

MEDIA LITERACY FOR FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

WHAT DISINFORMATION IS?

False information that intends to mislead the receiver and that is spread with bad intentions.

Disinformation differs from misinformation in the sense that disinformation is deliberate.



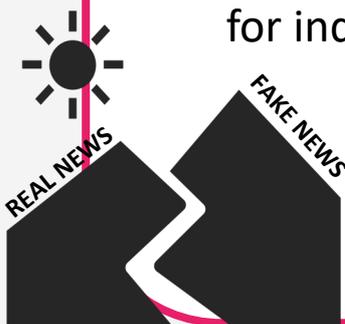
WHY IS IMPORTANT TO FIGHT AGAINST?

**DISINFORMATION HAS THE POWER
TO DECEIVE AND HARM THE POPULATION**

Exposure to disinformation can result in poor judgement and in a degradation of the information quality.

Disinformation can also have numerous detrimental effects for individuals, organizations, and society at large.

**IT IS IMPORTANT TO FIND EFFECTIVE WAYS
TO COUNTER THE NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES
OF DISINFORMATION.**



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WHO IS AFFECTED BY DISINFORMATION?

MICRO-LEVEL

Individuals may experience confusion, anxiety, and difficulty on distinguishing between true and false information.

Exposure to disinformation can also have a durable impact on people's beliefs, attitudes, behavioural intentions, and behaviours.

MESO-LEVEL

Institutions and **organizations** may suffer from a loss of trust and credibility, harming their reputation and goals.

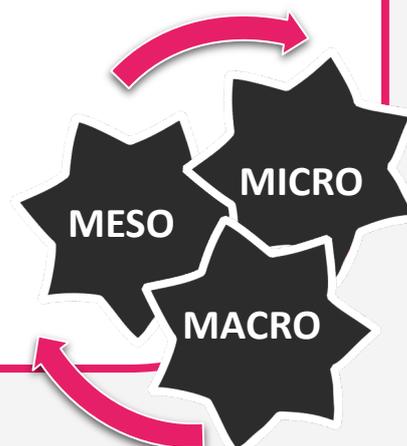
Disinformation that directly relates to an organization can even have extreme negative consequences.

MACRO-LEVEL

Media, **government** and **democracy** may suffer general distrust.

Distrust can lower citizen participation and confidence on related institutions, such as government, law, science, or healthcare.

**MICRO, MESO AND MACRO LEVELS
ARE INTERCONNECTED
AND CAN IMPACT EACH OTHER.**



MEDIA LITERACY FOR FIGHTING DISINFORMATION

WHAT MEDIA LITERACY IS ?

Individuals' ability to access and critically analyze and evaluate media messages, empowering them to make informed decisions about the media they consume, create, and share.



STUDIES ON MEDIA LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

An analysis of 103 studies of Media Literacy Interventions revealed that they were mainly conducted in the US, Europe or a combination of both, and they were mainly focused on the identification of short-term effects.

WESTERN BIAS



80%

US and Europe

20%

Asia and Africa

SHORT-TERM VS LONG TERM EFFECTS

81%



19%



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STRATEGIES FOR MEDIA LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

46% Passive inoculation  22% Active inoculation

Interventions where participants are spectators and passively receive the message (**Passive**) or having some form of perspective taking or role play as a disinformation creator (**Active**).

11% Logic-based  22% Source-based 

Interventions that explain the fallacious reasoning in the disinformation argumentation (**Logic**) or undermine the plausibility of the disinformation or the credibility of its source (**Source**).

2/3 Technique-based  1/3 Issue-based 

Interventions that focus on the ability to identify and guard themselves against various disinformation techniques (**Technique**) or try to warn about a particular type of disinformation (**Issue**).

MEDIA LITERACY INTERVENTIONS COULD INCLUDE DIFFERENT STRATEGIES

(e.g. active inoculation interventions were all technique-based)

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WHAT DID THE INTERVENTIONS MEASURE?

USER'S ASSESSMENT

64% measured **veracity measures**

19% measured **sharing/linking intentions**

SELF-PERCEIVED MEDIA LITERACY

15% measured **perceived media literacy**

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS

33% measured **beliefs and knowledge**

30% measured **attitudes**

16% measured **intentions**

9% measured **behaviors**



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EVIDENCES FROM THESE INTERVENTIONS FOR...

EDUCATORS

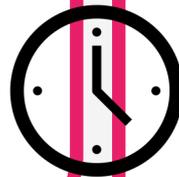
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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

RECOMMENDATIONS

1

Effectiveness and time allocation (on the part of the user) in media literacy interventions are related.



Consider **different time schedules** according to the audiences.

2

Specific audiences (e.g., children, elderly users, lower tech-literate users, users with limited online experience, lower-educated users) may have a relatively low level of media literacy.



For **audiences with low level** of media literacy, a **comprehensive educational intervention** produces a steep learning effect.

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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

Long terms effect of MIL actions are weak.

Even for media literate audiences there is a need to activate and extend previous knowledge.

Activating interventions remind users to consider their media literacy knowledge when selecting and processing online information.

RECOMMENDATIONS

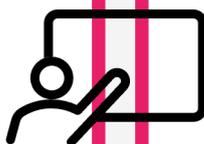
Actions for media literate audiences should **activate extant media literacy knowledge** and not only introduce new knowledge.

Actions should be **simple, short, unobtrusive** and often **repeated**.

Actions should take place right **before and during exposure** to possibly ambiguous information.

Interventions should be **visually attractive and/or attention grabbing**, to avoid desensitization.

3



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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

RECOMMENDATIONS

4

Messages evaluated as false may still influence users' beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors.

If disinformation is dismissed in the phase of article selection instead of article processing, its psychological effects will probably be much more limited.

Processing disinformation will elicit persuasive effects (even if the outcome of the processing is that the information is false).

Rather than prompt users to closely examine disinformation (e.g., verify claims, click links, check references), **improve users' media selection skills** (e.g., reminding them to check an article's source, the perceived veracity and persuasive intent of the headline, and the channel through which it was referred).



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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

5

RECOMMENDATIONS

Technique-based interventions may be more effective than issue-based interventions in distinguishing disinformation from correct information in the early phase (information selection).

The effects of these interventions are generalizable, rather than only disinformation about a certain topic.

These can also enhance user's critical thinking skills and equip them with the necessary knowledge and tools to be able to navigate the complex media landscape.



Reinforce the learning through media information literacy **interventions** with a **technique-based approach**.

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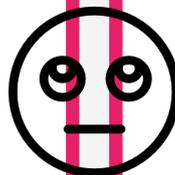
EVIDENCE SHOWS...

RECOMMENDATIONS

6

Media literacy intervention has mostly taught users to be skeptical, rather than to genuinely differentiate between information that is likely to be true or false. This reduces users' accuracy in accurately identifying correct information.

A possible consequence could be that users will develop a (chronically) skeptical approach to online information, even if this information would come from an entirely trustworthy source.



Prevent a skeptical attitude towards news in general.

Focus on skills that enable users to **distinguish disinformation from correct information** rather than simply evade disinformation.

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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

RECOMMENDATIONS

7

Evaluation of media literacy strategies and interventions implemented in the socio-educational context is essential to ensure that they are effective and are benefiting the participants.



Design evaluation indicators help to measure the impact of media literacy actions.

Establish **clear objectives** before implementing any media literacy strategy or intervention.

Collect data from the action, **both quantitative and qualitative**, to have information on the impact of your action.

Share your results and experiences with other groups such as other schools, organizations or universities.

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EVIDENCE SHOWS...

RECOMMENDATIONS

8

Media literacy strategies and interventions have demonstrated effectiveness and a positive impact on citizenship.

An approach rooted in humanism is necessary to progress in this direction.



Implement media literacy strategies and interventions with an impact on **citizenship** from **Human Rights** approach.

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HOW TO STRENGTHEN MEDIA LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

Considering the **lingering impact of disinformation**, since using real disinformation in experimental research could inadvertently contribute to the perpetuation of false beliefs among the participants.

Defining strategies addressed to **diverse targets** in the overcoming of disinformation.

Developing **monitor** and **evaluation protocols** for collecting empirical data on the impact

