Media and Information Literacy (MIL) and Disinformation: perspectives in Ibero-America[1]

Alfabetización Mediática e Informacional (AMI) en tiempos de Desinformación: perspectivas en Iberoamérica

Alfabetização midiática e informacional (AMI) em tempos de desinformação: perspectivas na América Latina

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Abstract: Media and Information Literacy (MIL) has contributed to the understanding and adaptation to the major evolutionary and cultural changes of the digital transformation. This research aims to focus on the challenges of ensuring digital citizenship with critical thinking and skills that can reduce the negative effects of disinformation. The study uses documentary analysis to examine theoretical elements on the topic and consults Ibero-American researchers and experts who have worked on it. Among the main results, elements associated with misinformation that should be strengthened in MIL programs are focused. These components would contribute to fostering skills and a digital culture that allows for critically addressing the disinformation processes that are generated today in the media and public sector.

Keywords:
Information, communication, digital transformation, digital government, digital literacy

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Resumen: La Alfabetización Mediática e Informacional (AMI) ha contribuido a la comprensión y adaptación a los principales cambios evolutivos y culturales de la transformación digital. La presente investigación tiene como propósito focalizar los desafíos para asegurar una ciudadanía digital con pensamiento crítico y habilidades que permitan reducir los efectos negativos de la desinformación. El estudio utiliza al análisis documental para examinar los elementos teóricos sobre el tema, y realiza una consulta a investigadores y expertos iberoamericanos que lo han tratado. Entre los principales resultados se focalizan elementos asociados a la desinformación que se deben potenciar en programas de AMI, para fomentar competencias y una cultura digital que permita afrontar los procesos que proliferan hoy día en el ámbito mediático y público.

Palabras clave:
Información, comunicación, transformación digital, gobierno digital, alfabetización digital

Resumo: A Alfabetização Midiática e Informacional (AMI) tem contribuído para a compreensão e adaptação às principais mudanças evolutivas e culturais da transformação digital. Esta pesquisa visa focar nos desafios de garantir a cidadania digital com pensamento crítico e habilidades que possam reduzir os efeitos negativos da desinformação. O estudo utiliza análise documental para examinar elementos teóricos sobre o tema e consulta pesquisadores e especialistas ibero-americanos que se debruçaram sobre o tema. Entre os principais resultados, destacam-se elementos associados à desinformação que devem ser fortalecidos nos programas de AMI para fomentar habilidades e uma cultura digital que permitam abordar os processos que proliferam hoje na mídia e nas esferas públicas.

Palavras-chave:
Informação, comunicação, transformação digital, governo digital, alfabetização digital

1. Introduction

The digital transformation in contemporary society demands new capabilities and skills to participate in and mediate increasingly complex digital environments, characterized by emerging dynamics of communication and access to information, as well as the intensive use of artificial intelligence (AI). These contexts, currently characterized by a web presence and functionality,

along with new challenges in the management and use of social networks, APKs, and AI tools, enable us to focus on scenarios that require cultural change and, consequently, the development of adaptive skills in response to these growing realities.

Digital contexts are generating profound transformations in the information society, with significant implications for professional fields and the daily lives of individuals. The accelerated development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is having a significant impact on information, communication, and knowledge-building processes (Castells, 2013; Amaral, 2016; Hernández-Serrano et al., 2017; Boaventura-Sales Paixão et al., 2022; García-Roca & Sánchez-Fortún, 2023; Marques de Carvalho et al., 2025).

Among the main distinctive elements of this transformation, which is also cultural, is an information and knowledge society where: a) the diversity of formats and the massification of social networks and the internet have led to a saturation of content (Castells, 2013), b) information can be accessed and consumed without constraints of time and place (Marques de Carvalho et al., 2025), c) a participatory and convergence culture (technological, media and cultural) is consolidated in which new networks and data flows are expanded, structured and organized (García-Roca & Sánchez-Fortún, 2023), d) the prosumer era has marked a significant change in the communicative environment, in its traditional modes of production and consumption of news (Hernández-Serrano et al., 2017), e. The phenomenon of cyberculture is emerging, supported by the sociocultural dimension and dynamics of the Internet, promoting a reformulation of social relations and the creation of communities in virtual environments, while simultaneously fostering the emergence of new behaviors (Amaral, 2016). The media and information context, for its part, is not exempt from substantial transformations: f) where people acquire a proactive role in the management of digital information (De Pablos Pons and Ballesta Pagán, 2018), g) in which an excess of digital information is recognized that demands specific capacities so that subjects can have an active position in the process of knowledge construction, capable of forming critical awareness and applying it throughout their lives (Boaventura-Sales Paixão et al., 2022), h) in an environment where media competencies become important from their actions within the media, interacting critically with messages from others, while producing and disseminating their own content (Ferrés and Piscitelli, 2012; García-Ruiz et al., 2014), i) where the communicative relationship depends on how individuals perceive and interpret each object or medium (Magalhães, 2021), j) where the media can determine the ways in which

individuals relate—primarily social media—, the quality of the information with which they interact can determine their actions and decisions, as well as the levels of civic participation (Dias-Fonseca and Potter, 2016), k) and where disinformation and post-truth are presented as increasingly complex phenomena in digital contexts (Ávila-Araújo, 2021) (Sabater-Quinto et al., 2025).

The digital landscape, therefore, demands new media and informational dynamics where individuals can build—in a critical, participatory, and inclusive way—a society tailored to these new realities. This entails recognizing the need to adapt to them and create skills tailored to this cultural change. Accordingly, the objective of this study is to identify the elements that should be considered in Media and Information Literacy processes to address the effects of misinformation.

2. Disinformation and its effect on the construction of digital citizenship

Disinformation is a phenomenon associated with the amount of information generated, accessed, and shared today. The phenomenon of infoxication, infosaturation, or information overload has significantly impacted the way individuals use, analyze, create, and share data, information, and digital content today. The issue in question is not new, but the communicative dynamics derived from the development of ICTs have fostered scenarios in which we are no longer mere web users, but prosumers, which imposes different understandings of this type of phenomenon. In recent decades, internet access, web development, the publication and openness of data, social networks, the technology industry, and the proliferation of digital companies/organizations, including media outlets, have significantly boosted the creation, availability, and accessibility of information. As a result, it is becoming increasingly complex to find rational limits on the processes of identifying, searching for, and consuming this resource. In this regard, authors such as Valverde-Berrocoso et al. (2022) have associated this phenomenon with the expansion of information saturation, information overload, and the trivialization of information, while Ávila-Araújo (2024a) describes it as a dynamic of information production, circulation, and use in contemporary society. However, although it has been argued that these phenomena are not recent and that they have occurred in other periods of the 20th century, as recently as 2016, the presidential elections in the United States of America and Brexit in the United Kingdom constituted political and socioeconomic processes that have revived or reinforced attention to this issue.

Regarding disinformation, Ávila-Araújo (2021) highlights that among the leading causes identified are the disintermediation of information, the emergence of social media with its algorithms and search engines, and the Big Data phenomenon, among other factors. In the author's view, we can add issues related to the use of AI, which poses new challenges in content generation and verification.

When addressing the phenomenon of disinformation, several terms are seen in use: "Fake News,"[2] "Junk News," "Deep Fake," "Fake Science"—which includes so-called historical denialism—"Clickbaits," "False Testimony," "Conspiracy Theories," "Hate Speech," "Infodemic," and the phenomena of "Misinformation," "Disinformation," and "Malinformation" (García-Marín & Salvat-Martinrey, 2021; Ávila-Araújo, 2024b; Guadarrama-Torres et al., 2025).

The term disinformation is defined as “verifiably false or misleading information that is created, presented, and disseminated for profit or to deceive the population deliberately, and that may cause public harm” (Comisión Europea, 2018a).

> Understood as the deliberate dissemination of false or distorted information, it is a potent tool for manipulating public opinion and undermining democratic institutions. It is important to understand how disinformation is produced, disseminated, and consumed in order to combat it effectively. (Sabater-Quinto et al., 2025)

In digital contexts, disinformation thrives in areas where specific sectors—whether governmental, organizational, or social—begin to gain attention, whether intentionally or unintentionally. The conditions that generate it, which are sometimes considerably reinforced by the media, are permeated by situations or elements of "public" interest that are attractive due to their immediacy and social impact, whether political, economic, or social. Their cognitive basis is a concern or information gaps that need to be filled to reduce high levels of uncertainty. They are permeated by new digital realities, in which social networks, new communication channels and platforms, among other technological solutions, facilitate the creation and dissemination of content generated by any individual or organization.

Given this scenario, disinformation constitutes a phenomenon in which data, information, or digital content is generated—intentionally or deliberately—that infoxicates, complicates, or distorts a particular "situation," which may be worthy of attention from the public and media spheres. This emerging information scenario that is activated by the disinformation phenomena

[2] Some better known by their acronyms in English.

has among its effects or purposes, to mark personal positions of diverse nature, generate specific perceptions, influence states of opinion, activate emotional states, and enhance calls to action once they begin to be consumed and assimilate information from the diverse dynamics in which disinformation is presented.

Added to these elements are the adverse effects brought on by the speed at which false information spreads on social media and the internet (Aceituno-Silva, 2024). These new capabilities have contributed to the creation of new dynamics, channels, and communication and information facilities that make it challenging to confront "fake news," "hoaxes," or other elements associated with this topic.

In the public and media arenas, disinformation is presented as a complex phenomenon of great concern due to its speed and immediacy, as well as the lack of skills in using verifiable sources of information to address it. This is why, in recent years, it has gained greater attention from the political, research, scientific, and academic spheres. Due to its impact, this issue is prominent in the agendas, roadmaps, and resolutions of international and regional organizations and professional associations (ONU, 2024; IFLA, 2018; Comisión Europea, 2018), as well as in the creation of mechanisms to address these phenomena, such as the creation of fact-checking platforms, digital observatories, research and innovation programs and groups, alert systems, and the creation of expert groups, among other initiatives (Moreno-Espinosa et al., 2024; Sabater-Quinto et al., 2025).

From a media perspective, media outlets have begun to utilize fact-checking tools. They are enhancing their verification processes for news sources, aiming to counteract the easily disseminated streams of misinformation that are triggered and spread. While many solutions have focused on professional fields related to this area, addressing these types of situations in the public sector is more challenging and complex, not only because of the need to combat them, but also due to the mandate to safeguard citizens' constitutional rights, especially in the digital space.

In this regard, Baquero-Pérez (2025) states that "with the proliferation of post-truth or disinformation, public administrations can assume responsibility for protecting the truth, or, in other words, seeking to guarantee citizens' right to reliable information. It is essential to note that this role can potentially cross the line and infringe upon freedom of expression, a fundamental pillar of democracy. However, it must also be kept in mind that it should not be used as an excuse to spread lies and manipulate public opinion" (Baquero-Pérez, 2025).

In recent years, the use of generative AI has also been added, enabling the design or creation of digital content in various formats, such as text, images, and videos, to augment or enhance disinformation campaigns or scenarios. According to Gómez, Feijóo, and Salazar (2021), cited by García-Marín y Salvat-Martinrey (2021):

> The development of artificial intelligence systems makes it increasingly easier to create malicious videos and audios. Although the first tool for creating this type of production was used on audio, the application of artificial intelligence models to graphic processing represented a significant qualitative leap.

In this regard, these authors consider that:

> In the case of videos, deepfakes are executed by swapping faces or through lip-syncing, to make people believe that the person appearing in the video delivered a speech that, given its spectacular or morbid nature, is easily propagated in digital circles. (García-Marín & Salvat-Martinrey, 2021)

This new reality, fostered by the use of AI, presents new challenges in terms of ethics and the development of skills and technological solutions that enable the identification and detection of malicious use of this type of intelligence.

> Beyond the controversies common to all AI, RGA technology can be used to alter or manipulate pre-existing images or videos to generate fake ones that are difficult to distinguish from the real thing. AI is increasingly facilitating the creation of these deepfakes and so-called fake news. In other words, AI is making it easier for certain actors to commit unethical, immoral, and criminal acts, such as spreading disinformation, promoting hate speech, and incorporating people's faces without their knowledge or consent into completely false and sometimes compromising audiovisual materials. (UNESCO, 2024)

The disinformation phenomenon, while it requires strengthening some capacities focused on developing better technological infrastructures and new information architectures that support verification, of sources, data and information, also requires greater social awareness and understanding on the subject, as well as literacy that contributes to the creation of media and information skills, but above all those focused on analysis and critical thinking in citizens and the population in general.

2.1 Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in the Information Society

The conceptual ambiguity generated by the coexistence of various terms associated with literacy, such as digital, informational, media, and multimedia, brings with it a wide variety of theoretical approaches that, despite being oriented indistinctly, essentially refer to the importance of information and its use in various contexts (Ferrés & Masanet, 2015; Moreno et al., 2018). At the same time, it is associated with the terms digital and media competence in an integrated

manner (INTEF, 2017; Ballesta et al., 2017; Moreno et al., 2018; Redecker, 2020; Vuorikari et al., 2022).

Educational conceptions of literacy have defined the term as a set of skills and competencies (Buckingham, 2007). Changes in the media context, new cultural practices, the emergence of new digital media (Scolari, 2016), and the implementation of the concept in different contexts, such as media education, have led to the emergence of a wide variety of related conceptualizations: information literacy, new literacies, digital literacy, media literacy, multiple literacies, internet literacy, computer literacy, cyberliteracy, transmedia, or transliteracy (Buckingham, 2007; Koltay, 2011; Frau-Meigs, 2012; Masanet et al., 2013; UNESCO, 2013; ACRL, 2016; Scolari, 2016).

The convergence of elements that comprise the different types of literacies has led international organizations, such as UNESCO, to advocate for the unifying concept of Media and Information Literacy (MIL) in its Curriculum for Teachers on MIL and its Competency Framework, aiming to establish a correlation between the various learning platforms.

In this case, technological, informational, and communicational aspects related to current contexts of social interaction, the right to freedom of expression, access to information, and the promotion of intercultural dialogue are complemented.

According to UNESCO (2013), there are several reasons why the different literacies converge within the MIL concept:

- Citizenship competencies that allow for the enjoyment of fundamental benefits and rights such as freedom of expression and access to information.
- Technological convergence.
- The need to shift the focus toward common elements of literacies.
- The need for an integrated approach to the implementation of methods, teaching processes, and skills development in personal, educational, professional, and social settings.

Based on the analysis of the conceptual and integrative elements of MIL proposed by IFLA (2011), Wilson (2012), the Moscow Declaration on MIL (UNESCO, 2012), UNESCO (2013), Grizzle and Torras Calvo (2013), the Paris Declaration on Media and Information Literacy in the Digital Age (UNESCO, 2014), Grizzle and Singh (2016), Renés Arellano (2019), Caldeiro-Pedreira et al. (2019), E. Courtenay-Rattray in UNESCO (2020), and Boaventura-Sales

Paixão et al. (2022), MIL can be conceived as a transdisciplinary process of continuous learning and the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes, aptitudes, competencies, and skills that seek to empower citizens by critically evaluating public information and media content. MIL promotes and empowers the use of various tools in a critical, ethical, and effective manner, enabling individuals to participate in and engage with personal, professional, and social activities and make informed decisions. This development is achieved by knowing how to identify, search, access, analyze, evaluate, organize, use, generate, produce, share, and communicate information and media content—in all formats—and by having creative, legal, and ethical knowledge of methods, as well as mastery and understanding of access, coverage, evaluation, allocation, use, production, and communication of media content.

These elements stand out among the various approaches and proposed dimensions and indicators, demonstrating an evolution aligned with the rapid technological boom, changes in digital interaction methods, and the emergence of new media. In this regard, the proposals oriented towards audiovisual communication skills (Ferrés, 2007), media skills (Aguaded et al., 2011; Ferrés & Piscitelli, 2012; Pérez-Rodríguez & Delgado-Ponce, 2012), information literacy (Catts & Lau, 2008), media literacy (Celot & Pérez-Tornero, 2009), and AMI (Wilson et al., 2011) stand out.

These approaches are highlighted in the Comisión Europea Reports (2006, 2007, 2007a, 2016, 2018, 2022). They are also recognized through the contribution of the European Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DIGCOMP) (Ferrari, 2013; updated and expanded by Vuorikari et al., 2022), which emphasizes the need to develop competencies in the digital landscape in an integrated manner.

The current integration promoted by MIL responds to practices and dynamics resulting from the evolution and development of technology, information, and media, which pose challenges from the very convergence and cultural approach with which it is conceived and designed.

2.2 Disinformation and MIL from the digital and development agendas

In recent decades, with the growth of digital transformation, e-commerce, e-government, and digital governance, literacy issues have gained greater importance. Added to this are the growing phenomena or contexts where disinformation places citizens facing high levels of

uncertainty due to the presence and generation of fake news, hoaxes, denialism, or hate speech, which significantly impacts the veracity of information in the public and media spaces.

Correspondingly, several international initiatives and agreements have sought to understand better these issues and the need to join forces in addressing them. Among the main agreements and initiatives focused on the international level are: the "Guidelines for the Formulation of MIL Policies and Strategies" (UNESCO, 2016); the "IFLA Declaration on Fake News" (IFLA, 2018); "Combating Online Disinformation: A European Approach" (Comisión Europea, 2018); "DigCom 2.2: Developing Digital Competencies for Citizens" (Comisión Europea, 2022); the “Tashkent Declaration on Universal Access to Information” (UNESCO, 2022); “Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean eLAC2024” (CEPAL, 2022); “Media and Information Literacy Curriculum for Educators and Students: Media and Information Literate Citizenship: Thinking Critically, Clicking Wisely” (UNESCO, 2023); “United Nations Global Principles for Information Integrity” (ONU, 2024); “Guide for the Use of Generative AI in Education and Research” (UNESCO, 2024); “Ibero-American Charter on Artificial Intelligence” (CLAD, 2023).

These international agreements, agendas, guidelines, or declarations emphasize the importance of developing digital competencies, as well as media and information literacy programs, to ensure that citizens are equipped with the skills to participate actively and critically in digital media.

3. Methodology

This descriptive research considered several methods and techniques, including documentary analysis and surveys. The former is used to identify and analyze the main theoretical and methodological elements associated with disinformation and AMI. This method is also used to review and characterize the international agreements and frameworks addressing these issues, making it possible to focus on the consensus, visions, and projections that stand out for their implementation. Among the analytical elements considered were: type of agreement, information on coordination and authorship, scope and projections, specific components for its development, and the main elements it promotes within development agendas and goals.

In the case of the survey, it is used as a technique to gather information—perceptions, criteria, and assessments—provided by researchers, academics, public officials, and experts who

specialize in these issues within the Ibero-American context. To this end, several areas or dimensions were identified for the analysis of the topic. The latter are presented below, with the categories considered in the design of the instrument:

• Dimensions

I. Perceptions of disinformation and MIL—from the perspective of public management—in relation to regional and national capacities; II. Level of development based on international agreements and frameworks; III. MIL programs and content; IV. Education and vocational training;

• Research categories or elements

I. Perceptions of disinformation and MIL: a) Importance and visibility of the phenomenon in the region and country; b) Most affected population groups; c) Sectors and areas where the issue is promoted and strengthened. / II. Level of development based on international agreements and frameworks: d) Progress based on international agreements and frameworks; e) Levels of maturity; f) Prioritized sectors. / III. MIL programs and content: g) National and h) Regional awareness-raising and literacy efforts and actions; i) Approach and coverage of the issue; j) Competencies and skills; k) Learning actions and resources; l) Tools and practices; m) Key dynamics, processes, media, and informational elements; n) Initiatives, laboratories, and platforms; ñ) Indicators for evaluating programs / IV. Teaching and vocational training: o) Curricular approach; p) Concept within vocational training.

Once these dimensions and categories were identified, a survey/questionnaire was designed in Google Forms to facilitate its dissemination, and it was shared with researchers, teachers, public officials, and experts who have worked on the topic in the Ibero-American context. The identification of experts considered the topics under study, including disinformation and AMI, as well as the professional fields linked to these phenomena, such as information, communication, journalism, and digital transformation, among others.

The form was published in May 2025 and disseminated through various digital communication channels. The instrument remained open until mid-June 2025.

4. Discussion

Analyzing the international framework—agendas, resolutions, agreements, official communications—on Media and Information Literacy and Disinformation, it can be affirmed that in recent years it has been an emerging topic of interest for international organizations, professional associations, and development strategies. The disinformation phenomena occurring today generate harmful effects not only politically and economically, but also have a significant influence on social sectors and citizens, reinforcing their social impact.

Democracy, freedom of expression, institutional integrity, credibility, transparency, respect, ethical conduct, but above all, the trustworthiness and veracity of information in digital environments, have been considerably affected by the proliferation of disinformation. Consequently, several projections have been conceived from various international scenarios, reinforcing the need to create greater objective and subjective capacities to confront these processes. Among the latter, a greater digital culture and the creation of media and information competencies to address it stand out.

The analysis of the ten international agreements and initiatives mentioned in the theoretical section of this research reflects that the issue is of great concern to the highest body of the United Nations, as well as the European Commission, ECLAC, and representatives of non-governmental organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean. Until 2016, special emphasis was placed on MIL and digital competencies, with UNESCO as the United Nations agency that had addressed the issue the most due to its mandate within the system. By 2018, the phenomenon of disinformation began to gain greater focus[3], which increased from 2019 to 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The communicative phenomenon of social media, changes in media and information practices and dynamics, the increase in content creators or so-called "influencers," web positioning and visibility strategies, and the consumption of digital content online have significantly influenced concerns about the reliability and veracity of information shared and distributed through the Internet and new digital environments.

Among the main principles, guidelines, and challenges associated with this topic identified in this study are:

[3] Possible result, in part, due to the political and social processes and phenomena that began to be seen in the presidential campaigns of Donald Trump (2016) and Brexit, among other evolutionary elements.

• Recognition of ICTs as an essential and unavoidable resource for the development of society, and consequently, digital rights.
• Existence of digital ecosystems with new forms of citizen interaction and engagement.

• Collaborative efforts that require promoting MIL policies, programs, and information, media, and digital competency frameworks to ensure greater awareness and improved performance of digital cultural change.

• Recognition, from the social sphere, of the need to promote and strengthen policies, regulations, strategies, and procedures related to I. Disinformation, II. AMI, III. The Use of Personal Data, IV. Security, integrity, and privacy in digital environments, and V. IAGen—the latter due to its implications for the creation and sharing of content.

• Concern about disinformation—and its effects—as a complex, rapidly spreading phenomenon that may intensify with technological, information-communication, and media developments, as well as with the impact of generative AI.

• Need to safeguard the right to freedom of expression, including the right of access to information.

• Continue supporting the integrity of ecosystems with free access to quality information, ensuring open, inclusive, safe, and protected environments free from discrimination and hate.

• Promote the empowerment of people through the right to seek, analyze, validate, access, share, and socialize information and ideas of all kinds, with freedom of expression and critical thinking, without interference with their opinions. Avoid censorship to combat disinformation.

• Strengthen social capacities by coordinating stakeholders to counter rumors and disinformation, hate speech, radicalization, extremism, messages of violence, and other elements that violate civil rights.

• Promote and strengthen non-discriminatory laws and policies that prevent hate speech, disinformation, and gender-based violence, avoiding the suppression of voices and fostering self-censorship.

• Ensure that vulnerable and marginalized groups are not disproportionately affected by issues of integrity and disinformation.

• Contribute through transparency, participation, and accountability to ensure quality information and prevent disinformation.

• Generate skills that promote critical thinking, supported by processes of active and democratic e-participation, awareness of ethical responsibilities, diversity, and dialogue.

• Need to strengthen national and institutional legal frameworks for the understanding and assimilation of generative AI, as well as the creation of digital skills for its ethical and responsible use.

• Reduce the gap generated by AI, which includes the use of content without consent, lack of transparency and explainability of AI, content generated through AI that can contaminate the internet, lack of understanding of the real world, reducing the diversity of opinions, and further marginalizing already marginalized voices, undermining the creation of criteria and critical thinking.

These elements of the development agendas and agreements illustrate the international and regional landscape regarding MIL and disinformation. However, while efforts are perceived as focused on establishing policies, developing programs to build digital skills, and increasing literacy in the use of platforms, social networks, and media, the views of some experts and specialists studying the topic in the Ibero-American context could illustrate some of the challenges currently being identified.

In this sense, the application of the form used in the study was carried out through various academic and professional networks that address the topic in the Ibero-American context. During this information-gathering process, opinions were obtained from sixteen expert researchers who participated voluntarily—62.5% female and 37.5% male. Sixty-two and a half percent of respondents were between 36 and 50 years old, 25% were over 50, and 12% were under 35. Eighty-two percent of respondents held a Master's or Doctorate in science, and the majority worked as professors, researchers, or specialists working in the fields of Communication, Information, and ICT. Sixty-two percent of respondents were Cuban experts, 18% were Brazilian, and the same number were Spanish. The majority of respondents were from the fields

of Library, Documentation, or information sciences, as well as communication sciences. Experts from the fields of ICT, Law, and Education were also included.

Among the main results obtained was that all respondents considered disinformation to be a top priority issue in today's society, focusing on it as a sensitive phenomenon in their countries due to its adverse effects and political, social, and economic implications. Consequently, all participants agreed that it should receive greater attention from all sectors of society, particularly because it affects the entire population and public and private entities, but primarily because it includes population groups that may be significantly affected, especially young people (90%), older adults (92%), and people with disabilities (60%). It is worth noting that adults and children are also identified, but to a lesser extent, reflecting the impact on all age groups. Interestingly, all population groups considered themselves negatively affected by disinformation, with some being more affected in specific situations and others in any situation of this type.



Chart 1. Population groups most affected by disinformation practices. (Source: Own elaboration)

In today's society, actions aimed at combating disinformation are evident; however, the efforts, strategies, and capabilities to address it remain insufficient. These actions are most frequently observed within/from the United Nations System, the European Commission, and academia. While it is recognized that these efforts could be strengthened, this is where the issue has been most projected and emphasized.

Regarding progress in international agreements and legal systems, it is worth noting that 81.3% of experts believe the issue is highly dispersed across specific sectors and areas that typically address the topic. It is also notable that 68.8% believe it is mediated by the type of agreement and the specific area in which it is promoted, such as Technology, Information, Communication, Law, and Public Management, among others. A further 62.5% and 56.3%

report that progress lacks a systemic and integrated vision from the digital sphere and is very weak at the national level. To a lesser extent, 50% argue that progress on disinformation is still weak and insufficient, although some multidisciplinary approaches are being employed to address it. Interestingly, none of the respondents believe there has been "significant progress and an accelerated approach from the legal perspective."

The aforementioned elements correspond to perceptions of maturity levels from the legal and strategic perspectives. In this sense, policies related to digital transformation are focused, but they should be further strengthened to achieve their objectives. In this regard, their explicit approach is considered necessary through digital agendas, communication policies, and laws, as well as transparency and access to information laws. This is further compounded by the need to strengthen the issue across both educational and criminal justice frameworks in relation to digital rights and the ethical and responsible use of AI.

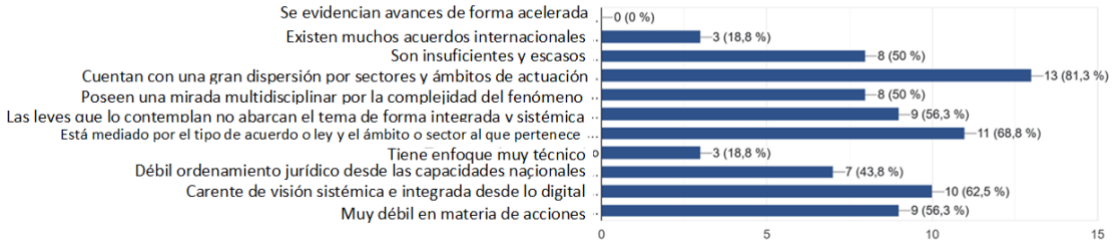


Chart 2. Perceptions of progress on disinformation based on international agreements and legal frameworks. (Source: Own elaboration)

93.7% of respondents believe that the issue should be addressed more extensively in the public sector and at the public level, given its implications for citizens.

Regarding the visibility of literacy and awareness-raising actions—by region or country—it is identified that they are being carried out, but in an isolated and infrequent manner, at least within the MIL programs themselves. At the national level, actions promoted by governments, universities, communication campaigns, political campaigns, unions, or professional associations are identified. At the regional level, initiatives are focused on those from international organizations, networks or communities of practice, academic or university associations, and country alliances.

One of the most interesting elements of the study lies in the experts' criteria regarding the areas or fields where capacity building on the topic should be strengthened. In the case of awareness-raising, this effort should be strengthened by universities and educational systems, as well as social media and alternative communication channels, including digital ecosystems and their components. However, as this is a global problem, it can continue to be addressed through forums such as the United Nations, regional alliances, government strategies, and professional associations. These elements coincide when referring to socialization processes. However, it is worth noting that those surveyed agree that, due to the complexity of the issue, it should be addressed in nearly all media, digital, and public management spaces. In general terms, there is a marked interest in strengthening all these actions among almost all sectors related to:

- SDGs and United Nations System agendas
- Regional councils, forums, and alliances
- Government strategies
- Regional and national digital agendas
- Media systems
- Universities and educational systems
- Alternative communication networks and channels
- Professional associations
- Academic guilds
- Digital ecosystems of organizations and entities

Regarding the approach to disinformation issues in MIL programs, respondents believe they focus more on media and social networks (73.3%), with an emphasis on the development of digital skills (66.7%), addressed from the specifics of communication and media (66.7%), with attention to information skills (46.7%). However, it should be noted that these are still not adequately addressed (46.7%) and lack approaches and capabilities for citizens (46.7%).

According to experts, the competencies and skills to be developed in an AMI program focused on disinformation should include: 1. Knowledge of how the media works; 2. Knowledge

of social media; 3. Informational competencies for identifying and locating information sources; 4. Skills to validate and contrast data and information; 5. Development of critical thinking; 6. Skills to identify hoaxes, fake news, and other types of disinformation practices; 7. Knowledge of web positioning, and 8. Skills to report, dismantle, or alert about potential hoaxes, fake news, and other types of disinformation practices. In addition, there are competencies related to participation and citizen rights, as well as policies and laws regarding communication, information, and its ethical and responsible use. Thus, some strategies, resources, and actions should be essential in the design of these programs: 1. Holding talks, workshops, training sessions, debates, and forums; 2. Using regulatory frameworks and international agreements, 3. Using educational and methodological materials on the topic, 4. Using courses, short videos, and outreach campaigns.

Among the tools and practices to consider are source and media checklists, as well as tools for source analysis and account verification, both with a 93.3% accuracy rate. Additionally, 80% of respondents reported using fact-checking platforms and resources, followed by social media alerts at 73.3%, and data verification tools, real-time checking, and digital forums at 66.7%, respectively. Last but not least, the use of image and video analysis tools was recognized by 60% of respondents.

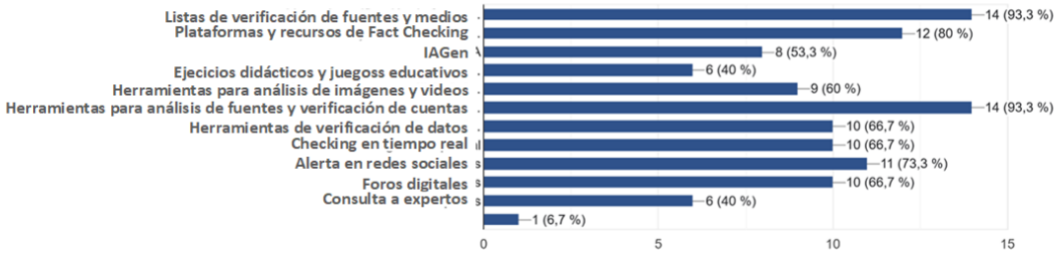


Chart 3. Tools and practices to consider in AMI programs to address misinformation. (Source: Own elaboration)

Among the media, people, and informational elements to consider in MIL to combat disinformation are the use of experts and the media, with a 81.3% share. The role of professional networks, academic communities, and specialized networks is also recognized, with 75%, as well as fact-checking tools and professional associations, with 68.8%. The analysis of these results

also highlights observatories (scientific, specialized, etc.), citizen participation mechanisms, and journalists and communicators, with 62.5%. In comparison, the use of e-government and transparency portals is identified by 56.3%. Among other initiatives identified by the experts are UNESCO, digital media observatories, and some anti-disinformation platform initiatives that have been developed in various regions and countries.

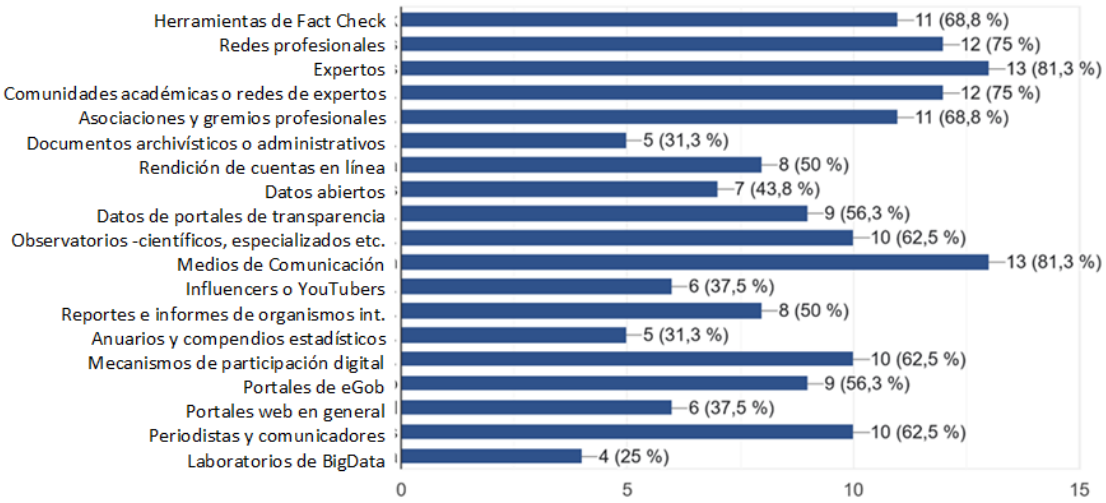


Chart 4. Media, people, and informational elements to consider in MIL programs to address disinformation issues. (Source: Own elaboration)

Regarding the curricular approach to disinformation, it is interesting that 56.3% of experts point out that the topic's coverage and presence in curricula are insufficient, as it should be addressed transversally across all professional fields. Similarly, 50% believe that the topic is not yet considered relevant, and 37.5% believe that it is addressed, but limited to Social Sciences programs such as Communication, Journalism, Documentation, etc. All respondents believe that it is not sufficiently addressed, given the complexity and impact of this social phenomenon today. In fact, 100% of respondents suggest that disinformation should have a transversal approach in vocational training due to its implications and consequences for the social and civic spheres.

Overall, experts recognize the importance of a better understanding of AI in this type of phenomenon, the need for greater engagement between all local stakeholders, and the importance of creating MIL programs that address and delve deeper into this topic.

5. Results

Based on the analysis of normative and regulatory elements, as well as a survey of Ibero-American experts, a set of elements can be identified and proposed (Figure 1) that are essential for enhancing capacities and competencies related to disinformation in MIL programs.

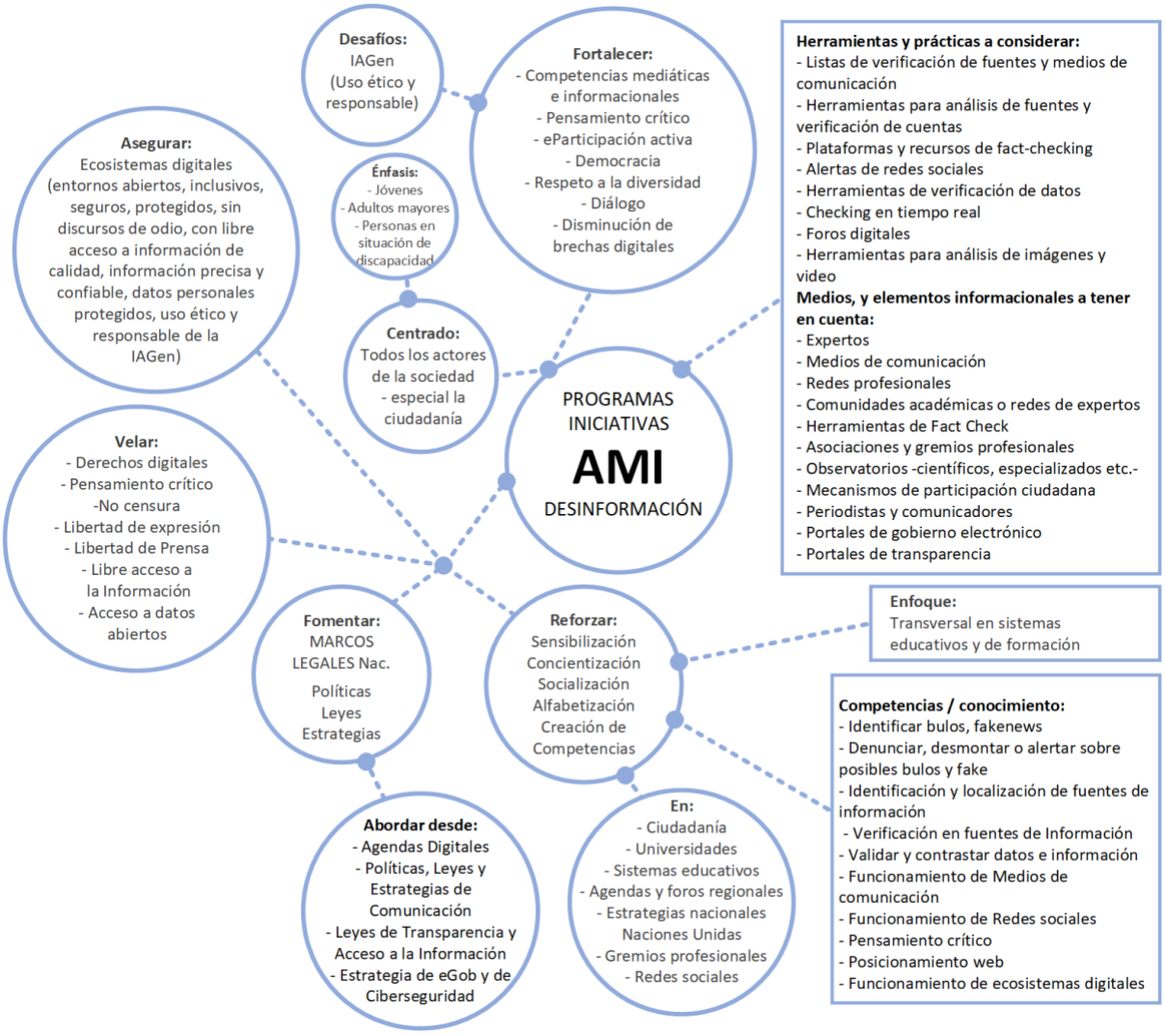


Figure 1. Development elements for media and information literacy on disinformation issues. (Source: Own elaboration)

These elements could be conceived for the design and implementation of AMI programs focused on disinformation. In addition to raising awareness and literacy on the topic and developing information, media, and digital competencies, new challenges arise from the ethical and responsible use of AI. Similarly, challenges arise in the assimilation of best practices regarding the use of social networks, Fact-Checking platforms, institutional portals, e-

government, transparency and accountability portals, open data repositories, scientific observatories, and media outlets.

In parallel, skills and abilities are required to know how to identify, use, and compare institutional sources—entities and organizations—and personal sources—experts, journalists, communicators, and other actors—that can contribute to curbing disinformation processes and facilitate the informational processes developed by individuals, critically analyzing the reality presented and being able to perceive, identify, verify, compare, evaluate, dismantle, and report disinformation phenomena.

6. Conclusions

Disinformation is an unavoidable phenomenon of utmost social concern. Its effects, across all sectors of society, can be harmful and affect vulnerable groups, generating uncertainty, media manipulation, distortion of reality, and even potential hate speech. Adding to this reality is AI, which poses new challenges and problems regarding content creation, emphasizing the need to generate and deepen its ethical and responsible use. However, while digital agendas and international agreements address this issue, it requires greater skills and abilities—media and informational—on the part of citizens.

Given this scenario, disinformation constitutes a phenomenon in which data, information, or digital content is generated—intentionally or deliberately—that infoxicates, complicates, or distorts a particular "situation," which may require attention from the public and media spheres. This emerging information landscape, triggered by disinformation phenomena, has among its effects or purposes the following: shaping personal positions—of various kinds—generating specific perceptions, influencing opinions, activating emotional states, and strengthening calls to action once information begins to be consumed and assimilated from the various dynamics in which disinformation is presented.

Based on the main elements of analysis of the regulatory framework and a survey of Ibero-American experts, it can be affirmed that disinformation, from the perspective of AMI, constitutes a topic of the highest priority and attention for both academic communities and public administration. While international and national initiatives focused on disinformation are visible, digital literacy constitutes an emerging issue, driven by the rapid development of ICTs and the new dynamics imposed by the media, especially social networks. This demands policies and

laws that more precisely address the need to develop these processes—of AMI—based on digital rights and the entire regulatory framework related to the topic.

Likewise, greater integration and coordination of stakeholders is needed to implement actions and activities in the public arena focused on developing media, information, and digital competencies—including those of the IAGen—to identify and combat disinformation from all sectors of society, thereby ensuring principles and values centered on democracy, equality, diversity, inclusion, participation, and respect for human rights.

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