



Understanding

# Misinformation

← and →

# Disinformation



# WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR...

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Information has real-life consequences. It can save lives, literally - when it's true. Unfortunately, the opposite is also true. Untrue information can cause great harm. Wrong information can spread widely, like a virus, causing what's been called an **infodemic**.

Now more than ever, we are experiencing the spread of two forms of wrong information: misinformation and disinformation. These two words, so often used interchangeably, are merely one letter apart. But behind that one letter hides the critical distinction between these confusable words: **intent**.

*excerpt from [www.dictionary.com](http://www.dictionary.com)*





# MISINFORMATION

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The unintentional spread of incorrect, false and misleading information simply because it is believed to be true.

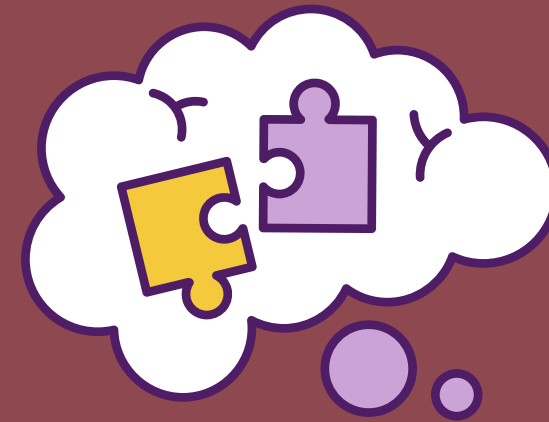
This usually stems from internal and external factors within society due to information overload and existing biases or beliefs often based on social, cultural and religious factors. It also refers to out-of-context information that is presented as fact regardless of an intent to deceive.

Misinformation has always existed as a tactic of social manipulation, the growth of the internet and social media platforms has simply given it a wider reach. It is everywhere online, and anyone can be vulnerable to it.

# Examples of Misinformation



Spreading incorrect rumours or gossip about one's sexuality based on their perceived identity and expression.



Jumping to conclusions without in-depth digestion of all given information or making assumptions of a story centered on only its headlines.



Unknowingly relying on outdated, wrong or bad sources of information for research studies and articles.

# DISINFORMATION

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Disinformation is the deliberate spread of false information with the intent to deceive or cause harm.

It is heavily based on a lack of (sufficient) information as well as bias, dislike, hatred or the necessity for gain (financial, social or otherwise) through sharing untrue information.

It is very powerful, destructive, and divisive because it is designed to trick its readers into believing something that isn't true.

# Examples of Disinformation

Untrue rumors  
stemming from  
deep fakes

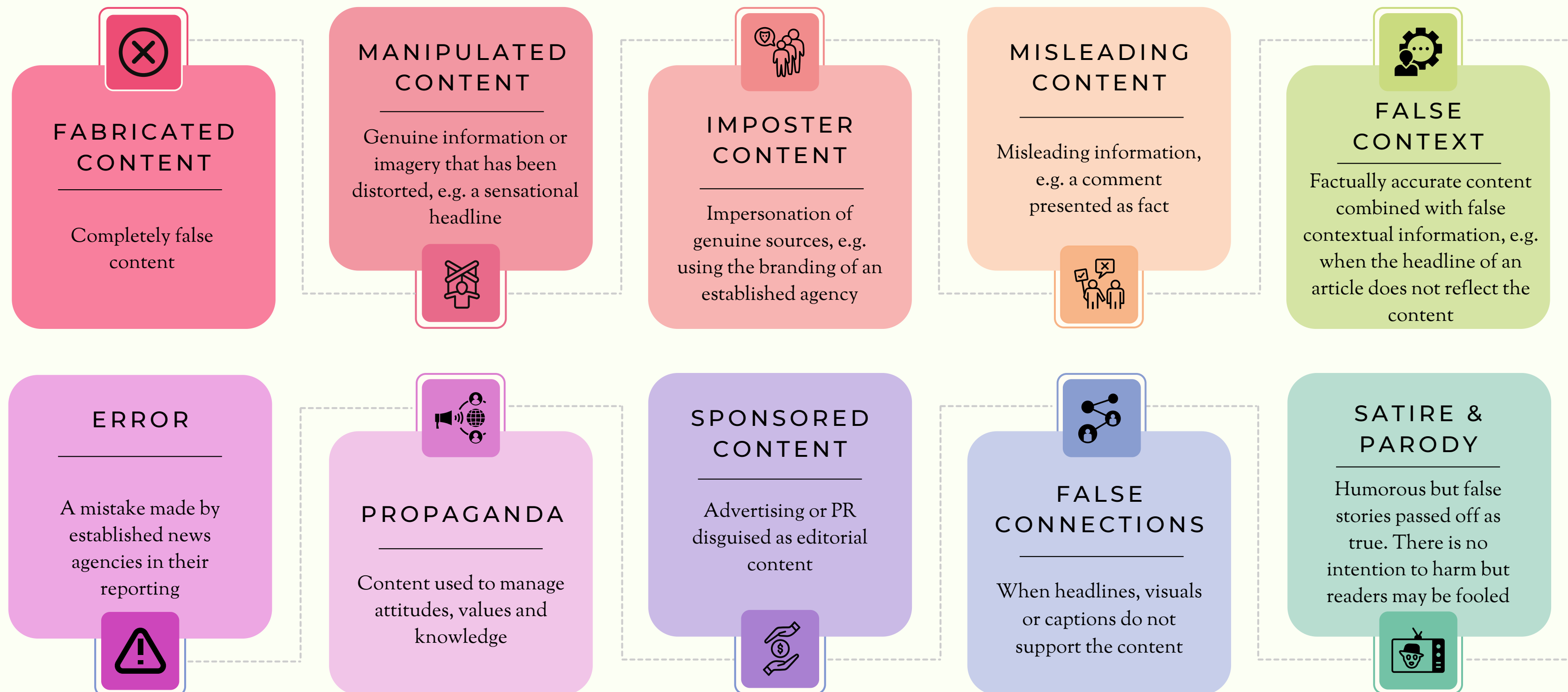
Hate speech or  
propaganda

Omission or  
exaggeration of  
details in a story  
or article

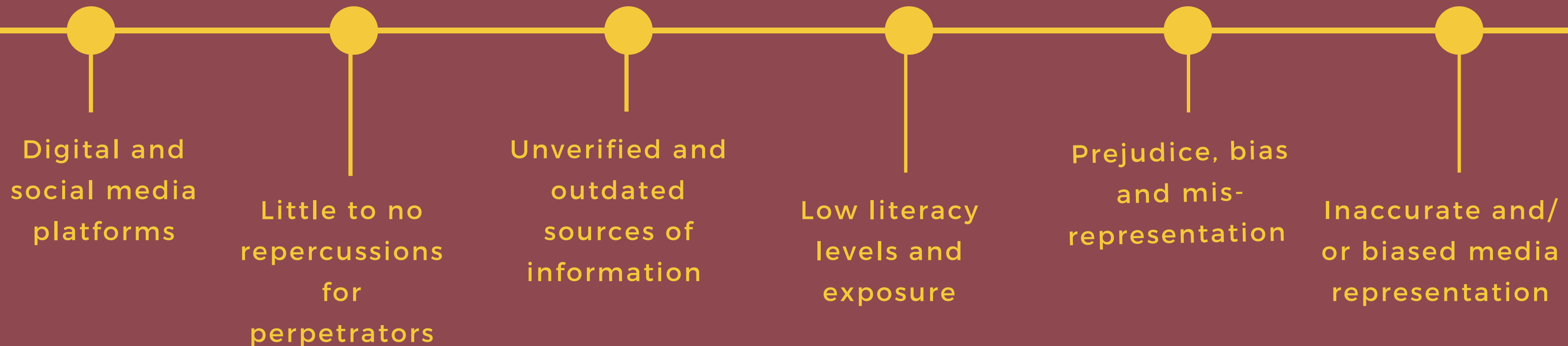
Intentionally  
using wrong or  
bad sources of  
information

In a recent research report on Disinformation Pathways and Effects (May 2022) by CIPESA, online platforms are noted to be the current key drivers of disinformation through various forms and examples such as use of deep fakes to share manipulated and fabricated content.

# TYPES OF MISINFORMATION AND DISINFORMATION



# CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO MISINFORMATION & DISINFORMATION (M&D)



# IMPACTS OF M&D

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The fast spread of misinformation and disinformation can cause serious impacts especially when the targets are marginalized communities such as structurally silenced womxn. This further limits their meaningful participation and engagement in civic, online and physical spaces.

01

Pushback on progress of human rights and marginalization of minority groups .

02

Failure by governments and stakeholders to make informed decisions.

03

Discredits the right sources of information and promotes tainted narratives.

04

Increase in cases of violence, stigma and discrimination due to “moral judgement”.

05

Continuous criminalization of minority groups which prompts systemic exclusion.

# SOLUTIONS TO M&D

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Here are solutions to debunk  
misinformation and disinformation  
in this digital revolution...



Independent and  
verified fact  
checks and  
investigations

Non-discriminatory  
enforcement of  
current cyber laws

Diverse narratives  
to eliminate biased  
media reporting

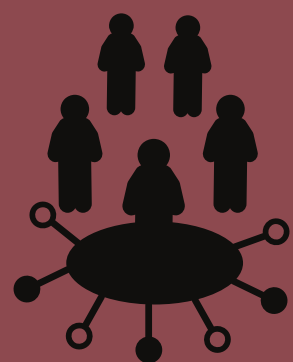
Influence digital  
community  
standards and  
policies

Awareness about  
M&D issues and  
how they can be  
addressed

Media and  
digital literacy  
programs

# TIPS TO SPOT AND VERIFY INFORMATION

It is important to have knowledge on basic fact checking tips which will help us discern between the facts and falsehoods amidst the myriad of information that we are exposed to online and offline in a bid to counteract misinformation and disinformation.



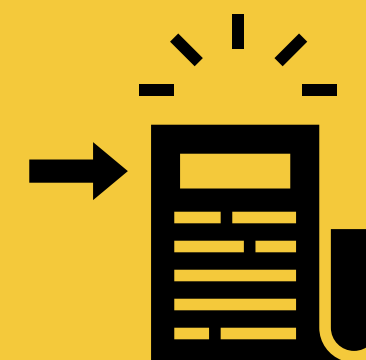
Use the 5Ws + 1H rule to establish the relevance of the information.



Run background checks to establish the validity of your sources.



Scrutinize the reliability of your website domains and social media sources.



Read beyond the headlines and verify information across other official sources.



If still uncertain about the information, please don't share or repost.



# GENDERED M&D

as explained by Maria Giovanna Sessa via Media and Democracy in the Digital Age platform

Gendered disinformation cripples the representativeness of democratic institutions and poses a security threat, since online harassment can sometimes inspire offline aggression.

The practice has a silencing effect on practically half of the world population, as women are drawn to disengage from the conversation, censor themselves, and avoid careers in politics and other male-dominated occupations. Over time, GBD becomes a cautionary tale, an invitation to discretion as a safety measure that potentially leads to the acceptance of victim-blaming logic – as if targets have called the abuse upon themselves by voicing their opinions. Therefore, more needs to be done to prevent and eliminate this abuse, which may cast a long shadow over future generations, the victims and their families, eroding the right to equality and truthful information.



Let's make the Internet safer together!

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