Approaches to Critical Digital Literacy in the MENA Region

Azoubi Othmane, Baddou Mounia, Jellal Khaoula, Hajjout Safae

College of Computing, Mohammed VI Polytechnic University

Dr. Loubna Mekouar (Supervisor)

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Abstract

This research paper aims to propose a viable solution to one of the world's most dire issues as of this decade, and most specifically within the MENA region. It is the proliferation of fake news, and misinformation that runs rampant, whether in community spaces or on social media. This advent has been further exacerbated by the recent rise of internet availability and content consumption in the region. Especially now that content creation, powered by automation, AI text generation and image manipulation, has never been higher. This study will focus on the most vulnerable parties of this issue: the youngest and the eldest of society, who are disproportionately susceptible. The objective of this research is to help support these vulnerable groups in developing stronger critical thinking skills so as to safeguard them against fake news in a beginning initiative, and lastly follow up with methods to prevent their spread in the first place with ethical methods. The approaches chosen to undertake this challenge will focus mainly on two facets: Firstly, case studies involving users within the MENA region clusters, both online and offline. Secondly, an analysis of how self-proclaimed news outlets manage to reach wider audiences.