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Widespread information disorder on social media is quickly becoming a prominent issue. Unintentionally or intentionally shared misleading information profoundly impacts interpersonal relations and psychological well-being, radically steers civic engagements, and fundamentally charts nationwide or worldwide political configurations. Emerging and increasingly connected technologies are predictably propelling information disorder into a worse state. At present, research in a wide variety of disciplines has only begun to disentangle social media information disorder.

Whenever information and behavior directly influence humans and societies, they possess ethical and moral significance. On social media, information-sharing is largely regulated by each individual's implicit internal moral codes rather than explicit regulations or ethical standards. This highlights the essence of moral decision-making in each instance of sharing. As such, an overlooked moral intensity perspective is utilized to investigate information disorder on social media. This research argues that moral intensity evaluation of sharing affects information disorder behavior and that information disorder behavior is context-dependent.

This research adopts a sequential mixed-research method, including a qualitative and a quantitative study to investigate information disorder behavior on social media. The qualitative study examines and interprets how the interactions between an individual's moral intensity and information disorder influence the decision-making and intention of information-sharing. The quantitative study conceptualizes information disorder as a dark behavior. It tests a disinformation sharing model with selected antecedents discovered from the literature and the qualitative study, predicting the regulatory effect of moral intensity on information disorder.

Our qualitative study suggests several mechanisms that underlie information disorder on social media. The perceived benefits, perceived urgency, explicit regulations in the to-be-shared

information, and trust in social ties are the primary mechanisms. The qualitative study also indicates that information disorder intention is contingent on each sharing and the related context, specifically the moral intensity. The results of our quantitative study verify the significant path coefficients, direct and indirect, between (1) an individual's moral philosophy of idealism and moral intensity, (2) IT mindfulness and moral intensity, (3) dark personalities and moral issue recognition, and (4) dark personalities and sharing intention. The model predicts the regulatory role of moral intensity in information disorder intention on social media. The model, however, also suggests that the selected antecedents are not theoretically strong enough to explain the variations in the moral intensity construct, pointing to the need for future research to add other antecedents into the predictive model.

This research provides insights into information disorder on social media and suggests mechanisms to mitigate it. Therefore, the research enhances the current knowledge of information disorder on social media and contributes to moral and ethical research of online behaviors.

Keywords: Information Disorder, Misinformation, Disinformation, Malinformation, Moral Intensity, Moral Decision-making, Moral Philosophy, Morality, Personality, Dark Personality, Mindfulness, IT mindfulness

INFORMATION DISORDER BEHAVIOR ON SOCIAL MEDIA: A MORAL INTENSITY

PERSPECTIVE

by

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DEDICATION

To my parents and kids.

APPROVAL PAGE

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Information disorder on social media is a global concern. Unintentionally or intentionally shared misleading information on social media has become problematic with political, economic, and social significance.

Misleading information erodes trust and confidence, inhibiting people's ability to communicate effectively with one another and to make decisions (Fallis, 2015), which causes social divide and partisanship (Tucker et al., 2018; Weeks & Zúñiga, 2019). False information has real effects on public news consumption, generating a range of emotions such as insecurity, suspicion, worry, anger, fear, and anxiety, which significantly affects decisions (Ferrara, 2015; Budak et al., 2011). Fake news that promotes a specific viewpoint about a product, brand, or business can be deliberately designed to mislead consumers into a boycott or purchases (e.g., Talwar et al., 2019; Taylor, 2016). What is worse, research suggests that false news spreads faster and wider than true information (Vosoughi et al., 2018), and misleading information may continue to shape people's attitudes and behaviors even after inaccurate information is debunked, due to the validity effect after repeated exposures (e.g., Margolin et al., 2017; Shin et al., 2018). However, as a society, we are increasingly relying on social media, whether for entertainment or seeking news. For example, a Pew Research Center study showed that 55% of US adults and between 40% to 60% of adults in most developed countries get their news from social media (Shearer, 2021a). Another study found that 48% of adults under 30 used social media as a primary source for news (Shearer, 2021b). As such, the World Economic Forum has declared massive digital misinformation online as one of the top ten technology-brought risks to which the world needs to pay attention (Howell, 2013).

This chapter is organized as follows: Section 1.2 shows four well-known information disorder cases to help make sense of the information disorder phenomenon on social media

and its real adverse effects. Section 1.3 defines the research problem. Section 1.4 specifies

research objectives and questions to be answered. Section 1.5 presents the overall organization

of the dissertation.

1.2 Making Sense of Information Disorder

Case 1: Military Draft of World War III?

The following is a chronicle that replays the events happening at the end of 2019 and the

beginning of 2020. On December 29, 2019, the United States conducted airstrikes in Iraq

against Kata'ib Hezbollah's weapon depots and command centers in retaliation for repeated

attacks on the US military base (DoD, December 29, 2019). On December 31, 2019, the Kata'ib

Hezbollah militiamen and their Popular Mobilization Forces (PMF) supporters and sympathizers

attacked the US embassy in the Green Zone in Baghdad in response to the US airstrikes two

days earlier (Associated Press, 2019). On January 2, 2020, the US Department of Defense took

"decisive defensive action to protect US personnel abroad" and ordered a ballistic airstrike to kill

General Qassem Soleimani, a commander of Iran's military forces throughout the Middle East.

This deadly airstrike heightened tension between the US and Iran (Helsel et al., 2020),

which was reflected on social media immediately. On January 4, *The New York Times* posted

the article, "Will There be a Draft? Young People Worry After Military Strike." The story tells of

the spiking anxiety of young men over the trending social media "WWIII" and military draft

speculations, and about the ways of reasoning that young people developed to mitigate their

anxiety. On January 8, US Army Recruiting Command verified a wave of fake text messages

sent to young individuals nationwide, which told them they had been drafted into military service

(CNN, January 9, 2020). The screenshots of the texts provided by US Army Recruiting

Command to CNN showed that some of the fake texts used real names of Army recruiting

commanders while others used fictitious names, lending to the deceitful appearance of

authenticity (Kelli Bland, a spokeswoman for the US Army Recruiting Command). As the result

of these fraudulent text messages, public concerns were so high that requests flooded and

crashed the website of an independent government agency called the Selective Service System that maintains a database of Americans eligible for a potential draft (CBS, January 8, 2020). The inaccessible service system resulted in causing even more uncertainty and anxiety in the public.

Case 2: COVID-19 Pandemic

The COVID-19 outbreak was first detected in December 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China (NYT.com). Ever since its break, the extensive spread of inaccurate medical advice related to the pandemic, such as fake remedies, treatments, and prevention suggestions, has been surging and putting people's lives in greater danger. For example, chlorine dioxide solutions are being touted as a "Miracle Mineral Solution" to cure COVID-19 (Karnik-Henry, 2020). Websites selling chlorine dioxide products typically describe the product as a 28% sodium chlorite liquid in distilled water. Product directions instruct consumers to mix the sodium chlorite solution with citric acids such as lemon or lime juice before drinking. However, when the acid is added, the mixture becomes chlorine dioxide, a powerful bleaching agent that can cause severe and potentially life-threatening side effects (FDA, April 08, 2020). The American Association of Poison Control Centers has recorded more than 16,000 cases of chlorine dioxide poisoning, including 2,500 cases of children under 12 since 2014 (Pilkington, 2020). Despite the deadly evidence and scientific recommendations, people were drinking the chlorine dioxide chemical to "disinfect" themselves out of panic. Thus, a federal court has entered a temporary injunction against the Genesis II Church of Health and Healing (Genesis) and four associated individuals. The court required them immediately to stop distributing its "Miracle Mineral Solution" (MMS), an unproven and potentially harmful treatment offered for sale to treat Coronavirus (FDA, April 31, 2020).

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also ordered Amazon and eBay to stop selling the toxic chlorine dioxide products that fraudulently claim to treat or prevent COVID-19 in adults and children (NPR, June 11, 2020). Joining the efforts, Facebook has taken down

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identified false claims or conspiracy theories flagged by leading global health organizations and local health authorities to combat misleading and inaccurate information on its platforms (FaceBook, 2020). Google has accomplished a similar move by working with WHO to make credible, authoritative resources easily accessible for people searching for information about the COVID-19 virus. In addition, Google has announced that it will remove users who coordinated the spread of disinformation about the health crisis (Thorbecke, January 31, 2020).

Case 3: US 2016 Presidential Campaign

Harvard University scholars conducted a lengthy report and a case study on the 2016 presidential election campaign (Faris et al., 2017). According to the report, Hillary Clinton's poll advantage was at the highest it would ever be after the Democratic National Convention in July 2016. Throughout August, however, the breakout news of the Clinton Foundation's alleged corruption shifted the topic of media conversation. In the end, the Clinton campaign's attempts to define her as a competent, experienced, and policy-wise candidate were drowned out by the coverage of her alleged improprieties associated with the Clinton Foundation and email controversies. Her polls steadily declined. In the meantime, Donald Trump used the Twitter platform to engage directly with his millions of followers by tweeting statements and opinions to shape the media's direction and public agendas.

The Harvard University report suggested that campaign reporting and sharing stories via social media were influential and charted the 2016 election. For example, Facebook served as a platform for conspicuously partisan news and a primary vehicle for political clickbait and disinformation (Kollanyi et al., 2016). Twitter acted as a mechanism for public debate and information-sharing but hosted a large number of bots designed to manipulate public opinion regarding the campaign (Kollanyi et al., 2016). The Knight Foundation and researchers at George Washington University (Hindman & Barash, 2018) have conducted similar research. They published one of the most extensive analyses to date on how fake news spread on Twitter both during and after the 2016 election campaign, finding "more than 6.6 million tweets linking to

fake and conspiracy news publishers in the month before the 2016 election. Yet disinformation continues to be a substantial problem post-election, with 4.0 million tweets linking to fake and conspiracy news publishers found in a 30-days period from mid-March to mid-April 2017, more than 80% of the disinformation accounts in our election maps are still active, as this report (2018) goes to press. These accounts continue to publish more than a million tweets in a typical day (p. 3)."

Case 4: False News and Market Fluctuations

In 2015, Scottish trader James Alan Craig falsely tweeted that two companies were under investigation, causing sharp drops in the two companies' stock prices and triggering a trading halt in one of them (Investopedia.com, 2020). The Securities and Exchange Commission's (SEC) complaint alleged that Craig's first false tweet caused the share price of Audience, Inc. to fall 28% for the day so that Nasdaq had to halt its trading temporarily. His second tweet the very next day about Sarepta Therapeutics, Inc. caused the share price to fall 16%. On both occasions, Craig personally profited from actively trading shares of the two companies. For both tweets, Craig created false Twitter accounts that looked like two well-known securities research firms.

Research reported that fake news had cost the stock market $80 billion annually and as much as 0.05 percent of the market's value is at risk for losses due to fake news (Cavazos, 2019). One example in Cavazos's report is ABC's mistaken news in December 2017 about former National Security Adviser Michael Flynn planning to testify that Donald Trump instructed him to contact Russia during the 2016 election campaign. Following the publication of that erroneous report, the S&P 500 dropped by 38 points within 30 minutes, translating to a $341 billion loss. After the news was retracted, the loss still marked $51 billion total. Cavazos's report (2019) estimates that at least $200 million in US presidential election spending will go toward promoting fake news.

1.3 Problem Statement

Information disorder on social media is a serious problem, as demonstrated in real-life cases. Research in a wide variety of disciplines is trying to disentangle social media information disorder after it was intensified by the 2016 US presidential election outcome (Bavel et al., 2021; Fallis, 2015). In behavioral science tradition, elements of human psychology and sociology, such as attitudes, motivations, cognitive responses, and their relations to information-sharing behavior, are studied frequently (Kümpel et al., 2015). For instance, motivation-related research draws from the *use and gratification theory* to answer why online information disorder behavior occurs, whereas *emotional broadcaster theory* explains how emotions play on feelings of superiority, anger, or fear and increase information disorder behavior (Harber & Cohen, 2005; Heimbach & Hinz, 2016). *Social influence theory* examines social tie strength and homophily (e.g., Bakshy et al., 2012; Ma et al., 2013, 2014). Nonetheless, theoretical understanding of this phenomenon is still relatively new (Wang et al., 2019).

"Fake news" was named the *Collins Dictionary* word of the year (Collinsdictionary.com, 2017). However, it is only one of the myriad types of inaccurate and misleading information, including misinformation, disinformation, malinformation, rumor, propaganda, parody, satire, conspiracy theories, deep-fakes, and more (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018; Gelfert, 2018; Bavel et al., 2021). In this dissertation, we will address all types of misleading information collectively as "Information Disorder." In research literature, each type of information disorder is conceptualized on different aspects with overlapping similarities. For example, Wardle and Derakhshan (2018) proposed seven misinformation and disinformation types defined along the dimensions of falseness and harm. Tandoc et al. (2018) developed and defined fake news typology on facticity and intention. Fallis (2009) uncovered a set of conditions under which disinformation may occur. The abundance of research taxonomies slows and disperses further information disorder research (Tucker et al., 2018; Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018). Hence, an integrated comprehension of information disorder on social media is beneficial.

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Ethical issues are established as legitimate concerns of mainstream information systems (IS) research and become increasingly crucial while facing derivative challenges of new technologies such as AI algorithm bias, computed sociality, and engineered living behaviors (Benbya et al., 2020; Alaimo & Kallinikos, 2017; Demetis & Lee, 2018). Whenever information and behavior bear direct influences on humans and societies, they have ethical and moral significance in the decision-making process (Mason, 1986; Stahl, 2006; Krebs, 2008). On social media, the current social network platforms are not regulated like traditional media. Information-sharing decisions largely depend on each individual's internal ethics or moral codes, highlighting the essence and importance of moral judgment (Morgan, 2018). Moral decision-making theories have been widely applied in the marketing, business, and organizations literature since the 1980s (e.g., Craft, 2013; Ford & Richardson, 1994; Loe et al., 2000; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Valentine & Godkin, 2019; Wang et al., 2019). Research on social media information-sharing has discovered that morality message frame increases the likelihood of sharing substantially (Valenzuela et al., 2017), and moral content increases behavioral intention (Everett, 2020). However, there is a lack of further theoretical explanation of how and why morality effects happen in the moral decision-making process.

Moral philosophies determine an individual's ideology spectrum (Graham et al., 2009; Kugler et al., 2014). Moral philosophies such as relativism and idealism have been established as effective predictors for decision-making in various business contexts involving moral or ethical dilemmas (Craft, 2013). A growing body of research has examined political ideologies such as liberalism and conservatism in disseminating misleading information (Lawson & Kakkar, 2020). However, few researchers have applied moral philosophies to study information disorders on social media. Thus, it is indispensable to investigate and differentiate the nuance of the moral philosophies' effects on information-sharing decisions. Doing so expands the current research focus on political ideology to a more generic understanding of intrinsic moral philosophy on information disorder behavior on social media.

The "Dark Triad" is a relatively underexplored research area in the field of Information Systems (Withers et al., 2017; Furnham et al., 2013). It is an individual-difference construct proposed by Paulhus and Williams in 2002. Recent papers have found that the Dark Triad traits are differentially informative in predicting workplace behaviors (O'Boyle et al., 2012), aggression (Baughman et al., 2012), and financial misbehavior (Jones, 2014). Dark personalities also predict maladaptive behaviors such as online trolling (Plouffe et al., 2017). Within social media information sharing literature, some studies have applied personalities to understand motivations (Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Correa et al., 2010). However, the "dark" personality effects on online communication behaviors have yet to be discovered (Petit & Carcioppolo, 2020), especially to predict "dark" behaviors.

Thatcher et al. (2018) proposed a construct of IT mindfulness and suggested mindfulness in the IT domain as a personal trait. They suggested how an individual's attention to the present subtleties in the environment and continuous scrutiny of a given technology can positively affect user behaviors. Extant studies looked into the effectiveness of mindfulness on technology adoption (Sun et al., 2016) and technology innovation (Valorinta, 2009; Wang & Ramiller, 2009). A few studies also argued and examined the positive relationships between broad trait mindfulness and moral capacities, such as moral awareness (Schwartz, 2016) or moral responsibility (Small & Lew, 2021). Ruedy and Schweizer (2010) posited that a lack of mindfulness might exacerbate one's self-serving cognition, self-deception, and unconscious biases leading to unethical behavior. Thus, a gripping question to ask becomes: How does an individual's mindfulness about social network technology impact morally and ethically wrong information disorder behavior? This research is one of the first to examine the IT mindfulness effect on social media information disorder.

Overall, theory-based information disorder research on social media is under-studied in the IS literature (Kümpel et al., 2015). Thus, this dissertation research contributes to theory-

building about digital behavioral ethics in general and information disorder on social media in particular.

1.4 Research Objectives and Questions

Researchers have been trying to conceptualize and understand this phenomenon. They empirically investigate from where information disorder comes and the diffusion process (Shin et al., 2018), who are the producers, influencers, and opinion leaders (e.g., Hu et al., 2012; Ma et al., 2014; Weeks et al., 2015), what strategies and tactics are used to disseminate misleading information through social networks, and the information disorder effect (Weeks & Zúñiga, 2019; Ferrara, 2017; Tucker et al., 2018). However, the extant research about information disorders is still at the early stage of development. We have a limited understanding of the phenomenon. What remains unanswered, or perhaps more critical questions to ask are (1) how do individuals react to information disorder online and make subsequent sharing decisions? (Tucker et al., 2018), (2) why are people sharing misleading information online deliberately or unintentionally? (Weeks & Zúñiga, 2019), and (3) how do we stop these harmful behaviors?

Inspired by previous academic efforts, this dissertation aims to enrich the current body of knowledge and to add another stepping stone to help extend the understanding of this phenomenon. To achieve the objective, this research examines how morality affects information disorder on social media. Specifically, this research takes an overlooked moral decision-making perspective and looks through a moral intensity lens to investigate it. The primary research questions are the following:

- Why do people share misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation on social media?
- How does moral intensity impact information disorder behaviors on social media?
- What are the mechanisms that underlie information disorder behaviors on social media?

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- How does individual moral philosophy influence deliberate disinformation-sharing on social media?

- How does IT mindfulness about social media technology influence deliberate disinformation-sharing on social media?

- Can dark personalities overturn the moral intensity during the deliberate disinformation-sharing process?

To answer these questions, this research first conducts a qualitative study to understand how the moral intensity interpretation of an issue changes an individual's information-sharing intention. A second quantitative study tests a conceptual model with selected antecedents discovered from the literature and the qualitative study, explaining and predicting the regulatory effect of moral intensity on the deliberate sharing of disinformation.

1.5 Organization of the Dissertation

This dissertation includes seven chapters.

Chapter One is the introduction, covering the phenomenon description, problem statement, research objective, and research questions.

Chapter Two reviews the literature on information disorder, moral decision-making process and moral intensity, moral philosophy, dark personality, and IT mindfulness. In particular, research related to misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation disorder is reviewed. The theoretical foundation of moral decision-making is discussed. Moral Intensity theory as the conceptual compass is deliberated. Finally, empirical studies about the applications of theories of moral philosophy, dark personality, and IT mindfulness are examined.

Chapter Three sketches the mixed qualitative and quantitative methodology used for conducting this research. Data collection approaches and procedures are presented and discussed according to the two methodological procedures. For the qualitative study, the research framework is discussed and brought forward. For the quantitative study, hypotheses

are developed first about the chosen antecedents, and the predictive PLS-SEM path model is proposed.

Chapter Four presents the analysis and findings of the qualitative study, comprising the research sample and data collection process, the results of the online qualitative survey, and the results of the one-on-one interviews.

Chapter Five addresses the analysis and findings of the quantitative study, including the research sample and data collection process, the results about measurement and structure models, and the analysis of the study.

Chapter Six discusses synthesized findings for the qualitative and quantitative studies. We discuss whether our findings confirm previous work and what the new discoveries are. These findings enhance our understanding of information disorders on social media and provide specific guides for future studies.

Finally, Chapter Seven reinforces this dissertation's practical and theoretical implications and contributions, addresses its limitations, and summarizes future research directions.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The rise of social media technology and the participation of regular internet users have changed how people connect and have facilitated information diffusion in an unprecedented scope and scale (Vosoughi et al., 2018). Pew Research Center (Anderson & Rainie, 2017) points out that networked communication technologies empower and weaken humanity at its best and worst.

Information is powerful. People enjoy sharing information online, especially interesting and relevant information, regardless of whether it may be true or not, with great regularity through their social networks (Karlova & Fisher, 2013; Chadwick & Vaccari, 2019). Karlova and Fisher (2012) indicated that high-impact topics in everyday life, such as politics, finances, health, and technology trends, are shared most and represent the prime sources of misleading and inaccurate information in wide-ranging contexts. During the information-sharing process, people self-generate information disorders (Coronel et al., 2019). From the cognitive perspective, information recipients determine the meaning of information received (e.g., Farradane, 1979; Davy, 2006). Information becomes subjective and mediated by the state of knowledge and interpretation of both sender and recipients (Fallis, 2009; Cornelius, 2002). To make the information disorder situation worse, human cognition is highly susceptible to bias and persuasion in making sense of information and choosing a response (Weeks et al., 2017; Weeks 2015). A social constructionist view advocates that information is a communicative construct produced in a social context (Tuominen et al., 2002; MacKay, 1969; Gabor, 1953). In other words, the information is the interpretive meaning of the content together with any relevant contextual information available to the recipients. Therefore, information-handling activities such as sharing is part of human cognition. Consequentially, people come to different conclusions and have varied responses even with the same information.

There is also a range of prominent trolls, ideologues, conspiracy theorists, politicians, mainstream media, and governments actively producing, sharing, and amplifying information disorders online (Tucker et al., 2018; Fetzer, 2004). They hold power to operate particular messages and to make what would otherwise be fringe beliefs gain mainstream coverage (Marwick & Lewis, 2017). They stage an "information war," using wrong information strategically to rob people's confidence and to mire them with doubt and confusion, producing emergent effects (Pomerantsev & Weiss, 2014). They often mix bits and pieces of facts anchored partly by valid sources that lend validity to their claims but include fake insinuations, leaps of logic, and flat-out false statements (Faris et al., 2017). As significant players in social networks, they turn social media into a battleground to spread information disorder to manipulate people's minds and to swing people's behavior to achieve their agendas (Marwick & Lewis, 2017).

Once problematic content is generated and disseminated throughout social networks, individuals can easily take on this information because it is shared by close friends, family members, coworkers, and other social ties in their network (Del Vicario et al., 2016). Research verifies that people trust their close social ties and take advice from them (Metzger et al., 2010). McKinsey (2018) reports that 52% of Gen Z trust influencers that they follow on social media for advice, and 82% trust their friends and family over any other sources. With trust and reliance on their social ties, receivers of information disorder may overlook the original author or source of the falsehood. They treat people who share the information as credible sources and share what is received further without much contemplation (Flanagin & Metzger, 2008). A December 2016 survey by the Pew Research Center suggests that 23% of US adults have shared fake news, knowingly or unknowingly, with friends and others. What is worse, research suggests that even after inaccurate information is debunked, it may continue to shape peoples' attitudes and behaviors due to the validity effect after repeated exposures (e.g., Margolin et al., 2018; Shin et al., 2018).

Therefore, we have observed that various misleading and inaccurate information diffuses across social groups and through social networks easily and quickly. According to a statement on the Nieman Journalism Lab of Harvard website, "the growing stream of reporting on and data online about fake news, misinformation, partisan content, news literacy is hard to keep up with." Therefore, understanding and mitigating information disorders on social media are imperative.

This chapter reviews the literature regarding information disorders and related theoretical perspectives adopted in this dissertation research. It is organized into five sections. Section 2.2 reviews the information disorder theory. Section 2.3 has a detailed discussion about moral decision-making models and moral intensity theory. Section 2.4 talks about moral philosophy, followed by section 2.5 about dark personality and section 2.6 on IT mindfulness.

2.2 Information Disorder Theory

Wardle and Derakhshan (2018) proposed three information disorder concepts on the dimensions of falseness and harm: misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation. Associating information with harm and distress introduces social and moral values into information (Buckland, 1991).

2.2.1 Misinformation

Wardle and Derakhshan (2018) defined misinformation as "*false and misleading but not created to cause harm.*"

In 1983, Fox's pioneering work delineated the undiscriminating and interchangeable relationship between information and misinformation. The traditional normative conception of information describes information as consistently accurate, true, complete, and current (Karlova & Fisher, 2013; Dretske, 1981). Fox's information theory challenged the very notion that information is true. He maintained that information might not be true as long as it is informative, as these natural properties do not all have to be present for it to be information (Cornelius, 2002). The flip side of Fox's theory is that misinformation can be inaccurate, untrue, incomplete,

and out-of-date in nature but still be true. Losee (1997) supported the notion by pointing out that misinformation can be as simple as incomplete and out-of-date but still be accurate and true.

Further, misinformation might be unresolvable because it can simply come from unintentional human or mechanical errors passed on by unsuspecting individuals (Godfrey-Smith, 1989). Empirical studies of human memory verify that people tend to misremember numbers to match whatever they already hold. For example, according to Coronel et al. (2020), "when people are shown that the number of Mexican immigrants in the United States declined recently — which is true but goes against many people's beliefs — they tend to remember the latter." Messages that fit people's beliefs are more likely to stick and are less likely to be counterargued (Oyserman & Dawson, 2020). Stahl (2006) also pointed out that the truth is subject to different interpretations. Information can be drawn from the inference of the subject's beliefs and independent of truth, just like people can read stories without necessarily believing them to be true or false.

The above perspectives and evidence together suggest that using "true" or "false" to tell information from misinformation is not plausible. Furthermore, although misinformation sharing is regarded as a cognitive decision, people who share misinformation do not purposely create false content or share them with harmful intentions (Coronel et al., 2020). The motivation for sharing misinformation is benign. Thus, misinformation is internally coherent and consistent with what individuals believe to be correct facts or information and shared with a well-intended purpose. This dissertation research defines misinformation as "*wrong or misleading information disseminated with benign intention*" (*Oxford English Dictionary*), which concerns information interpretation and the efforts to seek evidence-based facts and sources to prove it.

2.2.2 Disinformation

Wardle and Derakhshan (2018) defined disinformation as "*false and deliberately created to cause harm.*"

Disinformation is not a new phenomenon. It is a classic technique used in government propaganda (Fallis, 2015). One good example is Operation Bodyguard, a World War II "disinformation campaign" intended to conceal D-Day's planned invasion location that successfully convinced the Germans (Fallis, 2015; Farquhar, 2005, p. 72). Disinformation comes from the probable translation of the Russian term *dezinformatsiya* (*Merriam-Webster*, 1991), used by the KGB to indicate "manipulation of a nation's intelligence system through the injection of credible, but misleading data" (Safire, 1993). The term connotates a strong negative association with bad intent (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

Many people may have considered disinformation to be the same as misinformation, but bad intention differentiates misinformation from disinformation. Fallis (2009) analyzed disinformation to uncover sets of conditions under which disinformation may occur. He concluded that disinformation would typically be inaccurate information. However, inaccuracy alone is insufficient to satisfy the definition of disinformation. Misleading intent must be present. Disinformation has the function of misleading (Fallis, 2015). Cummings and Kong's (2019) research breaks down information disorders such as misinformation, disinformation, rumors, and propaganda by their sources and the spectrums of motivation to deceive others purposefully. According to their classification, misinformation and rumors have little intent to deceive, while disinformation and propaganda influence others deliberately. Especially for propaganda, content is shared to cultivate a particular judgment or course of action in the message recipients (Oyserman & Dawson, 2020). Evidence shows that mass media outlets frame, discuss, and present facts differently, such as systematically favoring or supporting one side of the political spectrum, swaying naïve readers (Gentzkow et al., 2015). Pew Research Center (2011) reported that 77% of survey respondents in the US say news stories tend to favor one side, and 63% of respondents agree news organizations are politically biased in their reporting. From the legal perspective, disinformation is deliberately and materially misleading

propaganda (Pielemeier, 2020). Different deliberate acts lead to disinformation, including concealment, ambivalence, distortion, and falsification (Zhou & Zhang, 2007).

In sum, disinformation may share properties with information and misinformation, but it is not a subset of misinformation. The research tradition unanimously clarifies disinformation as inaccurate content shared with the deliberate, unethical, or immoral intention to mislead, deceive, or confuse audiences (Allcott & Gentzk, 2017; Fallis, 2009, 2015; Fetzer, 2004). Disinformation may or may not generate harm or cause damage, but it is meant to mislead and influence. Thus, this dissertation research defines disinformation as "*deliberately disseminated wrong information to mislead yet unnecessarily cause harm or damage*" (*Oxford English Dictionary*).

2.2.3 Malinformation

Despite the attention and efforts in research, Wardle and Derakshan (2017, 2018) proposed that broad terms are inadequate to describe the complex phenomenon of information disorder. Thus, in addition to misinformation and disinformation outlined above, Wardle and Derakshan introduced malinformation. Malinformation is "*based on reality and facts, but either by moving private information into the public sphere or using people's affiliations, like religion, inflicts harm on a person, organization, or country.*"

Wardle and Derakshan (2018) enumerated purposely-leaked information, hate speech, and harassment as malinformation examples. There are several other antagonistic examples, such as trolling, cyberbullying, cyber-stalking (Mathew et al., 2018). *Hate speech* incites public violence or hatred against a group of persons or a member of such a group defined based on race, color, descent, religion or belief, or national or ethnic origin (Claussen, 2018; Council of the European Union, 2008). In addition, Twitter adds gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability, or serious disease into the group categories (Twitter, Retrieved July 2021). Hatred elicits negative, intentional, immoral, or evil actions (Haidt, 2003; Fischer et al., 2018). One real-world example of an online hate speech-induced hate crime is the 2017 mass

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genocide of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar (Mathew et al., 2018). *Cyber-harassment* typically

involves the act of systematic harmful humiliation and threats for various purposes, including

racial prejudice, personal malice, an attempt to force, etc. *Cyberbullying* is one of the major

cyber-harassments (Beran & Li, 2005). These examples indicate that malinformation disorder

intentionally aims to harm, and it fails to work in the right way because of information media or

agents' systematic biases and attribution processes (Ross, 1977).

There are two types of cognitive bias from the information-processing and decision-

making perspectives. The first type of "cold" bias comes from the human brain's heuristic

tendency to sift, sort, categorize, and take a mental shortcut in information processing

(Montibeller & Winterfeldt, 2015; Hilbert, 2012). For example, humans use heuristic methods to

find quick solutions to problems without checking all the relevant information or going through

effortful rational deductions (Kahneman, 2011). This research argues that misinformation

disorder is associate with "cold" bias. The second type of "hot" bias, also called motivational

bias, is generated from wishful beliefs or influenced by the desirability of choices and outcomes

(e.g., Montibeller & Winterfeldt, 2015; Nickerson, 1998). For example, ideology is an internally

consistent belief system of opinions, attitudes, and values (Jost, 2006; Converse, 2006). Thus,

pejorative ideologies manifesting in a web of distorted ideas and values have a tangible impact

on human information processing and sharing. For example, research finds positive

relationships between racial bias (a form of a distorted idea about race) and hate speech

propagation on social media (Sap et al., 2019). There is also evidence of race, ethnicity,

religion, gender, immigration bias-based cyber harassment (Sinclair et al., 2012).

Thus, this dissertation research defines malinformation as "*deliberately disseminated

real information to harm or to damage.*"

Figure 1 below shows three information disorders, definitions, and anchoring

dimensions.

Figure 1. Information Disorder

Malinformation sharing
Deliberately disseminated real information to cause harm or damage

Content: facts, real content
Intention: deliberate, unethical, immoral, harmful

Disinformation Sharing
Deliberately disseminated wrong information to mislead yet unnecessarily cause harm or damage

Content: wrong, manipulated, fabricated content
Intention: deliberate, unethical, immoral

Misinformation sharing
Wrong or misleading information disseminated with benign intention

Content: misinterpreted content, errors
Intention: well-intended, ethical, moral

2.3 Moral Decision-Making Model & Moral Intensity Theory

2.3.1 Moral Behavior Research and Moral Decision-Making Model

Moral behavior concerns the right vs. wrong code of conduct, which derives from one's culture, religion, political orientation, and/or personal philosophy (e.g., Haidt & Graham, 2007; Harvey & Callan, 2014; Ellemers et al., 2019). Research in this literature stream predicts and explains moral behavior and its influences (Ellemers et al., 2019). Jean Piaget (1930) proposed a moral cognitive development approach, suggesting that the relationship between moral values and moral behavior is subjective and changes throughout a person's lifetime. Jean Piaget is also the first scholar to define the constructs of "moral judgment" and "intentionality" in moral thinking (Rest, 1986). However, moral behavior research received little attention from the academic community until the mid-1960s (Rest, 1986).

Kohlberg (1958) advocates for Piaget's cognitive moral development approach to studying human behavior. Unlike social learning behaviorism, Kohlberg (1958) argues that moral behavior reflects an individual's view and intention rather than conformity to group norms through social learning. In other words, Kohlberg turns the socialization view of behavioral right vs. wrong based on social norms upside down. Instead, he suggests that right vs. wrong is up to an individual's construction, construal, and interpretation. In contrast to radical behaviorism, Kohlberg also argues that human behavior is not a simple response to environmental stimuli but the result of the environmental context within which humans continuously learn, plan, act, and develop. Thus, Kohlberg's developmental approach combines the moral agent (the individual) and the moral context to explain moral behavior.

Kohlberg identified six moral reasoning stages (Piaget identified two) within people facing different moral and ethical dilemmas (Blasi, 1990). Kohlberg ordered these six reasoning features by increasing cognitive adequacy. Individuals develop through the sequence of stages invariantly (Trevino, 1992). According to Kohlberg et al. (1983), basic social motivations may be presented and remain active throughout an individual's life. In other words, basic social motivations remain the same from stage to stage. Moral behavior is the joint effect of motivations with reasoning. What is progressively transforming is people's reasoning process: evaluations and choices through cognitive and ego developments (Blasi, 1990). Therefore, Kohlberg separated and introduced motivation and cognitive reasoning into the moral decision-making process. The following (Figure 2) are the stages of moral reasoning:

Figure 2. Moral Reasoning Stages

State1	• Punishment and obedience orientation
Stage2	• Naïve instrumental hedonism
Stage3	• Good morality of maintaining good relations, approval of others
Stage4	• Authority maintaining morality
Stage5	• Morality of contract, of individual rights, and of democratically accepted law
Stage6	• Morality of individual principles of conscience
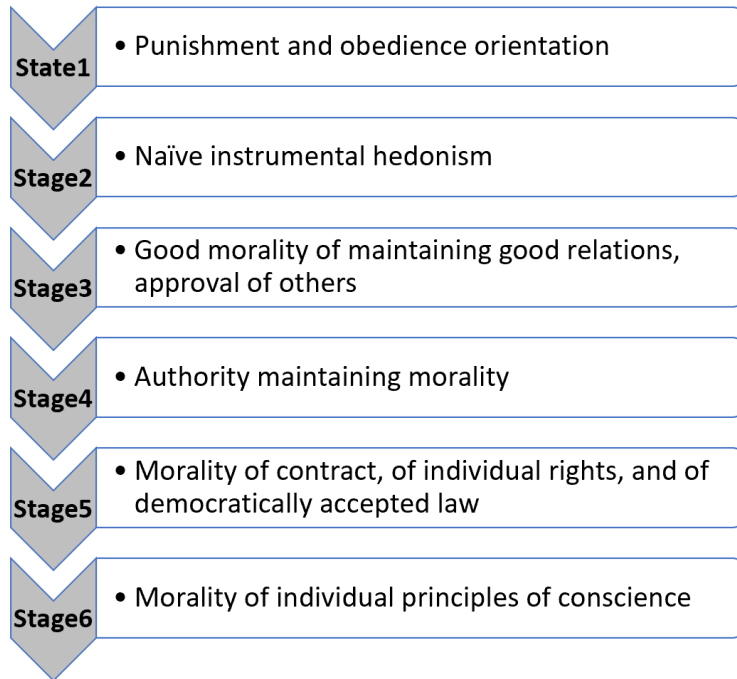
Developed from both Piaget and Kohlberg's cognitive moral developmental approach, Rest (1986, p.3) asked the question, "when a person is behaving morally, what must have happened psychologically to produce that behavior?" He then proposed a four-component model for individual moral decision-making and behavior. According to Rest, the moral behavior process starts with environmental stimuli such as economic, social, cultural, and political factors (Ferrell & Gresham, 1985). Environmental stimuli could generate a moral situation in which a person would perform at least four basic psychological processes to commit a behavior. First, *moral issue recognition* interprets the situation in terms of the actions possible and the effects of these actions on the self and others. Second, *moral judgment* determines which course of action is morally right. Third, *moral intent establishment* gives priority to what is morally right over other considerations. Finally, *moral behavior* demonstrates the strength and skills to follow through on the intention to behave morally. Although moral decision-making is a process model, each component in the process is conceptually distinct, and success in one stage does not

imply success in any other stage (Rest, 1986). The following (Figure 3) presents the four steps of the moral decision-making process.

Figure 3. Moral Decision-Making Process

```
Moral Issue      Moral         Moral Intent     Moral
Recognition      Judgement     Establishment    Behavior
```
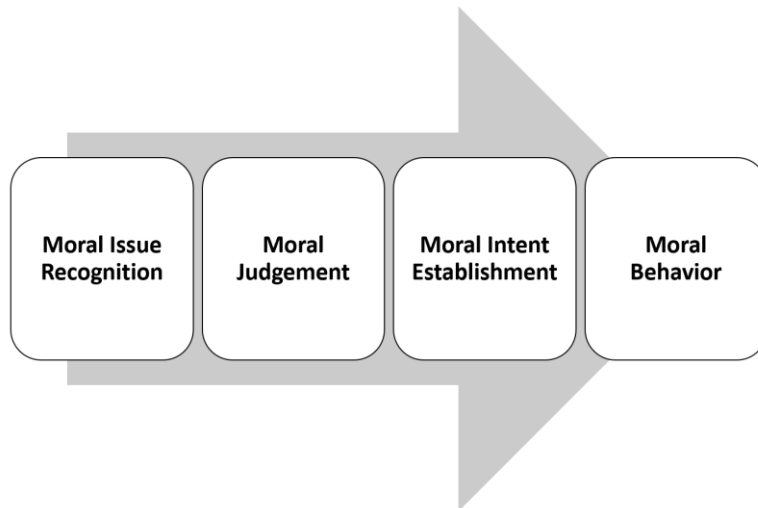
2.3.2 Moral Intensity Theory

Jones (1991) enumerated many ethical decision-making models that contribute to understanding the moral decision-making process. Jones concluded that none of the models hint at the characteristics of the moral issue itself. According to Jones (1991), proper ethical or moral conduct will likely change as the issue changes. The moral issue is context contingent. For example, Ferrell and Gresham (1985) argued that fewer people would endorse embezzling company funds than would support padding an expense account, despite both being morally wrong. Therefore, Jones proposed his synthesized moral intensity model on top of Rest's four-component moral decision model. According to Jones, the moral issue-related imperatives, or moral intensity, influence every component of the ethical decision model.

Jones identified six dimensions of moral intensity, arguing that the decision-making process is contingent on each dimension's perceived intensity. Jones also suggested that ethical intention and conduct would change as the interpretation of an issue involved in the

decision and context changes. The six dimensions of moral intensity proposed by Jones

include:

- Proximity – the feeling of closeness to the impacted people in a moral act in question;

- Social consensus – the degree of social agreement that a proposed action is good or bad;

- Temporal immediacy – the length of time between the present and the onset of consequences of a moral act in question;

- Probability of effect – the likelihood that a moral act in question will happen and cause harm or bring benefit predicted;

- Magnitude of consequences – the intensity of harm or benefits of a moral act in question;

- Concentration of effect – the average harm or benefits carried by impacted people;

In the context of information disorder on social media, the *proximity* dimension is

concerned with the feeling of closeness to the information's recipients. In discussing why

proximity is essential in undertaking a moral action, Jones explained that intuitively the feelings

of social, physical, psychological, and cultural closeness toward a person, a group, or norms are

likely to impact people's judgment of a specific situation and thus induce different behavior. For

example, Bandura (1990, 1999) indicated that people have difficulties imposing harm without

psychologically derogating or dehumanizing victims first. Cultural proximity affects the

respondents' perceptions of moral concern (Davis et al.,1998). Research has also shown that

most adults make moral judgments at the conventional level (Rest et al., 2000), which

elucidates that others in our close social circles and rules and laws influence our reasoning for

moral or ethical decisions (Trevino et al., 2006). However, McMahon & Harvey's (2007) study

indicated that proximity does not have a significant effect. Misinformation research has started

to pay attention to social media connections to people's news consumption (Tucker et al., 2018).

The *social consensus* dimension in information disorder on social media refers to the degree of social agreement on whether information disorder behavior is good or bad. Knowing common attitudes and beliefs decreases the moral ambiguity in the to-be-performed moral actions, provides comfort in one's mind, and keeps balance in a particular community (Goldberg et al., 2019). The more people agree, the higher the social consensus (Jones, 1991). In previous moral intensity research, social consensus maintains a significant predictor in moral perception, moral issue recognition (awareness), and intention formation (Goles et al., 2006; Jones & Huber, 1992; McMahon & Harvey, 2007; Morris & McDonald,1995). In addition, social consensus can have adverse effects on misinformation sharing by annulling the mainstream media's inference and accuracy (Schulz et al., 2018).

The dimension, *temporal immediacy*, is introduced into the moral intensity model by taking the economic principle of the time value of money perspective. The dimension indicates that time can discount how people perceive the magnitude of consequences. In information disorder on social media, it is the length of time between the present and the onset of the consequences of information disorder behavior; the shorter the time, the greater the temporal immediacy. Despite the perceived importance of this dimension, results from extant research are generally not consistent (e.g., McMahon & Harvey, 2007). However, in misinformation research, time is a significant factor in misinformation detection and diffusion (Liu & Wu, 2018; Vicario et al., 2016).

The *probability of effect* dimension in information disorder on social media refers to the likelihood of information disorder behavior causing the expected damage or bringing the expected benefit. Empirical results demonstrate that the probability of effect significantly predicts ethical judgment (Morris & McDonald, 1995; Singer et al., 1996, 1997, 1998). Online

misinformation research has applied stochastic epidemic models to understand the misinformation diffusion probability (Vicario et al., 2016).

The dimension *magnitude of consequences* in information disorder on social media refers to the intensity of harm or benefits resulting from information disorder behavior. Most ethical or legal systems recognize that making a proper decision for a course of action requires a decision-maker to consider the magnitude of consequences (Stein & Ahmad, 2009). Studies prove that magnitude of consequences is a significant predictor of ethical judgment (Barnett, 2001; Frey, 2000; Tsalikis et al., 2008) and significantly affects the decision-making process (Singer et al., 1996, 1997, 1998).

The *concentration of effect* dimension in information disorder on social media denotes the information disorder behavior effect's average impact by affected people. Previous research shows insignificant empirical evidence of the concentration of effect (e.g., Chia & Mee, 2000; Dukerich et al., 2000; Morris & McDonald, 1995) and suggests dropping it (McMahon & Harvey, 2007).

2.4 Moral Philosophy

Reidenbach and Robin (1990) recapitulated a few moral philosophy theories. These theories systematize, defend, and recommend right and wrong to explain human behavior, taking different perspectives. *Justice theory* argues for the principles of formal justice based on the concept of equality. Piaget and Kohlberg's cognitive moral developmental stages are aligned with the justice theory. For example, stage four of "authority maintaining morality" is an example of formal law and order justice. Stage five of "morality contract, individual rights, democratically accepted law" fits with procedural justice. Stage six of "morality of individual principles of conscience" matches substantive justice. However, justice cannot be judged in a black and white fashion. Societies often interpret principles in different situations to proportion the equality or to achieve distributive justice (Reidenbach & Robin, 1990). In the context of social media sharing, there are currently no hard regulations to guide the interpretations

(Morgan, 2018). *Deontology theory* supports Kant's (1959) "categorical imperative" that performing our duties for others is the "right" thing to do. However, critics point out that exceptions almost always exist on what are imperative rules. For example, telling a lie is not a right action. But given the right circumstances, telling white lies is considered the right thing to do. *Teleology theory* judges right vs. wrong on the consequences. Again, this stream of consequentialist theories has been tangled in how to evaluate the consequences, either based on *egoism* (individual) or *utilitarianism* (society). For example, they face challenges to answer the key question of how to justify greater harms to a few individuals or small groups vs. small gains to a large number of people in a society. The basic concept of *relativism* is that all normative beliefs are a function of the nature of a situation or individual. Varied and even contradictory values between different cultures offer evidence to support relativism. Culture-related relativism has been extended to various individual value systems as well. As such, no universal ethical or moral rules exist that apply to everyone.

All these moral philosophy theories demonstrate two key points: (1) that moral decision is context-based and (2) individual varied. The burden of judgment and choice falls on the shoulders of individuals who are making moral decisions in different contexts. This is true in information disorders on social media. There is no hard line to guide one's decision-making process regarding "right" information or "wrong" information to share.

The bulk of empirical studies address how different moral philosophies influence individual ethical decision-making (Loe et al., 2000). In general, these studies reveal that moral philosophy is related to the ethical decision-making process, affecting issue recognition, judgment, and intention (Loe et al., 2000; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005). Individuals may use different philosophies in the context of different industries and experiences. For example, managers and individuals change philosophies based on the situations (Fraedrich & Ferrell, 1992; Grover & Hui, 1994). This dissertation research applies philosophies of relativism and

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idealism. Chapter three will present detailed reasoning and arguments while developing the hypotheses.

2.5 Dark Personality

Dark personalities are part of personality theory, sharing the same essences and assumptions. Personality refers to the coherent patterning of emotion, behavior, cognition, and desires (goals) over time and space (Revelle & Scherer, 2009). Personality theories study variation among individuals and have a long history with an abundance of tradition. Personality trait theory (also called dispositional theory) is particularly interested in habitual (enduring) patterns of behavior, thought, and emotion. (John et al., 2008; Costa & McCrae, 2008). The trait personality research tradition makes two fundamental assumptions. First, traits are internal genetic properties with or without observable behavior and are relatively consistent over time and situations (Alston, 1975). Therefore, personality is stable yet differs from individual to individual and can be used as a causal determinant to explain the behavior of the individuals who possess them. Second, personality is the manifestation of the joint influence of both genetics and environmental stimuli. Studies show that personality demonstrates individual motivational differences in reactions to circumscribed environmental stimuli (Dingemanse et al., 2010; Denissen & Penke, 2008). Such motivational underpinning is fundamental, as they can be considered a driving force of self-directed behaviors (Lehmann et al., 2013).

Because of the consistent manifestation in values, attitudes, self-perception, etc., personality traits have been used in an extensive amount of research to predict human behaviors and reactions to other people and problems (Winne & Gittinger, 1973; Mischel & Shoda, 1998). For example, Matzler et al. (2008) discovered significant correlations between personality traits and knowledge-sharing. A few studies have utilized personality traits as predictors for information-sharing on social media (Deng et al., 2017; Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Correa et al., 2010). Contemporary moral personality investigates the interactions between personality and moral functioning such as justice, care, rights,

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responsibilities, and rationalities (e.g., Alfano, 2016; Walker, 1999, Walker & Frimer, 2007). In ethical studies, personality has attempted to explain moral issue recognition (Singhapakdi & Vitell, 1990; Mudrack, 2006), moral judgment making (Bartels & Pizarro, 2011), and intention to act morally (Jones & Kavanagn, 1996; Granitz, 2003; Blasi, 1990).

The search for moral characteristics, a set of stable personality traits that would predict immoral behavior, began with the studies of Hartshorne and May back in 1928 (Trevino, 1992). Kowalski refers to mean and nasty behaviors as aversive interpersonal behaviors (Kowalski et al., 2003). Among socially aversive personalities, *machiavellianism*, *narcissism*, and *psychopathy* are most empirically significant (Paulhus & Williams, 2002). The construct of *machiavellianism* is a manipulative personality, emerging from statements of Niccolo Machiavelli's original book *Il Principe* (*The Prince*). Respondents who agree with these statements were more likely to behave coldly and manipulatively in the laboratory and real-world studies (Christie & Geis, 1970). The construct of subclinical or "normal" *narcissism* emerged from Raskin and Hall's (1979) attempt to delineate a subclinical version of personality disorder. Facets of the clinical syndrome retained in subclinical narcissism include grandiosity, entitlement, dominance, and superiority (Paulhua & Williams, 2002). Finally, the construct of subclinical *psychopathy* is adapted from psychology (Hare, 1985). The central characteristics include high impulsivity and thrill-seeking along with low empathy and anxiety (Paulhua & Williams, 2002). Paulhus and Williams in 2002 verified that the three aversive personalities are overlapping yet distinctive concepts. As a result, they coined the term "Dark Triad."

In ethical studies, machiavellianism has been predominantly utilized to predict ethical decision-making (Verbeke et al., 1996). For example, individuals with a high score of machiavellianism perceived ethical issues as less serious (Singhapakdi & Vitell; 1990), judge the questionable selling practice as more acceptable, and report higher unethical intentions (Jones & Kavanagh, 1996; Granitz, 2003). Extant papers have found that the dark personality traits are informative in predicting unethical workplace behaviors (Spain et al., 2014),

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aggression (Baughman et al., 2012; Jones & Neria, 2015), financial misbehavior (Jones, 2014), and online trolling (Plouffe et al., 2017).

2.6 IT Mindfulness

Mindfulness is a psychological construct rooted in Eastern contemplative traditions. It has been called the "heart" of Buddhist meditation practice (Kabat-Zinn, 2003), a conscious state to attend the moment-to-moment experience (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Psychologists argue that mindfulness shapes how individuals interact with their environment (Bishop et al., 2004; Dane, 2011). To explain the mechanism of whether and how mindfulness affects changes and transformations, Shapiro et al.'s (2006) study posited and tested three building blocks: intention (on purpose), attention (paying attention), and attitude (the quality of attending). *Intention*, or a personal vision, reminds the individual of the purpose of practicing mindfulness. *Attention* involves observing the operation of one's internal and external experience and attending to consciousness. Finally, the *quality of attending* has been referred to as the attitudinal foundation of mindfulness (Kabt-Zinn, 1990). It is not cold, critical scrutiny; rather, it is a sense of open-hearted and friendly presence — this attending with "heart" quality results in fewer judgments and more acceptance (Shapiro et al., 2006). Additionally, when individuals feel a heightened state of involvement or presence in the moment (i.e., being mindful), they are more likely to detect changes in the surrounding environment and corresponding opportunities for action (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). The critical point in mindfulness is its dynamic and evolving cognitive process that allows the continuous practice, insight development, and identification of improved foresight and functioning (Shapiro et al., 2006; Langer, 1989).

Since the 1980s, research has evaluated the efficacy of mindfulness-based interventions such as stress deduction and interpersonal relationship treatments in healthcare (Shapiro et al., 2006). IS research most often studies mindfulness at the organizational level, espousing the view that "greater mindfulness among decision-makers changes the way in which mechanisms for environment scanning and information processing are used" (Fichman 2004 p. 338).

Specifically, IS research suggests that mindfulness relates positively to (1) organizational IT innovation (Fichman, 2004), (2) IS reliability (Butler and Gray, 2006), (3) high-quality managerial decision-making (Carlo et al. 2012; Swanson and Ramiller, 2004), (4) group decision-making (Fiol & O'Connor, 2003), and (5) learning (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006).

Given the proven benefits, Thatcher et al. (2018) studied the relationship between mindfulness and information technology use through a proposed IT mindfulness construct at the individual level. There are four dimensions tested in this construct. *Alertness to distinction* refers to the IT users' awareness of the capabilities of IT afforded and the context in which IT will prove helpful. In such awareness, an IT user will actively seek new ways to develop IT's potential (Langer, 1989). *Awareness of multiple perspectives* refers to different views regarding the usage and the distinct value of each potential use of an involved technology. Equipped with this perspective, a user could recognize IT potentials even beyond the design's original intention (Langer, 1989). A user with *Openness to novelty* will be likely to explore the technology in-depth (Thatcher et al., 2018). *Orientation in the present* refers to the sensitivity and understanding to a specific and current context (Stark & Crawford, 2015). Thatcher et al.'s (2018) findings indicate that IT mindfulness effectively and positively predicts "the use of IT to support the task" and "finding new ways to use existing IT."

The proposed construct of IT mindfulness by Thatcher et al. (2018) has three important implications. First, it is a broad personal trait. Therefore, it affects behavior across situations constantly and stably, just like other personality traits and dispositions. Second, IT mindfulness is domain-specific; thus, it exerts greater influence within narrowly defined contexts. In other words, IT mindfulness corresponds and reacts better to specific situations. Third, whereas individuals' dispositions are enduring, IT mindfulness is malleable as a result of behavioral interventions.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Doing research means systematically using some sets of theoretical and empirical tools to increase the understanding of phenomena or events of interest. Research evidence is inherently tied to the means or methods by which that evidence was obtained in any area of science (McGrath, 1995). Hence, understanding empirical evidence, its meaning, and its limitations requires comprehending the concepts and techniques on which evidence is obtained and based. This chapter centers on the discussions about the research methodology utilized by this dissertation research. This chapter also proposes the research framework and model for empirical studies.

The chapter is organized into four sections. After this introduction section, section 3.2 focuses on the mixed research methods adopted and their advantages. Section 3.3 discusses the first qualitative method, including the conceptualized framework created to conduct this study. Section 3.4 discusses the quantitative method, proposed psychometric structure equation model (SEM) for the study, hypotheses and scenario development, and survey instruments used. There are four subsections organized under the hypotheses that address the relationships between the antecedents, moral intensity, and the moral decision-making process.

3.2 Mixed Research Method

The diversity in research methods has been considered a strength of information systems research (Lee, 1999; Robey, 1996; Sidorova et al., 2008). These methods can be broadly categorized into quantitative and qualitative methodologies, which inherit different epistemologies, positive vs. interpretive accordingly. Although mixed methods research has received growing interest in the social and behavioral sciences (Tashakkori & Greswell, 2008; Venkatesh et al., 2013), limited research has employed this methodological pluralism (Kaplan & Duchon, 1988; Mingers, 2001, 2003).

Mixed methods research is the class of research when the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, or language into a single study (Venkatesh et al., 2013; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Philosophically, it is called a third paradigm research movement that combines the worldviews of qualitative and quantitative methods. Its logic of inquiry includes the use of induction (or the discovery of patterns), deduction (the testing of theories and hypotheses), and abduction (uncovering and relying on the best of a set of explanations for understanding one's results) (e.g., Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). As a creative form of research, mixed methods offer a logical and practical alternative to the other two paradigms (Venkatesh et al., 2013; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). It potentially allows complements of two research methods and supports a holistic understanding of the phenomenon of interest. Its pragmatic approach rejects dogmatism and expands and legitimizes multiple approaches to make more accurate meta-inferences and better answer the research questions (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

In the behavioral and social sciences, the phenomena of interest involve states and actions of human systems, including individuals, groups, organizations, larger social entities, and those actions' by-products (McGrath, 1995). Information disorder on social media is an emerging and complex human system on which limited knowledge is available to researchers. Therefore, to best understand how information disorder systems work and to achieve the research objective of extending the current knowledge, this research believes that the mixed approach offers the best opportunities to answer our research questions. This dissertation research has utilized sequential mixed-methods in two separate phases to develop our substantive predictive theory of information disorder on social media. In particular, the data and results of a qualitative study are used to help develop a model and hypotheses. A quantitative study is conducted to test the model and hypotheses (Venkatesh et al., 2013).

In the first phase, a qualitative study allows this research to use a multimethod of panel discussion, interview, and qualitative survey to tap into regular social media users' perspectives

(Walsham, 2006). Consequentially, propositions are generated based on the understanding of mechanisms discovered in the information disorder. In the second phase, a quantitative study permits this research to conduct confirmatory theory testing on antecedents and hypotheses derived from the first study and the literature, making systematical predictions (Tashakkori & Creswell, 2008). As a result, this research provides combined outcomes with complementary strengths and allows meta-inferences (e.g., Venkatesh et al., 2013; Brewer & Hunter, 2006). In addition, randomly selected samples from the population provide improved generalizability.

3.3 Qualitative Research

3.3.1 Qualitative Research Methodology

Qualitative research argues for the legitimacy of constructivism and interpretivism (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). These researchers contended that multiple-constructed realities abound because of multiple perspectives, opinions, or beliefs of humans. The interpretive analysis of the qualitative method allows the research participants to express themselves and their life stories the way they see fit without any distortion and/or prosecution (Alase, 2017). This gives researchers the best opportunity to understand the innermost deliberations of the research participants' lived experiences (Alase, 2017). In the meantime, it enables the researchers to explore and investigate the phenomenon and to capture humans' multiple constructions or values. In literature, qualitative research following the interpretive paradigm has been extensively acknowledged to capture the "native" point of view (e.g., Klein & Myers, 1999; Walsham, 1995).

In the tradition of Walsham (1995), several specific in-depth interpretive research approaches were used to gather evidence, draw interpretations, and understand the moral intensity and information disorder for this phase of the study. In the beginning, we conducted a panel discussion regarding general experience, attitudes, opinions, and concerns about misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation sharing on social media. The panel discussion allowed us to sensitize the respondents about information disorders. Next, we

carried out a qualitative survey on MTurk to collect more live experiences regarding information disorder on social media, using open-ended questions from the panel discussion to triangulate and validate the results and to achieve saturation in the observations. In the third step, we engaged in one-on-one interviews to capture the perspectives and experiences of respondents regarding moral intensity. Given the unobservable and sensitive nature of information disorder behavior, researchers took the role of "outside observer" (Walsham, 1995) and remained a "non-judgmental form of listening" (Myers & Newman, 2007) during the interviews. Following Eisenhardt (1989) and others, the interview questions were designed to align with the six dimensions of moral intensity. In addition, the open-ended questions encouraged dialogues between researchers and respondents and enabled researchers to revise ambiguous language (Fontana & Frey, 2000). All interview questions are presented in Appendix A. The interview was followed by sharing collected data and interpretations back with the respondents. In the literature, this is referred to as "member checking" (Ivari, 2018). Figure 4 depicts the composition of our qualitative study.

Figure 4. Qualitative Study Composition
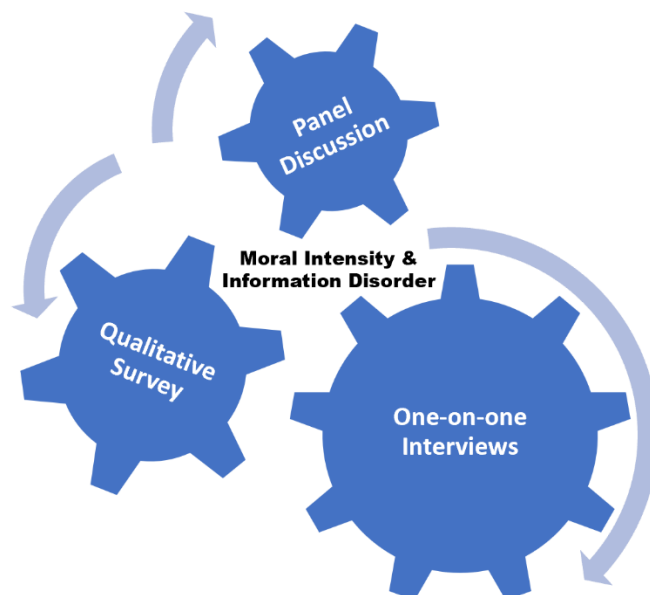
The research materials included various types of data. During the panel discussion and interviews, we asked the respondents to share their own stories and thoughts relevant to social media's moral intensity and information disorder. Human morality involves three elements: ideas about right and wrong, behavioral realities, and emotional experiences (Ellemers et al., 2019). Moral cognition (ideas and emotions) and moral action (behavioral realities) interplay, yet are different concepts (Blasi, 1980; Ellemers et al., 2019). The shared stories allow researchers to capture the behavioral realities while thoughts and emotional experiences tackle the cognitive process of respondents. The online survey employed the essay format to enable respondents to express their experiences and thoughts freely. Throughout the qualitative study, we focused on - *what and when things happened*, *who did what and why, and the outcomes.* The majority of the interviews were recorded, except for a few respondents who did not want to. Extensive notes were also taken to record the details of the conversations. Information disorder stories in the interviews were studied further for a better understanding of the sharing context. In the analysis, we used suitable probes such as the synthetic strategy to expand on the assertions to develop a deeper understanding. Scholars have termed this approach to generate process data (Langley, 1999).

3.3.2 Conceptualizing Moral Intensity and Information Disorder Interaction

The objective of the first qualitative study is to understand the interaction between moral intensity on three social media information disorder behaviors.

Without the presence of deliberate intention in misinformation disorder, moral intensity evaluation reflects distinctive individual's subjective interpretations of information, varying from person to person. For instance, moral disengagement theory posits that ethical behavior and moral decision-making are guided by personal standards (Bandura, 1999). Other scholars (Hardy, 2006; Blasi, 1993) posit that people act in harmony with self-moral beliefs to achieve cognitive and emotional comfort of self-integration and identity. Moral reasoning and judgment are not always sufficient to explain moral intentions and behavior (Roskies, 2003), and intuitions

formed on learning and influences from childhood and adolescence could play a role (Haidt, 2001). As such, we argue that human cognitive and perceptive limitations such as "cold" bias or heuristic problem-solving approaches will play a role in the interpretation and misinformation sharing. As such, the evaluation of moral intensity will be shaped mainly by proximity and social consensus.

On the contrary, the deliberate sharing of disinformation and malinformation singles out the importance of intention. For both, the evaluation of moral intensity serves to achieve the maximized target effects. Strategies and tactics will be utilized to help realize the desired results. For example, proximity is essential to reach the recipients while the social consensus is not relevant. Although motives drive both disorder behaviors, we argue that disinformation is shared at full awareness to be misleading for different agendas such as financial gain, political influence, and social advances. However, harming is not necessary presented in the purpose. We also argue that malinformation disorder behavior is caused by "hot" motivational bias, generated from wishful beliefs, strong ideology, or influenced by the desirability of choices and outcomes (e.g., Montibeller & Winterfeldt, 2015; Nickerson, 1998). Evans (1982) once conceived information handling activities, such as sharing, draw inferences from a subject's beliefs. Bavel et al. (2021) put forward a political psychology model to include ideology and morality as risk factors for digital misinformation study. Malinformation disorder differentiates itself from disinformation by the malicious intention of harm. This intention is evident in the cybercrime such as hate speech, cyberbullying, etc.

By anchoring our study in moral intensity and information disorder axes, we propose the following research framework to capture the information disorder behavior's granularity on social media.

Table 1. A Conceptual Framework for Moral Intensity and Information Disorder

Information Disorder Moral Intensity	← Benign ---------------- Harmful →		
	Misinformation *(e.g., misinterpreted content, errors)*	**Disinformation** *(e.g., wrong, manipulated, or fabricated content)*	**Malinformation** *(e.g., leaks, harassment, hate speech)*
Proximity	The proximity is an essential consideration of unintended sharing. The shorter the "distance," the higher the chance of misinformation sharing.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, proximity will be utilized to its full potential to reach the target disinformation consumers.	With the deliberate intention to harm, proximity is essential in the sharing evaluation to reach the target malinformation consumers.
Social Consensus	The social consensus depends on the sensitivity of the to-be-shared information. In general, the more social consensus, the higher chance of misinformation sharing.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, social consensus is not a concern unless it helps in crafting strategies and tactics to achieve the intended goals.	With the deliberate intention to harm, the consensus is not a consideration at all for sharing evaluation.
Temporal Immediacy	Unintended sharing is more of casual behavior; time may or may not be a consideration.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, time is critical because those who share want to see the results in a timely manner. The actual immediacy depends on the intended goal.	With the deliberate intention to harm, time is relevant but not critical. The actual immediacy depends on the intended goal.
Probability of Effect	In general, the probability of effect is not critical in misinterpreted and unintended sharing. The higher the perceived bad effects, the lower chance to share. Vice versa for beneficial effects.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, reaching the expected effects is the goal. The stronger the expected effects, the higher the chance to share.	Systematic biases cause the deliberate intention to harm. The probability becomes highly relevant. The higher the probability, the higher chance to share.
Magnitude of Consequences	The use and gratification motivations play an important role in unintended sharing. In general, the magnitude of consequences is not critical. The higher the perceived benefits, the higher chance to share.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, achieving the expected magnitude is the goal. The stronger the desired magnitude, the higher chance to share.	Systematic biases cause the deliberate intention to harm. Achieving larger consequences is the goal. The stronger the perceived harm, the higher chance to share.
Concentration of Effect	The use and gratification motivations play an important role in unintended sharing. In general, the concentration of effect is not highly relevant. The higher the perceived benefits, the higher chance to share.	Driven by deliberately misleading intentions, achieving the expected concentration is the goal. The higher the perceived concentration, the higher chance to share.	Systematic biases cause the deliberate intention to harm. Achieving the larger effect is the goal. The higher the perceived harm, the higher chance to share.

3.4 Quantitative Research

3.4.1 Quantitative Research Methodology

Quantitative research takes a positivist philosophy, believing that social observations should be treated objectively as entities to observers (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). In addition, quantitative research believes in the numerical representation and manipulation of observations to describe and explain the phenomena that those observations reflect (Creswell, 1994).

Out of several popular quantitative research methods, a questionnaire survey is the one adopted for this study. A survey questionnaire measures the characteristics of samples with statistical precision. As a result, these estimates from a sample can be generalized to the population with a degree of statistical certainty, which empowers the research model to explain and to predict.

3.4.2 Research Model

The second quantitative study aims to test the effect of a few antecedents selected and argues for a regulating role of moral intensity on social media disinformation disorder behavior. This research defines disinformation as "*deliberately disseminated wrong information to mislead yet unnecessarily cause harm or damage.*"

This research conceptualizes disinformation-sharing on social media as an unethical "dark" behavior. In order to deter the behavior and to mitigate the costly negative consequences, this study looks through the issue contingent moral intensity lens to understand what predicts the disinformation disorder behavior. Jones (1991) argued that the moral decision-making process is not cookie-cutter. Rather, the decision varies by the interpretation of the issue in context. As such, Jones built an issue contingent model. Moral reasoning and decision-making are made by moral agents and involve a cognitive process (Kohlberg & Kramer, 1969). Therefore, moral behavior becomes a reflection of moral agents on the issue in the question and environmental stimuli and context together (Rest, 1986; Trevino, 1986).

Previous research shows that personality traits are consistent yet differ from individual to individual and are salient predictors for human behaviors (e.g., Golbeck, 2016; McElroy et al., 2007; Amichai-Hamberger & Vinitzky, 2010). Personal moral philosophy is also a predominant predictor widely adopted to study business ethics such as financial scandals, software piracy, mal-marketing practices, etc. (e.g., Singhapakdi et al., 1999; Ferrell and Gresham, 1985; Hunt and Vitell, 1986). IT mindfulness as a trait affects users in engaging more positive behaviors in a given technology (Thatcher et al., 2018).

Drawing from literature and the first qualitative study, this research proposes an enriched issue contingent ethical decision model (Figure 5). The model integrates dark triad personality traits, personal moral philosophies, and IT mindfulness about the social network as antecedents empirically to test their combined effects on predicting a troubling dark social behavior - sharing disinformation on social media. This model also tests the regulatory (mediating) role of perceived moral intensity in disinformation sharing.

The following sections discuss each hypothesis to be tested in the proposed path model (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Proposed Research Model - Antecedents of Disinformation Sharing
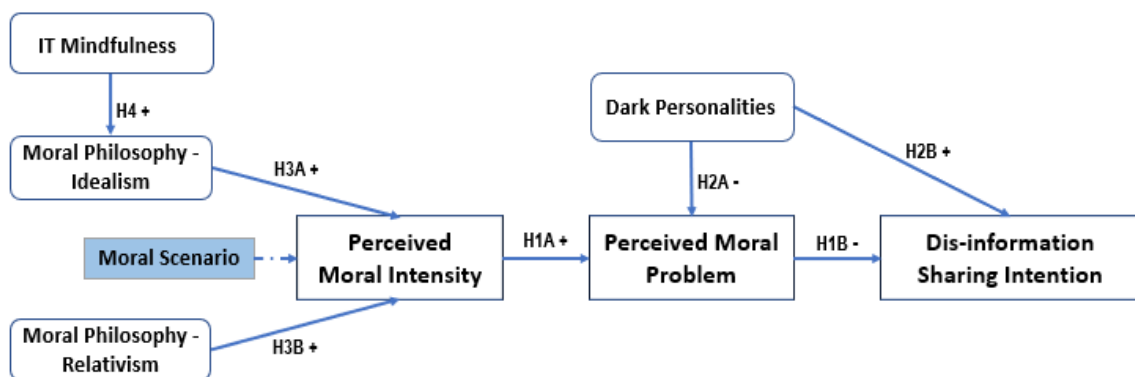
3.4.3 Research Hypotheses

3.4.3.1 Moral Intensity & Moral Decision-Making

Moral or ethical decisions refer to a morally and legally acceptable choice to the larger community (Jones, 1991; Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). A moral issue is present where a person's actions, when freely performed, may harm or benefit others (Velasquez & Rostankowski, 1985). Therefore, moral agents, ethical judgment, choices, and consequences of the decisions involve each moral issue.

Moral decision-making models consider individual decision-making starting with environmental stimuli (e.g., Jones, 1991; Rest, 1986; Ferrell & Gresham, 1985; Hunt & Vitell, 1986). The environmental stimuli generate a moral situation in which a person performs a cognitive evaluation before committing a behavior, this includes conceptually distinct moral issue recognition and moral intention formation (Rest, 1986; Dubinsky & Loken, 1989; Hunt & Vitell, 1986). Rest (1986) made moral issue recognition from environmental stimuli an initial element of the ethical decision-making model. Rest (1986) further suggested that people form intention by balancing many factors, including right or wrong judgment and self-interest considerations. Velasquez and Rostankowski (1985) posited that moral issue perception involves evaluating optional choices and behavioral consequences. Robin et al. (1996) conceptualized the moral issue perception as a global indicator of personal relevance. Recognizing the importance of characteristics (consequences, time, social consensus, proximity) of a moral issue in the decision-making process, Jones (1991) proposed that the moral intensity evaluation of the issue's characteristics impacts the issue recognition and behavior intention. Singhapakdi et al. (1996, 1999) empirically demonstrated that moral intensity positively influences marketing professionals' ethical issue perceptions and behavioral intentions. Accordingly, in the context of disinformation sharing on social media, we hypothesize that:

H1A: a perceived moral problem positively associates with the moral intensity of disinformation sharing in question. Individuals with higher moral intensity will recognize moral issues more frequently than those with lower moral intensity.

The extant research indicated that the perceived moral issue leads to reduced intention to act in an unethical manner (Barnett, 2001). Although the person who deliberately shares disinformation intends to share regardless of the awareness of possible ethical or moral violation, we argue that the moral intensity evaluation would serve as a mechanism to check and to mitigate the sharing intention. Therefore, following research tradition, we posit that the disinformation sharing intention is functionally and negatively associated with the perceived moral problem in the context. As such, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1B: the perceived moral problem negatively associates with the disinformation sharing intention. The increased perceived moral problem will decrease the disinformation sharing intention.

3.4.3.2 Dark Personality & Moral Decision-Making

Personality trait theory (also called dispositional theory) presumes human habitual (enduring) patterns of behavior, thoughts, and emotion are relatively stable over time and situations (e.g., John et al., 2008; Costa & McCrae, 1999; Alston, 1975). This perspective also presumes traits to be causal in explaining the behavior of the individuals. Dark personalities are part of personality trait theory, sharing the same essences and assumptions.

Among the socially aversive personalities, *machiavellianism*, *narcissism*, and *psychopathy* are most empirically significant (Kowalski, 2001). Paulhus and Williams verified in 2002 that the three aversive personalities are overlapping yet distinctive concepts. As a result, they coined the term "Dark Triad." Recent papers have found that the dark personality traits are informative in predicting unethical workplace behaviors directly (Spain et al., 2014; O'Boyle et al., 2012), aggression (Baughman et al., 2012; Jones & Neria, 2015), financial misbehavior

(Jones, 2014), and online trolling (Plouffe et al., 2017). For example, research showed that respondents with aversive machiavellianism were more likely to behave in a cold and manipulative fashion in the laboratory and real-world studies (Christie & Geis, 1970). In ethical studies, machiavellianism has been predominantly utilized as a predictor for moral functions such as recognizing moral issues (Singhapakdi & Vitell, 1990) and intention to act morally (Jones & Kavanagh, 1996; Granitz, 2003). Information disorders on social media are moral behaviors that involve these moral functions.

Within social media information sharing literature, a few studies have adopted the big five personality theory to examine information sharing (Deng et al., 2017; Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Correa et al., 2010). Within information disorders literature, studies applied personalities to study the motivation of people's sharing of misinformation on social media (Indu & Thampi, 2020; Chen & Sin, 2013; Chen et al., 2015) and propagation of fake news (Buchanan & Benson, 2019). However, the dark triad personalities' effects on online communication behaviors have yet to be discovered (Petit & Carcioppolo, 2020). Flangan (2009) once articulated that every moral thought and behavior owes "at least a partial personality structure." Based on these findings and assertions, this research hypothesizes:

H2A: the dark triad negatively associates with the perceived moral problem of disinformation sharing in question. The person with a higher dark triad score will recognize moral problems less likely than those with a lower score.

H2B: the dark triad positively associates with the disinformation sharing intention. The person with a higher dark triad score will have a higher intention to share disinformation than those with a lower dark triad score.

3.4.3.3 Idealism, Relativism, & Moral Intensity

Sharp (1898), an early psychologist, discovered that research subjects have different concerns regarding what was moral. Certain behaviors viewed by one as moral may be immoral

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to another. He concluded that a person making decisions about other people's morality is based on his or her own individual ethics system. Schlenker and Forsyth's (1977) research has supported Sharp's contention. Their study identified two fundamental personal moral philosophies that might parsimoniously explain individual variations in moral judgment: relativism and idealism. Individual differences on these dimensions may account for varying approaches to moral judgments (Forsyth, 1980). The idealism-relativism typology is also consistent with the major schools of philosophy, including deontology, utilitarianism, and egoism (Forsyth, 1980, 1992).

Relativism refers to the extent to which an individual rejects universal moral rules or standards (Forsyth, 1992). Relativists practice a moral philosophy based on skepticism and "generally feel that moral actions depend upon the nature of the situation and the individuals involved, more than the ethical principle that was violated" (Forsyth, 1992, p.462). Thus, they evaluate contextual and situational factors involved in the moral action in question. *Idealism* refers to "the degree to which an individual focuses upon the inherent rightness or wrongness of actions," assuming that the best possible outcomes can be achieved by following universal moral rules (Forsyth, 1980). An idealist "describes the individual's concern for the welfare of others… [and] feel that harming others is always avoidable" (Forsyth, 1992, p.462).

Plenty of ethical research in various business contexts extensively applied Forsyth's moral philosophy model and verified that individuals responded differently based on their moral philosophies when encountering an ethical dilemma (e.g., Shultz & Brender-Ilan, 2004; Barnett et al., 1996). Overall, relativists have fewer rules they "have to" follow. They are more likely to make unethical choices (Callanan et al., 2010) and to judge ethically questionable behavior as more ethical than idealists (Boyle, 2000). Empirical findings suggest that idealism is associated with greater ethical sensitivity than relativism (Forsyth, 1992; Chan & Leung, 2006) and relativism is a poor predictor of social norms (Vitell et al., 1993).

In social media disinformation disorder research, political ideologies such as conservativism or liberalism are studied (Lawson & Kakkar, 2020). Yet, root philosophical theories such as idealism and relativism have not been applied to study disinformation sharing despite their strong predictive power. Since relativists act more on perceived outcomes (Forsyth et al., 1988), we argue they will actively evaluate the moral intensity of each ethical issue; thus, relativism positively associates with moral intensity. On the other hand, since idealists act on universal moral rules, we argue that idealism is also positively associated with moral intensity, but idealism has a stronger tie to moral intensity than relativism has, resulting in stricter judgments. As such, we propose:

> **H3A**: idealism positively associates with the perceived moral intensity of disinformation sharing in question.

> **H3B**: relativism positively associates with the perceived moral intensity of the disinformation sharing in question. However, relativism has lower perceived moral intensity in disinformation sharing, compared to idealism.

3.4.3.4 IT Mindfulness & Moral Philosophy & Moral Intensity

Thatcher et al. (2018) proposed the construct of IT mindfulness as a personal trait with four dimensions. Therefore, similar to personality traits, IT mindfulness is stable yet differs from individual to individual and can be used as a causal predictor to explain the behavior of the individuals who possess them.

Although there is not any preceding research to study the relationship between IT mindfulness and moral philosophies, a few studies have proved the positive relationship between a broader concept of mindfulness and moral awareness (Schwartz, 2016), and mindfulness and moral responsibility (Small & Lew, 2019). For example, mindfulness positively influences moral intent through an improved sense of moral responsibility and judgment (Small & Lew, 2019). Additional evidence also shows a correlated relationship between idealism and

spiritual well-being (Fernando & Chowdhury, 2010). Therefore, this study argues that IT

mindfulness as a positive behavioral practice is conceptually close to idealism. Since IT

mindfulness about a technology positively predicts the technology's usage and innovation

(Thatcher et al., 2018), this study also argues that the increased involvement and openness

about social media technology and its users help to detect changes in the surrounding

environment and subtleties in the to-be-dealt-with issues. The heightened awareness toward the

environment and issues increases idealists' sensitivity to the rightness or wrongness of actions.

This increased sensitivity further improves the perception of moral intensity and allows idealists

to make a more morally accurate judgment. In such a way, idealism positively mediates IT

mindfulness's effect on the moral issue intensity and indirectly shapes the disinformation

sharing behaviors. Thus, we propose:

    H4: IT mindfulness positively associates with idealism. IT mindfulness's impact

    on the perceived moral intensity is positively mediated by idealism.

    The following Table 2 shows the summary of our hypotheses.

Table 2. Summary of Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Description
H1A	A perceived moral problem positively associates with the moral intensity of disinformation sharing in question. Individuals with higher moral intensity will recognize moral issues more frequently than those with lower moral intensity.
H1B	The perceived moral problem negatively associates with the disinformation sharing intention. The increased perceived moral problem will decrease the disinformation sharing intention.
H2A	The dark triad negatively associates with the perceived moral problem of disinformation sharing in question. The person with a higher dark triad score will recognize moral problems less likely than those with a lower score.
H2B	The dark triad positively associates with the disinformation sharing intention. The person with a higher dark triad score will have a higher intention to share disinformation than those with a lower dark triad score.
H3A	Idealism positively associates with the perceived moral intensity of disinformation sharing in question.
H3B	Relativism positively associates with the perceived moral intensity of disinformation sharing in question. However, relativism has lower perceived moral intensity in disinformation sharing, comparing to idealism.
H4	IT mindfulness positively associates with idealism. IT mindfulness's impact on the perceived moral intensity is positively mediated by idealism.

3.4.4 Scenario Construction

Common in research involving sensitive ethical or moral issues, a scenario-based study is utilized, allowing researchers to tap into reality by removing the respondents' social desirability bias (Butterfield et al., 2000). A scenario contains a story that is analytically coherent and imaginatively engaging (Bishop et al., 2007). Both Piaget and Kohlberg use the research method of scenario or story with complex moral dilemmas to evoke discussions and explanations of the subject's thinking and decision-making process. A good scenario asks respondents to step into the situation where researchers want them to be and answer the question, "what are you going to do?" (Bishop et al., 2007). This research adapts to a well-established business ethics scenario used in empirical studies (Dornoff & Tankersley, 1975;

Reidenbach et al., 1991) to reflect social media disinformation sharing context (see Appendix B).

3.4.5 Survey Instruments

The constructs in this study were measured using items adapted from previously validated studies and grouped into seven sections (see Appendix C). We used two items from Chua and Banerjee (2018) and four items from So and Bolloju (2005) to measure the dependent variable *Disinformation Sharing Intention (*DV*)*. For example, respondents were asked how much they agreed or disagreed with statements, such as: "I intend to share the disinformation with others," "I intend to share the disinformation in the near future," and "I intend to re-share/re-post the disinformation frequently." These six items gauge the extent to which a respondent is willing to share disinformation on social media. The *Perceived Moral Problem* (**PMP**) was measured with a single item, "the scenario involves an ethical problem," developed and test-rested by Singhapakdi et al. (1996, 1999). When item reliability is not at issue for a construct, in other words, measurement is assumed without error, or very close to it, a single-item measure is acceptable (Garson, 2016).

The *Perceived Moral Intensity* (**PMI**) is a second-order construct consisting of four reliable dimensions: the *seriousness of consequences, temporal immediacy, proximity, and social consensus*, with three items measuring each dimension (Barnett, 2001). Because the scenario was created to illustrate unethical behaviors (e.g., Dornoff and Tankersley 1975), the higher score of each item indicates higher PMI, stronger PMP, and higher unethical sharing intention. This type of operationalization is consistent with previous studies, such as Vitell and Hunt (1990). For example, the question of "do you believe any harm (if any) resulting from the sharing of disinformation will be: Minor – Severe?" measure the *seriousness of consequences*. The question of "do you anticipate that any harm (if any) of the sharing of disinformation is likely to occur: After a Long Time – Immediately?" measures *temporal immediacy*. The question of "compared to yourself, do you believe those potentially affected by the sharing of disinformation

are: Not Alike - Alike?" measures the *proximity*. The question of "please indicate the degree to which you believe society as a whole considers that sharing disinformation is: Unethical - Ethical?" measures *social consensus*.

This study applies the Barnett (2001) four-dimension PMI measurements over six-dimension original PMI measurements (Jones & Huber, 1992) out of two reasons. First, studies suggest that it is better not to use a mix of positively and negatively worded measurement items because doing so threatens the validity and reliability of the survey instruments (Chyung et al., 2018; Edmondson, 2005). Our first pilot study demonstrated strong evidence of unreliable answers to the original reversed worded items for each of six dimensions. Secondly, the semantic-differential scale combines more than one pair of grammatically opposite adjectives. The versatility in words is a reliable way to get information on people's attitudes toward a topic of interest (Bradley & Lang, 1994). Podsakoff et al. (2003) suggested that different survey item types within the same survey questionnaire help to lower common method bias.

Personal moral philosophies were measured by Forsyth's (1980) Ethics Position Questionnaire (EPQ), a common model of personal moral philosophy (e.g., Marta et al., 2008; Musbah et al., 2016). The EPQ consists of 20 stand-alone statements, ten items each measuring idealism (**MP-I**) and relativism (**MP-R**), without using scenarios to prompt ethical responses. Higher scores indicate stronger philosophical tendencies.

The *Dark Triad* (**Dpers**) is a second-order construct consisting of 14 items developed by Jonason and Webster (2010) through four studies. Five items measure narcissism and Machiavellianism, while four items measure psychopathy. Statements include "I tend to want others to pay attention to me" for narcissism, "I tend to lack remorse" for psychopathy, and "I tend to manipulate others to get my way" for machiavellianism. Higher scores indicate stronger dark personalities.

IT mindfulness (**ITM**) again is a second-order construct measuring an individual's awareness and openness to context and technology. The scale includes three items for each of

four dimensions, totaling 12 items (Thatcher et al., 2018). Three studies rigorously validated the

scale in different technological contexts, using multiple methods and subjects, different

theoretical relationships, and long and short forms. A higher level of IT mindfulness

demonstrates more heightened alertness to technology distinctions, various perspectives,

openness to novelty, and orientation in the present.

CHAPTER IV: THE QUALITATIVE STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter encompasses the results of the qualitative study. Section 4.2 discusses the research sample and data collection process. Section 4.3 presents the results of the online qualitative survey. Finally, section 4.4 shows the results of the one-on-one interviews.

4.2 Qualitative Research Samples & Data Collection

Our qualitative study consists of three stages. At first, we conveniently (Etikan et al., 2016) identified and sampled nine respondents from one large organization for the panel discussion. Our sampled organization is located in a mid-Atlantic state and offers services in more than one US state. The organization specializes in healthcare but is highly dependent on IT, government regulations, and the political landscape. The panelists were asked to discuss two general questions and to share their stories and experiences regarding information disorders on social media. The first question asked the respondents' understanding, feelings, and values regarding information disorder on social media. The second question asked the role of an individual's morality in information disorder on social media. The panel discussion allowed this research to understand the aspects of information disorder as panelists shared their own stories and thoughts.

After the panel discussion, we conducted a round of qualitative surveys on the MTurk to sample the general population. We invited respondents from five different functional areas - healthcare, management, IT/IS, education/training, and finance/accounting, striving to cover high-impact social media topic areas as much as possible. According to studies (Karlova & Fisher, 2013), these topic areas are prime sources of misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation in wide-ranging contexts. This second stage serves to triangulate and to validate the aspects revealed by the panelists because we want to maximize variations in the sample to ensure data representation. During this stage, the respondents were asked to answer the

general questions used in the panel discussion in essay style. A total of 90 responses were collected. Afterward, Voyant (v2.4) was used to analyze the data. Voyant (voyant-tools.org) is an open-source text-mining tool that is well-documented for its text analysis capabilities and is well-received in dissertation studies (Miller, 2018; Welsh, 2014).

The third stage is a one-on-one interview process, the most critical data collection process. The 21 respondents were sampled from the same organization as in stage one. Some of the respondents were interviewed multiple times to ensure a clear understanding. To help maintain this research's moral intensity theoretical focus, we used the conceptual framework developed in Table 1 (Chapter Three) to guide our interviews. Six specific questions related to the six dimensions of moral intensity were asked. Our data collection period spanned four months. Figure 6 depicts the data collection process.

Figure 6. Qualitative Data Collection Process
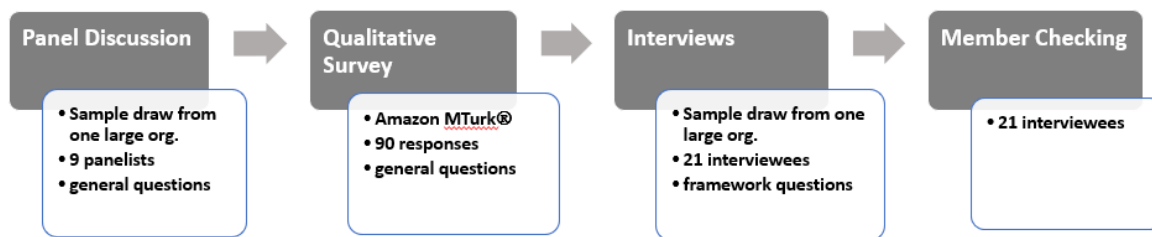
Table 3 presents a summary of the research data involved in the study. The entire data collection process consumed roughly 292 hours. The collected survey notes are presented in Appendix E.

Table 3. Summary of Research Data

Data Collection Process	No. of Respondents	No. of Hours (data collection & cleaning)
Panel discussion	9	10
Qualitative survey	90	135
Individual interviews	21	105
"Member checking"	21	42
Total		**292**

4.3 Qualitative Study – Findings of Topic Areas

Our first round of data analysis focused on understanding the similarities and differences regarding information disorder within each of the five topic areas: healthcare, management, IT/IS, education/training, and finance/accounting. The purpose of this round of analysis was not for a detailed theory-oriented investigation but to assess the general public's attitude about information disorder and the role of morality in information disorders. We used Voyant (v2.4) for text analysis. The goal of text-mining was to conduct content analysis. Voyant text-mining tools allow researchers automatically to identify general themes and interactions in the text, similar to traditional text analysis (Miller, 2018). Specifically, the "Terms" tool enabled this research to see what terms occurred most frequently throughout the survey essays by counting them, regardless of the location (Miller, 2018). In addition, the simultaneously interactive and relational aspect of Voyant tools gave this research the capability to read the relevant text about the high-frequency terms in their original locations and to find out what respondents said about them, ultimately giving way to patterns in the text and interpretations (Miller, 2018). This study applied these tools to analyze text on a topic basis.

The following wordcloud "Cirrus" image (Figure 7) from Voyant gives us a visual presentation of the top 45 terms (excluding misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation since they are merely referenced words) from all the respondents. These high-frequency words reveal (1) respondents think that spreading information disorder on social media is wrong and harmful to society; (2) respondents believe that the truth is hard to tell, making sharing dangerous; (3) morality plays an essential role in regulating information disorder behavior on social media. The following subsections discuss the findings of each topic area.

Figure 7. Top 45 High-Frequency Terms

4.3.1 Healthcare Information Sharing

Respondents differentiate information disorder professionally and personally in this area. Information disorder matters greatly to respondents professionally, but not much personally. From the professional perspective, respondents think the consequences can be enormous and powerful for misleading information about healthcare. As such, information disorder is significant. Personally, they think that information disorder is not a particular concern because of three reasons. First, the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries are under strong regulations and subject to detailed policies. Second, in the realm of science and research, the scrutiny and critique of information are high. Thus, information disorder is less likely to develop further. Third, as trained professionals, respondents are confident about making their own "evidence-based" judgment.

In answering the question of what information disorder is, respondents first pointed out that information disorder originates from subjective interpretations. In highly specialized areas, information interpretation requires specific knowledge and training. Even specially trained professionals can have various interpretations and different takes on the same piece of information. For a layperson, this imposes much bigger challenges. Many people lack adequate knowledge to trace the sources, check source credibility, and make correctly informed judgments. In addition, people trust authoritative health organizations. The second aspect of

information disorder is deceit. Respondents brought up the intentional vs. unintentional and agenda-driven information sharing in healthcare.

4.3.2 Educational/Training Information Sharing

Information disorder matters "hugely" is the unanimous answer that features in this topic area. According to respondents, misleading information about education directly impacts public opinions, ideologies, and individual lives. Moreover, misleading educational information has long-lasting influences on people's mindsets. Thus, information disorder matters professionally, personally, and morally.

To answer the question of what information disorder is, respondents were concerned about its origins. First, people treat facts and the truth interchangeably, although they are not the same concepts. For example, truth is subjective. Ideologies shade the interpretations of a particular piece of information, leading to discrepancies in truth comprehension. Other people genuinely believe in certain causes so that they share information to persuade others, disregarding whether it is factual or not. Second, information disorder comes from different sources. For example, many people think that if they see words in print or a book, they can assume it is factual without checking the reliability and credibility of the source. Third, cognitive limitations cause information disorder. People are often unaware of the divergence between what they see and hear from what they perceive. Finally, information disorder can be generated during the information communication process. For example, sometimes people may use inadequate methods or words to express their thoughts, which may be misconstrued in a rush.

In addition, respondents stressed that information disorder could be with or without intention. Intentional sharing is problematic, and there is a range of intentions, from benign to harmful. For example, respondents indicated that some people are not sure of what they are sharing, but they just want to be the first to share and be seen as knowledgeable or informed. The worse intention is trying to spread misleading information to manipulate or to control other people.

4.3.3 IT/IS Information Sharing

Regarding whether information disorder matters in IT/IS, respondents provide a ranged answer. A close examination shows that information disorder is not a big concern from the information recipients' perspective. Respondents were confident in their ability to make good judgments. However, for sharing or disseminating, information disorder matters highly to them. Respondents take their professional reputations into considerations. They maintain a sense of skepticism and a level of caution in evaluating consequences.

In the field of IT/IS, information disorder mainly refers to inaccurate information coming from misunderstanding, miscommunication, or lacking verification. About IT/IS research and development information, information disorder is rare. Algorithmic programming is about right or wrong, works or does not work. There is not any gray area in between. Any wrong algorithms, whether inaccurate or out-of-date, will be verified fairly quickly during implementation and corrected. On emerging and trendy technology, people focus more on information verification due to the "have to learn" reason. For security-related information, respondents brought up the concern for intention.

4.3.4 Management Information Sharing

In general, misleading information matters "hugely" to respondents in the management/governance field. For example, respondents pointed out that information disorder affects discourse within an organization and can press leadership to make certain decisions. One respondent also pointed out that information disorder itself is a century-old strategy and tactic utilized by the government. Technology transforms the game entirely because the active participation of ordinary people complicates the situation, and information spreads at a greater velocity and extent.

To answer the question of what information disorder is, respondents discerned its origins. First, information disorder largely originates from the interpretations of the content. One respondent pointed out a fuzzy boundary between the truth and facts, like shades of gray in

between black and white. People derive different truths from the same facts, depending on how they interpret the information. Second, identifying with particular information can result in people lowering their guard, thus contributing to information disorder. For example, people mistake opinions as facts when reading the information, so they take and share. Third, respondents indicated that information disorder could be deliberately misleading information or mistaken, incorrect, or out-of-date information.

4.3.5 Finance/Accounting Information Sharing

In general, information disorder matters "highly" to the respondents. In the field of finance, misleading information can generate a "perfect storm" if manipulated with intentions.

Information disorder is inaccurate information. Respondents mentioned two important aspects regarding information disorder in finance and accounting. First, all information has sources, and all sources have their agendas. The fact that truth is not absolute implies that recipients are susceptible to influences and can be swung by opinionated assertions and agenda-backed stories. As such, evaluating the source of information becomes critical. The second aspect of information disorder is its misleading characteristics. People in finance and accounting are highly sensitive to the intention because the actual consequences are reflected directly in dollars and cents. Therefore, respondents take the information evaluation into their own hands and rely on self-judgment to a great extent and guard their professional reputation prudently.

The survey results from different topic areas suggest one overall point: most information disorders at the individual level are misinformation, and rarely do ordinary people intentionally share disinformation or malinformation. Echoing the general patterns discovered through Voyant text analysis, respondents were genuinely concerned about information disorders online and thought that sharing disinformation or malinformation was morally wrong. Our data demonstrated their awareness and efforts not to do it. The findings are visualized in the mindmap (Figure 8) below. In summary,

- Information disorders matter greatly to all the respondents.

- Information disorder sharing is related to benign or deceitful intention.

- The main concern from respondents regarding information disorder on social media is about its origins.

- Respondents were generally confident about their capability to make judgments regarding information.

- Respondents named several reasons that contribute to information disorder, including interpretations, cognitive limits, communication errors, undifferentiated fact vs. truth, fact vs. opinion, and agenda.

  Source credibility and reliability are crucial for information verification and deterring disorder behaviors on social media from happening.

Figure 8. Summary of Information Disorder in Different Topic Areas
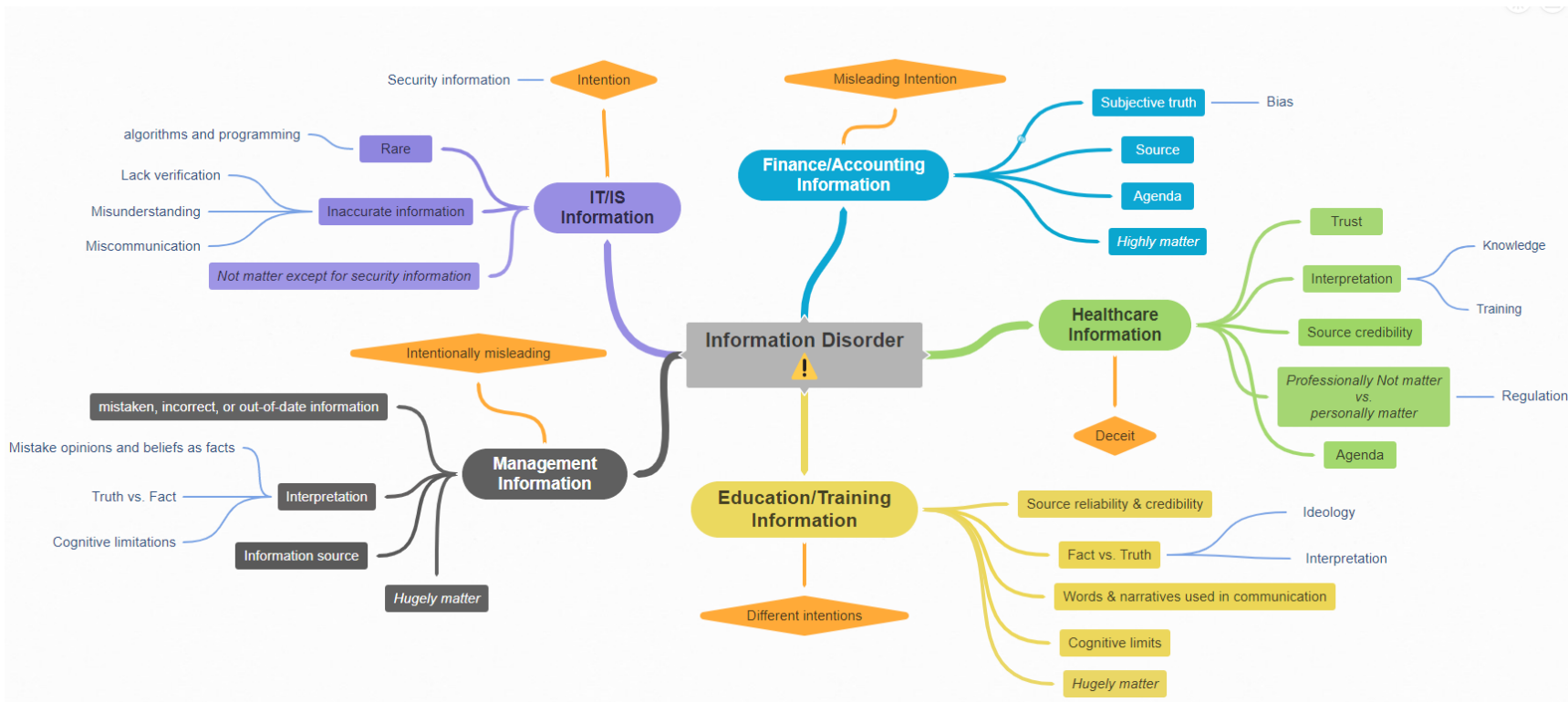
4.4 Qualitative Study – Findings of the Proposed Framework

As noted previously, we followed the moral intensity theory to conduct interviews with individuals from the sample organization. The objective is to discover moral intensity interpretations related to information disorder behavior on social media. The section below discusses interviews about each moral intensity dimension, interpretations, and information disorder behavior based on extant literature. Our research suggests that social media's information disorder behavior is contingent on all six dimensions of moral intensity. There are similarities and differences across professional areas. Different underlying mechanisms contribute to the variations of the intensity in each dimension.

4.4.1 Proximity in Information Disorder Behavior

The most common form of proximity is geographical (Knoben & Oerlemans, 2006). However, other kinds of proximity have also been identified, including cultural (Gertler, 1995; Gill & Butler 2003), cognitive (Wuyts et al., 2005), social (Oerlemans & Meeus, 2005), institutional (North, 1991), and technological proximity (Greunz, 2003; Kirat & Lung 1999). All these proximities measure "being close to something on a certain dimension" (Knoben & Oerlemans, 2006). Proximity, in general, is often seen as an essential pre-condition for knowledge sharing and knowledge transfer (Gertler, 1995).

Our study found that proximity was the unanimous and foremost information contingent on social media information disorder behavior. To avoid conflicts, ensure understanding, and seek resonation or support in information recipients, people are selective in forming their proximity circles for information sharing. The increased proximity feeling toward information recipients leads to an increased chance of sharing misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation on social media. Moreover, it drives a moral agent's sharing intention and actual sharing thereafter, regardless of information disorders.

Proximity plays a significant role in my sharing decision. I won't share health-

related information with the public but only with close friends who understand the

conveyed materials' context. [Healthcare quality reviewer]

Proximity in misinformation sharing is like *Chinese Whispers*. Generally, I avoid

sharing anything other than humor. Because sharing eventually means proximity

is overcome. Anything you share will wind up far away from where you intend it

to go. In this sense, I think maintaining a "public" online face (much like courtesy

or good manners) is the safest thing to do. However, in the coming era of deep

fakes, this won't suffice either. [Trainer]

The proximity of a moral issue is the feeling of nearness (social, cultural, psychological,

institutional, physical, or knowledge) that a moral agent has for victims and beneficiaries of the

moral act in question (Jones, 1991). Our interview data confirm it. Today, people are less likely

to seek out news from traditional media actively. Instead, people are increasingly dependent on

other individuals in their social ties to provide and to curate information (Thorson & Wells, 2016;

Weeks et al., 2017). People trust their close social circles (Metzger et al., 2010). Sharing with

known social circles or like-minded people reinforces beliefs, thoughts, and cognitive bias inside

a closed information ecosystem that inevitably leads to social divide and partisanship. As a

result, the filter bubble occurs and the echo chamber effect arises on social media.

Proximity is highly relevant to me. I tend to share information more with trusted

friends with similar interests and concerns. This is especially true for sensitive

information. [Manager]

4.4.2 Social Consensus in Information Disorder Behavior

The social consensus is the agreement implying that individuals rationalize a course of

action based on expectations about others' behavior in the social group (Bateman et al., 2013).

These expectations are norms that guide what is considered acceptable behavior (Jones,

1994). Judgments of other people have influential power on people's thoughts and actions

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(Asch, 1955; Deutsch & Gerard, 1955), especially when they are uncertain about what to think or how to behave (Festinger, 1954). Linden et al. (2017) pointed out that people tend to rely on social consensus cues heuristically to form judgments about an issue in a complex and uncertain world. For example, in the context of climate change, misinformation sharing research shows that belief in climate change appears to be shaped by the readers' perceptions of the social consensus such that it can be used effectively to counteract the real-world misinformation (Lewandowsky et al., 2019; Linden et al., 2017).

Contrary to extant research, our data reveals that *social consensus* is a weak moral intensity contingent on information disorder. Of all the information, education and training information is the only one that demonstrates social consensus sensitivity. The majority of respondents indicated that they trust "my independent judgment." If it is relevant, the influence of social consensus is reflected in either complying or not. For instance, respondents from the education sector demonstrate substantial compliance with social consensus. One respondent noted:

Social consensus is relevant since education and training are at the forefront of misinformation sharing. Information that deviates from orthodoxy can result in a very toxic environment in education. I make sure my recipients will very well perceive my information. As such, the judgment depends on the content and its sensitivity. I would try to avoid conflicts and sharing information with foreseeable adverse effects. [Trainer]

A senior manager from finance also felt it vital to understand the social consensus but only to act against it. Because of the nature of the business and a tendency to get swayed by information disorder, he said:

It is my independent judgment, and I do my evaluation. There is a herd mentality in investment. An individual trader or investor often follows what most traders

think or do due to an emotional level of influence rather than a rational one... I

move against herd thinking. [Financial Manager]

Our research findings indicate that the social consensus for sharing information on social

media is a set of implicit standards and moral principles held by a social community. However,

these standards and moral principles do not delimit the morality of each individual. People's

sharing intentions and actual sharing are mostly independent of what is considered acceptable

by the majority. Social media is not regulated like traditional media that is subjected to

journalistic gatekeeping efforts such as reporting facts and maintaining information's

objectiveness (Weeks & Zúñiga, 2019). Thus, low social consensus interacting with high

proximity can easily amplify specific biases and cause adverse social effects.

4.4.3 Temporal Immediacy in Information Disorder Behavior

In an exciting piece of research by Baesler and Burgoon (1994), the effectiveness of

persuasion based on an anecdotes' vividness decreases over time. In moral intensity studies

(Dukerich et al., 2000; Goles et al., 2006; Singer, 1996; Singer et al., 1997, 1998), the empirical

results for the temporal effect are inconsistent. For instance, some studies (Barnett, 2001;

Jones & Huber, 1992) show no significance on ethical judgment, while in other studies, the

temporal immediacy effect was observed or partially supported in ethical judgments in related

study contexts (Chia & Mee, 2000; Kelley & Elm, 2003; Singhapakdi et al., 1996). The

conflicting evidence suggests that temporal immediacy is also a contingent issue.

Our data indicate that the contingency of *temporal immediacy* is the function of

perceived urgency—the higher the perceived urgency about the to-be-shared information and

desired results, the higher the temporal immediacy perceived by a moral agent, and the greater

the chance for information disorder behavior to occur. Perceived information urgency can even

nullify the effect of temporal immediacy. Our data also reveal a reversed relationship between

information disorder behavior and temporal immediacy, in contrast to Jones's conceptualization.

Specifically, Jones (1991) asserted that a higher temporal immediacy reduces immediate moral

urgency, thereby increasing information disorder behavior. However, our research findings do not support this assertion. For instance, healthcare research results and treatment are time-sensitive information. The more urgent the need for information, the higher the temporal immediacy, which results in more information sharing.

During a pandemic, such as COVID-19, there is a significant need to obtain as much information as quickly as possible to fight a deadly infectious disease. Time is critical. Medical researchers globally rush to submit manuscripts on this new topic. Editors of journals, including prestigious ones, made manuscripts publicly available right away upon submission. Newspapers report unverified information. And social media news becomes the most popular news... Because of the crisis during a pandemic and individuals' innate desire to know more, misinformation propagates. [Medical researcher]

Opposed to extant research findings, our research suggests that temporal immediacy is a critical dimension in information disorders, especially in educational and finance information.

Education is a process. It is about the results and final effects on students, long- or short-term, so temporal immediacy is always important. [Trainer]

Social media has become hugely important in high-frequency stock trading… Twitter is a game-changer in finance. With minimum effort, fraudsters spread false or misleading information about a stock to large numbers of people, generate purchases, pump up a stock price, then dump the stock shortly after, making huge profits. [Finance manager]

4.4.4 Probability of Effect in Information Disorder Behavior

Tversky & Kahneman (1972, 1973) pointed out that probabilities might be challenging to estimate. However, research about the lottery, gambling, and insurance shows that a decision-maker weighs the probability of payoffs when dealing with the gain/loss. Additionally, probability-weighting appears to be affected directly or indirectly by the size of the gain/loss payoffs

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(magnitude of consequences) (Etchart-Vincent, 2004; Currim & Sarin, 1989; Harless & Camerer, 1994). Empirical studies verify that the probability of effect has a relatively stable predictive power in ethical judgment (Morris & McDonald, 1995; Singer, 1996; Singer et al., 1997, 1998).

Our data verify the probability of effect contingent on the perceived benefit or harm (consequences or effects) of the to-be-shared information across all industry sectors. As ordinary social media users, people intuitively stay away from sharing information that is perceived to be harmful or damaging. The underlying mechanism for information disorder behavior is a benign motive, such as socializing, informing, and helping (Chen et al., 2015; Kümpel et al., 2015). The probability of effect has a positive association with the perceived benefit or harm. More perceived benefits lead to more sharing, verifying extant research that strong effects are more likely to induce ethical or moral behavior (Frirtzsche, 1988; Fritzsche & Becker, 1983).

> If I perceived any harm in the information, I would not share it at all. Therefore, the probability is not relevant. However, I will likely share if I do not see the harm in the to-be-shared information. If what I share could provide help to others in certain ways, the chance of sharing is largely increased. [IT/IS project manager] I do not think my share will change people much; after all, people are hard to change. I share to help. [Healthcare practitioner]

The probability of effect is hinged on gain/loss in finance and accounting, a variant form of benefit and harm.

> If the magnitude of consequences is considered a defensive line to protect my clients and me, the probability of effect is a constant evaluation process for a better return, especially in evaluating the quality of assets and balance of positions. [Finance manager]

4.4.5 Magnitude of Consequences in Information Disorder Behavior

According to most ethical systems, the magnitude of consequences is a question posed to juries in each case, and it is a concept understood very well by the general public (Singer, 1996). Making an ethical decision requires that the decision-maker considers the magnitude of the consequences of a course of action (Stein & Ahmad, 2008). The magnitude of consequences holds its persistence results in extant research in general. For instance, McMahon and Harvey's (2007) moral intensity overview shows that out of 12 studies, the magnitude of consequences had a significant effect in six studies and some significance in one.

Our data show inconsistent concern patterns toward the consequences and effects of information disorder behavior. Weber (1996) once pointed out that the magnitude of consequences alone can be evaluated physically, economically, or psychologically. These variations help to explain why there are various consequences and effect concerns in this research. Nonetheless, interviews verify that the magnitude of consequences is a natural contingent in individuals' decision-making process.

Consequences and effects are a very intuitive evaluation process. We consider them holistically because of the sheer number of humans involved and the impossibility of quantifying or predicting responses. [Educator]

Our interview data also points to three essential mechanisms for information disorder behavior. First, respondents access consequences and effects at distinct professional and personal levels. Specifically, if explicit regulations and control procedures are in place, there will be more concerns for professional reputation and rule violation and less information disorder behavior.

In general, for professionals, reputation is important. Therefore, the evaluation of consequences will be largely decided by whether sharing will help or hurt my reputation. [Software engineer]

The health industry is highly regulated. I would not worry too much about wrong

information at the professional level because deliberately share such information

has severe consequences. [Healthcare practitioner]

Second, disinformation disorder behavior is mainly driven by decisive agendas in politics

(Benegal & Scruggs, 2018), financial gain (Tandoc et al., 2018), and social advantage (Vargo et

al., 2018; Ciampaglia et al., 2015). Manipulative sensational adjectives, rhetorical content,

partial facts, and wrong context are shared to get people to support a particular method of

thinking. Our findings align with Ferrell and Gresham's (1985) contingency framework positing

that environmental stimuli such as economic, social, and political factors impact the sharing

decision-making process.

I have observed that geopolitical disinformation on Twitter generates a "perfect

storm," which sways the market in a great deal for personal gain. [Finance

manager]

As public figures and running business affairs, we have our own goals and

advocate certain ideas. [Manager]

Because discontinuing the program and fund allocation are high-stake issues

that concern every family in the organization, lots of sharing of related

information within the community without accuracy checking. [HR manager]

Third, ideology and beliefs drive malinformation behavior:

There are no fundamental differences in disinformation and malinformation

because both are shared with deliberate intentions. However, the impact of

malinformation could be worse and more profound since it plays on people's

beliefs. [Educator]

4.4.6 Concentration of Effect in Information Disorder Behavior

The concentration of effect pertains to the sense of the importance of justice a decision-

maker has for individuals (Rawls, 1971). This effect is introduced to moral intensity theory by

Jones (1991) mainly for intuitive reasons and for the sake of completeness. However, empirical tests in extant research have limited and contradictory results. For instance, Decker's (1994) study finds significance in ethical judgment, yet Morris and McDonald (1995) fail to prove its significance in three scenarios in their research. The limited and contradictory evidence prompted Chia and Mee (2000) to ask whether it is necessary to include all consequences and effects in moral intensity. Some scholars suggest dropping the concentration of effect due to "their inability to tap into the moral intensity effectively" (McMahon & Harvey, 2007).

As discussed before, our respondents consider the consequences and effects collectively. A close examination of the definitions and the examples in Jones' (1991) paper shows that the magnitude of consequences and the concentration of effect tap into the same dimension but are measured in either the total or averaged scales. Our data show that many decentralized social network structures allow shared information to reach a broad audience and to impact millions of others quickly (Tambuscio et al., 2015). Thus, the concentration of effect plays an important contingent role, especially in the education and training information sector.

The concentration of effect is of high relevance because it brings social justice and equality into play. If sharing does not involve the concentration of consequences, I might risk sharing more. Because sharing can reach more people than I intend, I share as little as possible. [Educator]

Concentration is very important in terms of how many people are impacted. The more awareness of a particular problem, the better. [Private educational business owner]

The summary of findings, including the mechanisms discovered in each interactive relationship, is enumerated in Table 4.

Table 4. Summary of Research Findings

Dimension	Summary Findings
Proximity & Information Disorder	• Proximity is the unanimously most important dimension in moral intensity across information disorders in deciding whether to share information. • The higher the proximity, the greater chance of information disorder intention and behavior. • Proximity causes bias reinforcement, resulting in information filter bubbles and the echo chamber effect. • The underlying mechanism is related to social ties and trust.
Social Consensus & Information Disorder	• Social consensus is a less significant dimension in moral intensity across information disorder, against extant research findings. • Social consensus is independent of information disorder intention and behavior, except for the education information. • The underlying mechanism for social consensus is implicit moral principles and standards held in individuals' minds.
Temporal Immediacy & Information Disorder	• Temporal immediacy is relevant to all kinds of information, especially in education and finance information, against extant research findings. • The higher the temporal immediacy, the higher the chance of information disorder intention and behavior. • The underlying mechanism is the perceived urgency for to-be-shared information and desired results.
Probability of Effect & Information Disorder	• A highly relevant dimension for all kinds of information. • Benign motives such as self-serving, altruistic, and social motives play an influential role in misinformation disorder intention and behavior. • Perceived benefit or harm is the regulating mechanism for information disorder intention and behavior, with a positive association between the probability and perceived benefits but a negative association with the perceived harm or damage.
Magnitude of Consequences & Information Disorder	• An intuitively and highly relevant dimension for all kinds of information. • Decisive agendas drive disinformation disorder behavior • Ideologies, beliefs, and religions are significant in malinformation disorder intention and behavior. • Regulations are critical for mitigating information disorder intention and behavior, regardless of information.
Concentration of Effect & Information Disorder	• A highly relevant dimension for the educational information • Many-to-many social network distribution magnifies the concentration of effect

A visual Venn diagram display of the interactions between information disorders and the six dimensions of moral intensity is presented in Figure 9. The three information disorders' core nature is the misleading effect, regardless of content manifestation and intention. Proximity, social consensus, and temporal immediacy play the same role in the sharing decision-making process across professional areas. The probability of effect, the magnitude of consequences, and concentration of effect are all sensitive to the ethical regulations, but the underlying mechanisms are not the same and are contingent on the type of information. In general, educational and financial information are more sensitive to the consequences of moral intensity than management information. Information disorders are rare in the IT/IS sector, except for security-related information. Healthcare information is also less sensitive to moral intensity owing to strong regulations.

Figure 9. The Interplay Between Moral Intensity and Information Disorder

CHAPTER V: THE QUANTITATIVE STUDY

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses a quantitative study, which is broken down into three sections. Section 5.2.1 discusses the research samples and data collection process as well as the respondents' profiles. Section 5.2.2 offers the results of the measurement model. Finally, section 5.2.3 is the findings of the structural model.

5.2 Quantitative Study Results

5.2.1 Research Sample & Data Collection

The primary objectives of this quantitative study are: 1) to investigate the predictive relationships between the chosen antecedents and disinformation sharing intention on social media; and 2) to explore the proposed model on the regulatory (mediating) role of moral intensity. Structural equation modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS (version 3.3.3) was used to test and analyze the hypotheses of the proposed research model. There are three advantages to using SmartPLS. First, our objectives fit two specific reasons for using the variance-based partial least-square structural equation model (PLS-SEM) instead of covariance-based structural equation model (CB-SEM) (Hair et al., 2011, p. 144): (1) predicting key target constructs or identifying key "driver" constructs; (2) exploring a proposed theory. SmartPLS composite variance (common, specific, and error) calculation explores and captures the hypothesized complex relationships between latent constructs with increased accuracy and predictive power (Hair et al., 2017; Fornell & Bookstein, 1982; Chin & Newsted, 1999). Second, PLS-SEM does not assume normal data distribution. Rather than parametric significance tests used in regular regression analyses, Bootstrapping of PLS-SEM randomly draws observations (subsamples) from the original dataset (with replacement) to estimate the PLS path model. This study used suggested 5000 subsamples to derive standard errors for the estimates and t-values

significance. Third, the PLS-SEM models convergence on a relatively small sample size to fit a proposed exploratory theory (Hair et al., 2017).

We conducted the questionnaire survey on MTurk (Berinsky et al. 2012; Paolacci et al. 2010; Shapiro et al. 2013). A filter of 98% and above HIT approval rate for respondents is set according to MTurk to increase the survey quality. All questions were "enforced" for answers. Therefore, there were no missing values. All responses were recorded on a 7-point Likert scale with one as "strongly disagree" and seven as "strongly agree" except for the moral intensity construct with multi-item semantic-differential scales. In addition, instructional manipulation checks such as speeder and attention filter trap questions were used to eliminate common method bias (Oppenheimer et al., 2009; Meade & Craig, 2012; Berinsky et al., 2014).

The proposed model's survey instruments were pretested and revised in two pilot studies. In the beginning, a draft of the adapted items of all tested constructs was administered to two Information Systems professors for the items' wording and organization. Next, the first pilot online survey on MTurk collected 76 responses. Based on the pretest model results, items were revised for clarification. In addition, the six-dimension construct of PMI (Jones, 1991) was replaced by the four-dimension construct (Barnett, 2001) due to the observed substantial inconsistency in responses. Afterward, the second pilot online survey was distributed. Survey items were fine-tuned again based on the pretest on 90 responses collected. At last, a survey questionnaire with 72 items was used, of which 65 items are model construct-related.

PLS-SEM offers solutions with small sample sizes when models comprise many constructs and a large number of items (Hair et al., 2019). Other researchers have claimed that a sample size of 300 is sufficient (e.g., Comrey & Lee, 1992; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). In the popular 10-time rule in SEM estimation, Nunnally (1978) suggested that "a good rule is to have at least ten times as many subjects as variables" to achieve an acceptable level of power of 0.8. MIS research that used SEM has adopted this rule of thumb of 10 cases per item in setting a lower bound of sample size (Westland, 2010; Goodhue et al., 2012). Accordingly, the minimum

size for our model constructs together could be as high as 650 (for 65 items). However, Hair et al. (2011) pointed out that SEM sample size is subject to other considerations such as the number of constructs and items. Recently, Kock and Hadaya (2018) did a comprehensive study on the minimum sample size required for PLS-SEM modeling by comparing three existing popular calculation methods (Monte Carlo simulation, 10-time rule, minimum R^2) and two new methods (Inverse Square Root, Gamma-exponential). They recommended that PLS-SEM users who are not methodological researchers use the Inverse Square Root method for minimum sample size estimation at the early stages of research design. Based on the path coefficient range (0.15 – 0.6) extracted from our pilot studies, we calculated the minimum sample size for each construct using the Inverse Square Root formula. The result indicated a total of 537 sample sizes (Table 5 below). Therefore, this study has attempted to yield approximately 500 or above usable samples in order to satisfy the statistical recommendations. In the end, the full study collected 557 samples, with 481 effective responses. Figure 10 depicts the data collection process.

Figure 10. Quantitative Data Collection Process
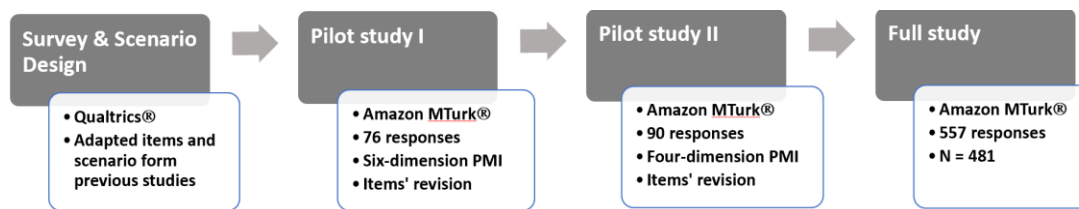
Table 5. Minimum Sample Size

Path	Model Path Coefficients (extracted)	Minimun Sample Size $N > (0.5/\beta)^2$
ITM -> MP - I	0.6	17
MP - I -> MI	0.315	63
MP - R -> MI	0.152	271
MI -> PEP	0.534	22
PEP -> DV	0.338	55
DPers -> PEP	0.298	70
DPers -> DV	0.399	39

Table 6. Demographics of Respondents

	Demographic feature	Frequency (N = 481)	Percentage
GEN	▪ Male	360	74.84%
	▪ Female	119	24.74%
	▪ Other	1	0.21%
	▪ Prefer not to say	1	0.21%
EXP	▪ 0 – 1 years	20	4.13%
	▪ 1 – 5 years	229	47.58%
	▪ 5+ years	232	48.29%
AGE	▪ 18 – 23	27	5.61%
	▪ 24 – 29	192	39.92%
	▪ 30 – 35	163	33.89%
	▪ > 36	99	20.58%
EDU	▪ Less than high school	1	0.21%
	▪ High school	42	8.73%
	▪ College	120	24.95%
	▪ Undergraduate	180	37.42%
	▪ Graduate	138	28.69%
SAL	▪ Less than $20,000	43	8.94%
	▪ $20,000 - $44,999	139	28.9%
	▪ $45,000 - $139,999	237	49.27%
	▪ $140,000 - $149,999	42	8.73%
	▪ $150,000 - $199,999	17	3.53%
	▪ $200,000+	3	0.62%
ETH	▪ American Indian or Alaska Native	11	2.29%
	▪ Asian	102	21.21%
	▪ Black or African American	36	7.48%
	▪ Hispanic or Latino	31	6.44%
	▪ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.21%
	▪ White	300	62.37%

Table 6 above shows the basic demographics of full-study respondents, following

categories used in Singhapakdi et al. (1996, 1999). Although demographic information has no

impact on the level of analysis of the study, this information may provide a general view of

respondents. As reported in the table, three fourths of the respondents were male (75%). About

96% of them have good experience with social media. This was expected, given that the sample

of respondents was obtained from MTurk. The data also showed that most respondents have

undergraduate and graduate qualifications (combined ~90%). The age of respondents was

relatively young, with the majority between 24 and 35 years old. In terms of ethnicity, "White" counts for almost two thirds (62.27%), followed by "Asian" with ~21%. The middle-income level ($20,000 - $139,999) represents about 78%.

5.2.2 Measurement Model

The measurement model estimates the accuracy of measurement items (variables), the relationships between the measured variables, and the latent constructs the measured variables represent. This involves assessing and evaluating cross-loading, construct composite reliability, construct convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement model, and overall measurement model fit. As a general rule, the standardized items loading estimates should be 0.5 or higher for the reflective model (Hair et al., 2011). Even though all loadings are significant with scores higher than 0.6, the three loadings of MI-SCs are lower between 0.35 – 0.38. Further checking on the items' wording indicates that the three MI-SCs theoretically match our intended meaning of the SC. Barnett et al. (2001) also reported 0.9 reliability coefficients of the original items. This left us with one concern: does this dimension of moral intensity theoretically reflect reality in the information disorder scenario? The low loadings echo the findings of a qualitative study, in which interviewees indicated that sharing is a personal decision independent of social consensus. Nonetheless, further investigations in different scenarios are necessary regarding the SC dimension's legitimacy in information disorder studies. The overall items' cross-loading descriptions are shown in Appendix D.

Reliability measures the extent to which the results can be reproduced when the research is repeated under the same conditions. Nunnally (1978) suggests that *composite reliability* (CR) should be 0.7 or higher for a construct to demonstrate adequate reliability. As shown in Table 7, except for *Perceived Moral Problem* (PMP), which is a one-item construct, the Cronbach's α is between 0.77 and 0.95, and the composite reliability of constructs in the model also ranges from 0.76 to 0.95, indicating that all items are free from serious random measurement errors and consistent in measuring what they are supposed to measure.

Convergent validity measures the correlation of multiple items of the same construct in agreement, evaluated by average variance extracted (AVE). All AVEs are above 0.5, indicating that a larger than 50% variance in each construct is captured by associated measurement items (Ab Hamid et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 7. Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, Average Variance Extracted

Construct	Cronbach's α	CR	AVE
DPers	0.95	0.95	0.59
DV	0.91	0.94	0.84
ITM	0.92	0.93	0.54
MI	0.77	0.85	0.54
MP - I	0.87	0.90	0.52
MP - R	0.90	0.92	0.53
PMP	1.00	1.00	1.00

In contrast, the *discriminant validity* ensures that items of each construct are not interrelated and only measure their associated constructs. It can be evaluated by using a *Fornell-Larcker criterion* and *heterotrait-monotrait ratio of correlations* (HTMT) in SmartPLS. The Fornell-Larcker criterion values (square root of every AVE), reported in bolded font and on the diagonal of the correlation matrix (Table 8), are larger than the corresponding off-diagonal correlations among any pair of latent constructs (Fornell & Lacker, 1981), indicating suitable reliability. The HTMT is a new method that outperforms classic approaches to discriminant validity assessment (Voorhees et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2015). The values (Table 9) are much smaller than 1, indicating good discriminant validity (Ab Hamid et al., 2017; Kline, 2011).

Table 8. Discriminant Validity - Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	DPers	DV	ITM	MI	MP - I	MP - R	PMP
DPers	**0.77**						
DV	0.46	**0.92**					
ITM	0.46	0.15	**0.73**				
MI	0.21	-0.13	0.31	**0.73**			
MP - I	0.28	0.03	0.60	0.39	**0.72**		
MP - R	0.67	0.19	0.51	0.31	0.50	**0.73**	
PMP	-0.18	-0.41	0.06	0.47	0.18	0.01	**1.00**

Table 9. Discriminant Validity - HTMT

	DPers	DV	ITM	MI	MP - I	MP - R	PMP
DPers							
DV	0.490						
ITM	0.503	0.175					
MI	0.365	0.275	0.421				
MP - I	0.312	0.136	0.664	0.489			
MP - R	0.733	0.219	0.568	0.437	0.568		
PMP	0.182	0.432	0.083	0.519	0.198	0.044	

The *standardized root mean square residual* (SRMR) and Bentler and Bonett *normed fit index* (NFI) are two applied indices to assess the fit of measurement models in SmartPLS. The SRMR value measures the residual discrepancies between observed and hypothesized correlations. The SRMR fit index for our reflective measurement model is 0.09, a value larger than the cut-off value of 0.08 suggested (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2011), demonstrating a reasonable fit (McDonald & Ho, 2002). The NFI is an incremental index, calculated based on the comparison between the tested and null (worst) model of Chi²; the closer the NFI is to 1, the better the fit. Our model NFI = 0.76 is smaller than the cut-off value of 0.9, suggesting an inconsistent "bad" fit compared to SRMR. However, as Kenny (2015) indicated, the cut-off values of indices are arbitrary, and adding more parameters would increase the NFI. Thus, we argue that the inconsistent results cannot be directly interpreted as weak correlations among observed constructs but suggest a future model refinement such as adding other explanatory antecedents and paths.

5.2.3 Structural Model and Hypotheses Testing

The structural model estimation includes the assessment of the multicollinearity, significance and relevance of constructs' relationship, and model fit in R^2 and F^2 (effect size). For the multicollinearity assessment, the variance inflation factor (VIF) ranges from 1.149 to 3.458 for all the variables (items) used in the model, smaller than the suggested cut-off value of 5, suggesting admissible correlations among variables (Hair et al., 2019).

Figure 11 below provides the structural regression model results with the standardized path loadings for each hypothesized relationship and R² values for each endogenous variable. Path coefficients (regression weights) show that all hypothesized relationships are supported.

Figure 11. Path Model Results
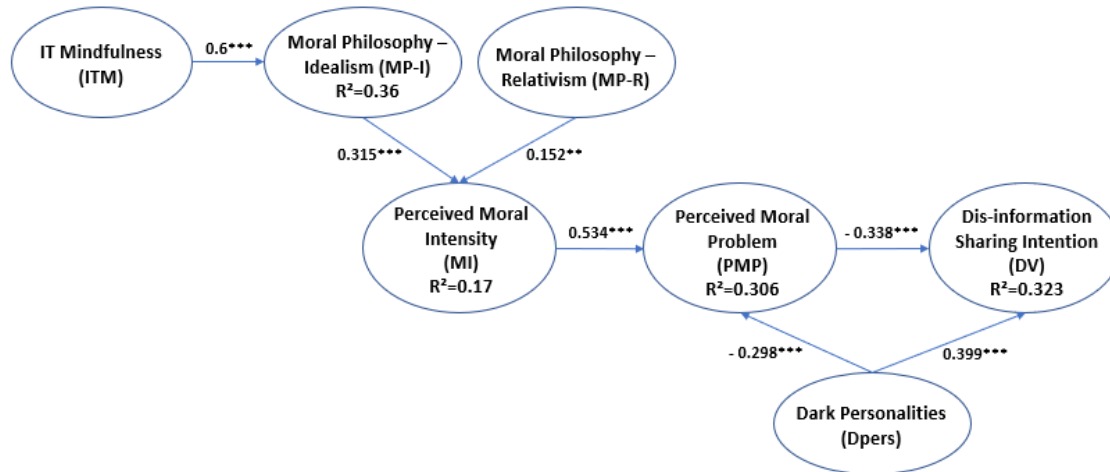
The structural model suggests that moral intensity has a potent direct effect on the perceived moral problem in the scenario (**H1A**), with a path coefficient of 0.534 (SE = 0.045, p = 0.000). Higher moral intensity ensures better moral problem perception. Once a moral problem is recognized, the negative path coefficient of -0.338 (SE = 0.043, p = 0.000) demonstrates its effectiveness in decreasing the disinformation sharing intention (**H1B**).

The hypothesized positive direct effect of idealism on moral intensity is also verified (**H3A**) with a significant path coefficient of 0.315 (SE = 0.061, p = 0.000). According to Forsyth et al. (1988), idealistic individuals exhibit concern for the welfare of others and insist that one must avoid harming others. Therefore, idealism heightens the evaluation of moral intensity. Though still supported, relativism's effect on moral intensity (**H3B**) is the weakest of all the hypotheses, with a path coefficient of 0.152 (SE = 0.072, p = 0.036) in the presence of other constructs. Relativist philosophy aligns with the concept of moral intensity–moral decision

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contingents on the issue and its embedded context. Relativists assume that exceptionless moral principles do not exist (Forsyth et al., 1988). Those who are relativistic will be more flexible; thus, relativism has less impact on moral intensity evaluation. IT mindfulness has the most potent direct effect on idealism (**H4**), with a path coefficient of 0.6 (SE = 0.051, p = 0.000), suggesting that it can be an operative factor in increasing the moral intensity and decreasing the disinformation sharing intention.

As hypothesized, the positive effect of dark personalities on sharing intention (**H2B**) is significant. A path coefficient of 0.399 (SE = 0.042, p = 0.000) indicates that dark personality is a robust direct antecedent to predict increased disinformation sharing. The dark personality also works against moral intensity by impacting the perceived moral problem (**H2A**) negatively and significantly (path coefficient = -0.298, SE = 0.038, p = 0.000). These findings raise an interesting question of how strong the influence of dark personalities could be on the disinformation sharing intention by subverting the moral intensity evaluation.

R^2 represents the amount of variance explained in each endogenous construct, measuring the model's predictive accuracy. The rule of thumb for moderate model fit in social sciences is 0.3 – 0.5 (Hair et al., 2011; Chin, 1998). Our model constructs have values larger than 0.3 except for the moral intensity construct of 0.17. In a similar vein to R^2, the effect size F^2 measures how much a model's dependent variable may be affected by removing an exogenous variable, >= 0.02 is small, >= 0.15 is medium, and >= 0.3 is large (Cohen, 1988). As shown in Table 10, relativism has a small effect size (0.021) on moral intensity, consistent with the less significant path coefficient (0.152, p=0.036). Idealism also has a relatively smaller effect size of 0.089, despite its significant path coefficient. The smaller sizes of R^2 and F^2 suggest two things. First, although moral philosophies predict perceived moral intensity, the findings are not theoretically strong enough to explain the concept. More antecedents should be considered in an individual's moral intensity evaluation in the future model. For example, as a dark behavior, the motivation could be a meaningful antecedent impacting moral intensity evaluation. Moral

intensity can also be contingent on regulations. Second, moral intensity encompasses four dimensions: the seriousness of consequences, social consensus, proximity, and temporal immediacy. The positive effect of moral philosophies might not be associated with all dimensions. For example, the temporal immediacy dimension is likely to have less association with idealism, while the seriousness of consequences evaluation should be closely related to idealism's judgment of right or wrong. Future research should systematically explore scenarios to reflect and differentiate all the dimensions. In the meantime, investigating the nuanced relationships between moral intensity dimensions and moral philosophies could be interesting in future research. Table 10 shows the summaries of all path coefficients, significances, and effect sizes.

Table 10. Summary of Path Coefficient Results and Effect Sizes

Hypotheses	Path	Original Sample Mean (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	P Values	F Square (Effect Size)
H1A +	*MI -> PMP*	0.534	0.045	0.000	0.393
H1B -	*PMP -> DV*	-0.338	0.043	0.000	0.163
H2A -	*DPers -> PMP*	-0.298	0.038	0.000	0.122
H2B +	*DPers -> DV*	0.399	0.042	0.000	0.227
H3A +	*MP - I -> MI*	0.315	0.061	0.000	0.089
H3B +	*MP - R -> MI*	0.152	0.072	0.036	0.021
H4 +	*ITM -> MP - I*	0.600	0.051	0.000	0.562

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the synthesized findings from both qualitative and quantitative studies. First, we discuss whether our findings confirm previous work and what the new discoveries are. Here, we center our discussions on the six research questions proposed in chapter one. Second, we provide synthesized findings from both qualitative and quantitative studies. We found that the synthesized findings enhance our understanding of information disorders on social media and provide specific guides for future studies. In particular, section 6.2 discusses the qualitative study in relation to the first three research questions proposed in chapter one, with synthesized results about three information disorders in the light of moral intensity and proposed propositions for future research. Section 6.3 discusses the quantitative study in relation to the second three research questions and future research directions.

6.2 Qualitative Study

Our first qualitative study in this dissertation research helps to answer the following three research questions raised in chapter one:

1. Why do people share misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation on social media?

2. How does moral intensity impact information disorder behaviors on social media?

3. What are the mechanisms that underlie information disorder behaviors on social media?

Chapter four addressed these questions in detailed data analysis, including information disorder regulating mechanisms from a moral intensity perspective (summarized in Table 11). The section below focuses on research questions #1 and #2 and discusses them together.

Table 11. Summary of the Information Disorder Regulating Mechanisms

Dimension	Summary Findings
Proximity & Information Disorder	The regulating mechanism for proximity is social ties and trust.
Social Consensus & Information Disorder	The regulating mechanism for social consensus is implicit moral principles and standards held in individuals' minds.
Temporal Immediacy & Information Disorder	The regulating mechanism for temporal immediacy is the perceived urgency for to-be-shared information and desired results.
Probability of Effect & Information Disorder	Perceived benefit or harm is the regulating mechanism, with a positive association between the probability and perceived benefits but a negative association with the perceived harm or damage.
Magnitude of Consequences & Information Disorder	The regulating mechanism for the magnitude of consequences is explicit regulations and policies.
Concentration of Effect & Information Disorder	The regulating mechanism for the concentration of effect is explicit regulations and policies.

6.2.1 Misinformation Propositions

To answer the question of why people share misinformation in the first place, researchers discovered a range of motivations including entertainment, socializing, seeking information, and/or self-expression and status-seeking (Chen et al., 2015). Our data verify that misinformation sharing is the dominant behavior among ordinary social media users who share without deliberate, unethical, and harmful intentions. Instead, most users share because of perceived benefits associated with benign motives of socializing, informing, and helping others. Specifically, our findings reveal that the natural tendency in humans to help others amplifies the *probability of effect* and leads to the intention and sharing directly.

Because information sharing is user behavior, user characteristics on social network platforms are studied frequently. Most research dedicates attention to perceived opinion leadership, online social relationships and ties, activities on social network platforms, content

preferences, etc. (Kümpel et al., 2015). Other than these characteristics, our research reveals

that ordinary users vary in their cognitive capabilities, such as knowledge, emotion,

philosophical views, and mentality, and differ in their ability to evaluate the true *magnitude and*

concentration of sharing consequences effectively. For example, our research discovers that

professional training leads to disparate patterns in information disorder. A more discreet attitude

towards sharing on social media is correlated with higher training and education, greater

knowledge, and more frequent concern for circumstances.

Additionally, users predominantly share with like-minded people to avoid conflicts,

ensure understanding, and seek resonance in each other. Our data indicate that people are

becoming more and more proactive in forming their *proximity* circles on a topic base and share

primarily within these social circles. The established trust and comfort among like-minded

people relax their guard, making them less likely to check content and source credibility and

contributing to misinterpretation of the to-be-shared information.

Furthermore, our research discovers that the perceived urgency of the to-be-shared

information, which depends on perceived benefits, opens up greater misinformation sharing

intention and behavior. In other words, the greater the perceived benefits in the to-be-shared

information, the higher the perceived urgency, the higher the perceived *temporal immediacy*,

and the larger the chance for misinformation disorder behavior. Our introductory case of the

chlorine dioxide "Miracle Mineral Solution" used to cure COVID-19 is a good example of the way

people share misinformation to "help" in an urgent context.

Hence, to answer why the influx of misinformation permeates social media and how

moral intensity impacts information disorder, we put forth the following propositions:

P1: Misinformation sharing occurs because perceived benefits in the to-be-shared

information increase the *probability of effect*.

P2: Misinformation sharing occurs because of unavoidable human perceptive limitations on the *magnitude of consequences and concentration of effect* about the to-be-shared information.

P3: Misinformation sharing occurs because *proximity* increases information misinterpretation.

P4: Perceived urgency in *temporal immediacy* increases misinformation sharing.

6.2.2 Disinformation Propositions

In social media news sharing research, the widely adopted Use and Gratification approach explains the social and psychological motives that influence individuals' media channels and content selection, as well as the subsequent attitudinal and behavioral effects (Lee & Ma, 2012). However, it has an explanatory limitation, failing to cover the deliberate, harmful, unethical, and immoral motives and intentions in disinformation and malinformation behavior. Our research suggests that other "dark" motivations, such as political agenda, financial gain, and social advantage, drive disinformation sharing. In other words, people sharing disinformation on social media want to bring about the specific concentration of effects and magnitude of the consequences in a targeted temporal immediacy frame. Much online fake news reports and research also suggest that false information was created for financial gain (Tandoc et al., 2018), political advantage (Marwick & Lewis, 2017), and maximum attention (Vargo et al., 2018; Ciampaglia et al., 2015). Our data suggest that all sharing is set in motion by certain external goals or internal motivations.

Hence, to answer the question of why people share disinformation and how moral intensity impacts it, we put forth the following proposition:

P5: Desired *concentration of effects* and *magnitude of the consequences* in political agenda, financial gain, and social advantage increase disinformation sharing.

Our research verifies that the consequences of sharing and evaluations of its effects are particularly sensitive to explicit industry regulations and detailed policies because people value their professional reputation and credibility (Chen et al., 2015). In addition, our research suggests that people "subconsciously" apply implicit morality standards to gauge right and wrong, thus regulating the decision-making process. For example, public health messages' morality content increases health behavior-compliant intentions (Everett et al., 2020). The morality message frame in the news substantially increases the likelihood of sharing (Valenzuela et al., 2017). However, we posit that the desire for particular results could overwrite explicit regulations and implicit moral standards in disinformation sharing.

Hence, to answer the question of how to intervene in online information disorders, we put forth the following proposition:

P6: Explicit ethical regulations and implicit moral standards online mitigate deliberate, unethical, immoral intentions and decrease disinformation sharing.

6.2.3 Malinformation Propositions

Extant research has made great strides in understanding cognitive processes and attitude development related to online news sharing (Kümpel et al., 2015; Lee & Ma, 2012). However, various cognitive biases have received little prior research attention as limitations to cognitive processes but could be a significant determinant in information disorder intention and behavior. As we discussed in the literature review (Chapter Two), humans are highly susceptible to motivational bias, or "hot" bias, which are wishful beliefs or desirability of outcomes and choices (e.g., Montibeller & Winterfeldt, 2015; Nickerson, 1998). For example, psychology research shows that people trust content confirming their preexisting beliefs or hypotheses (confirmation bias) (Jones & Sugden, 2001). People reject new evidence contradicting their established beliefs (conservation bias) (Keersmaecker & Roets, 2017). Ethical ideologies are strongly associated with whistle-blowing–the behavior of releasing private information into the public sphere (Barnett et al., 1996; Trevino & Victor, 1992) and political

news consumption (Tucker et al., 2018). Our data show that ideologies, manifested as social consensus within different communities and advocacy of believed causes, reinforced by proximity, could create chamber effects and give rise to bias. These "hot" biases dictate malinformation disorder intention and behavior.

Hence, to answer the questions of why people believe in certain information but not others and why people share malinformation, we put forth the following proposition:

P7: Ideology works as a type of systematic *social consensus* thinking, moderated by *proximity*, that increases bias and malinformation intention and sharing.

Our seven propositions are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12. Summary of Research Propositions

Misinformation sharing
P1: Misinformation sharing occurs because perceived benefits in the to-be-shared information increase the probability of effect.   **P2**: Misinformation sharing occurs because of unavoidable human perceptive limitations on the magnitude of consequences and concentration of effect about the to-be-shared information.   **P3**: Misinformation sharing occurs because proximity increases information misinterpretation.   **P4**: Perceived urgency in temporal immediacy increases misinformation disorder sharing.
Disinformation sharing
P5: Desired concentration of effects and magnitude of the consequences in political agenda, financial gain, and social advantage increase disinformation sharing.   **P6**: Online explicit ethical regulations and implicit moral standards mitigate deliberate, unethical, immoral intentions and decrease disinformation sharing.
Malinformation sharing
P7: Ideology works as systematic *social consensus* thinking, moderated by proximity, that increases bias and malinformation intention and sharing

6.2.4 Synthesized Information Disorder Framework

Drawing on our research insights, we further decompose information disorder as a systematically interconnected self-referential framework (Figure 12). Misinformation originates from misinterpreted information in context. When operated by deliberate, harmful, unethical, and immoral intentions, misinformation can turn into disinformation and malinformation. Evident in correct content, malinformation can be easily perceived as legitimate and be skillfully manipulated into disinformation or misunderstood as misinformation. Disinformation manifests itself in fabricated and manipulated content. Without effective source verification, disinformation can be treated as information, then shared as misinformation, or weaponized as malinformation. Over time, repeated information disorders circulating on social media self-reference and amplify one another and pollute the whole social media information ecosystem more and more. The three real cases in Chapter One vividly demonstrate the interchangeable dynamic relationships among the three information disorders.

Figure 12. The Interplay Between Different Aspects of Information Disorder

The following mind map (Figure 13) shows an overall visualized organization of the qualitative study of this dissertation, from theory base to findings and propositions.

Figure 13. The Organization of the Qualitative Study

Social Consensus:
the degree of social agreement that a proposed action is good or bad

Mechanism:
explicit ethical regulations, implicit moral standards

Temporal Immediacy:
the length of time beteen the present and the onset of consequences of a moral act in question

Mechanism:
perceived information urgency (mis-), desired results (dis-, mal-)

Magnitude of Consequences:
the total harm or benefits of a moral act

Mechanism:
agendas, cognitive bias

Probability of Effect
the likelihood of moral action will happen and cause damage or benefit predicted

Mechanism:
agendas, cognitive bias

Concentration of Effect:
the intensity of consequences on impacted people

Mechanism:
agendas, cognitive bias

Proximity:
the feeling of closeness to the impacted people in a moral act

Mechanism:
social ties & trust

Moral Intensity

21 interviews and member checking

90 qualitative surveys

1 panel discussion

Methodology
qualitative, interpretive

Keywords

misinformation, disinformation, information, fake news, rumors, moral intensity, moral psychology, morality, ethical decision-making, news sharing

Information Disorder on Social Media

Information Disorder

Misinformation:
false and misleading but not created to cause harm

Intention:
well-intended, ethical, moral

Content:
misinterpreted, errors

Disinformation:
false and deliberately created to cause harm

Content:
wrong, manipulated, fabricated

Intention:
deliberate, unethical, immoral

Malinformation:
based on reality and facts but used to inflict harm

Content:
real, facts

Intention:
deliberate, harmful, unethical, immoral, illegal, evil
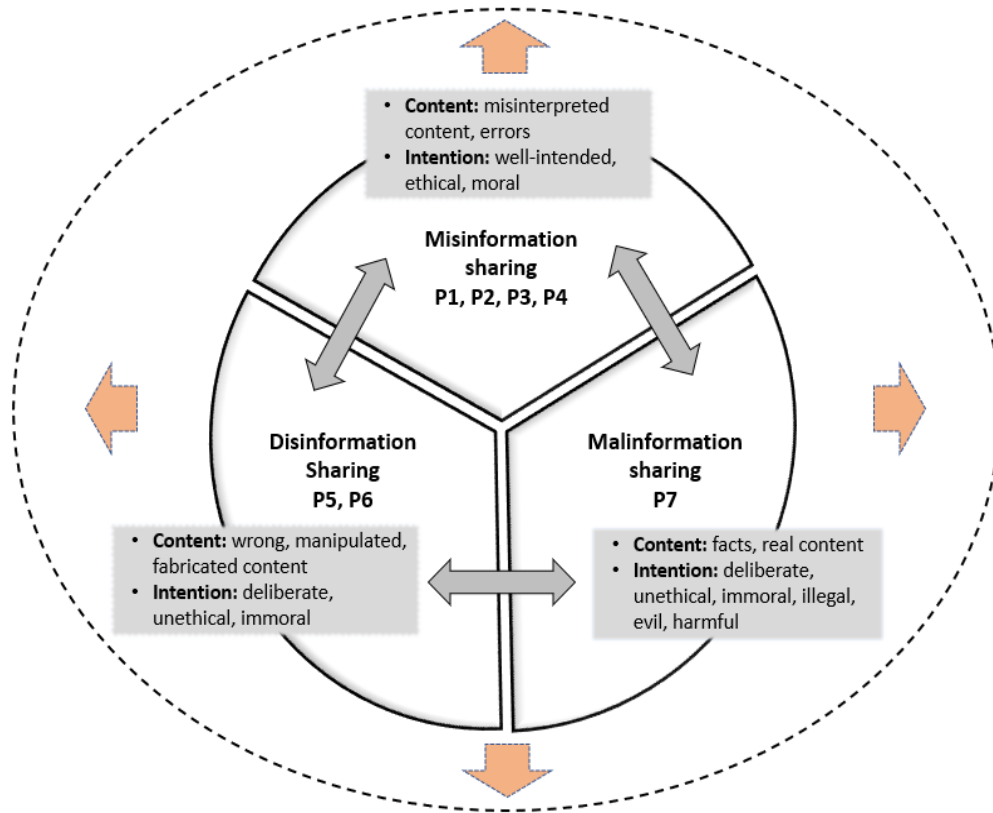
Propositions

Misinformation sharing:
P1: Misinformation sharing occurs because perceived benefits in the to-be-shared information increase the probability of effect.*

P2: Misinformation sharing occurs because of unavoidable human perceptive limitations on the magnitude of consequences and concentration of effect about the to-be-shared information.

P3: Misinformation sharing occurs because proximity increases information misinterpretation.

P4: Perceived urgency in temporal immediacy increases misinformation sharing.

Disinformation sharing:
P5: Desired concentration of effects and magnitude of the consequences in political agenda, financial gain, and social advantage increase disinformation sharing.

P6: Online explicit ethical regulations and implicit moral standards mitigate deliberate, unethical, immoral intentions and decrease disinformation sharing.

Malinformation sharing:
P7: Ideology works as systematic social consensus thinking, moderated by proximity, increases bias and malinformation intention and sharing

6.3 Quantitative Study

Our second quantitative study focuses on disinformation sharing. In particular, we conducted structural equation modeling research by applying antecedents to answer the following three research questions raised in chapter one:

1. How does individual moral philosophy influence deliberate disinformation-sharing on social media?

2. How does IT mindfulness about social media technology influence deliberate disinformation-sharing on social media?

3. Can dark personalities overturn the moral intensity during the deliberate disinformation-sharing process?

In the proposed model, we conceptualize that the sharing intention reflects each individual's ethical decision-making process, regulated by the moral intensity evaluation. We argue that moral philosophy influences how each person evaluates the intensity of moral issues in each sharing, which further impacts moral problem recognition and formation of sharing intention. At the same time, intentionally sharing disinformation online is considered a "dark" behavior. We argue that this problematic behavior is also an outcome of each individual's unconscious dark personality. Furthermore, since sharing disinformation is a behavior entangled with social media technology, we also argue that a person's mindfulness about the technology helps to regulate the sharing intention indirectly by working together with one's idealism. Chapter Five addressed these questions in detail in data analysis. The section below summarizes the findings one by one.

6.2.1 Research Question 1 – Moral Philosophy

Sharing information on social media is an individual behavior. Each person acts as a moral agent in deciding whether to share a particular piece of information. Therefore, this study argues that an individual's intrinsic characteristics play roles in this decision-making process. The first set of intrinsic characteristics we incorporate into our model is moral philosophy.

Personal moral philosophy is an individual characteristic that shapes one's moral beliefs and influences one's judgment about right and wrong. Moral philosophies have been applied to investigate the ethical decision-making process (e.g., O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Craft, 2013). These extant empirical studies have established moral philosophies to be effective indicators of explaining and predicting individual behaviors in various ethical situations. Following the tradition, this study applies Forsyth's moral idealism and relativism to predict moral intensity evaluation.

The findings of this study provide supportive results for the hypotheses in order to answer our research question. The significant positive coefficient between idealism and moral intensity construct suggests that idealism has strong effect in helping to improve morality in the context of information disorder on social media. However, an individual with moral relativist orientation is less sensitive in moral intensity evaluation of information disorder, as demonstrated by the small coefficient between relativism and moral intensity. These findings correspond with findings of extant research (Singhapakdi et al., 1999).

Despite the explanatory power of idealism and relativism, the results of this research also point out that moral philosophies are not the most effective in predicting the moral intensity evaluation in an information disorder context. This suggests that future research must consider other individual characteristics. For example, hate speech as a form of malinformation is driven by hatred, a powerful emotion. Martel et al.'s study (2020) found correlational and causal evidence that reliance on emotion increases belief in fake news.

6.2.2 Research Question 2 – IT mindfulness

Information disorder on social media is a technology-empowered behavior. Thatcher et al. (2018) proposed IT mindfulness as an individual trait associated with technology that positively predicts the technology's usage and innovation. Thatcher et al. argued that fully attending to the present and the surroundings helps people to understand what is happening

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around them and to become better at what they are doing. This study implements this newly proposed IT mindfulness construct as an antecedent in our predictive model.

The findings of this study provide strong evidence to support the hypotheses and answer our research question. The sizable positive coefficient between IT mindfulness and idealism constructs indicates the strong relationship between IT mindfulness and moral idealism. This finding has major theoretical and practical implication suggestions. First, future research can incorporate this construct for other technology-related behavioral predictions. As an early empirical study implementing IT mindfulness in the behavioral prediction model, our result proves a worthy addition to the many individual factors that have been used in extant research to examine information technology-related human behaviors. Second, social network platforms or organizations can craft programs to emphasize IT mindfulness in social media. As the results of this study indicated, improved IT mindfulness can significantly predict moral idealism directly and thus boost morality, resulting in decreased unethical sharing intention.

6.3.3 Research Question 3 – Dark Personality

Information disorder on social media is a "dark" behavior that is driven by "dark" personalities. Although less often applied as predictors than the "big five" personality traits in previous research, the three aversive "Dark Triad" personality traits have been proven to be informative in directly predicting unethical workplace behaviors (Spain et al., 2014; O'Boyle et al., 2012): aggression (Baughman et al., 2012; Jones & Neria, 2015), financial misbehavior (Jones, 2014), and online trolling (Plouffe et al., 2017; Craker & March, 2016). Therefore, this study introduces the three dark personalities as antecedents to explain information disorder behavior on social media.

The findings of this study support the hypotheses and answer our research question. The significant positive coefficient between dark personalities and disinformation sharing intention and the significant negative coefficient between dark personalities and moral problem recognition confirm the hypothesized "dark" relationships. The large sizes in R^2 also offer strong

evidence to support the usefulness of utilizing dark personalities to predict malevolent

behaviors.

These findings again have primary theoretical and practical implication suggestions. First, our research adds to extant findings to prove dark personalities' predictive effectiveness. Thus, dark personality can expand the current personality analysis in future research and enhance our comprehension of dark online human behavior. Second, social network platforms and organizations can deploy online text analysis to identify users with dark personalities and develop programs to flag potential risk of unethical behavior and intervene effectively before it occurs.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

Information disorder on social media is a serious problem with noticeable adverse effects on individuals, organizations, and society. To effectively intervene in misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation sharing on social media for a healthy online information environment, the first step is to understand what, why, and how it occurs. This dissertation is motivated to do so and poses the central research questions: what are the regulating mechanisms underlying information disorder behaviors on social media? How does moral intensity regulate information disorder behaviors on social media?

To answer the research questions, this dissertation has conducted empirical investigation of information disorder on social media in the light of moral intensity and moral decision-making. All relevant literature towards identifying and answering the research questions was consolidated in Chapter Two. Emerging from the review in Chapter Two, the framework for qualitative study and the conceptual model and related hypotheses for the quantitative study were developed in Chapter Three. Sequential mixed research methods were also reviewed in detail in Chapter Three. The findings from the qualitative study were presented in Chapter Four. The quantitative results were presented in Chapter Five, followed by the discussions regarding the two studies in Chapter Six.

The present chapter first addresses the theoretical and practical contributions of this dissertation research. Finally, it concludes with a discussion of the limitations and possible directions for future research.

7.2 Contribution

The essential part of any research is the contribution it makes to a body of knowledge. This work makes several contributions that cross the theoretical and practical realms. Section

7.2.1 describes the theoretical contributions, while section 7.2.2 discusses the practical contributions.

7.2.1 Theoretical Contributions

This research makes six theoretical contributions. Foremost, it has pioneered assessing the regulating role of moral intensity and conceptualizing information disorder as a result of the moral decision-making process because any behavior that impacts humans and society has moral implications. Moral decision-making theories have been widely applied in the marketing, business, and organizational behavioral literature since the 1980s (e.g., Craft, 2013; Ford & Richardson, 1994; Loe et al., 2000; O'Fallon & Butterfield, 2005; Valentine & Godkin, 2019; Wang et al., 2019). Ethical issues are established as legitimate concerns of mainstream IS research and are becoming increasingly crucial while facing challenges brought by new technologies such as AI algorithm bias, computed sociality, and engineered living behaviors (Benbya et al., 2020; Alaimo & Kallinikos, 2017; Demetis & Lee, 2018). Some research on social media information sharing has taken a morality perspective to comprehend the phenomenon. For example, framing messages in moral tones increases the likelihood of sharing substantially (Valenzuela et al., 2017), and moral content increases behavior intention (Everett, 2020). However, there is a lack of further theoretical explanation of how and why morality effects happen. This research attributes the why and how to the interpretations of the moral intensity of the issue in question. The results suggest several mechanisms in social media information sharing and support our proposed theoretical model. As such, this research provides a stepping stone to extend both morality and information disorder research on social media.

Second, this research affirms the moral effects of relativism and idealism in the literature from a new context. To be specific, in conjunction with the moral decision-making process, this research empirically tested Forsyth's (1980) idealism and relativism in a particular context: information disorder behavior on social media. Although relativism and idealism have been

extensively applied as predictors for decision-making in various business contexts involving moral or ethical dilemmas (e.g., Barnett et al., 1996; Craft, 2013), they have not been utilized to explain information disorder behaviors. Our results and analysis verify that idealism is more ethically sensitive than relativism, associating significantly with moral intensity evaluation and moral decision-making in sharing information on social media. Our findings validate the extant results, and thus help the generalization of the moral philosophies of relativism and idealism.

Additionally, awakened by the 2016 US presidential campaign's outcome, a growing body of information disorder research has shown strong interest in the effects of political ideologies such as liberalism and conservatism in the dissemination of wrong information (Lawson & Kakkar, 2020). Our investigation of moral philosophies' effects expands the current focus on political ideology to a more generic understanding of intrinsic moral philosophy on information disorder.

Third, this research contributes to the information disorder on social media literature by conceptualizing sharing misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation online as a dark behavior. This problematic behavior can be a manifestation of each individual's dark personality. This "dark" conceptualization captures the intentionality of information disorder and the sensitivity of interpersonal differences (Nielsen & Graves, 2017).

Within the social media information sharing literature, some studies have applied personality traits as predictors (Amichai-Hamburger & Vinitzky, 2010; Correa et al., 2010). However, the "Dark Triad" is a relatively underexplored research area in the fields of IS (Withers et al., 2017; Furnham et al., 2013), online communication, and security behaviors (Petit & Carcioppolo, 2020). Our research results have proved that dark personalities is an effective theoretical tool, suggesting its usefulness in theorizing other dark online behaviors.

Fourth, since sharing information is a behavior empowered by social media technology, this research takes a novel approach by incorporating a person's mindfulness about the technology into the model as an antecedent. Many individual factors have been studied within

the ethical decision-making literature, from basic demographics and cognizance to motivations and emotions (Craft, 2013). As a new individual-level psychological construct, mindfulness has recently been recognized for its transformative power in human behaviors (Shapiro et al., 2006). For example, mindfulness-based practices and interventions have been positively associated with group decision-making (Fiol & O'Connor, 2003) and learning (Levinthal & Rerup, 2006). To our best knowledge, this research is one of the first to empirically test the effects of IT mindfulness in both ethical decision-making and information disorder behavior. The significant effects of mindfulness toward social media technology in this research demonstrate that IT mindfulness can be a distinguishing individual factor in future information systems research.

Fifth, current research about online information disorder behavior is growing and spans disparate disciplines. However, understanding this phenomenon is still relatively new (Wang et al., 2019). There are myriad terms used by researchers in their studies, including misinformation, disinformation, malinformation, fake news, rumor, propaganda, parody, satire, conspiracy theories, deep-fakes, etc. (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018; Gelfert, 2018; Bavel et al., 2021). Each type is conceptualized differently with overlapping similarities. For example, Gelfert (2018) pointed out that "fake news" has been used in various ways on its disruptive potential and deceptive nature. However, less attention has been paid to analyzing and defining the term, making conceptual analysis more difficult. Without definitional clarity, the various terms disperse the efforts and slow down academic debates and information disorder research (Tucker et al., 2018; Wardle & Derakhshan, 2018). Hence, an integrated comprehension of information disorder on social media is beneficial.

This research builds on three information disorder concepts proposed by Wardle and Derakhshan (2018) and current studies to conceptualize information disorder based on information content and sharing intention, the two critical characteristics of information disorder on social media recognized by researchers. We differentiate the sharing intention in the

information disorders while departing from the subjective false vs. true description about the content in Wardle and Derakhshan's definitions.

Finally, the current research further validated the measurement items of moral intensity (Barnett, 2001), IT mindfulness (Thatcher et al., 2018), and intention to share (Chua & Banerjee, 2018; So & Bolloju, 2005). All constructs' measures were slightly modified to fit into the context of information disorder on social media, but both convergent and discriminant validities were still achieved. Not only that, this research has developed a scenario to study disinformation sharing in a social media context.

Overall, this research contributes to theory-building about understanding digital and behavioral ethics in general and information disorder behavior on social media in particular.

7.2.2 Practical Implications

Information disorder behavior is inevitable. As Quandt et al. (2019) put it: there is a wide range of reasons for the literal "falsification" of information that is resulting in information disorder, from simple accidental mistakes, to negligent behavior such as sloppy work and errors of omission, to planned (potentially strategic) manipulation. By understanding the antecedents and role of moral intensity, we can ensure that adequate awareness is brought about, particularly to limit the harmful effects. The primary practical implications of this research stem from the identified mechanisms of three information disorders, and the verification of connections between IT mindfulness, moral philosophies, dark personalities, and information disorder intentions on social media.

The various mechanisms discovered in the qualitative study offer a few practical ways to mitigate information disorder on social media. For example, regulations are an effective mechanism to keep people's sharing behaviors in check, especially for professionals. Social or otherwise, various media outlets should establish explicit ethical policies, which will provide guidance and implicitly facilitate moral culture development regarding information sharing. Also,

understanding online social networks' influential and persuasive characteristics and nature is another practical direction to mitigate information disorder online.

In the quantitative study, the supported conceptualization and model provide practical new insights toward understanding how to mitigate information disorder on social media. In general, a morally intensified evaluation process helps us recognize a moral problem in the sharing and thus decreases the sharing intention. Moral philosophies, especially idealism, help improve moral evaluation of right vs. wrong about the issue in question. On the other hand, considering information disorder as a dark behavior, the dark personalities can disrupt moral evaluations and exacerbate sharing. However, the model suggests that working together with idealistic moral philosophy, IT mindfulness seems to promise a solution in this battle between information disorder's morality and dark personalities.

Specifically, the factors (antecedents) tested in the quantitative model can be practically monitored and an intervention can curb the information disorder behavior on social media. For example, the SEM model results support our hypothesis that a person's mindfulness about social media technology and its users helps to improve the moral intensity evaluation through idealism and indirectly regulates the sharing intention. Thatcher et al. (2018) advocate IT mindfulness as a malleable behavioral intervention. Therefore, as a positive practice, IT mindfulness training programs could be developed and implemented to shape people's behavior, including increasing awareness about cognitive bias, enhancing idealist philosophy, raising sensitivity towards moral issue intensity, and ultimately decreasing the sharing intention on social media.

The SEM model demonstrates the significant positive association between the dark personalities and sharing intention and a strong negative association with moral issue recognition. On social network platforms, dark personalities may be monitored through natural language processing analysis. Interventive metrics can be built into social media platforms,

flagging potential unethical behavior proactively, thus effectively preventing the information

disorder from happening or capturing it during the process.

7.3 Limitations and Future Research

Despite its contributions, this thesis has several limitations, indicating future

improvement and new research directions. First, this study has limitations due to the survey

data collection methods. MTurk allows researchers to collect data quickly at a substantially

lower cost than professional survey providers (Kennedy et al., 2020). It generally provides

higher quality data than student samples, community samples, and even some high-quality

national samples (Hauser & Schwarz, 2015; Mullinix et al., 2015; Thomas & Clifford, 2017).

However, there has been some criticism of data quality and integrity since 2018 (Kennedy et al.,

2020). Despite setting up our screening method for the respondents with a HIT approval rate

larger than 98%, this research observed that some respondents were trying to rush through the

survey or gaming the system. Therefore, we name online data collection methods as one

improvement area.

Second, this study only utilized one scenario to study disinformation sharing. There are

three types of information disorder that differ in their origins, natures, contents, and intentions.

Moral intensity also measures dimensions of temporal immediacy, social relationships, social

norms, and behavior consequences in an ethical dilemma. These aspects are conceptually

distinct. For example, the findings of our quantitative study suggest that the moral philosophy

effect might not be associated with all moral intensity dimensions equally. An idealist's

judgment, by definition, could be more closely related to social consensus evaluation of moral

intensity than a relativist's judgment. While this research suggests that moral intensity impacts

information disorders, a more systematic understanding of moral intensity evaluation for

different types of information disorders in various scenarios is a worthwhile future research

direction. Future theory advancement and generalization can benefit from a systematic scenario

portfolio reflecting and manipulating different dimensions of moral intensity and three types of information disorders.

Third, although moral philosophies predict perceived moral intensity, it is not theoretically strong enough to explain the moral intensity construct, as demonstrated by the relatively small R^2 and F^2 in the moral intensity. Clearly, moral philosophies are not the only antecedents in information disorder behavior. For example, as a dark behavior, the motivation underlining the intention could be a meaningful antecedent influencing moral intensity evaluation. Moral intensity can also be contingent on regulations, as indicated by the first qualitative study. Motivation, emotions, and social ties are studied frequently to answer why online information disorder behavior occurs (Kümpel et al., 2015; Harber & Cohen, 2005; Heimbach & Hinz, 2016). Following this current behavioral science research, adding internal antecedents such as motivations and emotions, and including external factors such as social influences, social tie strength and homophily, and regulations is encouraged in future research seeking to predict information disorder behavior. In addition, researchers could also apply these factors alternatively as mediators or moderators in the model to compare and contrast different effects in order to enhance the understanding of various information disorder behaviors on social media.

Fourth, two studies in this thesis took a cross-sectional approach without temporal consideration, prohibiting the drawing of causal conclusions and instead offering predictions. However, the constructs utilized, such as moral philosophies and dark personalities, proved to make causal conclusions in extant research. Therefore, future research could incorporate temporal design to make the model robust and increase the causal explanation power of the theory.

Fifth, the quantitative study specifically queried disinformation sharing intentions rather than actual sharing behavior. We recognize that intention to share may not lead to actual

sharing. Thus, investigating factors capable of triggering the actual sharing would be another interesting future research direction.

Combining with the future research direction suggested by proposed propositions in chapter six, Table 13 provides a future research summary. We believe future empirical research following the recommendations in the table could effectively extend the knowledge regarding information disorders on social media beyond.

Table 13. Summary of Future Research Directions

Methodology
• Scenario systematization. For example, vignette scenario design of 4x3 (4 MI dimensions, 3 information disorders) • Designing temporal study in the cross-sectional model for causality explanation
Model
• Adding internal factors such as motivations, emotion to the model • Adding external factors such as social influences, social tie strength and homophily, and regulations to the model • Testing internal and external factors alternatively as antecedents, mediators, or moderators in the model • Investigating actual information disorder behavior's triggering factors
Theory
• Examining the interactive relationship between perceived consequences in the to-be-shared information and various perceptive limitation in misinformation disorder • Examining the effect of perceived benefit in the to-be-shared information in misinformation disorder • Examining the effect of perceived urgency in the to-be-shared information in misinformation disorder • Examining the effect of proximity and associated trust, respect in misinformation disorder • Examining the effect of various agendas in disinformation disorder • Examining the effect of ethical regulations and code of conduct in disinformation disorder • Examining the effect of ideology as systematic social consensus thinking in malinformation disorder • Examining the effect of ideology on cognitive bias such as emotion in malinformation disorder

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Research Description:

This research is interested in understanding your thinking about <u>sharing misinformation,</u>

<u>disinformation, and/or malinformation</u> (collectively, we call this information disorder) on social

media.

In general,

1. What is your understanding of information disorder on social media? To what extent

     does information disorder on social media matter to you? (low, medium, high)

2. What role do you think an individual's morality plays in information disorder on social

     media?

Specifically,

Would the following aspects affect your judgment about sharing misinformation, disinformation,

or malinformation on social media:

1. Whether the expected intensity of harm or benefits resulting from information disorder

     impact your judgment about the sharing?

2. Whether the expected likelihood of damage or benefits from information disorder impact

     your judgment about the sharing?

3. Whether the expected average harm or benefits borne by impacted people impact your

     judgment about the sharing?

4. Whether the length of time between the present and the onset of the consequences of

     information disorder impact your judgment about the sharing?

5. Whether the social agreement on whether information disorder is good or bad impact

     your judgment about the sharing?

6. Whether the feeling of closeness to the information recipients impact your judgment about sharing?

Closing Question:

1. Are there additional comments about information disorder experiences you like to discuss or share?

Jane has recently been hired as a software salesperson and has been working very hard to impress her boss with her selling ability. She discovers that customers have been keen to use a few online discussion and review forums to get information about comparable products and service experiences. These discussion and review forums are considered genuine by customers, thus, pretty influential on purchase decisions.

Action: Jane has intentionally registered using disguised/Fake IDs on the forums. She has fabricated customer experiences and product reviews, and developed a conspiracy theory about competitor products on these discussion forums to attract customers and make sales for herself.

ItemCode	ItemName	Adapted Item Description
AGE	Age	In years
EDU	Education	Six categories from HS or less to Doctorate
GEN	Gender	Male / Female / Other / Prefer not to answer
SAL	Income	US Census Bureau 2019 household income categories
USE	Social Media Use	Social media usage experience in years, 0-1, 1-5, 5+ years
ETH	Ethnicity	Five minimum ethnicity categories by NIH
ITM-AD1	IT-Mindfulness - Alertness to Distinction	I find it easy to create new and effective ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-AD2		I am very creative when using social network platforms.
ITM-AD3		I make many novel contributions to my work-related tasks through the use of social network platforms.
ITM-MP1	IT-Mindfulness - Awareness of Multiple Perspectives	I am often open to learning new ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-MP2		I have an open mind about new ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-MP3		I use social network platforms in many different ways to support my work.
ITM-ON1	IT-Mindfulness - Openness to Novelty	I like to investigate different ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-ON2		I am very curious about different ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-ON3		I like to figure out different ways of using social network platforms.
ITM-OP1	IT-Mindfulness - Orientation in the Present	I often notice how other people are using social network platforms.
ITM-OP2		I attend to the 'big picture' of a project when using social network platforms.
ITM-OP3		I 'get involved' when using social network platforms.
D12-N1	Dark Personality - Narcissism	I tend to want others to admire me.
D12-N2		I tend to want others to pay attention to me.
D12-N3		I tend to expect special favors from others.
D12-N4		I tend to seek prestige or status.
D12-N5		I tend to try to be dominant in social situations.
D12-P1	Dark Personality - Psychopathy	I tend to lack remorse.
D12-P2		I tend to be callous or insensitive.
D12-P3		I tend to be not too concerned with morality or the morality of my actions.
D12-P4		I tend to be cynical.
D12-M1	Dark Personality - Machiavellianism	I have used deceit or lied to get my way.
D12-M2		I tend to manipulate others to get my way.
D12-M3		I have used flattery to get my way.
D12-M4		I tend to exploit others towards my own end.
D12-M5		I tend to have trouble understanding other people's feelings.
MP-I1	_____	A person should make sure that their actions never harm another, even to a small degree.

MP-I2		Risks to another should never be tolerated, irrespective of how small the risks might be.
MP-I3		The existence of potential harm to others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.
MP-I4		One should never psychologically or physically harm another person.
MP-I5	Personal Moral Philosophy - Idealism	One should not perform an action that might in any way threaten the dignity and welfare of another individual.
MP-I6		If an action could harm an innocent other, then it should not be done.
MP-I7		Deciding whether or not to perform an act by balancing the positive consequences of an act against the negative consequences of the act is immoral.
MP-I8		The dignity and welfare of people should be the most important concern to any society.
MP-I9		It is never necessary to sacrifice the welfare of others.
MP-I10		Moral actions are those which closely match the ideals of the "perfect" action.
MP-R1		There are no ethical principles that are so important that they should be part of any code of ethics.
MP-R2		What is ethical varies from one situation and society to another.
MP-R3		Moral standards should be seen as individualistic; what one person considers to be moral may be judged immoral by another person.
MP-R4		Different types of moralities cannot be compared as to "rightness".
MP-R5		Questions of what is ethical for everyone can never be resolved since what is moral or immoral is up to the individual.
MP-R6	Personal Moral Philosophy - Relativism	Moral standards are simply personal rules which indicate how a person should behave, and are not to be applied in making judgments of others.
MP-R7		Ethical considerations in interpersonal relations are so complex that individuals should be allowed to formulate their own individual codes.
MP-R8		Rigidly codifying an ethical position that prevents certain types of actions could stand in the way of better human relations and adjustment.
MP-R9		No rule concerning lying can be formulated; whether a lie is permissible or not permissible totally depends on the situation.
MP-R10		Whether a lit is judged to be moral or immoral depends upon the circumstances surrounding the action.
MI-MC1	Moral Intensity - Seriousness of Consequences	Do you believe any harm (if any) resulting from the sharing disinformation will be: Minor - Severe
MI-MC2		Do you believe any harm (if any) resulting from the sharing disinformation will be: Insignificant - Significant
MI-MC3		Do you believe any harm (if any) resulting from the sharing disinformation will be: Slight - Great
MI-TI1		Do you anticipate that any harm (if any) of the sharing disinformation is likely to occur: After Long Time - Immediately

MI-TI2	Moral Intensity - Temporal Immediacy	Do you anticipate that any harm (if any) of the sharing disinformation is likely to occur: Slowly - Quickly
MI-TI3		Do you anticipate that any harm (if any) of the sharing disinformation is likely to occur: Gradually - Rapidly
MI-PX1	Moral Intensity - Proximity	Compared to yourself, do you believe those potentially affected by the sharing disinformation are: Dissimilar - Similar
MI-PX2		Compared to yourself, do you believe those potentially affected by the sharing disinformation are: Not Alike - Alike
MI-PX3		Compared to yourself, do you believe those potentially affected by the sharing disinformation are: Different - Same
MI-SC1	Moral Intensity - Social Consensus	Please indicate the degree to which you believe society as a whole considers the sharing disinformation is: Unethical - Ethical
MI-SC2		Please indicate the degree to which you believe society as a whole considers the sharing disinformation is: Wrong - Right
MI-SC3		Please indicate the degree to which you believe society as a whole considers the sharing disinformation is: Inappropriate - Appropriate
PMP-1	Perceived Moral Problem	The scenario above involves an ethical problem.
INT_1	Intention to Share Disinformation	I will share the disinformation with others.
INT_2		I intend to share the disinformation with others.
INT_3		I intend to share the disinformation in the near future.
INT_4		All things considered, I expect to share the disinformation.
INT_5		I will re-share/re-post the disinformation in the near future.
INT_6		I intend to re-share/re-post the disinformation frequently.
ATT1	Speeder Trap question	We want to test your attention, so please click on the answer '**To a Moderate Extent**'. Not at all, Very little, Little, Somewhat, To Some Extent, To a Moderate Extent, To a great Extent
ATT2	Attention Filter question	When a big news story breaks, people often go online to get up-to-the-minute details on what is going on. We want to know which websites people trust to get this information. We also want to know if people are paying attention to the question. To show that you've read this much, please ignore the question and select The Drudge Report as your answer. *New York Times *Huffington Post *FoxNews.com *CNN.com *The Drudge Report *MSNBC.com *Washington Post

APPENDIX D: MEASUREMENT ITEMS QUALITY CRITERIA

	Loadings	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Value
IT Mindfulness (α = 0.92, CR = 0.93, AVE = 0.54)				
ITM-AD1 <- ITM	0.73	0.03	27.08	0
ITM-AD2 <- ITM	0.76	0.03	30.69	0
ITM-AD3 <- ITM	0.74	0.03	28.73	0
ITM-MP1 <- ITM	0.70	0.03	23.92	0
ITM-MP2 <- ITM	0.70	0.03	24.96	0
ITM-MP3 <- ITM	0.76	0.02	32.56	0
ITM-ON1 <- ITM	0.79	0.02	38.50	0
ITM-ON2 <- ITM	0.76	0.02	32.27	0
ITM-ON3 <- ITM	0.77	0.03	29.60	0
ITM-OP1 <- ITM	0.69	0.03	24.53	0
ITM-OP2 <- ITM	0.66	0.03	19.98	0
ITM-OP3 <- ITM	0.72	0.03	24.40	0
Moral Personality - Idealism (α = 0.87, CR = 0.90, AVE = 0.52)				
MP-I1 <- MP-I	0.75	0.03	30.57	0
MP-I10 <- MP-I	0.61	0.04	13.95	0
MP-I2 <- MP-I	0.74	0.03	26.80	0
MP-I3 <- MP-I	0.72	0.03	26.45	0
MP-I4 <- MP-I	0.70	0.03	22.12	0
MP-I5 <- MP-I	0.71	0.03	23.37	0
MP-I6 <- MP-I	0.66	0.04	18.51	0
MP-I7 <- MP-I	0.66	0.04	18.28	0
MP-I8 <- MP-I	0.75	0.02	32.12	0
MP-I9 <- MP-I	0.65	0.04	17.80	0
Moral Personality - Relativism (α = 0.90, CR = 0.92, AVE = 0.53)				
MP-R1 <- MP-R	0.67	0.04	17.35	0
MP-R10 <- MP-R	0.71	0.03	22.41	0
MP-R2 <- MP-R	0.75	0.03	29.09	0
MP-R3 <- MP-R	0.79	0.02	35.88	0
MP-R4 <- MP-R	0.71	0.03	20.58	0
MP-R5 <- MP-R	0.78	0.02	32.19	0
MP-R6 <- MP-R	0.73	0.03	25.68	0
MP-R7 <- MP-R	0.76	0.03	26.00	0
MP-R8 <- MP-R	0.69	0.04	18.39	0
MP-R9 <- MP-R	0.68	0.04	18.19	0
Dark Personalities (α = 0.95, CR = 0.95, AVE = 0.59)				
D12-M1 <- Dpers	0.77	0.02	31.78	0
D12-M2 <- Dpers	0.83	0.02	53.55	0
D12-M3 <- Dpers	0.75	0.02	33.32	0
D12-M4 <- Dpers	0.86	0.01	67.07	0
D12-M5 <- Dpers	0.79	0.02	39.72	0
D12-N1 <- Dpers	0.66	0.03	19.49	0
D12-N2 <- Dpers	0.67	0.03	22.24	0
D12-N3 <- Dpers	0.81	0.02	41.42	0
D12-N4 <- Dpers	0.73	0.03	28.66	0
D12-N5 <- Dpers	0.74	0.03	26.11	0

D12-P1 <- Dpers	0.80	0.02	36.97	0
D12-P2 <- Dpers	0.82	0.02	45.95	0
D12-P3 <- Dpers	0.82	0.02	43.28	0
D12-P4 <- Dpers	0.68	0.03	20.48	0
Moral Intensity (α = 0.77, CR = 0.85, AVE = 0.54)				
MI-MC1 <- MI	0.76	0.03	24.74	0
MI-MC2 <- MI	0.76	0.03	30.16	0
MI-MC3 <- MI	0.78	0.02	34.93	0
MI-PX1 <- MI	0.75	0.03	24.87	0
MI-PX2 <- MI	0.73	0.03	23.88	0
MI-PX3 <- MI	0.71	0.04	18.70	0
MI-SC1 <- MI	**0.38**	0.08	4.92	0
MI-SC2 <- MI	**0.35**	0.08	4.25	0
MI-SC3 <- MI	**0.38**	0.08	4.69	0
MI-TI1 <- MI	0.79	0.02	34.00	0
MI-TI2 <- MI	0.78	0.03	30.54	0
MI-TI3 <- MI	0.71	0.03	20.80	0
Disinformation Sharing Intention (α = 0.91, CR = 0.94, AVE = 0.84)				
INT-1 <- DV	0.88	0.01	64.68	0
INT-2 <- DV	0.91	0.01	85.36	0
INT-3 <- DV	0.92	0.01	107.35	0
INT-4 <- DV	0.91	0.01	85.74	0
INT-5 <- DV	0.91	0.01	88.54	0
INT-6 <- DV	0.92	0.01	98.86	0

APPENDIX E: QUALITATIVE SURVEY NOTES

Respondent 1

I think that sharing misinformation or disinformation on social media is made out to be a bigger deal than it is. I think that people who worry about this sort of information are usually more so trying to brand things they don't like as misinformation or disinformation rather than acting in good faith and trying to make the truth known. From my perspective most people are able to figure out what is misinformation or what is wrong and what is correct, and so the problem solves itself as people are given new information and discern what is true and what isn't. I want people to be free to decide for themselves what is or isn't misinformation or disinformation.

I think that each individual is tasked with figuring out whether what they are engaging in is true or not and from there deciding what to do with that information. I do not think people should be held to a moral standard of reporting the truth as the truth differs from person to person. Instead people should be allowed to share their own truths and falsehoods and whatever they come to see as true or false is true for them. Other people can believe what they want but they shouldn't be able to in essence force the majority of people to believe one thing or another.

Respondent 2

I think when you post on social media, you need to be extremely careful that what you post is valid and real. There are so many people who end up getting most of their news and information from social media, and people put great trust in it (even if that trust is misguided). They rely on they information they learn through social media as the basis of their understanding of the world. For example, when Covid was thriving, there were a number of

incorrect and invalid posts about it on Facebook. That led to millions of people having incorrect beliefs about the virus. Whenever I post anything on social media, I carefully vet the information and make sure it has been confirmed by a number of sources, first. It's simply irresponsible to do otherwise, in my opinion.

I think individuals who are especially moral are probably more likely to make sure the information they post is correct, first. I think people with loose morals sometimes like to trigger drama and excite high emotions, and I think there are some people who will intentionally post false information, especially if it aligns with their beliefs or their way of seeing the world. People who are trustworthy, moral, and caring would never intentionally post false news or misinformation. I do think, however, that some moral people might unintentionally post false news or misinformation. Some of the fake news stories are very hard to differentiate from real news, and with news ever changing, it can be tough to know where to look to validate things before posting them. Finally, in the heat of the moment, some people just do not take the time to validate things and instead act on intense emotions when they see something online and then post it themselves. I do not think MOST people do this because they are immoral, but simply because they are excited about something (either positively or negatively) and find it hard to hold back.

Respondent 3

i feel very sad Prior work on the psychology of misinformation has focused primarily on the extent to which reason and deliberation hinder versus help the formation of accurate beliefs. Several studies have suggested that people who engage in more reasoning are less likely to fall for fake news. However, the role of reliance on emotion in belief in fake news remains unclear. To shed light on this issue, we explored the relationship between experiencing specific emotions and believing fake news (Study 1; N = 409). We found that across a wide range.

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it was good It's always important to cut the crap, but first you must spot the crap. Misleading news content, or misinformation as the experts call it, is all around us — in our phones and on our feeds; in our timelines and on our screens. News meant to mislead us has an annoying habit of quickly making its way from social media to the minds and mouths of our racist uncles. The easiest way you can limit the spread of fake news When reading the news, keep in mind who's paying for the story and who's funding the organization. Figure out who wrote this story and why. This doesn't always tell the entire story of why a certain site is telling a certain story but it's always worth keeping in mind, Jakola says.

Respondent 4

I think it is really saddening that people are taking advantage of others in this way but even more-so I can't believe how gullible people are. I can't believe, with the internet and all the technology and information that we can share, that people are not better at disseminating fact from fiction. All of the truth is literally in front of our faces if we simply put in a small amount of effort to find it, yet people just read headlines and see bullshit on facebook, twitter or instagram or wherever and take it as truth. It honestly blows my mind that this is where we have come to. The internet should helping us all become more intelligent as a society, but its like we trusted chimpanzees with fire.

I believe that at the very very very top of the chain this issue is related to morality. So the people who are creating the false websites, the fake headlines, crafting the narrative; people like the guy behind Q-anon, Steve Bannon, Vladimir Putin, and even lower level disrupters who I can't name, are the people who have are showing a lack of morality, and willingness to do anything. I almost forgot about the politicians who either push the falsehoods as well, like Josh Hawley and Marjorie Taylor Greene, or fail to support the truth, like Mitch McConnell and

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Lindsay Graham. But beyond those people, who are at the very top, I believe the rest is shared

by people who simply don't know better, and that truly is what makes it dangerous.

Respondent 5

I think any misinformation or disinformation should instantly be labeled as such, and

some sort of consequence given to the person or organization posting it. A good option would

be not only removal of the item posted, but removal of the offending party for a period of one

week for their first offense. Subsequent offences should have escalating consequences, and

after five offences, the offending party or organization should be permanently removed from

whatever social media site they are posting the misinformation or disinformation on.

Additionally, there should be a blanket posting from the social media website that this person or

organization had been removed for posting things that were blatantly untrue. It's time to get

tough on liars!

Some people don't give a shit about anyone or anything but themselves. A perfect

example is the most recent ex-president. He doesn't care about cheating on his wife, his taxes,

his business partners or anyone else. He either can't tell a lie for the truth, or he doesn't care

about that either. The man has no morality whatsoever, and nothing he says or does should be

trusted. A person who actually cares about what they say and do, and truly doesn't want to

harm anyone or anything, will behave in a moral and straightforward manner.

Respondent 6

I feel so bad about sharing misinformation on social media. Whenever i see

misinformation's on social media i felt like disgust and anger over the person who posted it. My

feelings towards the post depends on the posts and it's contents. Some people have the routine

to share this kind of misinformation's on social media. we can't stop them but we have the options to block and stay away from them. because they are malicious and danger a lot to us.

The thought of people who like to cheat and loot people from all the way and possibilities they are looking for is the kind of people who doing this. These are the moralities of the people. we can't stop them but we can stay away from those people. they are not even bad they are worse in the society . they are misleading the society with the misinformation. but some people posts these misinformation related posts without knowing it.

Respondent 7

I think that sharing misinformation and/or disinformation on social media is reckless and dangerous. There are people actively trying to destroy society and in some cases, government stability by spreading false information. This is dangerous and immoral. It creates a lot of mistrust even when media tries to counter misinformation with facts. The real becomes fake, and the fake becomes real. It dumbs down the people who consume this information, and it creates a lot of chaos with people arguing with each other.

I think there are some people who genuinely are unaware that they are spreading misinformation because the share without fact checking the information. For some people, it might be an honest mistake as they may re-share something without properly reading through the information. However, people who knowingly do this clearly have no morals and are most likely sociopaths or psycho pathetic. They probably get off on creating chaos, and they have no care about what they are doing to people and society at large.

Respondent 8

Before sharing a post on Facebook or Whatsapp, make sure you've checked that it is trustworthy and factual information. Social media and second-hand messages are not fool-proof ways of getting informed. It is best to get your information directly from an authority or expert on the issue, or from the reports from a reputable news outlet.For a closer look at how role morality affected the behavior of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, watch In It to Win: Jack & Role Morality. The case study on this page, Freedom vs. Duty in Clinical Social Work, examines how role morality may affect social workers ability to properly do their job when their personal values come in conflict.

For a closer look at how role morality affected the behavior of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, watch In It to Win: Jack & Role Morality. The case study on this page, Freedom vs. Duty in Clinical Social Work, examines how role morality may affect social workers ability to properly do their job when their personal values come in conflict For a closer look at how role morality affected the behavior of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, watch In It to Win: Jack & Role Morality. The case study on this page, Freedom vs. Duty in Clinical Social Work, examines how role morality may affect social workers ability to properly do their job when their personal values come in conflict.

Respondent 9

I think it is important that if you are going to share something on social media, it should be at least in your better judgement, truthful. Sharing false information knowingly to others is lying to them and spreading rumors and misinformation. It causes more harm than good and can affect others in a negative way. Sharing information is powerful and has the ability to make great changes, but it doesn't work if the information we share isn't reliable or doesn't come from reliable sources. It is almost like the story about the boy who cried wolf. Once you start sharing

false information, people are going to stop believing you. Then, when you have something

really important to say, people are not going to listen.

Morality and ethics play a part in whether a person is generally honest or not. The more

immoral a person is, the more likely they are to look someone in the eye and purposely lie to

benefit themselves. Same goes online or on social media. If a person is generally a bad

person, they are more likely to share misinformation or false claims just to stir things up and

cause drama. Then they will sit back and watch the commotion. A morally good person would

not likely do this because they do not like to hurt people or generally lie to people if they can

help it. Most people usually tell the truth and try to share information that is truthful.

Respondent 10

I think it's immoral to spread misinformation on social media knowingly. It can propagate

false conceptions about major issues and create feelings of apprehension or distrust. People

should be confident that the information they are receiving is accurate and reflects the truth so

that we can further cultivate a society where we can trust each other with providing good quality

information. Misinformation has caused a lot of unnecessary debate over certain issues, for

example over the safety of new vaccines, and has made people unnecessarily afraid.

I think the type of person that knowingly spreads misinformation in order to encourage

people to think a certain way is acting immorally and is trying to manipulate people. This type of

person has little regard for the feelings of others and doesn't care about spreading the truth.

They would rather further their own thinking at the expense of damaging the trust of others.

Wanting to spread misinformation to sway people is just absurd and doesn't achieve anything

good in the long run.

Respondent 11

I think social media is maybe the worst thing that has happened to society. Sharing false information is only one of the many negative aspects. The anonymity people feel hiding behind a computer screen leads them to think they are somehow separated from what they post. There is no accountability, as there would be if you said something false to another person's face. Rumor and innuendo are posted as true facts, and the lemmings who read what is posted just believe blindly without doing any research. Social media really may be the downfall of society as we have known it.

Morality could play a role, if people listened to their inner thoughts. I'm sure morality is a check on what certain people would say on social media and how honest they are. But unfortunately there are so many people out there who feel like what they post on social media is somehow separate from their own true self. Everyone should think "how would my mom feel about what I'm posting here?" or "how would I feel if someone said this about my family member/my community/my workplace/etc?" Morality should be our guiding star, but instead it seems to be waning in our culture today. People are more interested in gaining attention or pulling someone else down by spreading disinformation to raise themselves up, than in thinking about the morality of their actions. It's a sad state we are in.

Respondent 12

I feel that sharing misinformation or disinformation online and on social media is something that needs to be more regulated. I feel that it is wrong to share information that is not correct. It spreads extremely quickly and this leads to people believing something that is not real and can end up causing a lot of harm or damage. We need to make sure that information that is available online is correct and that it is based on science and facts instead of something that is made up and not the complete truth. We need to make sure that information is not harmful but helpful to others and that things that are not correct are not gaining in traction and becoming

what many people believe. There needs to be more disclaimers on information and ways to fact check.

I think that a persons individual morality plays a huge role in sharing misinformation or disinformation on the internet and social media. I think that people need to be aware that information should be correct and that we should want to make sure that the information that we share is what is the truth and not something that is a lie. Sharing information that is not real can be extremely harmful and can end up hurting a lot of people, it is also a lie. A person should know that morally this is wrong and we should want to provide others with the most accurate information as we can. We shouldn't want to participate in the spreading of lies and misinformation.

Respondent 13

I feel like it is very easy to share this type of information and it causes a lot of harm that many don't seem to understand. If someone intentionally creates and shares this type of information, there should be punishments in place to stop them, especially if it affects something as serious as political opinions and social values. I think accounts, groups, pages, etc. that share misinformation should be banned, even IP banned. I believe having accountability, especially for those who hold high positions, such as Donald Trump, should be held to a higher standard. I'm pleased that he finally was silenced on major platforms because his social media usage was detrimental to our national safety as seen during the attack on January of this year. I used to comment and post links to Snopes, among other credible sources, but it only seemed to make them believe in the misinformation more. And this is often common when someone holds a delusion or belief and are confronted with any information to the contrary. This is extremely detrimental to us as a whole and I hope that in the future this will no longer be something that we deal with. I have family and friends who believe in QANON, along with biblical theories and

prophecies dictating that Trump is going to be involved in grand things and that our current president, Biden, will be out of office in August. What might happen when August comes, and these events don't take place?

I think morality comes into play when you are knowingly sharing something that you know is actually false. Something that is meant to be divisive and cause an uproar in a way that those who hold your similar beliefs will only dig in deeper with regards to these beliefs. For those who have no idea they are sharing misinformation, there is still a moral issue. These people should make an effort to ensure the information they share is truthful before sharing anything that could potentially create problems in our society. Ignorance cannot be an excuse when it comes to this problem. It is up to every one of us to try to spread accurate information.

Respondent 14

Social media has had a dramatic impact on the ways we interact with one another. Social media platforms have connected us to one another in new and impactful ways. Stories and opinions can gain exposure with unprecedented speed, giving individuals around the globe continuous access to a near-real-time conversation about both important and trivial matters.Unfortunately, there is a dark side to social media: fake news. Misinformation can influence users, manipulating them for political or economic reasons. How can you spot fake news, and what can you do to combat it? This guide will provide a comprehensive view of the subject and give you the tools you'll need to address this burgeoning issue.

Individuals who encounter false information on social media may actively spread it further, by sharing or otherwise engaging with it. Much of the spread of disinformation can thus be attributed to human action.Social media disinformation is very widely used as a tool of influence: computational propaganda has been described as a pervasive and ubiquitous part of

modern everyday life.hey regularly spill over into other parts of our lives. Experimental work has shown that exposure to disinformation can lead to attitude change [5] and there are many real-world examples of behaviours that have been directly attributed to disinformation, such people as attacking telecommunications masts in response to fake stories about '5G causing coronavirus.

Respondent 15

Officials at Dictionary.com say it comes down to what the writer or speaker actually means. They say that "when people spread misinformation, they often believe the information they are sharing." But disinformation is often shared with the goal of misleading others.As the overall media landscape has changed, there have been several ominous developments. Rather than using digital tools to inform people and elevate civic discussion, some individuals have taken advantage of social and digital platforms to deceive, mislead, or harm others through creating or disseminating fake news and disinformation.

Morals vary dramatically across time and place. One group's good can be another group's evil. Consider cannibalism, which has been practiced by groups in every part of the world. Role morality is the tendency we have to use different moral standards for the different roles we play in society. For example, we may follow one set of standards when among our co-workers and a different set of standards when among our friends. Now to the questions that deal with the rules of morality and all the rules which govern human behavior. First, some terms need to be clarified. Etiquette – rules of conduct concerning matters of relatively minor importance but which do contribute to the quality of life. Violations of such rules may bring social censure.

Respondent 16

I think everyone should make an effort to not intentionally share misinformation. It's an individual's responsibility to fact check information they see online. I think people have an emotional response to information and that information can validate an opinion. In these cases people are more willing to accept that information as fact, and go on to share this information as if it is true. I think most of the misinformation disseminated throughout social media and forums is viewed as true and the individual sharing it has not done their due diligence in finding the truth. I think that any news site or company that intentionally spreads misinformation should be punished.

I think that the morality of an individual heavily influences their choice of what they accept as true. If information validates an individual's beliefs they are far less inclined to question if that information is true or not. I think someone with low morality would intentionally spread misinformation because they have an agenda, or even just to troll and cause a rise out of other users. For the most part, I think the majority of misinformation spread does not come from a lack of morality.

Respondent 17

I think that misinformation is a problem for sure. I am not sure to what extent it is a problem, but it's still one. I think that this can lead to a lot of problems in society if left untreated. This can lead to people doing all sorts of things that are just wrong and possibly stupid. What really makes this even worse is that the misinformation can spread so fast and without someone stopping it will just keep going like a domino effect.

I think that some people may not even know that they are spreading the wrong information. Some probably do it on purpose as there is always people like that. So when it comes to the person marals its really does just depend on the situation. I think the ones that are

doing it on purpose are obviously morally wrong and should be punished accordingly. but the ones that aren't, that maybe are doing is without knowing, well they should maybe be warned and told that they are wrong or something like that.

Respondent 18

I personally would never share misinformation or disinformation on social media. I am bothered by people who think it's OK to share this kind of information on social media. I think due to the sharing of bad information, social media has turned into into a horrible place where people are arguing over information that isn't even true. I think it's sad, disarming, and just plain horrible. I'm not sure where it all began, but there are so many ways for people to remain informed with, So this really shouldn't even be a thing.

I think people have a certain level of responsibility and also should have a moral standard when making posts on social media. I don't think people take into consideration how much a post can be shared or to what degree the numbers of people that can see and may potentially believe bad information. People should be responsible for the things that they post and for only being allowed to share information that is truthful and honest or information that has been fact checked prior to posting.

Respondent 19

I personally don't share misinformation or disinformation online. I think it's part of a greater problem that does nothing to serve the nation. This applies for both liberal and conservative information. And frankly, misinformation/disinformation is a way of manipulating people. I believe that manipulation is a tool of the week. If I can't stand in front of you and persuade you with the truth, then I just might be wrong. If I do post misinformation (and I don't

because I confirm everything I see online using reputable sources), I make corrections and tag everyone who liked or commented on what I'd previously posted in error.

Morality is tricky. Things that are right or wrong morally may be bad ethically. So, the morality of the issue is only part of my motivations for my misinformation policy. Lying is wrong (even for a good cause). But, I think that the question of posting misinformation is more one of ethics. I think it's a question of treating people badly to lie to them. Forcing people to base their decision on lies undermines the entire decision making process. Further, when they find out about the lie (and they always find out about the lie), you can harden their hearts and minds against doing what really is best for them.

Respondent 20

We're only human, and sometimes that means we get things wrong. We forget details, recall things incorrectly, or we pass along unverified accounts that we mistakenly take for fact. Thus, misinformation is wrong information that you don't know is wrong. An innocent everyday example of this is when someone on your neighborhood Facebook group posts that the drug store closes at 8pm on weeknights when in fact it really closes at 7pm. They believe it closes at 8pm, but they're simply mistaken. This is intentionally misleading information or facts that have been manipulated to create a false narrative—typically with an ulterior motive in mind. The readiest example of this is propaganda, yet other examples also extend to deliberate untruths engineered to discredit a person, group, or institution. In other words, disinformation can take forms both large and small. It can apply to a person just as easily as it can to a major news story.

the problem is, opportunities to glimpse misinformation in action are fairly rare. Most users who generate misinformation do not share accurate information too, so it can be difficult

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to tease out the effect of misinformation itself. For example, when President Trump shares

misinformation on Twitter, his tweets tend to go viral. But they may not be going viral because of

the misinformation: All those retweets may instead owe to the popularity of Trump's account, or

the fact that he writes about politically charged subjects. Without a corresponding set of

accurate tweets from Trump, there's no way of knowing what role misinformation is playing.

Respondent 21

I think it's super unfortunate and actually something that happens by accident for the

most part, but I do think even as an accident we are failing because it is preventable. I

understand the urge to share misinformation but it's so harmful and had real world

consequences. Sometimes clicking the share button on Facebook or Retweeting something can

feel so easy and simple and we think it had such a reaction in us that we need to have other's

see it. But without doing our job by fact checking things, we are failing. It can also feel good

when we share those things that help us feel justified in our beliefs. We almost don't want to fact

check because we don't want it to be wrong or we just assume it's right because it makes sense

with what we already believe. I just think it is so harmful and is something everyone can do

better at, to differing degrees. I have to think that the people who are sharing some of the more

wild consipiracy theories online are a bit of a different class. Where they aren't super worried

about checking things because you can't check them, this is the only source and it needs to be

believed. But otherwise, my values are it's bad, you need to do the work, every time you share

something, and the bigger the claim the bigger the evidence you need before you share.

I think you could say there are three types of people when it comes to sharing

misinformation and morality. One who shares things on accident and if they knew it was

misinformation they wouldn't share it, and they would feel bad about it because the truth matters

to them. The other would share misinformation and not feel bad about it because they assume

it's the price of admission for the internet or something or some reason that absolves them from fault in sharing and don't really feel bad about it. Then finally there is the person who shares misinformation on purpose because they like to, it feeds some chaos or anger inside them. Those are the worse and most dangerous I would say. But overall morality does play into misinformation sharing on social media, because at the end of the day it's harmful and wrong.

Respondent 22

I believe that sharing misinformation on social media is not a good thing. This is because a lot of people do not take the time to find out if it is real or not. This would lead to a big majority of people being misled due to misinformation or propaganda. This leads them to not being able to make sound and accurate judgments. It is also a really bad thing because the more misinformation there it is out there the harder t is to understand the real information. Its sorta like the boy who cried wolf. The more misinformation that someone reads the less likely they are to believe what is real when they come across it. I believe that more disinformation would lower the moral of a country and start to create a rift between different groups of people. This would lead to what is starting to happen today in my country where people are fighting each other and not sticking together to help the country as a whole.

I believe that someones morality plays a big part in the sharing of disinformation. This is because if they are will to spread disinformation knowing that they are going to continue to share false information that is going to continue to cause a gap between people they are not moral. Where as someone that just wants to get the correct information out there no matter who it supports would have a high moral standing point for the truth. Also I believe that not being very moral they might be spreading the information just to help sow deciet and lies to help distance different people for there own personal gain . That is very wrong and not moral at all. All it does it help promote one persons views and disregards everyone elses train of thoughts.

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Also as a country we need to be founded on what is correct and right and we will be a stronger nation. However if people do not hold there morals to a high standard of what is right we crumble.

Respondent 23

I think for the most part people should be able to share what they want. The platforms where people post this stuff on also has the right and responsibility to moderate their content. It's not my place to tell them how strict they can be, but the platforms do have a responsibility to take reasonable action if people are posting things that could harm others. I feel like ultimately, it's up to us to decide if information if we are receiving is credible or not. There are many methods we can do this, and I don't think that in general the platforms should be dumbed down because some people don't properly evaluate the information they receive.

I think morality plays a significant role in sharing misinformation or disinformation on social media. If it's done on purpose and can cause harm to others, then that is a significant transgression in my opinion. I think people/organizations who do such things are irresponsible, should not be trusted and platforms have a responsibility to take action when they see this happening on their platform. If it's something that is accidental or the information is up for debate then that is a much different thing. I do not think in this scenario that there is necessarily anything morally wrong. Although if it's an accidental case, the user should take steps to try to prevent it form happening in the future if they were not already taking reasonable precautions.

Respondent 24

I think sharing misinformation is one of the most dishonest and deceitful things a person can do. People who do that can't be trusted and they're doing it for their own agenda and interests. Information should be as truthful as possible even if you're wrong, you should be

going in with the intent of providing honest and useful information because people will use that information to make decisions on what to do with their time and if it's not good information then you're leading them down a wrong path which is immoral.

I've seen all kinds of misinformation on social media accounts like instagram and twitter where the person with a decent amount of followers are holding on to every word that that person is saying. One example is a person who tweeted bad and untrue things about Asians and a lot of people agreed with it. Seemingly out of nowhere there has been a lot of physical assaults on Asians because of that misinformation from people believing in it. That's one example of what misinformation can do.

I think that morality plays a big part of sharing information and people should be as honest as possible because that information is going to affect people's lives with what they will do with that information and how they make decisions. It could lead them down a wrong path if it's bad information. If someone really believes in what they're saying even if it's misinformation then I can understand their intent but it would still be bad information and they should educate themselves on the matter by going through as many sources of information on the topic as possible before coming to a conclusion if they want true objectivity.

I just hate when some people put out misinformation with the intent of an agenda which really does harm others in various ways from ruining someone's reputation, job loss and just an overall misinformed conclusion of a topic or of a people.

Respondent 25

Social media and misinformation are made for each others like flowers for bees, the nectar being attention and influence. Social media connects us in pseudo friend echo chambers

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on important, while most of the content shared is sort of misinformation about people's lives projecting Even critical thinking skills would have helped, but we can't act as though everyone who spreads misinformation is unintelligent.

Misinformation in this sense isn't like a personal post about food to validate, it's about getting people to believe and in the ultimate state, not listen to other opinions, and disregard other opinions based on the lack of shared meaning of this misinformation. pushing agendas under the same sound bites, and activating the audience through group psychology and basic triggering. The simple and meaningless kind like food selfies and endless vacay photos.

Respondent 26

Although I do find it quite annoying when people share misinformation or disinformation, I believe people should be able to share their opinions without being censored. However, because of this, misinformation will spread and more people will not have access to the truth. Thus, the burden should be on the journalists and reporters to put out the truth rather than trying to put out what they feel will attract the bigger audience.

Generally, I believe people just want to be happy and live with as little stress as possible if they can control it. Sharing misinformation is usually unintentional, as the person sharing tends to believe what they're sharing is true (or atleast want it to be true). Therefore, I don't believe morality plays a huge role in the sharing of misinformation rather it plays a bigger role in those who originally put out the information.

Respondent 27

For me the sharing of misinformation is detrimental. It is really difficult for people to be shown feeds and feeds of information and for them to have to pick and choose what is and is

not legitimate in terms of factual accuracy. This really stems into a toxic ideology of believing

everything you read on the internet. One of the main victims of this in my opinion is the elderly.

They arent taught to sift through news sources to find legitimate work and facts. They may

simply just agree with the first bit of information they are shown and that really can snowball into

a toxic mentality all around.

An individuals morality plays a large role in misinformation. This could be something as

simple as getting extremely riled up at finding a bit of information that may not be accurate.

Someone with a moral compass that may not be the most in tune with the "right" path may be

more inclined to fall into bad habits and fall into violent tendencies. People often hear about

riots, hate groups, and the like all over the internet. Someone whos moral compass isnt in line

may be more and more tempted to become one of those hateful groups of people. This

ultimately would lead to a hard and violent path. I think this plays a massive role in society. The

way people have their moral compass set really depends on the environment around them. If

you are filled with hatred and the inclination to do bad then you are already predisposed to

being on a bad path of life.

Respondent 28

Fake news on social media can influence users, manipulating them for details on social

media, it's important to understand the impacts of sharing potential bias, and it may attempt to

inspire anger or other strong feelings from the reader. fits the members' values and norms

stands a higher chance of being communal feel it: Perception and conceptualization of the term

"fake news" in the media. Believing and sharing misinformation, fact-checks, and accurate

information on. cognitive biases behind the belief in, and sharing of, misinformation. ... Fact

checkers should promote awareness of our emotions, preference for novelty.

Our daily acts of sharing or posting on social media influence this race. Platforms, a flood increasingly polluted by misinformation and 'fake news'. The individual harm is that some people may acquire misleading beliefs ... for sharing: we do not know whether these norms are epistemic, moral. We fall sway to fake news because it grabs our attention through outlandish claims, suggests false memories and contains appeals to our emotions that align with our politics. ... An error occurred while retrieving sharing information.

Respondent 29

It is wrong and unethical. they ruin people's lives. and put fear into the public that is not real. there are thing they change and alter in their favor or in their beliefs. they know the power of the public they have and they will narrate the news any way they want to. social media also has the control to remove information and profiles to their liking. I think that it is sad and terrible that people do that. I do not trust anything I read on social media, no matter where it came from because someone I trust may have shared something false unintentionally. Then we can get into the whole aspect of photos that are altered.

how they were raised, or what they are truly believing in. Some people are raised to trust the news and some people were not. some people truly just believe what they read and are unintentionally sharing the misinformation or disinformation on social media. when it comes to photos being altered, I don't think that they are really intending on hurting anyone, they just want to make themselves look better and feel better about themselves. I don't think they look at the big picture and how it is effecting other people looking at the photos.

Respondent 30

I think it's bad because you can confuse people. i think people in this generation are quick to believe false information and they don't fact check things for themselves in the newer generations of people these days. i think that their values are wrong, and that it's bad to share things when you don't necessarily have all the facts right. and then other people end up getting really confused about the information that is being shared.

i think people do it out of spite. i think people can be hateful and want others to believe their theory only no matter the costs, so they make up information for naive people to believe even if it's not true. and they share those same beliefs on social media and don't listen to opinions of other people. i think it shows that people aren't moral when they are acting this way. i think that it shows that they are not smart when they act in this manner.

Respondent 31

I feel very sad and also very angry about who post the fake information. They are doing like, this work get them comment and like. I was very angry about who post the fake information and I want to tell them don't to like this, this information will affect our society and people. Their are posting for their popularity and I was always against like this fake information. I want to say to who post like this information their are against the country.

I am always angry about like this fake information. In my opinion they are give fake information about society. They are post against the society but some information are be correct but some are fake information. I was always be want proper and perfect so, I want to scold for post like this information. They are very bad character and some time their do for their popularity. I want to tell them this is wrong and very bad habit in the world.

Respondent 32

I am very sad to sharing misinformation or disinformation on socail media. I don't like to share if I know the news is fake. Unfortunately, there is a dark side to social media: fake news. Misinformation can influence users, manipulating them for political or economic reasons. It is important to understand the impacts of sharing potential misinformation. Remember fake news is not content that you merely disagree with — it is fabricated information designed to manipulate others.

It is very important to everybody when sharing information on social media. Individuals who encounter false information on social media may actively spread it further, by sharing or otherwise engaging with it. So we need to very careful before forwarded to others. Authority is the extent to which the communication appears to come from a credible, trustworthy source. The fact that only a minority of people actually propagate disinformation makes it important to consider what sets them apart from people who don't spread untrue material further. We need to careful on this matter.

Respondent 33

Misinformation is everywhere and it is frustrating seeing people fall for it. Nothing is fact checked anymore and this information is purely manipulative. It needs to be monitored and regulated better. Social media makes it too easy to spread false info. Someone needs to be held accountable. It is to easy to manipulate the masses and we have a huge security problem. I'm fed up with seeing stupid stories shared by friends and family constantly. They shove these ridiculous claims down my throat with no proof.

It is a moral obligation to fact check everything you see. The people intentionally spreading misinformation are toxic and immoral. Theyre turning us against each other and creating a divide. Politically charged media that uses false infor is immoral as it is turning

everyone against each other. Someone is intentionally manipulating us and we are falling straight into their hands. Whoever is doing it is the lowest of the low and needs to be prosecuted.

Respondent 34

Sharing misinformation on social media is very harmful to people that read it. A lot of people do not do their own research to se if something is true or not and just blindly believe everything they read on the internet. SO if you knowingly share something that is misinformation, you are doing nothing but spreading the information and continuing to hard people who may be reading it and believing it to be true. Sharing it should be avoided at all costs. If you share something that is false or misleading, the website that hosts the post should have the right to remove it, censor it, or give you a warning about sharing and spreading misleading or false information.

I think the morality of an individual plays a big role when it comes to sharing information that may be false or misleading. If they are a moral person and know what they are reading is false or misleading, then they would not share it. Someone who is not particularly moral ay come across something they know if false or misleading and share it anyways because they want people to read it, believe it, and freak out about it, causing it to spread more. They like the chaos it brings. If someone does not know the information they are sharing is false or misleading, then I do not believe their morality really comes into play; that is strictly ignorance.

Respondent 35

With a business or professional account, the focus is audience-centered. Professional organizations' social media pages should ideally be informative about the business' goals and values. They should engage potential or current customers and be careful not to alienate

themThis is important to know for context. As an individual, being aware that the news you see on your feed is filtered based on previously collected data can help you be more conscious of your own inherent bias. If you represent a business using social media as a marketing platform, it's important to keep your posts consistent with your brand, and share things on your timeline that build customer relationships, line up with your values, or showcase original content.

t is never easy facing the unknown, and amid the fear in the midst of this pandemic with a novel virus, there have been a host of different reactions. For governments, there has been a need to balance between containing the problem in the name of public health and the performance of the economy. There is also a need to ensure that excessive anxiety and subsequent panic are not induced by the irresponsible spread of fake news. On a societal level, this can cause a loss of confidence in the government's decisions and policies on how it handles the pandemic, economic recessions, retrenchments and unemployment.

Respondent 36

Misinformation sharing belongs more in the realm of rumour. The pragmatic value of sharing is more than asserting that someone said something. To post and share content with a high emotional and normative charge. Fake news and misinformation have been a persistent concern ever since the 2016 U.S. presidential election. People fall for fake news when they rely on their intuitions and emotions, and therefore at risk of sharing misinformation. The proliferation of fake news on social media is now a matter of differences in emotional intelligence and fake news detection ability.

Fake news feels less immoral to share when we've seen it before leads individuals to temper their disapproval of the misinformation when ... Misinformation and Morality: Encountering Fake-News Headlines Introducing Play to Higher Education Reduces Stress and

Forms Deeper Connection Material. sequences of fake news are as dramatic; but, when individuals or groups act upon. The invention of journalism ethics: The path to objectivity and beyond for the role it may have played in two elections with surprising outcomes

Respondent 37

Sharing fake information on social media is dangerous, I believe that it has the ability to sway political believes and it can cause things like the incident at the capital that we saw earlier in the year was caused by peoples propensity to share fake news. This is an issue with people and their critical thinking, people are in full support of their political or news organizations that they will believe whatever is published. I do not think most people know that the information they are posting on social media is false, I think that most people see it from what they deem a trusted friend, political figure or news source.

I feel most people that share misinformation on social media are not doing this in an attempt to manipulate people with information that they know is false. I believe that people really genuinely think that this information is real and believe that it is their responsibility to share it. I don't believe morality always comes in to play unless someone is purposely putting false information to manipulate people on their feed. Quite frankly, I think its more because of peoples knowledge and intelligence and that has nothing to do with some one's morality. I believe it has more to do with someones refusal to look for information and their gullibility or they just believe everything.

Respondent 38

I think it's probably one of the biggest concerns on the internet as a whole. People are not taught how to differentiate between emotionally charged opinion pieces and news. Any bad actor (foreign state, corporation, politicians) can use this to create rifts within our society, and it's

being used extremely effectively. I think it's causing serious problems for people, even if they

don't use social media. It's creating an atmosphere in which people are constantly emotionally

charged. It causes the overall sense of rationality and common sense in society to be lowered

as a whole. I don't know that there is a solution to the problem other than educating people, but

that won't help morons.

I don't think morality comes into play here. Most people that engage in this stuff as

average citizens are doing so because they've been manipulated into doing it. They are

constantly being fed emotionally charged opinions masquerading as fact and they don't know

any better. With respect to the average person, I don't know that this type of ignorance is a

moral issue. For the groups within our system (not foreign governments) that are producing this

misinformation I believe it's an entirely different concept. These people are evil in the sense

that they understand that they are causing the citizenry to be in a constant state of fear, anger,

hopelessness, etc. They trade on the idea of division within society. With respect to adversarial

foreign governments I think it morally understandable (albeit probably not morally acceptable)

for them to do this. It's what they should be doing for their own interests.

Respondent 39

I personally would never share anything I knew to be false on social media. I stay away

from posting anything political or divisive or even discussing news or current events. I just post

about my own life and use social media as a way to keep up with friends and family. But if other

people want to share information I believe they should have the right to. I don't think these

companies should censor people's posts or try to dictate what opinions are "correct." We all

have the right to believe in whatever we want, even if it is wrong. An opinion can never be

wrong and to say that it is, is being the thought police. People should know by now not to trust

the things they see on social media or use it as a source for reliable news, and if they do those things it's on them.

I guess it depends on their motivations for doing it. If they know something is wrong and they post it deliberately in an attempt to mislead or miseducate naive people, I guess that's immoral. But like I said in the other answer, people should already know that you can't trust information posted on social media. If they choose to believe or trust it, it's on them. It's the reader's responsibility to research and check up on information before using it. And if the person posting it genuinely believes it themselves, that isn't immoral at all in my opinion. Everyone has the right to believe whatever they believe and the immoral thing is trying to censor people's genuine beliefs or punish them for being "wrong"... in my opinion this is part of true freedom... being able to believe in things that other people do not believe in. Morality only ever enters the equation when someone is deliberately trying to cause harm to others by posting misinformation.

Respondent 40

Sharing info that doesn't fit what a small group of evil think is correct is not misinformation. Disinformation is the propaganda the major corporations pump out to allow banks and foreign forces rob and steal from the common man.

Most of those people are brain washed. Or willingly propping up the system for their own personal gains. It's a small club and they think they're in it. Too many people are trained that there are part of the elite ruling class when they are not even close.

Respondent 41

My thoughts on the sharing of misinformation on social media is disheartening. There should be a stop to disinformation because it promotes anti-intelligence. It's not good for our society to blindly believe what anyone has to say without factual evidence. It will only lower the overall intelligence and cause a lot of dangerous scenarios to occur if we go down this path. Education should be number one priority. We simply cannot neglect or overlook the important facts of life. We must show that we are better than that and we have evolved from primitive ways. We cannot be vulnerable to what others say. We have to be knowledgeable and show that we can perform critical thinking and have common sense. It's not that crazy to think how society would end up if we were to become dishonest with our intelligence. It's not the time to ignore what scientists and world leaders are actively saying.

An individual's morality should be to always look for facts in the mist of disinformation. Nowadays, its very difficult to look for the actual truth as the media and news loves to hide the real problems that society is faced with every day. It's important that people do their own research and come to conclusions by using the education they learned when they were in school. People should be guided by a basic set of rules that define between right and wrong. It's not okay to stray too far from these rules and believe whatever you want because what you believe or think is right without any evidence to support your arguments. People should not be played when deciding on important issues. Some bad actors like to downplay certain situations and make it seem like a problem isn't as bad as it seems. It's important to stick true to values upheld by society and have been tried and true for years.

Respondent 42

I think a lot of the information put on the web has not been checked out and the information is not correct without being checked or fact find. They say almost half of the information you find is disinformation. I believe it is important to fact find and information you are

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putting on the computer to make sure that itis current and correct. People use that information in their daily lives and depend onit for their profession to get the information right.

I feel that it is very important that we get all of our information done correctly and that we have our information straight before we even think about putting information out for anyone else to read, or believe that can be relevant or very important to them We are so dependent on certain topics that our lives somewhat revolve around it Our life depends on this information or at least livelihood to pursue our daily work.

Respondent 43

I think it is wrong to purposefully mislead people on social media. I think a lot of people on both sides do it purely for political gain and don't care about who might be hurt by the misinformation. That being said, I am also a fierce advocate for the first amendment and free speech and I think people should be allowed to say whatever they want to say without fear of being punished for it. I think it is really up to the individual to do their own research and come to their own conclusions. The facts are typically out there, and it is just up to you to find them. People have a responsibility to not believe everything they read on the internet, and to always be skeptical of bogus claims -- especially if those claims are only being reported on by one source. I think it is more of a common sense issue than anything else; people just need to be more mindful with misinformation and should be better trained to recognize it when it is posted.

If they are knowingly and maliciously spreading false information, then they have a lack of morality because they are willfully trying to hurt other people for their own personal gain -- or just trying to start a fight which is arguably even worse than misleading for political gain. I think in most cases, however, it isn't necessarily a morality thing when it comes to the spread of misinformation, but rather an ignorance thing; most people who post fake news or

disinformation have no idea that they're actually doing it -- they take things at face value and just assume that something that is posted is authentic when it isn't. I don't think someone's morality is compromised just because they had a lapse in judgement and didn't know any better when posting something false. Of course, you could also argue that it is a moral issue to verify before posting, so that is something I think about.

Respondent 44

I feel worried about sharing misinformation on social media. Sometimes unknowingly users share or post misinformation. Users did not check legitimacy of news information they have found. I feel manipulation and detection of misinformation on social media is must. Misinformation can spread very easily throughout social media and quickly reaches many individuals and make confusions, unnecessary anxiety, etc. The results that reveals misinformation related to preventive and therapeutic methods is the most mentioned type. Other types of misinformation associated with peoples daily lives. Moreover changes in the crisis situation are relevant to the type of variance of misinformation.

I think individual is responsible for sharing misinformation on social media. We have to check the fact of the shared information. If we know or hear about some news are fake or mislead or against the government/rules we must delete it. We don't share such information on public or private. Following research result, strategies of health communication for managing misinformation on social media are give such as credible sources and expert sources. Also traditional beliefs or perceptions plans the vital role in health communication. Combating misinformation on social media likely not a easy work.

Respondent 45

I feel as though the ones who like to share misinformation on social media should be punished. They are blatantly spreading lies and many people can tell but I understand that some may be fooled. There is a reason why people post misinformation on social media and the reason is they get a rush of creating clickbait for people to see their content even though it is not true. I had been thinking about that word recently when seeing misinformation about social media. The word is 'clickbait' I believe this to be the product that is actually being produced. I am usually very good at identifying clickbait but I can tell others are not able to see past the clickbait. This in turn makes the postings popular and helps the creator of the misinformation produce more similar content. I do not condone it in anyway and feel as though this type of content on social media is borderline immoral.

I think the role that is played by the individual is one who wants to stir things up. They are ready and willing to play devils advocate on any subject they want. Those who are easily tricked can be seduced by the misinformation and possibly change their who life view based on one single person who might have not intended that to happen. The social media poster usually does not realize this themselves as they are too busy getting the rush of the likes and comments on their clickbait content. The morality of doing these types of things is immoral in my opinion. I believe that it can do much more harm than aid. I think of the BLM movement as a good example for this. BLM started out as misinformation on social media postings and not it has turned to full scale riots that are ruining the United States of America. Everyone knows that ALM is superior to BLM and that BLM should be ashamed of what they are doing. ALM is for those pure of heart, angels you may call them. While BLM is only working for darkness and hate.

Respondent 46

Disinformation is currently a critically important problem in social media and beyond. Sharing other's content is an everyday activity that most social media users partake in without much thought. Sharing happens as the result of a split-second decision, yet its effects are long-lasting and tend to ripple: since sharing amplifies misinformation to an unprecedented extent, it generates epistemic harms at collective and individual levels. Once disinformation has initially been seeded online by its creators, one of the ways in which it spreads is through the actions of individual social media users. Sometimes the fake news hurts us a lot and I personally suffered too and not only me many of the others using the social media

The use of technological tools and techniques, including bots, big data, trolling, deep-fakes, and others, enables those intending to manipulate public opinion by spreading false, inaccurate, or misleading information, to reach targeted and potentially endless audiences. The inability to trace sources further enables dissemination of political ads by foreign or domestic sources in violation of campaign financing rules, in countries where such rules apply So before sharing any information with others please make sure is it a true one.

Respondent 47

We're only human, and sometimes that means we get things wrong. We forget details, recall things incorrectly, or we pass along unverified accounts that we mistakenly take for fact. Thus, misinformation is wrong information that you don't know is wrong. An innocent everyday example of this is when someone on your neighborhood Facebook group posts that the drug store closes at 8pm on weeknights when in fact it really closes at 7pm. They believe it closes at 8pm, but they're simply mistaken. This is intentionally misleading information or facts that have been manipulated to create a false narrative—typically with an ulterior motive in mind. The readiest example of this is propaganda, yet other examples also extend to deliberate untruths engineered to discredit a person, group, or institution. In other words, disinformation can take

forms both large and small. It can apply to a person just as easily as it can to a major news story.

the problem is, opportunities to glimpse misinformation in action are fairly rare. Most users who generate misinformation do not share accurate information too, so it can be difficult to tease out the effect of misinformation itself. For example, when President Trump shares misinformation on Twitter, his tweets tend to go viral. But they may not be going viral because of the misinformation: All those retweets may instead owe to the popularity of Trump's account, or the fact that he writes about politically charged subjects. Without a corresponding set of accurate tweets from Trump, there's no way of knowing what role misinformation is playing.

Respondent 48

I challenge this assumption by proposing a non-epistemic interpretation of (mis)information sharing on social networking sites which I construe as infrastructures for forms of life found online. Misinformation sharing belongs more in the realm of rumor spreading and gossiping rather than in the information-giving language games. If users will clarify how their gestures of sharing are meant to be interpreted by others, they will implicitly assume responsibility for possible misunderstandings based on omissions, and the harms of shared misinformation can be diminished.

In turn, perceiving the headline as less unethical predicted stronger inclinations to express approval of it online. People were also more likely to actually share repeated headlines than to share new headlines in an experimental setting. We speculate that repeating blatant misinformation may reduce the moral condemnation it receives by making it feel intuitively true, and we discuss other potential mechanisms that might explain this effect.

Respondent 49

I always decide a selewcted information update.when i given a disinformation means i redy to clear and resolve the issue and problems.i create a alternate solution for this type of disinformations. Real information is giving a more positive enery to ourselfs .kind of information is more powerfull to us ,so need to share for ecited one to everything for all .i always sharing a good thing and best thing in social media activities .i decide to share everything measn at the time i put my effort at the social media platform,it was always usefull and needed.i always sharing a good thing and best thing in social media activities .i decide to share everything measn at the time i put my effort at the social media platform,it was always usefull and needed

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Respondent 50

I think it is pretty messed up if someone is doing it on purpose. A fake story, or fake information can seriously impact someones life and mind, and spreading this type of information is like playing with fire. Some misinformation can be harmless, however more important or sensitive information can really put people in poor positions depending on what it is. There is so much political misinformation that really shapes peoples opinions on certain politicians, and this

can have drastic effects on our country. This type of misinformation impacts us all whether we know it or not.

I think it is a moral issue at heart. If someone is spreading misinformation just to try and make someone believe what they want them to believe, than this is the same as lying. This can even go as far as it does in court, because lying on social media literally is what forms the opinions of some people. Some opinions can even result in dangerous situations for the nation as a whole. When certain people get a hold of these opinions and act on them, they put many people at risk and really have a chance to cause a lot of damage.

Respondent 51

I think sharing misinformation on social media is ridiculous and foolish at best and malicious and disgusting at worst. We have actual cult-like behavior rising in my country (USA) due to the garbage people read, believe and share on Facebook. Otherwise intelligent people don't bother thinking critically -- they just believe it, get angry about it, and pass it on, and before long we end up with people screaming about an election being stolen (okay, where's the proof?) and forcing their way into our Capitol like they have any right to do so. It's frightening, and everyone who has shared lies on social media has had a hand in it, even if they didn't intend to be complicit.

More and more it feels like the individuals who do this sort of thing don't have any true morality. They're all too willing to bend the truth -- or outright snap it in half -- to justify whatever skewed viewpoint they insist on clinging to. These are people who insist they're good people, who get offended and self-righteous when they're judged for their opinions. Truly moral, ethical people wouldn't share false information, or if they accidentally did, they would fix the situation

when they realized. A lot of the misinformation online is deliberately and maliciously shared, and it's harming our entire society.

Respondent 52

i absolutely cant stand when people spread fake news. it starts fights and rumors and simply confuses people. a perfect example is the coronavirus vaccine. people are saying this changes your DNA and discourages people to get the vaccine when in reality it is something positive that can help you. there is no reason for this rumor and gossip spreading from adult people. there is no purpose other than to cause drama which i am personally against. i think this is a big problem on social media and it makes me not even look at news anymore on there period. i don't want to get confused or mislead so i feel it is not safe to pay attention to news on social media.

i think a moral person would never spread fake news. it is wrong to give people the wrong and often crazy idea. hurting people through the spread of gossip and fake news is simply the wrong thing to do. people who are doing it know it is wrong and do it out of pure fun. these types of people are bad people when you get down to it. they are dramatic people who like to stir up trouble everywhere they go. people will believe what they want but trying to sell a news article that is made up and citing a credible source to confuse people on purpose is wrong. the people who do it know it is wrong and do it anyways. the nation is a mess and politics are the main cause of this right now.

Respondent 53

I strongly object sharing misformation in social media. Any information has to be validated before it is shared. Sharing misinformation may leads to many problems. Any individual should be moral enough to validate the information before sharing. One should not

blindly trust whatever gets shared on social media. Sharing misinformation may cause

problems. Any misinformation about particular person may affect him emotionally. Strict actions

has to be taken against those who share misinformation. Media platforms allow for users to

create media accounts where they can provide behavioral, preference, and demographic data

about themselves. ... Big data companies and scientist, then collect this data and build personas

about you that can determine your age and gender, what you like and much more.

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platforms allow for users to create media accounts where they can provide behavioral,

preference, and demographic data about themselves. ... Big data companies and scientist, then

collect this data and build personas about you that can determine your age and gender, what

you like and much more.

Respondent 54

I don't think sharing information online is right or wrong. I believe that's something that

can only be decided by the individual person who's posting the misinformation. If I see

something online I won't just believe it at face value no matter who said it. I would take the time

to do my research and only then will I decide if I believe the information or not. I think there are

much bigger problems in this country that we have to worry about. If people weren't so addicted

to social media I don't even think people would be talking about misinformation being shared on

it. I think social media has too much of an influence on our lives. It has too much of an influence on elections.

When it comes to sharing misinformation on social media I don't really think it has anything to do with morals. Just because it's not true doesn't mean it's morally wrong. People put too much into social media. I think people attach morals to things that are so small they can't really be morally right or wrong. I believe right and wrong and morally right and wrong are two different things. As I said in my previous paragraph it's up to the people who see the message to do their research and come to a conclusion on their own.

Respondent 55

I feel it is unethical to share misinformation as not only does it misinform people, it also causes a sort of chain reaction of misinformation. If the way you present the information is professional and credible, others will tend to take it for fact without verifying the integrity of the information. I don't take social media "facts" too seriously in this regard. Rather I value the information on social media to the level of just being aware of what people are saying about a particular issue. I will do my own research if it involves me enough, but other than that, social media information is not worth much beyond bringing awareness to an issue

I think morality plays a role in spreading misinformation. The severity of which depends on the context of the information that is involved. If it's something important that may effect people's lives to a large degree, it's highly immoral to be spreading misinformation on such topics. For example, it would be highly immoral to spread rumors about what stocks to buy and sell as that's just manipulating people to behave in a way that's beneficial to you. Ideally, folks would not be spending money on stocks if they couldn't afford it, but this could potentially ruin some people's financial situations.

Respondent 56

I don't want too much information about my personal life out there. I really don't have my phone number where I live or my birthday out there. I try to be discerning with pictures, I don't really post alot of pictures, mostly my dog. I am sensitive to people's privacy and I usually check with people before posting. I don't think people really care about whether someone is accurate or not, seems like people don't even care about verifying information. People post too much personal information and it often comes back to bite you when you least expect it.

Some people are so ignorant. Say people who supported Trump were always posting stuff that were lies. They would just keep reposting without even checking the accuracy of what they were posting and just did not care-of course I realize they were pretty brainwashed. Stuff beiing posted like he won the election and things that were on Fox news things that were easy to prove or disprove. Peoples morality plays no part, we live in a society that has basically lost it's sense when it comes to asking yourself if this is right before posting.

Respondent 57

I think it is immoral and dishonest and sometimes illegal to share misinformation or disinformation on the social media. Because you are literally lying to the public intentionally. For the people who share misinformation or disinformation on the social media without verifying them, they should be held accountable for their action. Right now we are facing the serious problem of fake news that spamming on the social media which is toxic and harmful for the society and its seriousness is often underestimated due to the popularity of social media. Many users of social media are not critical and clear enough to tell the fake news, so they can be misled easily by the misinformation and disinformation.

In my mind people who share misinformation or disinformation on social media should be blamed from the perspective of morality. Some people intentionally share these misinformation or disinformation on social media in order for personal gain from the spreading of fake news, these people are morally wrong and should be punished. Some of them are actually breaking the law by doing so. Some people unintentionally share misinformation or disinformation on social media because they might be too naive or not critical enough. These people are not moral enough either. Because they fail to verify the information they share on the social media.

Respondent 58

Motivations of Misinformation Sharing. The respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agreed that a motivation applied to their decision to share misinformation on social media .Understanding more about why people share misinformation, and how it spreads, leads to proposed solutions — a goal that becomes more important as people spend more time on social media platforms, and the connections between misinformation and election results become clearer.

For a closer look at how role morality affected the behavior of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff, watch In It to Win: Jack & Role Morality. The case study on this page, Freedom vs. Duty in Clinical Social Work, examines how role morality may affect social workers ability to properly do their job when their personal values come in conflict .The dissemination of disinformation to create tensions in society, to further political agendas, or to delegitimize political opponents has been utilized by foreign as well as domestic actors.

Respondent 59

When looking at what constitutes "fake news" and how it gets shared on social media, there are two kinds of false information to be aware of—misinformation and disinformation. Researchers at Indiana University found these two types of information often go viral because "information overload and users' finite attention span limit the capacity of social media to discriminate information on the basis of quality. Because social media is a public platform, anyone—including news outlets—can post anything without being accountable for fact-checking. It's left to users to distinguish misinformation vs. disinformation in their feeds.

Misinformation on social media spreads quickly in comparison to traditional media because of the lack of regulation and examination required before posting. ... shows they also play a role in curbing the spread of misinformation on social media through debunking and denying false rumors Factors which contribute to the effectiveness of a corrective message are an individual's mental model, an individuals worldview beliefs, repetition of the misinformation, time-lag between misinformation and correction, credibility of the source and relative coherency of the misinformation and corrective message. Corrective messages will be more effective when they are coherent and/or consistent with the target audience's worldview beliefs.

Respondent 60

Although online disinformation and misinformation about the coronavirus are different—the former is the intentional spreading of false or misleading information and the latter is the unintentional sharing of the same—both are a serious threat to public health. Social media platforms have facilitated an informational environment that, in combination with other factors, has complicated the public health response, enabled widespread confusion, and contributed to loss of life during the pandemic.

In all four studies, a minority of respondents indicated that they had previously shared political disinformation they had encountered online, either by mistake or deliberately. Some of the key conclusions in this set of studies arise from the failure to find evidence supporting an effect. Proceeding from such findings to a firm conclusion is a logically dangerous endeavour: absence of evidence is not, of course, evidence of absence.

Respondent 61

The people reporting the greatest likelihood of sharing disinformation were on self-reported likelihood of sharing social media disinformation by far the most likely to spread material originally published by 'fake news' domains. Fake news on social media can influence users, manipulating them for details on social media, it's important to understand the impacts of sharing potential bias, and it may attempt to inspire anger or other strong feelings from the reader.

Individuals who encounter false information on social media may actively more than 10% of participants shared articles from 'fake news' domains during the scale asking "To what extent do you think this post was designed to appeal idea that digital literacy has a role to play in the spread of disinformation. claims of the online spread of rumors, fake news, and disinformation. Social media platforms rarely provide data to misinformation researchers. This is problematic as platforms play a major role in the diffusion.

Respondent 62

Misinformation is not a good news on social media. It should be vanished from social media websites. We only post the truthful informative news which only spread all over the media. And almost the most important thing about sharing some information to our contact means we should check whether it is really good, informative or fake news to spread. There are

so many kinds nowadays using social media. They may read good or bad news about anything. So parents should know how to stop or how to deviate form them anything else. But we should teach from social media why because there are good and useful messages are stored in social media websites.

Definitely every individual should know about the news or message which is very valuable and informative. After that only, they will share the messages to some persons in their contact list. We should have the potential and take care of the news on social media which is good and bad and what should be share what should be deleted in the media websites. We have come upon so many fake information news in media. But we need to check it whether it is true message or false message before we send it to anyone. And most important this is to the fake message sender will be get punished.

Respondent 63

This cooperation started with the joint Stop the Spread campaign in May-June 2020, which encouraged the use of trusted sources such as WHO and national health authorities for accurate COVID-19 information. The new phase of the joint campaign focuses on proactively identifying and reporting potentially wrong or misleading information, as part of WHO's efforts to address the spread of inaccurate and harmful information during the pandemic.

Social media platforms like Instagram and Facebook have become ingrained in the lives of countless individuals. With adolescents and young adults, particularly young women, being the primary users of such platforms, it is an important question whether social media use has an impact on self-concept, self-esteem, body image, and body dissatisfaction. Researchers have started to empirically investigate these questions, and recent studies show mixed results. The present article attempts to review these findings and offers possible explanations for effects of

social media use on body dissatisfaction, with a focus on Instagram, Facebook, and other popular image-based platforms.

Respondent 64

Fake news of social are really misinformation in the day to day life. Ther are many fake news are created the bad impression. Information over loaded the information in the user basies of quality. Because social media is a public platform, anyone—including news outlets—can post anything without being accountable for fact-checking. It's left to users to distinguish misinformation vs. disinformation in their feeds.

This study examines the effects of conformity to others online when individuals respond to fake news. It finds that after exposure to others' comments critical of a fake news article, individuals' attitudes, propensity to make positive comments and intentions to share the fake news were lower than after exposure to others' comments supportive of a fake news article. Furthermore, this research finds that the use of a disclaimer from a social media company alerting individuals to the fact that the news might be fake news.

Respondent 65

Social networking sites such as twitter or facebook are efficient channels for the propagation of misinformation because of the massive informational content shared by their users.regular social media users are responsible for most of information progated on social networking sites.since misinformation would have much less harmful effect if it were not made visible by being shared misinformation, the role of the regular users in amplifying the storm of misinformation.

Unethical behaviour.toxic work place culture.people often do discrimination and harrassment due to the misinformation.dishonest person do this more.who want to hide their original identity they shared a lot of misinformation in the social media.people definetely take ction towards them.they really want to change their character.because it affct more people.it made a bad impact on everyone life.so we need to take action towards the misinformation.

Respondent 66

The people reporting the greatest likelihood of sharing disinformation.the account that shared the post have emotional or professional stakes. that may even end up in mainstream media as topics worthy post and share content with a high emotional and normative charge. According to the corollary, individuals feel that those who are at a social they act as a bad. Information Overload Helps Fake News Spread, and Social Media Knows It ... actual social media: the probability that a meme would be shared.

it's important to understand the impacts of sharing potential bias, and it may attempt to inspire anger or other strong feelings from the reader. Cut the False Information Loop. Propaganda, misinformation, deep and cheapfakes, and other attempts at manipulation are prevalent post and share content with a high emotional and normative charge. The pragmatic value of sharing is more than asserting that someone said something.

Respondent 67

I am feeling bad and somewhat guilty while sharing the misinformation on social media. Individuals who encounter false information on social media may actively spread it further, by sharing or otherwise engaging with it. Much of the spread of disinformation can thus be attributed to human action. Experimental work has shown that exposure to disinformation can

lead to attitude change [5] and there are many real-world examples of behaviours that have been directly attributed to disinformation.

I would sharing the misinformation with some responsibility and consistency.While there are likely to be a number of other variables that also influence the spread of disinformation, there are grounds for believing that consistency, consensus and authority may be imporant.onstructing or targeting disinformation messages in such a way as to maximise these three characteristics may be a way to increase their organic reach. There is real-world evidence of activity consistent with attempts to exploit them. If these effects do exist, they could also be exploited by initiatives to counter disinformation.

Respondent 68

who encounter false information on social media may actively spread it further, by sharing or otherwise engaging with it. Participants also reported whether they had shared real-world disinformation in the past. Not all individuals who encounter untrue material online spread it further. In fact, the great majority do not. Twitter identified fraudulent accounts that simulated those of US local newspapers , which may be trusted more than national media. These may have been sleeper accounts established specifically for the purpose of building trust prior to later active use.

Disinformation is currently a critically important problem in social media and beyond. Social media disinformation is very widely used as a tool of influence, computational propaganda has been described as a pervasive and ubiquitous part of modern everyday life. Under some circumstances, we may carefully consider the information available. At other times, we make rapid decisions based on heuristics and peripheral cues.

Respondent 69

I think social media has made it so this is inevitable. It is a poison on society. People will soon not be able to tell the difference between fact and fiction, and soon after that, they will no longer care. Truth will become secondary to feeling good and getting attention. Temporary fixations on achieving selfish goals will triumph over long term knowledge and the advancement of morality and intellect.

I think morality plays a large role. When people are largely only thinking of themselves, they don't care much about misinformation and disinformation. The actual legitimacy of claims is secondary to what those claims can achieve for the individual, and how it makes them feel in the moment. When morality is more revolved around caring about other people, this goes away. Social media has degraded morality in society at an alarmingly rapid rate, and will continue to do so if no brakes are put on this train of disaster.

Respondent 70

Get Rid Of Some Common Thoughts- It's time to stop thinking in 'shoulds. I have really thought about my emotions seriously and actually considered the value of them. In the past, if I ever felt a certain away I never. The morality play is a genre of medieval and early Tudor drama. Morality plays, at least as the ... Thus, a major shift in focus, from concern for the individual's moral behaviour to concern for the individual's.

The emphasis put on morality, the seemingly vast difference between good and evil, and the strong presence of God makes Everyman one of the most concrete examples of a morality play.Morality play were usually from stories of the bible, which lent themselves to moral lessons and the miracles plays usually surrounded around the life a saint.The moral themes of the story

and the presence of characters such as the good angel and the bad angel are characteristic of a morality play. The story revolves around the conflict between good and evil.

Respondent 71

The word misinformation has been used since the late 1500s. But Solomon said the word was chosen this year because it also "ties to a lot of events that are happening in 2018." In Myanmar, misinformation, like hate speech and propaganda, fueled violence against Rohingya Muslims. For example, if people share information that they know to be false in a story or a picture, that is disinformation. Jane Solomon is a language expert with Dictionary.com. She told VOA that the choice of misinformation, instead of disinformation, was done for a reason.

Simplifying greatly, it seems to me that morality helps to provide security to members of the community, create stability, ameliorate harmful conditions, foster trust, and facilitate cooperation in achieving shared or complementary goals. In short, it enables us to live together and, while doing so,Role morality is the tendency we have to use different moral standards for the different roles we play in society. For example, we may follow one set of standards when among our co-workers and a different set of standards when among our friends.

Respondent 72

I think it's irresponsible to share misinformation online these days because there are so many resources available to double check your sources. Everyone should be aware that this is bad information floating around the internet and therefore, everyone should be vetting the information they receive and their sources before deciding to trust the news they see. If you're sharing that information with others, you're even more bound to make sure that the news is trustworthy and true.

I definitely think it's a moral issue when you share misinformation on social media while aware of the fact that the information you're sharing is wrong. Regardless of the intent, you're purposely spreading bad information that can affect other people. You have a responsibility to other people to vet the information you share. Let's take for example anti-vaxxers who share bad information regarding vaccines. This information is spread widely and affects many innocent children who cannot decide for themselves to get vaccinated. This is playing with the health and lives of children who can die if they contract a dangerous disease or have their lives forever changed.

Respondent 73

The shift from print sources of information to online sources and the rise of social media have had a profound impact on how consumers access, process, and share information.The repetition of false information will make that information feel truer (something called the illusory truth effect). If the misinformation starts to feel true, you may decide to share. Thus you become an unwitting agent of the people trying to spread misinformation and disinformation.

For a related case study about a medical doctor who facing a conflict at work because of role morality, read Healthcare Obligations: Personal vs. Institutional. Terms defined in our ethics glossary that are related to the video and case studies include: conformity bias, morals, obedience to authority, and role morality.How can you guard against being the victim of role morality? Mental health clinicians are taught to introspect about the degree to which their own background, culture, values, and beliefs may affect their reactions to their clients, and to strive to maintain objectivity in the process of assessment, diagnosis, and treatment.

Respondent 74

It feels me guilty and this makes me less secure for the misinformation. In this social media, this information sharing makes me little more confusing for the encryption of the data that we have used. The information that could be more secured while it takes to the google and Facebook. High end of quality information could leads this to the same types of information that doesn't leads to the same misunderstandings.

It always develops in the information sharing to others. This could also takes us to the confidence level where each could make all time effort in the same conversation. Morality is the major role in every human life where they could be very personal to others and their colleagues. In every time they could have the same type of morality that leads a better life. One could have the individual mortality which has more ethical issue.

Respondent 75

While fake news is garnering significant attention in today's media landscape, its prevalence and importance will only grow in coming years. Increased capacity of artificial intelligence in social media algorithms to target, track, and increase audiences for specific content simultaneously expands convenience for consumers while increasing the dangers of fake news.

Pressure has been placed on social media companies like Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram to improve their false content monitoring and address their content promotion algorithms, which boost the visibility of high-traffic posts frequently involving fake news. As recently as October 2020, both Facebook and YouTube have decided to reject ads globally that discourage people from getting a COVID-19 vaccine, but the ability for these policies to be enforced remains to be seen.

The way that gossip spreads around a school is similar to how fake news spreads around the internet. It can start small, but grow very quickly, and it's hard to contain once people start believing it.

In the past few years, the term "fake news" has become a common phrase used everywhere from the White House podium to your daily meme thread. It's a force that is changing the way people around the world relate to their communities, their governments, and even to themselves. While fake news has existed for a long time, only recently has it been able to spread at incredibly fast rates and go viral to millions of people.

Definition: Fake news is false information intentionally presented as factual news with an intent to deceive.

How It Works: Before the rise of social media, the spread of information was controlled by tv stations and newspaper companies. Today, just about anyone can create a headline or post a photo with no requirement that they represent accurate information.

Respondent 76

In general, I think social media platforms need to do more to prevent falsehoods from being spread. By that, I mean they need to constantly have fact-checkers active to ensure that people aren't being bombarded with misinformation or disinformation.

It would have been ideal to have social media training in schools so we would be inoculated against becoming misinformed (they have this now, but this wasn't a thing before for obvious reasons). Even critical thinking skills would have helped, but we can't act as though everyone who spreads misinformation is unintelligent.

The problem is that a lot of the things people share on social media actually look like they're coming from legitimate news providers / legitimate organizations. Not everything that labels itself as independent media is actually unbiased, and not all blogs are actually spreading misinformation. I'll give you an example:

Nature is a prestigious journal where most of us could only dream of publishing. So if someone is writing articles for their blog, there's a very good chance it's backed up by actual scientists.

Social media is unintuitive because for most of human history, we never had the opportunity + ability to publish information to the public domain, or even to publish information to a large number of private individuals.

You'd never accidentally write a letter to 100 of your friends about how your boss is such an asshole, or how you're thinking of divorcing your wife. But you might post a social media update that effectively achieves the same thing. The main thing I think is to realize that 'privacy' doesn't really exist anymore, if it ever did. Everything we do or say can be amplified by others to a dramatic degree. Your personal message to one person might end up on the front page of Buzzfeed in 30 minutes. A question that I've often grappled with is- am I responsible for how other people

Respondent 77

The repetition of false information will make that information feel truer (something called the illusory truth effect). If the misinformation starts to feel true, you may decide to share. Thus you become an unwitting agent of the people trying to spread misinformation and disinformation, and always.

The simple thing is to not require answers from people. Instead, encourage people to withhold answers if they aren't sure. When you do this, people are more likely to evaluate information.

Therefore, it is important to understand who extends the organic reach of disinformation, and why. The answers to those questions will help inform the development of effective interventions, and always The people who subsequently see it may then share it to their own

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social networks, potentially leading to an exponential rise in its visibility. Research has suggested that relatively few people (maybe less than 10% of social media users) actively.

Respondent 78

I feel like the amount of misinformation going around now days is not a good thing to help our race progress. There are too many people who believe everything they see on the internet. They do not realize the ability to fake things if you edited the video. I do think that the current 'fact-checkers' are not very credible as well because they do not act in the correct way when it comes to censoring content.

I believe the individuals immorality takes a big part in posting misinformation on social media. They choose to post it because they know the content is known as viral. People get a rush when they get a lot of likes and comments on their social media content. They do not care if they tell the truth or not they only want the attention. I have come to the conclusion that these type of people need to be either put into a concentration camp to do hard labor or be executed.

Respondent 79

IT is very harsh indeed that any sorts of misinformation make that one very hectic and it gives the meaning and doubt having that it will be wrong and it leads to the irrelevant points and it takes to the another level and makes that waste of time.Understanding more about why people share misinformation, and how it spreads, leads to proposed solutions — a goal that becomes more important as people spend more time on social media platforms, and the connections between misinformation and election results become clearer.

Any individual misinformation are in danger that irritates the person that our morality is misinformed and it gives a poor king of a feel to that person and make him suffer more due to

this and it wont help him either.Encountering Fake-News ... thought it was to publish and share that headline when they saw it again – even when it was ... exposure to the headlines would affect intended social-media ... assesses individual differences in deliberative thinking.

Respondent 80

My feelings about sharing misinformation on social media is that it should not be shared. I think if someone is unsure if something is accurate or true then they should not be posting about it. I think it's important to make sure things are true before writing about them. Opinions are always okay to make but when people try to misinform others about certain issues that's when I think they are wrong.

I think morality plays a big role in sharing misinformation. If someone is moral then they are sure to think about what they are sharing and they might think what if I post something and I am wrong. Also if people are immoral then they might just not care if what they are sharing is true or not. I think it does play a big role but there might be cases also where someone is moral and still shares misinformation so it just depends on the situation.

Respondent 81

I will not accept it to much because it is my intention to share only good things in social media so i do not want false partitions. My aim is to make peaple belive in social media so that people can llose confidence i the miscon ceptions and share only real ideas and news. That the most people and children are searching for good ideas and news searcing for real information and social media so that people can llose confidence i the miscon ceptions and share only real ideas and news.

It is a bad idea for people who share misconceptions in social media because it should be intended only to inform people of good things in social media that it is a bad thing for me to say that the worst thing is that the most people and children are searching for good ideas and news searcing for real information. My aim is to make peaple belive in social media so that people can llose confidence i the miscon ceptions and share only real ideas and news.

Respondent 82

I honestly don't think it should matter. I feel as though no matter what my feelings are, there are still a large amount of people posting misinformation on social media. And, because of this, nobody should trust anything that is posted on social media. This should be common knowledge and a common practice among people. It comes with the territory. Therefore, if you're trusting information posted on social media, and it's misinformation, that's really on you for believing it.

I obviously think it's immoral to post misinformation on social media; however, at the same time, I don't necessarily think people post misinformation on social media on purpose. I don't think their intent is to hurt people to trick people. I think they are really just trying to get attention. They are people who are in need. They're lonely, they need the attention, and, the only way they know how to get attention is to post misinformation to get people to pay attention to them. They post interesting things regardless of if they're true or not.

Respondent 83

Sharing misinformation can result to deceit and misleading of the individuals. Misinformation can attract unnecessary attention to individuals who can spread and mislead to masses and society and hence, it needs to be discouraged. Misinformation has resulted to global fake news that lure social media users to believe what is not there. As a result, people

have lived in lies while others convinced on some information that is not true. In most cases, misinformation comes inform of an attractive deceit i.e. social engineering, that is meant to grab the attention of the viewers. It is therefore the role of the individual to be on the lookout and use appropriate fact checks when deciding what to view and the one that is not to avoid the rotting of the society.

Individual's morality determines the perception of the information shared. on most occurrences, people target to view morals that are rotten in the society and use them to manipulate others. For instance, an individual centered on bad morals can chose to mislead the masses through sharing misinformation. Since most o the misinformation shared can attract a lot of attention, the individuals on social media can view it and actively share and mislead the others. Therefore, as an individuals with good morals, there is need to have a critical thinking mind and be able to and distinguish between misinformation and and the one that is accurate in order to avoid sharing of false information.

Respondent 84

I feel there is no value in it. I think it just causes problems for society, and helps to divide people. It's made it so that even things that should be universally accepted are now called into question. We have people who refuse to get vaccinated - in the middle of a once in a lifetime global pandemic - because of what they've read on social media. It's also the reason why we've seen the rise of absurd theories like people believing the Earth is flat, or that tragedies like Sandy Hook were all staged and were actors. While conspiracy theories like that have always existed - moon landing hoax theories come to mind - social media has allowed them to grow out of control.

I think a person's morality plays into it a lot. If they don't realize they're sharing misinformation, they do so thinking that they're helping others. They probably have good intentions driven by their morals. But for those who do know, they simply enjoy spreading lies, and are driven by a lack of morals. They know what they're saying is false, but gain pleasure out of fooling others. Or they enjoy the chaos that they sow when they see how these lies effect people in the real world. Or they enjoy the attention, they like making things up and making people eat out of the palm of their hand, and they care not that their words are falsehoods. Or maybe they're immoral and driven by greed, and spreading misinformation is a part of their business, like Alex Jones.

Respondent 85

One time i shared misinformation about one special VIP person. After some moments, i faced so many reweet comments regarding that post. I am not expected that one. So many peoples scold me regarding that post and advised to me that post. Finally, i removed the post from social media. After that incident, i share only right post. At first and last, i never involved some unwanted event. So many peoples scold me regarding that post and advised to me that post.

At individually i felt too much and disturbed too much in my life. This is not happened before in my life. At first and last, i never involved some unwanted events and unwanted information, i never shared misinformation to someone who knows or unknow. This is not happened before in my life. At first and last, i never involved some unwanted event. So many peoples scold me regarding that post and advised to me that post.

Respondent 86

I am slightly nervous about the misinformation sharing on the social media sometimes. There are more fake news spread all around the world. Sharing content with others is a daily activity and most social media users participate without much thought. Partitioning occurs as a result of a split-second decision, but its effects are lasting and ripple effect: because partitioning multiplies misinformation.

The role of regular users in amplifying the storm of misinformation deserves further scrutiny because their well-intended acts of sharing content have an aggregated disastrous effect on the online information. Look here, this is worthy of your attention". In this interpretation of sharing as a gesture of pointing, the truth value of information shared is not the most important factor for the users. It is possible, of course, that I share something because it is true.

Respondent 87

Now a days social media is the major platform for sharing information, so if we share a news it will spread fast. So if we share a fake news it will spread fats and may cause danger to other people who may believe the news true. If we share a misinformation in social media the news may affect many people and most of them do wrong things as per the information provided in the news. so it is very danger to all so sharing misinformation is not good to me and all the other peoples. Good information share slowly but bad information share very fast so don't share misinformation in social media.

My role in sharing misinformation is that any news I heard or saw in social media first I have to check whether the news is true or not then only I have to share the news. If I saw any others sharing fake news I must warn them or to strike the post to avoid further sharing. This action may help many others from seeing the other post and believing the news to be true. so my morality is to avoid sharing fake news and to avoid others sharing the fake news.

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Respondent 88

I think you shouldn't disillusion your friends. If you don't know something as fact, please don't pass it on. We have enough half truths going on and we just need actual facts. Don't spread bullshit and don't negatively impact others' lives. In my area, people don't get the best education. It results in a lot of a bad outcomes. Please, just don't perpetuate it. It's for the best, seriously. We should come together and not egg everyone on.

If you truly believe in it, go ahead and share your thoughts. However, we all now know that disinformation is being spread. Don't be a dumbass. Read up on it. Make sure you're not spouting BS. I just wish we weren't in this culture where everything could be interpreted as truth. No one believes anyone online anymore. I have no clue how to fix that. We have fact checkers, but that doesn't do much. Just use logic and common sense and not your biases.

Respondent 89

In social media many people share false news, it affects lots of people. They don't know the correct news. If sharing disinformation on social media. The spread of fake newsd on the internet is a cause of great concern for all members of society, including government, policy makers, organization, business and citizens. Fake news is specifically designed to plant a seed of mistrust and exacerbate the existing social and cultural dynamics by misusing political.

The fake news and its viral circulation have become a grave concern in the era of social media. It affects lots of people and their life. They don't have any personal motivation they want to spread the fake news universally and their post are spread universally. Disinformation is created to deceive. This can be unavoidable. Government may strict the rules to prevent many people from this misinformation. And punish the people who spreading false news.

Respondent 90

I do not think people should share disinformation or misinformation on social media or anywhere, if they realize that is what they are sharing. I know our society values lying and dishonesty, but I do not. I believe in honesty and want to know the truth about things. One exception could be someone trying to remain anonymous and thus attributing their achievements to someone else or allowing someone else to take credit for them; this is not ideal either, however.

As, I alluded to above, if someone thinks lying is a good thing, like our society implicitly teaches, they might actually think it is a good thing to share disinfo and misinfo. Someone who doesn't believe in any objective morality could make any number of excuses to do it also. They could try to say they are doing it for national security or for the children or some other BS. Lastly, someone like me it who believes in truth will do their best to never share either disinfo or misinfo.