Index

Understanding Disinformation

▶ What is Disinformation ?

Disinformation is a deliberate and intentional spread of false or misleading information with the purpose of deceiving, manipulating, or influencing individuals, groups, or societies. It is a form of misinformation that is created and disseminated with the intention of causing harm, confusion, or achieving a specific agenda. Disinformation often takes advantage of people's trust in information sources, their cognitive biases, and their emotional responses to create a false narrative or shape public opinion.

Mine
Vaganti
NGO

Key aspects of Disinformation:

1) the falsity of the content (so-called fake content)

2) the contagiousness of the same (i.e., the ability to transfer emotional states and perceptions among users, i.e., to affect the behavior of recipients)

3) the malicious intent underlying their creation

4) the political/ideological or economic motivation of those who create them and then disseminate them

5) the mass dissemination of them

6) the aptitude to produce an impact for informational pluralism (thus, to generate effects on citizens' opinion formation)

The Impact of Disinformation in Italy

76.5% of Italians believe that fake news is increasingly sophisticated and difficult to discover,
20.2% believe they lack the skills necessary to recognize them, and 61.1% think they have only some of them.
Only a minority of 18.7 percent believe with certainty that they are able to recognize immediately a fake

The share of those who think they lack the necessary skills rises to:

29.5 percent among those living in municipalities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants,

39.5 percent among those over 64 years old,

51.5 percent among those with low educational qualifications, outlining the profile of those at risk of being trapped in an unreal world.

Media Literacy: A Powerful Solution

What is Media Literacy?

"A framework to access, analyze, evaluate, create and participate with messages in a variety of forms — from print to video to the Internet" (MLN,2023) "Media Literacy is interdisciplinary by nature and represents a necessary, inevitable, and realistic response to the complex, ever-changing electronic environment and communication cornucopia surrounding us." (National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2023"

According to the definition of Media Literacy Now, 2023

Media Literacy is the capacity to:

- Decode media messages (as well as the systems in which they exist);

- Evaluate the impact of such messages on thoughts, feelings, and behaviors;

- Create media with consideration and diligence.

Initiatives in Italy

Fondazione Media Literacy

---

focus their activities in the fields of education and information, particularly towards upper secondary school students, in the belief that the growth of awareness and culture in young people is one of the main elements that guarantee a modern democracy, social cohesion and the fulfillment of individuals.

MED "Associazione italiana per l'educazione ai media e alla comunicazione

---

It promotes an educational and didactic activity, aimed at developing in young people critical information and understanding about the nature and categories of the media, the techniques they employ to construct messages and produce meaning, genres and specific languages

Open the box (Dataninja)

Open the Box is a media and data literacy course for secondary schools aimed at teachers, educators, educators and all people involved in education with girls and boys aged 11 to 18.

Key Takeaways

We have defined what is disinformation and its key aspects: to better tackle this phenomenon is important to truly understand it!

We saw what is the impact of disinformation in Italy: data confirm the majority of people are aware of the situation and believe they need support to better recognize fake news!

We gave a definition of Media Literacy, a powerful instrument to fight disinformation and the spread of fake news!

Italy's initiatives are mostly focus on education of young people and educators which is a key factor to prevent disinformation , still if elderly people are also in need of support

Bibliography

- Terzo Rapporto Ital Communication– Censis. "Disinformazione e Fake News in Italia, il sistema dell'informazione alla prova dell'intelligenza artificiale". CENSIS, Rome, 2023
- Open the Box "Un percorso interattivo di media e data literacy per le scuole superiori". Dataninja, 2023 https://www.dataninja.it/portfolio/open-the-box-it/
- "Media Literacy defined" The National Association for Media Literacy Education, 2023. https://namle.net/resources/media-literacy-defined/
- Fondazione Media Literacy, https://www.medialiteracy.it/
- "Le strategie di disinformazione online e la filiera dei contenuti fake" Autorità per le Garanzie nelle Comunicazioni Servizio Economico-Statistico. 2014

Thank you for your kind attention!