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Abstract



**Dr. Sarah Kaddu**

EASLIS Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.  
sarkaddu2@gmail.com

**Eric Nelson Haumba**

Law Development Centre (LDC), Kampala, Uganda  
haumban@gmail.com



## **Critical Ethical Reflections on False Information and its Impact to the Vulnerable Groups During the Current Health Crisis in Uganda**

False information is news, stories or hoaxes created to deliberately misinform or deceive targeted audience. Fake information is not a new concept, only that it has become very popular and an issue of ethical concern. Usually, these stories are created to either influence people's views, push a political agenda or cause confusion and can often be a profitable business for online publishers. False information can deceive people by looking like trusted websites or using similar names and web addresses to reputable news organisations. In Uganda, in the past, for instance, trusted news used to be acquired from trusted sources of information. Those dealing in information were expected to follow strict codes of conduct when practicing. With the developments in the current information ecosystem, the Internet for instance, has made it very easy for any content creator to publish, share and consume information and news with very little or no regulations or standards. Many people now get information/news from social media sites and networks which makes it difficult to tell whether this information/news/stories are credible or not. Social media sites can play a big part in increasing the reach of these types of stories to a wider audience while impacting negatively on vulnerable people. This poses critical ethical concerns. The aim of this paper is to critically review the ethical issues arising out of false information circulated, the types, its characteristics, and its impact to the vulnerable groups (youth, poor and elderly) of people especially during the current health crises in Uganda, lessons learned and way forward.



## Dr. Sarah Kaddu

EASLIS Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda.  
sarkaddu2@gmail.com

### Brief Bio :

Dr Sarah Kaddu holds a Bachelor of Library & Information Science, Master of Arts in Information Studies, and a Ph.D. in Information Science. Currently, President, Uganda Library & Information Association (ULIA); Former Secretary-General, ULIA; Current Chair, AfLIA LIS EDUCATION & Training Section, & AfLIA, Governing Council member, IFLA Africa section committee member, Reviewer, IFLA/ OCLC Jay Jordan Early Career Fellowship programme,, incoming Chair, IFLA Sub-Saharan Africa, and a Library & Information Science Educator.

## Eric Nelson Haumba

Law Development Centre (LDC), Kampala, Uganda  
haumban@gmail.com



### Brief Bio :

Eric Haumba is a Senior Librarian at the Law Development Centre (LDC as well as a LIS trainer in Uganda. He is a progressive library administration professional, skilled in building and developing the library into a fundamental constituent of university education and student academic success. He is a well-rounded and experienced copyeditor and author. He holds a Master of Science Degree in Information Science and CPD from University of Pretoria. He is also a PhD Candidate at the University of Cape Town, South Africa. He is the public lead Creative Commons Uganda Chapter, member of the Creative Commons Global Network , AfLIA East Africa Representative and a freelance blogger.