

Title: Materials appendix for “A survey of expert views on misinformation: Definitions, determinants, solutions, and future of the field”

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Note: The material contained herein is supplementary to the article named in the title and published in the Harvard Kennedy School (HKS) Misinformation Review.

Appendix B: Materials

Experts’ opinion on definitions of misinformation was measured with the question, “Which of the following do you think best describes the term ‘misinformation’? Select one.”

- False information
- Misleading information
- False and misleading information
- False information spread unintentionally
- Misleading information spread unintentionally
- False and misleading information spread unintentionally

In all the questions below, participants responded on a 7-point Likert scale (“Strongly disagree” [1], “Disagree” [2], “Tend to disagree” [3], “Neither agree nor disagree” [4], “Tend to agree” [5], “Agree” [6], “Strongly agree” [7]). Note that we did not offer a “Don’t know” (DK) option in addition to the “Neither agree nor disagree” option. However, we asked attitudinal questions, not knowledge questions, and there is evidence that respondents largely use “Neither agree nor disagree” as a substitute for DK (Sturgis et al., 2014).

Experts’ opinions on examples of misinformation were measured with the question, “To what extent do you agree that the following are examples of misinformation?”

- Satirical and parodical news
- Hyper-partisan news
- Conspiracy theories
- Clickbait headlines
- Pseudo-science
- Propaganda
- Deep fakes
- Rumors
- Lies

Experts’ opinions on the determinants of belief in misinformation were measured with the question, “To what extent do you agree that each of the following explains why people *believe* misinformation?”

- (Social) Identity
- Partisanship
- Repeated exposure
- Motivated reasoning
- Confirmation bias
- Inattention

- Lack of digital or media literacy
- Lack of trust in institutions
- Lack of education
- Lack of cognitive reflection
- Lack of access to reliable news media

Experts' opinions on the determinants of misinformation sharing were measured with the question, "To what extent do you agree that each of the following explains why people *share* misinformation?" and were offered the same options as for the determinants of belief in misinformation.

Experts' opinions on general questions about misinformation and digital media were measured with the question, "To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements?"

- Social media and digital platforms have worsened the misinformation problem.
- In surveys, participants sincerely believe the misinformation they claim to believe (i.e., they are not merely expressing a political opinion or trolling, etc.)
- People are able to distinguish between the truth and falsehoods.
- More people believe in misinformation and conspiracy theories today than ten years ago.
- People are exposed to more opposing viewpoints online than offline.
- Falsehoods generally spread faster than the truth on social media.
- Misinformation played a decisive role in determining the outcome of the 2016 U.S. elections.

Experts' opinions on individual-level interventions against misinformation were measured with the question, "To what extent do you agree that the following tools would be effective to combat misinformation if deployed in the wild and adopted widely by social media companies or institutions?"

- Fact-checking
- Labeling of false content (e.g., Facebook labels)
- Labeling of news sources (e.g., Newsguard labels)
- Digital or media literacy training
- Accuracy prompt (briefly reminding people about accuracy)
- Inoculating people against misinformation with games or videos (e.g., Bad News game)

Experts' opinions on system-level actions against misinformation were measured with the question, "To what extent do you agree that the following interventions should be used against misinformation?"

- De-platforming prominent actors who spread misinformation
- Stronger regulations to hold social media companies accountable for what is shared on their platforms
- Content moderation on social media platforms
- Penalizing misinformation sharing on social media
- Algorithmic changes (e.g., upranking high-quality news sources and downranking low-quality)
- Shadowbans (i.e., banning users without other users knowing)
- Platforms design changes (e.g., rewarding accuracy instead of engagement)
- Removing misinformation
- Crowdsourcing the detection of misinformation (e.g., Twitter Birdwatch)

Experts' opinions about the future of the misinformation field were measured with the question, "For the future of the field of misinformation, to what extent do you agree that it's important to:"

- Collect more data outside of the United States.
- Move away from fake news and study subtler forms of misinformation.
- Move away from Twitter and Facebook data to study TikTok, WhatsApp, and other platforms.
- Move away from social media data to study offline misinformation.
- Develop better theories of why people share and believe misinformation.
- Develop better tools to detect misinformation online.
- Develop and test more interventions to fight misinformation.
- Do more interdisciplinary work on misinformation.