

# Disinformation is Everywhere. Why Should we Change our Perspective on this Phenomenon?

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**Abstract:** Disinformation is a complex phenomenon, although we associate it mainly with politics and the media. However, its tools and consequences can be seen in various areas of social life. Understanding the nature of disinformation, its mechanisms and possible ways of influencing it seems necessary to fully understand this phenomenon. Campaigns targeting minority groups, manipulation in business, falsified messages in the area of health, tools of political propaganda or pseudoscience are examples of disinformation that allow you to see it in a broad perspective. And only this will allow you to develop a system of immunity to fake news.

**Keywords:** disinformation, misinformation, fake news, manipulation, resilience

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## 1. Introduction and methodology

Most of us associate disinformation only with media and politics, and we are right – there are numerous examples of fake news and manipulation in these areas. However, we need to broaden our perspective and recognize that disinformation is a more complex phenomenon that can also be found in unexpected places. This broader perspective can help us understand disinformation and build resilience against it. When we recognize the connections between disinformation and stereotypes, understand the tools used by creators, and are aware of the consequences and manipulation techniques, we can change our beliefs and behaviors. We must be vigilant for disinformation everywhere, but we don't need to be afraid of it because we are aware of it and know how to neutralize it.

In this article, I will try to provide a different perspective on disinformation. I will start by discussing stereotypes and exclusions, and then delve into disinformation in the health sector, media, and politics, as well as its serious consequences in business and prevalence of fake news in science. By highlighting the various contexts in which disinformation can occur, we can start to consider strategies to counteract it. My goal is show, why broader perspective is essential to understand disinformation and create resilience attitude. If we would like to fight with fake news and manipulated information, we need to deep understanding of the problem in order to find a remedy for it. The sources that I analyzed are international studies and reports on disinformation as well as the literature on the subject.

I believe that the solution lies in fostering a responsible communication system that promotes critical thinking, encourages breaking out of filter bubbles, and advocates humility in the face of ignorance. These approaches can help all of us in the fight against disinformation.

## 2. Information disorder

Information disorder is the overarching concept that encompasses the phenomenon of disinformation, which is characterized by chaos and the difficulty in distinguishing between real and manipulated content. Disinformation, misinformation, and malinformation are three perspectives from which we can understand the impact of information disorder. Disinformation, in particular, is the concept most commonly associated with deliberate misleading of message recipients. It can be motivated by various factors, such as financial gain, political influence, societal polarization, or simply the creation or deepening of information chaos. Disinformation is consciously distributed for specific purposes defined by the sender, often using channels that accelerate its dissemination and expand its reach to a wide audience. This is why the internet, especially social media, is a common medium for disseminating disinformation, as it can rapidly spread information without proper verification. Unlike conveying a message through lies, disinformation involves deliberate concealment or distortion of facts to create false beliefs in recipients. It is a strategic and calculated action aimed at achieving specific effects, involving all components of the information process. Understanding the intentionality behind disinformation is crucial to comprehending its nature and impact (Gans, 2004; Wardle, 2020).

The second type of information disorder is misinformation, which occurs when the sender unintentionally provides the recipient with manipulated information. Often, the sender shares this information in good faith, such as when they learn something important and want to share it with friends or family. They may write a post on a social media platform and publish it, resulting in several hundred people receiving the information in a

short amount of time. However, the author often does not verify the truthfulness of the information before publishing it, and if the message is sensational or emotionally charged, it is likely to spread widely on the web, misleading recipients. Even though the content is shared in good faith, it can still cause social harm (Wardle, 2021).

It may seem that fact-checking is the solution to this problem. However, the third type of information disorder, malinformation, demonstrates that fact-checking alone is insufficient. Malinformation involves true information that is transmitted with the intention of causing harm, such as by evoking specific, usually negative emotions. As a result, the recipient receives a factual message, but their emotional response to it may be different than if they had received it in a neutral or contextually appropriate context. Malinformation is often used in political struggles to discredit a social group or individual, portraying them in a negative light or undermining their social standing. In theory, the information may be true, but in practice, the effects are similar to disinformation. This is a dangerous phenomenon because it may not be detected by systems that identify disinformation content on social media. Content that is factually accurate and verifiable may not violate community standards, and therefore cannot be removed based on that criteria. The impact of malinformation is serious and often more dangerous than the previous two types of information disorder, as it is difficult to track and eliminate. The criteria for detecting context manipulation are not as transparent as identifying false information in content, and the social impact is significant as it is aimed at harming specific members of society (Wardle, 2020).

The basic tool of disinformation is fake news, which encompasses the space between truth and lies. Importantly, this term refers to information that is manipulated and falsified, but not entirely false, as it always contains some element of truth (Bąkiewicz, 2023). It is defined as the act of conveying a message by concealing information to lead someone to form a false belief about a given topic (Elliot, Culver, 1992), and as a phenomenon that contributes to political and social trends in 21st century societies (McNair, 2018), involving distorted signals unrelated to the truth or part of psychological warfare based on manipulating public opinion (Alwairi, Alwahedi, 2018).

All of these phenomena can occur due to the existence of information bubbles. This phenomenon consists of social preferences to surround oneself with people who share similar beliefs, while rejecting those who hold different views and content that does not align with one's worldview. As a result, recipients of information avoid conflicting messages, intellectually isolating themselves from their environment. This leads to a self-perpetuating cycle of opinions, where people are locked into echo chambers, repeating the same content and surrounding themselves with information that confirms their preexisting beliefs. Over time, they may perceive everyone as saying and thinking the same thing, further reinforcing their beliefs and contributing to polarization and social divisions (Michelucci, 2013). This echo chamber effect fosters extremism, as individuals within these bubbles become less critical and more unified in their beliefs, even if they are based on false information (Szpunar, 2014). Consequently, individuals may avoid expressing differing opinions within their social group for fear of ostracization or exclusion, leading to a phenomenon called the spiral of silence, where individuals prefer to remain silent to maintain their perceived social safety (Noelle-Neumann, 1974).

The complexity of information disorder phenomena shows how complicated the modern information ecosystem is. It is easy to find manipulated or falsified content that can be found and cause damage in many social areas.

### **3. Areas of disinformation**

#### **3.1 Minorities**

More than half of the surveyed Poles have encountered the phenomenon of disinformation, nearly a quarter of them say that they come into contact with manipulation every day or several times a week, and half indicate politicians as the creators of disinformation, and this is the area we most often associate the phenomenon with (NASK, Studies). However, it is not only in the area of politics that we can see disinformation activities, distortions, manipulations and half-truths can be found in many other areas of social life. And although they are not always visible, their consequences are clearly felt.

The first area marked by disinformation is minority communities, such as LGBT+ people, migrants, Gypsies, and Jews. There is no community that does not oppress and discriminate against its minorities. Here, we are dealing with the correlation of misinformation with the phenomenon of stereotyping, which divides people into those who are right, belonging to a given social group, and those who should be excluded from the group as not conforming to its idealized version (Girard, 1987). Organized disinformation campaigns against LGBT+ people continue. According to European Union research, representatives of this minority are among the main targets of disinformation attacks, and pro-Kremlin organizations are responsible for their creation and implementation.

Most often, disinformation messages contain a narrative that portrays LGBT+ as a new form of colonization of the West, a threat to the traditional family model, the safety of children and youth, and the natural order related to procreation. This is particularly visible in the countries of Eastern and Central Europe, where public debate creates fertile ground for the implementation of such messages. As a result, 30 percent of people from this minority admit that they have experienced harassing comments, threats, acts of aggression, or other similar incidents. The authorities are often an active party in such activities, for example, by creating LGBT+ free zones, as is the case in Poland, Bulgaria, Finland, Greece or Spain (Strand et al., 2021).

Disinformation publications also heavily impact migrant communities. According to the EUvsDisinfo study, the amount of manipulated information in this thematic area is twice as much as in other areas. The basic narrative is that migrants pose a threat to European culture and identity, supported by stories of various European cities allegedly abandoning Christmas traditions or children being forced to pray to Allah in schools. The narrative of Islamization is prominent in many publications, suggesting that Muslims will soon outnumber Europeans, depriving the natives of jobs, housing, and social privileges. Another narrative portrays migrants as a criminal or terrorist threat, with a particular emphasis on rape. While messages about migrants as an economic threat are weaker and less radical than in previous years, they are still present. In Poland and Italy, migration is also presented as an element exacerbating tensions between EU countries. This contributes to an increase in aggressive behavior towards representatives of minorities and intensifies the isolation of its members, who, in order to feel safe, often close themselves in ghettos instead of integrating with representatives of other European cultures (The impact of disinformation..., 2021).

Manipulated information messages also target people of non-white skin color. Despite efforts to combat racism, its manifestations are still evident, especially in areas such as education, employment, housing, healthcare, and public services. Media and social messages about individuals with non-white skin color often perpetuate negative beliefs and behaviors towards them. They are more harshly judged by the courts, receive higher penalties for crimes more frequently, and are often associated with criminal behavior and aggression (Champa, 2021). In news coverage, they are portrayed as more dangerous when they become the subjects of daily news, often overrepresented as criminals and underrepresented as victims or contributors. This trend is also observed in music videos and cultural products targeted at young people. As a result of such messages, stereotypes are reinforced, and exclusionary beliefs are intensified, leading to a diminished quality of life for individuals belonging to these groups (Media portrayals...).

Furthermore, representatives of the Roma and Jewish populations face a significant disinformation narrative. Messages about them are based on contempt, expressing low social status, dishonesty, lack of ethics, or socially unacceptable behavior. Anti-Roma narratives are included in the political programs of populist nationalist parties, such as those in Hungary, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic. Similarly, anti-Jewish narratives are propagated by politicians in Poland, such as the Konfederacja party. As a consequence of disinformation, events such as social lynching occur, such as the attacks on two Gypsies groups in the suburbs of Paris in 2019 (Banaji, Bhat, 2019).

Disinformation messages rooted in stereotypes contribute to exclusion. Despite discussions about equality and its importance in modern societies, there are unfortunately not only isolated incidents, but also organized campaigns targeting specific groups.

### **3.2 Health**

Health is another critical sphere of our lives that is impacted by disinformation. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we faced not only disinformation but also an infodemic, where an overwhelming amount of false information posed a threat to the stability of the information ecosystem. Speculations about the origin and sources of the virus emerged, accompanied by various conspiracy theories, ranging from claims that the virus was planned by the Rockefeller Foundation, to suggestions that it was a means to solve overpopulation, or that COVID-19 vaccines contained electronic tracking chips. Tragically, some individuals died after consuming chlorine or refusing treatment based on unfounded beliefs in self-healing through willpower. The consequences were not limited to health alone, as research indicates changes in trust towards government, particularly among the younger generation during the pandemic (Trust in government..., 2020). Skepticism about vaccines also increased due to media reports about adverse effects. People began to fear vaccines more than the potential complications of the infection itself (Belanger, 2020).

The disinformation surrounding the Blue Whale Game, which was ultimately revealed to be a global hoax, had serious consequences. In 2017, when countries around the world were grappling with the health and well-being of young people, the story of a mysterious game that allegedly drove teenagers to suicide, created by a Russian

journalist, gained widespread attention. The tasks attributed to game administrators, which were never substantiated, circulated on the internet and served as a classic example of a disinformation narrative amplified by the media. According to the narrative, young people were supposed to find their "guardian" by using a specific hashtag, who would then guide them through a series of tasks, culminating in suicide. At that time, questioning the existence of the game required great courage, as the belief in its existence was so prevalent that it went unquestioned. Tragically, the consequences were all too real, as teenagers in Poland and around the world engaged in self-mutilation and attempted suicide, with some cases resulting in tragic loss of life (Bąkiewicz, 2020).

Similar consequences are faced by victims of disinformation about vitamin C and its alleged connection to cancer. In Poland, Jerzy Zięba is a prominent figure behind the false narrative of a miracle drug, offering ethically questionable treatments for seriously ill patients based on falsified data and research. He capitalizes on the social trend of declining trust in the medical community (Poland ranks among the lowest in Europe in this regard) and combines it with a well-crafted conspiracy theory centered on a global population reduction plan (Pluta, Pseudoscience...). Similar patterns can be observed at CHIPSA, or Centro Hospitalario Internacional del Pacifico in Mexico, which claims to offer integrative cancer treatment. Unfortunately, this type of disinformation is highly dangerous, as evidence has shown that some medical services offered through manipulated messages have resulted in negative health effects, permanent damage, or even death for patients (Ohlheiser, 2021).

When discussing the areas impacted by disinformation in the health sector, it is important to highlight the beauty sector, which boasts a market value of \$250 billion and is rife with half-truths and misleading content. A prevalent form of disinformation in this sector revolves around the cult of beauty, where idealized bodies with smoothed and slimmed appearances are depicted through graphic programs. Pseudo-experts or even actors posing as doctors often recommend various supplements, perpetuating such disinformation. This has detrimental effects on trust in doctors and science as a whole, leading to a rejection of expert knowledge in favor of destructive disinformation messages that harm society at large (de Regt et al., 2019).

### **3.3 Business**

Unfortunately, the realm where disinformation has been proliferating rapidly in recent years is the business sector. Its impact is particularly significant in the stock market, where disinformation messages can influence share prices and, consequently, the overall value of a company. Such actions are feared by nearly 60 percent of large companies in the United States (Global fraud, 2020).

Disinformation in business can take two forms: the creators and the victims of disinformation. In the former, we can observe what is known as "washing," which involves using social phenomena to enhance one's image. Companies create disinformation messages that purportedly inform the public about non-business activities for a specific group or area, while the reality may be different. Often, disinformation in the business sector pertains to environmental issues, known as greenwashing, where false claims are made about an entity's commitment to environmental protection, when in fact the opposite may be true. Market research clearly demonstrates how greenwashing impacts consumer behavior and leads to erroneous decisions. The scale of this phenomenon is significant, as a study conducted by the American consulting agency Terrachoice found that out of over 1,000 products tested in American supermarkets, which were promoted as environmentally friendly, only one was truly free from greenwashing (Terrachoice, 2007).

Pinkwashing, also interchangeably referred to as rainbowwashing, involves apparent activities that claim to support non-heteronormative individuals. However, in reality, it is a strategy used to shift the focus away from overt discrimination, exclusion, or violence, disguised under the guise of inclusive rhetoric. The concept of LGBT+ pinkwashing was coined in 2011, in reference to the Israeli government's public relations activities related to homonationalism and the exploitation of sexual minorities to justify racism and xenophobia (Abdelmoez et al., 2022).

Similar to pinkwashing, sportwashing is a set of practices employed by individuals, companies, or countries to repair or enhance their reputation using sports. The most common form of sportwashing is organizing sporting events, ranging from local tournaments to world championships, or owning a sports team or club, such as Paris Saint-Germain, which is owned by a subsidiary of a Qatari sovereign wealth fund and has faced criticism for unethical actions (Fruh et al., 2022).

In the aftermath of the war in Ukraine, a new phenomenon called warwashing emerged, which involves feigned aid activities and a disparity between declarations and actual aid provided to war victims. This may include

changing logos to Ukrainian colors or claiming withdrawal from the Russian market despite lacking actual plans to do so (Korczyński, Podus, 2022).

The business environment is often targeted by disinformation propagated by trolls, profiteers, and foreign entities. Trolls are individuals or groups that engage in anti-social behavior online, particularly in places where discussions take place. They launch disinformation attacks in the form of entertainment or hate speech publications, with the aim of destabilizing discussions, misleading other participants, and tarnishing the reputation of companies. Trolls generate up to 12 times more content, often using colloquial language and profanity, and they respond to almost every comment that references their statements (Musiał, 2017).

Profiteers, on the other hand, profit from the distribution of disinformation through business speculation. Their actions can weaken companies and their position in the industry by spreading messages about alleged crises or the unprofitability of entire sectors. These messages can take the form of single statements or organized campaigns against competing entities. In the most dangerous form, disinformation is propagated by foreign entities, where the level of organization is even higher and involves the participation of governments and authorities in disinformation campaigns. Such organized groups have been identified in 48 countries, most notably in countries that claim global dominance. This type of disinformation is particularly dangerous as it is challenging to track and carries serious risks for businesses, including potential collapse (Nemr, Gangware, 2019).

### **3.4 Politics**

The connection between politics and disinformation has existed for centuries. One of the earliest known examples of disinformation in an election campaign dates back to the fight between Octavian and Mark Antony, where Octavian spread disinformation about his opponent using coins.

In modern times, Donald Trump was the first prominent politician to widely use the terms "disinformation" and "fake news." He first used these terms in a Twitter post in December 2016, and by the time of the first presidential debate, he had repeated them 1,906 more times. Data from The Washington Post's Fact Checker's Database revealed that Trump made an average of 23 false or misleading tweets per day, creating what the media referred to as a "tsunami of untruth" that influenced political discourse. In 2019, Trump even claimed credit for coining the term "fake news." Trump's extensive use of disinformation during his election campaign, particularly on Facebook and Twitter, contributed to the impact of these platforms on the political beliefs of their users (Woodward, 2020). The disinformation narrative amplified by Fox News further reinforced false beliefs, leading to the attack on the U.S. Capitol in January, which resulted in the loss of 5 lives.

Brexit was a significant consequence of political disinformation, with the narrative of Euroscepticism playing a crucial role on the Twitter platform. An analysis of 7.5 million tweets revealed that users supporting the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union were not only more numerous, but also more active compared to other users. They posted more tweets containing anti-EU content, shared links to press publications that aligned with their beliefs, and engaged with like-minded individuals. Bots also played a role in amplifying this narrative, with less than 1 percent of accounts generating over a third of the content. More than 13,000 accounts were designed to disseminate information to varying degrees. The main figures in this campaign were Boris Johnson and Nigel Farage, who created and spread messages across the network (Hoeller, 2021).

The tragic effects of political disinformation can be observed in the events in Ukraine. There are four main trends of disinformation in this context: government propaganda, conspiracy theories, context manipulation, and emotional manipulation. Pro-Kremlin messages distort reality and aim to portray Russia as a victim of Western aggression, such as the alleged threat of NATO enlargement. State-owned media only disseminate information that aligns with the political interests of Russia's ruling groups. Paid trolls also play a role, writing thousands of comments online and spreading the pro-Russian narrative across various social media platforms (Paz, 2022).

The Ukrainian side also utilizes disinformation as a weapon of war, with President Zelenski having 1.4 million followers on Telegram, and the content he shares with Ukrainian society aimed at boosting morale, often adopting a heroic tone (Demagog, 2022).

All members of society are affected by political disinformation, as it undermines freedom of thought, human rights, right to privacy, right to democratic participation, and various economic, social, and cultural rights. Moreover, it diminishes indicators of democratic quality by eroding trust in the independence of democratic institutions, disrupting elections, and undermining confidence in their fairness. Additionally, it contributes to social polarization, exacerbating existing divisions (Eurobarometer, 2022).

### **3.5 Media**

The media holds a significant, often dominant, position in the social structure. As their main role is to provide information, they shape attitudes and influence opinions and decisions. Despite the element of journalistic integrity, media outlets are also commercial enterprises where issues such as profits and ownership relations come into play. Moreover, the phenomenon of convergence, which has blurred genres and information distribution channels, has made the media system increasingly complex. Consequently, it is not difficult for disinformation to infiltrate, often taking the form of manipulating quotes or changing context, which has an immediate effect on the perception of content. For instance, a notable example is the case of Anthony Fauci, the White House's chief medical adviser, whose interview excerpt in *The New York Times* was manipulated to create the impression of vaccines' ineffectiveness. However, reading the entire text reveals that the doctor was referring to the ineffectiveness of vaccines administered with too long intervals between doses. Media disinformation can also be created through false narratives built on distorted facts, which is challenging to detect and rectify as it requires thorough analysis and fact-checking, which recipients of the content usually do not undertake. For example, in the issue of so-called push backs, where migrants are pushed back to Belarus at the border despite crossing into the Polish side, the head of the National Security Bureau, during an interview with *Radio Plus*, cited a wrong example justifying the unauthorized conduct of Border Guard officers by referring to a judgment of the Court of Human Rights. Another form of media disinformation is the generation of false messages, which often occurs on internet portals through hacking of pages or profiles, leading to the creation of misleading narratives (Digital Poland, 2022)

In addition, disinformation is facilitated by clickbait, which is increasingly employed in the media, particularly in mainstream outlets. Clickbait is a short and attention-grabbing form of journalistic material that focuses on generating popularity for the content rather than delivering qualitative messages. While clickbait is often viewed as a tool for selling content rather than intentionally deceiving or manipulating the audience, it is hard to ignore the possibility that this marketing activity may contribute to the dissemination of fake news (Alves et al., 2016). The publication of clickbait itself can be considered as fake news, as it misleads the audience through headlines that are inconsistent with the actual content.

The consequences of media disinformation are numerous and grave. Firstly, they further diminish the already low level of social trust. In Poland, only 20 percent of the media are perceived as independent, leading to increased reliance on social media by a growing number of people, especially the youth. The changing nature of journalism itself does not help either, particularly with the emergence of media workers who perform similar tasks as journalists but lack the ethical codes and standards. This impacts both the volume of disinformation in the media and the industry as a whole.

### **3.6 Science**

Unfortunately, science is not immune to misinformation, despite being expected to uphold the highest standards as a model for all other publications and content. One form of misinformation in science is pseudoscience, which relies on simplistic reasoning and selectively accepts only favorable results while disregarding data that do not support the original thesis. It often refers to concepts lacking scientific justification or combines them with scientific definitions and publications from unknown or unrecognized sources, relying on isolated and ambiguous experiments (Żukowska et al., 2021).

Pseudoscience is closely related to fake science, which distorts reality by presenting facts as non-facts and presenting pseudo-evidence as credible evidence. Fake science is the result of intentional attempts to introduce false or unconfirmed disinformation claims into the scientific discourse, often perpetuated by scientists themselves. This can create a false belief about the truth or probability of certain claims, leading other researchers to rely on them as a basis for their own studies and analyses. Fake science comprises theories and claims that may appear similar to scientific theories in terms of writing, methodology, and argumentation, but lack empirical confirmation. It can be seen as an imitation of science. Unlike pseudoscience, fake science employs a reproducible methodology and is based on true claims (May, 2019).

Research conducted in 2021 by Else and Van Noorden indicates that fake science is not limited to isolated cases, but often occurs as an institutionalized form of forgery, aided by predatory journals that prioritize profits from publications over the dissemination of high-quality content. For example, researchers from China have been found to create low-quality content in order to receive undeserved accolades. In 2020, over 1,400 scientific articles submitted by Chinese researchers were registered in biomedical journals. Although nearly 400 of these articles have been retracted after their misinformation was exposed, around 1,000 of them still remain in circulation (Turek, 2022). A similar situation has occurred with publications from Italian researcher Alfredo Fusco

and his co-authors in the field of oncology, where between 2013 and 2018, 22 articles were retracted and 10 corrections were published. Nevertheless, eight of the retracted articles have received 71 citations on Google Scholar since their retraction (Bucci, 2019).

It is not difficult to highlight the negative consequences of disinformation in science. In addition to the loss of trust in representatives of this field, the implementation of falsified or manipulated content carries a high risk. Even if only partially misinformation, the social effects remain negative. Science should remain a bastion of truth and reliability, serving as a reference point for creating a reality based on facts.

#### **4. Tools to promote resilience**

Viewing the phenomenon of disinformation in a wide spectrum allows for the development of a resistant attitude towards manipulated content, which is necessary to navigate the information ecosystem. It should begin with cooperation and cohesion among different social groups, sectors, and governments. The voices of entities such as the European Union or the United Nations are increasingly encouraging agreements and joint activities in this field. Only through mutual support and the creation of solutions to improve the fight against disinformation can we have a chance of success in the face of its rapid proliferation. Building a culture of communication, improving trust in the media and academia should be prioritized in actions against disinformation (Baptista, 2021).

Improving media literacy is of great importance in addressing this issue. The ability to think critically, evaluate, use, and create information is a key skill in the 21st century that allows individuals to navigate the information environment and make informed choices. It also promotes responsible participation in political processes and democratic elections, free from interference and manipulation (Countering disinformation..., 2022). This is exemplified by programs implemented in Europe and around the world that focus on building mental resilience to manipulation, starting with awareness of these phenomena. Familiarity with the terminology associated with techniques used to falsify reality allows for approaching information with distance and healthy skepticism (Teperic, 2022). When we are aware that disinformation can be found in every aspect of social life, we are better prepared for its occurrence and less susceptible to its harmful effects. However, if we are unaware that disinformation can be related to stereotyping, or can affect business or be present in science, there is a high probability that we may not respond to it properly when it arises. Considering the rapid technological progress and the increasing pace at which it occurs, it should be anticipated that there will be more manipulations in the years to come.

An attitude of responsibility is also crucial. We must recognize that disinformation is a concern for all members of modern societies, and we should feel accountable for it. What we read and what we share can either support a discourse based on truth or deviate from it. Therefore, it is important to break out of information bubbles and our own comfort zones, which may give us a false sense of security but ultimately distort our perception of reality. Such bubbles can contribute to the disappearance or significant reduction of awareness about the phenomenon of disinformation, making it a fertile ground for its spread. Similarly, the fear of expressing our own views and a conformist attitude that amplifies the voice of the majority can also support manipulated or polarizing content.

Building resistance to disinformation is not only necessary to address this phenomenon, but also to ensure the quality of the information that surrounds us. The examples described in this article illustrate the wide reach of disinformation and the serious consequences it can cause. Neutralizing these consequences is often challenging, which is why prevention, an approach that aims to mitigate this harmful phenomenon, becomes so crucial.

#### **5. Discussion**

Disinformation is a complex phenomenon that should be viewed in a broad spectrum. The fact that it can be pervasive highlights the dynamic and heterogeneous nature of the issue we are grappling with. In order to effectively counteract it, whether by building resilience or neutralizing its consequences, it is crucial to understand its complexity. Disinformation evolves, much like the world around us, and therefore requires constant vigilance and analysis of signals and phenomena. In-depth discussions are also important, aimed at understanding the processes that contribute to the spread and strengthening of disinformation in the social space. Viewing disinformation across the spectrum is a crucial step in building a high-quality information ecosystem, and should be a top priority for all of us.

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