


Chapter 13


Exploring the Legal Framework and Education for Protection and Promotion of Truthful Information

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ABSTRACT

The widespread dissemination of misinformation, amplified by social media, presents a significant threat to democracies and societies globally. False narratives distort reality, manipulate public opinion, and undermine trust in institutions. Addressing this challenge requires a dual approach that combines legal regulation and educational empowerment. This chapter examines existing and emerging legal frameworks aimed at curbing the spread of harmful misinformation, alongside educational strategies designed to enhance individuals' critical thinking skills and their ability to discern fake news. It also reviews the roles of international organizations and

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governments in implementing solutions such as stricter regulations on social media platforms, accountability measures for content, public awareness campaigns, media literacy programs, and fact-checking initiatives. By integrating legal and educational efforts, societies can become better equipped to navigate the complex information environment of the digital age and foster a more informed and resilient citizenry.

INTRODUCTION

Misinformation in the new age of the internet is one of the major antagonists the world faces today having gained momentum and coverage. Such complete misinformation distorts almost every aspect of human endeavor, politics, health, financial markets and the international system. The how and when of fake news tells even more: in the context of the extremely fast sharing of information that does not undergo any verification, coupled with the multiple embedding of the misinformation in cultural, political, and economic realities, it has become clear that there is a desperate need for scientific and efficient protection of truths. Social media has rapidly turned into a source of institutionalized misinformation and its costs are not marginal; they are becoming existential, which means that they are undermining the basis of informed societies.

The problem is all the more daunting, especially given its dimensions. In a world where billions of people have one form of interaction with the other through electronic media then it becomes very easy to spread a wrong narrative, which is a kryptonite to the traditional structures of information control. While miscreances have always been part of societies around the globe, such deceptive information disseminates rapidly and without any sort of control due to internet and social media. Thus, popular algorithms that aim at enhancing people's interest unintentionally amplify sensational or emotion-provoking material, which is often blatant misinformation. Such has been this digital architecture that there is an architecture that fosters misinformation, subtly negotiating public perception of realities. Misinformation has shown the ability to distort lives, intensify division, and erode sound deliberation, the very decisions necessary for democratic governance, right from the possibly manipulated portrayal of electoral results to the false health information (Eyal, 2024).

It means much, especially in democratic nations where good, credible information is the foundation of good citizenship and leadership. The Democratic system requires citizens to make rational choices in exercising their accountability on leaders and in developing policies which meet public desires. If false information misleads the public, then there is danger of diluting democracies. For instance, amorphous information on candidates standing for election or on electoral process disorients eligible voters or paints a picture, which, if misleading may influence the voters'

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