Hi, my name is Shivu Sharma and I am a student at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. The spread of misinformation on social media has been covered prominently by the media as of late, especially as it relates to the COVID-19 pandemic and the 2020 United States presidential election. Because of these issues, getting the right information has never been more important than it is now. However, many people, like me, who rely on social media to get caught up on what is happening in the world tend to just accept the information they are presented, and often fall for misinformation as a result.

The main problem is that a lot of people do not question what is said on social media because they do not want to have to leave the app or website to fact check the information. As someone who would like to be able to get all the information I need in one place, I can understand that feeling all too well. That is why I am proposing the idea for a web browser extension that provides basic information to the user that allows them to determine whether they can trust the information they see or not.

The way the browser extension will work is that when the user selects a piece of text, they can click on a button in their web browser and it will perform a web search in the background. After it is done searching, the extension will display a list of related statements from published sources, in order of most recent. The idea behind this is that if there are any statements that conflict with what the selected text states, the user would question the information rather than accept it.

The great thing about this solution is that it does not open a new page or tab, so you can continue scrolling while the extension searches in the background. Let’s say you were browsing Twitter and saw a tweet claiming that a tour you were looking forward to was canceled. To figure out if that information is accurate you can select the text pf the tweet and then click on the extension’s button on your web browser. If there are any statements that say that the tour was not cancelled, it indicates that perhaps you may need to do your own research. At the very least, you would question the information rather than immediately believe it.