to the event that is the subject of the rumor, or they are fabricated and taken from YouTube videos.
Second: Discuss the results of the content questions

1)   What are the types of rumors studied?

From the data contained in Table and Figure No. 02, it is clear that social rumors are the most widespread rumors during the study period, and they are the rumors that focus on social issues and what concerns and affects society. The month of August witnessed the spread of 12 social rumors that dealt with the issue of fires in Algeria. It is an issue that occupied Algerian public opinion during this period.
This type of rumor is dangerous, as it weakens society's resolve, frustrates its abilities, paralyzes its will, and makes it anxious, worried, and eager to accept the rumor.[2]

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[1]- Osama Bin Ghazi Al-Madani, The Role of Social Media Networks in Promoting Rumors Among Saudi University Students (Twitter as an Example), Umm Al-Qura University Journal of Social Sciences, March 2017, p. 47.
[2]- Abd ELRahim Muhammad Al-Maghzawi, Rumors and their effects on society. Medina: Islamic University of Medina,2010,p.61.

2)   What are the purposes of studied rumors?

Every rumor must have an intended purpose, whether that purpose is direct or indirect. This study proved that most of the information spread by rumors was for the purpose of falsifying facts, as shown in Table and Figure No. 03. This false claim contains an inaccurate basic idea.

One of the methods of falsifying facts is sensationalism in the main headline, which may differ from the content of the information, in order to attract the attention of the recipient and promote the fabricated information, to make the masses unconscious.[1]

3) What are the sources to which the studied rumors are attributed?

Every rumor has a source that spreads it, and the electronic rumor published on Facebook pages makes it easy to identify its owner from their accounts, unlike the traditional rumor that people transmit orally, where it is difficult to access it and reveal its source.

However, this study revealed different sources for spreading rumors on Facebook pages, as shown by the data in Table and Figure No. 04.

Anonymous pages (fake accounts or so-called electronic flies) with strange and fictitious names topped the rate of 44.82% compared to the list of other sources, and most of the rumors they published revolved around topics: medical, Corona developments. And social.

These accounts are managed by a single individual or specialized electronic groups, aiming to tweet about a specific issue that may be social, political, or economic, and these accounts may cross continents. Fake accounts often use photos that can be shared, The fake account does not contain a photo, its name is incomprehensible, and it is often devoid of posts. He only reacts negatively to regular posts.[2]

4)   What are the mechanisms for responding to rumors used by the fatabayyano platform?

Refuting rumours, revealing their lies, making them known and showing their contradiction in order to invalidate their effectiveness, directing the reaction against those who spread them, and dealing with them with caution to ensure their ineffectiveness, taking into account that the response is from a responsible party, a

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[1] - Nasser al-Din Mazari, Facebook, s credibility between news and rumor, Afaq Science Magazine, Volume 5, Issue 2, 2020, Page 218.

[2] - Mishal Al-Muqbali., The concept of delusions, its meaning and harms, and how to discover it? (March 29, 2018), Redemption date: July 14, 2023, https://www.atheer.com/archives/465347/

known and reliable source, and constitutes an influence on public opinion, has become necessary to confront rumours.

It appears from the data contained in Table and Figure No. 05 that the sources that the Fatabayano platform relies on to deny rumors are diverse, and are estimated at 163 sources.

In its response, the Fatabayyano platform relied on multiple sources and relied on the credibility and accuracy of the response. News is rarely received from only one source, and these sources topped the list: Searching on official websites, and reverse searching in Google, Yandex and Tineye, by 25.76%.

The platform relies on the websites of official authorities for news related to institutions or official bodies, and always tries to rely on the main sources and official data for any news it verifies in this regard, and does not hesitate to speak with those in authority directly to help confirm or deny the information, and this result is consistent with Study by Angie Abdel Aziz Issa, It also uses reverse search on Google search engines to search for the source of the original images.[1]

Conclusion:

Among the findings of the study are: The nature of the rumors published on Facebook pages monitored by the "Fatabayyano" platform was in the form of pictures, with the highest percentage reaching 48.28%.

Social topics also emerged at the forefront of other topics, at 39.65%, and false information rumors occupied the highest percentage, at 46.55%.

The largest percentage of the rumors studied was attributed to fictitious publishers with unknown accounts, at a rate of 44.82%. To reveal the truth, the "Fatabayyano" platform relies on its own mechanisms, including reverse search technology in Google, Yandex, and Tineye engines, and searching the websites of official bodies at a rate estimated at an estimated rate of 44.82%. By 25.76%.

Therefore, in this study we recommend the following:

1)   The Fatabayyano platform team must make an effort to uncover economic and political rumors and enlighten social media users with the truth, because they are dangerous rumors for society.

2)   Encouraging official and unofficial institutions to create and develop media platforms that play the role of confronting and responding to rumors (especially medical rumors), through the official spokesperson, websites, and social media pages of those institutions.

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[1]- 4.   Abdel   Aziz   Issa   Angie,   Evaluation   of   those   responsible   for   communicating   in print press organizations and websites on mechanisms for confronting rumors via social media sites, Egyptian Journal of Media Research , volume 2020, number73,2020, p 221-275..

3) We advise the platform team to investigate and search for the truth of what is published in times of crises because these are the periods that rumor mongers exploit to spread their poison in societies.

4) Tightening control over social media, especially Facebook, and taking all deterrent measures against accounts that spread these rumours, and exposing accounts that claim to spread rumors so that their users will not follow them in the future.

5) We recommend that the fatabayyano platform expose the rumors spread in traditional media, to encourage them to verify the credibility of what they broadcast or write in the future.

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