


# Chapter 11


## The Role of Education in Combating Cybercrime in the Asia–Pacific: Tackling Misinformation and Disinformation in Australia

**Leo S. F. Lin**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3684-5403>


*Charles Sturt University, Australia*

**Geberew Tulu Mekonnen**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7672-3609>


*Charles Sturt University, Australia*

**Mladen Zecevic**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0002-1455-2992>


*Charles Sturt University, Australia*

**Duane Aslett**

 0000-0003-1540-7180

*Charles Sturt University, Australia*

**Douglas M. C. Allan**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0616-5546>

*Charles Sturt University, Australia*

### ABSTRACT

*This chapter examines how education serves as a key strategy to combat cybercrime by specifically analysing misinformation and disinformation issues in Australia. The*

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*chapter analyses complex elements of the subject area to provide valuable insights which can shape upcoming educational approaches and inform policymaking decisions. Through education priority, the chapter supports an adaptive and practical cybercrime approach that respects ethical standards to protect individual rights. This research aims to build an essential basis for enhancing educational methods and policy systems across the Asia-Pacific region. This chapter points out that digital literacy and critical thinking skills must be developed in individuals because these abilities are essential for navigating and fighting against misinformation and disinformation in the digital environment. These educational programs prove essential because they teach citizens to identify trustworthy information, which helps build societal defences against cybercrime in the region.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The current digital era witnesses a rapid spread of misinformation and disinformation, which creates complicated global challenges for societies (Bennett & Livingston, 2020; Petratos, 2021). This circumstance distorts public perception and damages the reputation of institutions and systems. The United Nations has drafted a Cybercrime Convention that offers a framework for international cooperation to combat cybercrime threats (Lin et al., 2024b). Emerging technologies offer opportunities and challenges, particularly in mitigating the spread of false information.

Misinformation and disinformation have had profound consequences on public trust, decision-making, and societal stability, making individuals more susceptible to manipulation, fraud, and other cyber-related threats (Ma & McKinnon, 2021; Wilson et al., 2024). Equipping individuals with fact-checking technologies and critical thinking skills enables them to identify credible information, thereby reducing the impact of misinformation and disinformation. Educational initiatives play a pivotal role in fostering these competencies, ensuring individuals can navigate the digital information landscape effectively.

In Australia, misinformation and disinformation have become pressing concerns, affecting democracy, public health, education, and social cohesion. In response to this threat, the Australian government is developing a multifaceted approach aimed at enhancing public trust and the individual capacity to critically assess online information. This approach has been shaped by policy development, legislative reforms, curriculum integration, and community engagement programs.

This chapter examines the Australian government's strategic response to misinformation and disinformation through a two-pronged approach: (1) the development and implementation of policy and legislative measures, and (2) the integration of digital literacy and critical thinking education into school curricula and public awareness

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