

## Strategies for Combating Media Disinformation through Multimedia Storytelling: A Case Study of the 7iber Platform

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### Abstract

This paper will discuss the strategies employed by the Jordanian media independence site 7iber to counter misinformation via multimedia storytelling. The study took a qualitative case study design of exploration that involved content analysis of 16 news stories (articles) published between 2013 and 2025 and objective analysis of five in-depth interviews with key founding members. The results indicate that 7iber takes a multi-layered approach that is not restricted to fact-checking. They came up with five overarching strategies: deconstructing and contextualizing misinformation, framing human-centered narratives, strategic integration of multimedia, commitment to in-depth investigative journalism, and the promotion of implicit media literacy. Collectively, these measures form a concept of resilience-based journalism, a framework that facilitates resilience of society against misinformation. The research discovered that 7iber considers its audience as active contributors of meaning making. She also pointed out the need for independent media to cooperate to make algorithms more reliable in times of crisis.

**Keywords:** Media Disinformation, Multimedia Storytelling, Investigative Journalism, Arab Media, 7iber

### 1. Introduction

The modern international system of information is in a very serious crisis of trust, where the main cause is the extensive and harmful flow of fake news. This is what has been labeled as the fake news, which threatens directly the very principles of democratic societies, relying on the public awareness in order to think, make choices, and take responsible actions. The disinformation Dishonest or fake information intentionally published in order to mislead the masses has become a common characteristic of the digital public, affecting attitudes, spreading divisions, and refuting institutional authority (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). The opening of communication technologies to democracy has led to the greater availability of information, and on the other hand, misinformation has become spread like wildfire. The use of social media algorithms, which are structured in a way that favors engaging and emotional appeals, places more emphasis on sensational content rather than factual information, which many scholars refer to as an infodemic that causes the blurring of truth and falsehood boundaries (Surjatmodjo et al., 2024).

There are social and political implications of this crisis of disinformation on an international scale though its effects are catastrophic particularly in those regions that are characterized by weak media systems and freedom of media. The history of the power of state media, extensive censorship, and the inability to access reliable information have been long ruining the trust of people (Cosentino, 2022). The information space is complex and it comprises of digital audiences that are informed by local and global narratives, transnational satellite network, and multilingual communities. Such a setting not only is a political and ideological control weapon of disinformation but also a by-product of the technological shift. In times of crisis or war, disinformation is used in default by people to silence the opposition, promote sectarianism, and dominate the language of the masses. This information war has been aided by regional conflicts and the competing actors have attempted to dictate the narratives through organized social media campaigns and fake images and videos. The result is a divided and polarized media industry, where the citizens are more likely to lose their belief in the idea of objective truth and are unable to distinguish the credible and the lie.

Multimedia narratives have become an efficient approach to combating disinformation in this unstable communication environment. They can be used to provide the viewer with a multi-dimensional, emotionally engaging means of grasping information that is complicated by integrating text, pictures, videos, audio clips, and interactive graphics. Multimedia formats based on narratives are especially useful in addressing the problem of deception, as they combine the complexity of investigative journalism with the accessibility and emotional appeal of visual media (Caled & Silva, 2022). These approaches are not merely exposing fallacies; they restructure the informational system, clarify the processes of production, and make human beings victims of disinformation. Multimedia narratives use a variety of sensory and cognitive channels, and they give viewers indicators that they are being manipulated and that simplistic or polarizing interpretations are being presented (Suau Martínez & Juarez Miro, 2024).

Thus, multimedia storytelling is consistent with the so-called resilience-based model of countering the disinformation, as construed by the scholars of communication. This model is based on the development of critical thinking, empathy, and contextual awareness, and the correction of false information. This type of narration applies the same mechanics that are used by disinformation emotional appeal, visual appeal, and social involvement but focuses it on the truth and transparency. The proposed intervention methods by Okuhara et al. (2025) were visual and narrative, which ought to improve the recollection of information among the audiences and decrease their vulnerability to misleading claims. On the same note, studies in media psychology show that multimedia material enhances the understanding and retention of information especially to the young audiences who are mostly subjects to the digital world of visuals. (Arbi & Juhana, 2024). The results highlight the fact that the counter-disinformation does not only involve a technical problem, but also a communicative and cultural one, whereby novel stories must be created to restore trust and meaning.

Recent studies have established that the misleading information presented visually especially deceptive photographs and manipulated video content is a major percentage of the fake news presented on social media sites, mostly concerning political and security news. (Aljalabneh, 2024). At the same time, the independent media projects aimed at restoring popular control, as well as objective accounts, have been observed in the region. These platforms, as a solution to information disruption, are now using multimedia stories as a strategic and ethical response, and frequently have limitations due to economic and political forces. By incorporating reporting with the use of easy creative formats such as infographics, interactive graphics, podcasts, and storytelling through documentaries, Tayia (2022) has further facilitated media literacy and transparency by making it easier to understand and follow the information presented through various formats.

These are only a few of the trailblazers, but a good example of endurance and creativity is 7iber, an independent online platform in Amman, Jordan.

7iber was established in 2007 as a citizen media platform funded by its founders; it has evolved into a Jordan-registered LLC and media organisation dedicated to promoting an open society through values of accountability, the rule of law, human rights, and pluralism. The organisation achieves its mission by producing original multimedia journalism, hosting public talks and debates, researching internet governance and digital rights, and conducting professional media training. Currently financed through grants and media projects, 7iber's work is supported by partners such as the European Endowment for Democracy (EED), International Media Support (IMS), the Netherlands Embassy in Amman, the Open Society Foundation (OSF), and the Swiss Embassy in Amman, building on past collaborations with organizations like the Heinrich Böll Foundation, SIDA, and Hivos (7iber, 2025).

The platform is committed to providing multimedia and comprehensive news implementation and supporting the standards of accountability, pluralism, and human rights (Hamdo, 2022; Sobrino, 2021). The campaigns of 7iber in a small media environment where distortion succeeds on ambiguity and the sensational show that the multimedia storytelling can be a democratic instrument of participation and critical discourse. Through transparent sourcing, contextualizing complicated matters, and amplifying minority voices, 7iber does not only disrupt mainstreams but also directs the general population to critical assessment of information. (7iber, 2025).

The general idea is that to re-brand journalism as a search of truth, facts, emotions, and ethics, one will need to examine the multimedia storytelling. The insights into the world of the global media, particularly into those aspects of it where the struggle against disinformation cannot be disentangled of deeper questions of governance and civil culture, such as the Arab world, are the key to such projects as 7ibr. The text concludes with the statement that it is not only the technological solutions that are required in the context of overcoming the lies and that the threats that are on the high level, such as deepfakes and generated media, are to be counteracted. It requires an extreme re-birth of the civic journalism task, narrative imagination and audience engagement.

## 2. Literature Review

The literature review provides the theoretical framework for understanding disinformation and its spread in the modern digital ecosystem. It provides a general overview of the prevailing international approaches formulated to combat this

phenomenon, along with their strengths and weaknesses. Later, the review concentrated on exploring the opportunities of multimedia storytelling as a particular and ever-more crucial counter-disinformation approach. Lastly, it will place these larger themes in the context of the sometimes-challenging media environment of the Arab world. It will also examine the pressures and opportunities influencing the work of independent media houses like 7iber, thereby defining the scholarly gap that this case study will fill.

### Conceptualizing Disinformation in the Digital Age

The academic discussion on false and misleading information has led to the development of a more sophisticated typology to define different types of information disorder. Wardle & Derakhshan (2017) proposed a framework of information disorder types based on the motive of harm in one of the Council of Europe's seminal reports. *Misinformation* is false information exchanged without bad intentions, while *disinformation* is information exchanged with the intent to cause harm. The third type is *malinformation*, which consists of the intentional publication of real information to harm, e.g., doxing or hate speech. The term "*fake news*" has become widespread in everyday speech. In scholarly discussions, the use of the term is often avoided because trust in media has become deeply politicized, shaped by decades-long institutional decline, making such labels insufficient to capture the complexity of the current information environment. (Zuckerman, 2017).

Users may find themselves trapped in filter bubbles or echo chambers because personalized content feeds are susceptible to manipulation and can amplify pre-existing biases. Furthermore, they are exposed to fewer alternative viewpoints, making them easier to manipulate (Allen, 2012). Moreover, the erosion of traditional media business models has emptied local newsrooms, creating news deserts that are easy prey for disinformation peddlers. (Stonbely et al., 2015). The combination of these technological capabilities, economic incentives, and human psychology has provided fertile ground for what is now commonly referred to as the "infodemic," in which an excessive abundance of information, much of it false, makes it challenging to find reliable sources and guidance when needed. (WHO, 2020).

### Global Strategies for Countering Disinformation

To address this crisis, a wide range of disinformation countermeasures have emerged across journalism, education, technology, and policy. The most prominent of these is the fact-checking movement. Organizations such as PolitiFact, FactCheck.org, and the International Fact-Checking Network (IFCN) actively work to identify and debunk false claims in the public sphere. Despite its vital importance, fact-checking presents significant challenges. Studies have indicated that corrections can be limited in scope and do not always reach isolated communities that have entrenched the original falsehoods at the highest levels. (Graves, 2018). Furthermore, the sheer volume of disinformation often overwhelms fact-checkers' capacity, creating a seemingly endless, unwinnable game. The cognitive phenomenon of confirmation bias and the so-called continued influence effect imply that, despite receiving corrected information, people can still preserve the belief in the initial falsehood. (Ecker et al., 2010).

Due to the shortcomings of reactionary solutions to the problem, numerous attempts have been made to adopt proactive solutions, primarily based on media and information literacy (MIL). These measures are intended to empower citizens with the critical thinking skills they need to assess information sources, recognize manipulative information, and interact with the digital world responsibly. (Bulger & Davison, 2018). School-based educational and community-based awareness campaigns, as well as point-of-consumption interventions (e.g., pre-bunking or inoculation theory, i.e., exposing audiences to diluted versions of manipulative argumentation), have all shown promise. (Roozenbeek & van der Linden, 2019). Nevertheless, the long-term effects of such interventions and their scalability remain the subject of research and discussion.

The second central theme of counter-disinformation has been part of technology platforms themselves. The desire of social media companies to be more transparent and accountable has generated considerable controversy and pressure, leading them to propose changes to algorithmic amplification, implement stricter content moderation policies, and divest from disinformation sites. (Gillespie, 2018). The Disinformation Practices Act and the Digital Services Act are prominent regulatory efforts aimed at making platforms more responsible for the content they host and advertise. (European Commission, 2022). However, these attempts are complex. Difficult questions arise concerning freedom of expression, what constitutes harmful content, and the potential for establishing new forms of censorship.

### Multimedia Storytelling

Amid all the controversy surrounding fact-checking and platform control, an increasing body of literature identifies the power of narrative and narrative-telling as a strong counter-disinformation tool. Disinformation often succeeds not because of its accuracy but because of the simplicity, emotional appeal, and logical nature of the story it tells, which align with an individual's personal worldview. (Fisher, 1984). It may not be effective to counter such accounts with a list of dry facts. Multimedia storytelling, including text-visual, audio, video, and interactive narratives, constitutes an effective tool

for building potent counter-narratives that can attract viewers on cognitive and affective levels. (Dahlstrom, 2014). Pictures, specifically, are an important part of the contemporary information setting. The emergence of so-called visual and multimodal disinformation (manipulated images, out-of-context videos, AI-generated 'deepfakes') demands an equally advanced visual response. (Aleessawi, 2024).

It is now apparent that information should be accompanied by relevant pictures and images to make the message appear more credible, memorable, and engaging. (catipovic, 2024). Digital journalism tools can help organizations go beyond the debunking of facts and offer a more contextual perspective of reality, including interactive infographics that enable individuals to discover data on their own or audio documentaries that offer a more human view of a complicated matter. This strategy is in line with evidence, indicating that narrative-based corrections can be more effective than direct refutations since they can be used to fill the knowledge gap that occurs when a misconception is debunked. (Okuhara et al., 2025). One way that journalists can resist the temptation of misinformation is by making an effective compelling story and packaging it in an interesting, memorable way.

### The Arab Media Landscape

The specific political and media environment defines the combat against disinformation in the Arab world. The MENA region has traditionally been characterized by a media system dominated by state-controlled sources, in which journalism is often used as a propaganda tool by ruling regimes and as a vehicle for official discourse. (Howard & Hussain, 2013). In most countries, press freedom is grossly suppressed, and journalists are often censored, harassed, and jailed. It has cultivated a culture of mistrust of the traditional media by the masses, leaving a gap that practitioners of disinformation, both domestic and foreign, can easily fill. It has created a vacuum of distrust toward traditional media among the masses, which can be easily filled by both domestic and foreign entities that deal in disinformation. (Cosentino, 2022). The current warfare and political polarization in the region have transformed the information space into a battlefield, where disinformation is actively used to demonize the adversary, recruit supporters, and conceal human rights violations. (Accorsi, 2025).

In this context, the emergence of the internet and social media has been proclaimed as a liberating force, giving people their own voices in journalism and alternative voices, especially during the Arab Spring revolts of 2010-2012. Nevertheless, the authoritarian regimes have evolved, and they have carried out the so-called digital authoritarianism, with the same digital tools, they have performed surveillance, promoted pro-government propaganda, and harassed activists and journalists on the internet (Cosentino, 2022).

This has made the digital arena highly competitive, with independent media outlets constantly innovating to survive, stay afloat, and retain credibility. It is in this sphere of contention that a vibrant ecosystem of self-sustaining Arab media and fact-checking projects has emerged. Arab Reporters to Investigative Journalism (ARIJ), an organization that supports investigative reporting in the region, and the Arab Fact-Checkers Network (AFCN), a group that unites fact-checkers to collaborate and exchange best practices, are two at the forefront of this movement. Today, these organizations are embracing new forms of journalism characterized by independence, investigative journalism, and full engagement with society. They use digital media to bypass traditional gatekeepers and reach the public directly, often employing the same multimedia and narrative skills discussed in this study.

### Research Gap

The literature review above indicates a few important points: disinformation is a multidimensional and complex phenomenon with technological, political, and psychological aspects; the number of counterstrategies is large, but none of them is enough, which causes the desire to create more persuasive narrative-based strategies. This is also particularly burdensome and critical in the Arab media environment, the object of the study of such dynamics. Despite the existence of a research on disinformation and Arab media, the literature does not include research on the intersection of the two. There is a paucity of studies that have undertaken a comprehensive and qualitative analysis of the manner in which the independent Arab media houses strategically employ multimedia narration as a strategy of resilience against deception. This 7iber case study will help to close this gap. The primary question that this article answers is the following: What are the multimedia storytelling techniques that the 7iber platform uses to fight media disinformation and increase the level of awareness of the population?

### 3. Methodology

This paper adopted a qualitative case study to evaluate the storytelling techniques of the Jordanian media outlet 7iber to refute disinformation using multimedia. The research question that the strategy is oriented to is: What strategy does 7iber use to counter disinformation? It encourages a deep, holistic perception of a modern phenomenon in its practical setting. (Chen, 2022). Instead of a quantitative design, a qualitative design was selected due to the fact that the research is process-oriented, there is a strategic decision-making, and the journalistic practice is complex, among others. (Aleessawi,

2023). This study can be termed as a case study. This research has a definite objective. It is not merely knowing 7iber. One must understand how independent media organizations in difficult situations fight disinformation, and 7iber is a Jordanian media organization. 7iber was selected as a critical case to be analyzed because the direction and activities of this organization can generate more information and can influence the formation of knowledge more than other possible cases (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 229). This platform was established in 2007 and has recorded its history of becoming a professional watchdog organization out of a citizen blog. The site is specifically devoted to multimedia journalism. It has been known as the most popular independent voice in the Middle East and North Africa area. (Hamdo, 2022).

#### Data Collection

To ensure a comprehensive and multifaceted analysis, this study triangulates its data sources through qualitative analysis of 7ibr's published news stories and in-depth interviews with key figures. This combination of public-facing content and internal perspectives is designed to provide a sober understanding of the strategies employed to verify and detect fake or misleading topics, and the rationale behind them.

#### Content Analysis Corpus

The information to be used in this research will consist of a sample of 16 news items published by 7iber between 2013 and 2025. A corpus of this nature was chosen on the basis of a document that was offered at the beginning of the research, and which included articles that specifically covered the topic of disinformation, media credibility, fake news, and propaganda. The inclusion criteria of this study were (1) the articles should be published by 7iber within the given period, and (2) the articles should be mainly aimed at countering or analyzing disinformation, which is revealed by the titles of the articles, their content, and their multimedia components. This is an adequate purposive sampling method because it is needed to make sure that the content under analysis is relevant to the research question. The 12-year gap between the articles also allows viewing the strategies of 7iber in terms of a longitudinal perspective of how it has evolved over the years and how it has adjusted to a new media and political landscape. Table 1 below includes 16 articles published by 7iber (Hibr) that specifically address the topic of disinformation, media credibility, fake news, propaganda, and similar problems, and apply multimedia storytelling. 7iber is determined to fight misinformation in the Arab world, which is reflected in the date of its coverage, 2013 to 2025 (Table 1).

Table 1. The articles analyzed (N=16)

| Date       | Title                                                              | Links   |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------|
| 2013-12-30 | Propaganda within Propaganda                                       | 7iber1  |
| 2016-03-06 | Is Twitter's End Near?                                             | 7iber2  |
| 2016-12-08 | How Facebook Post Leads You to State Security Court                | 7iber3  |
| 2016-12-25 | Media in Karak Events: Surrender to Self-Censorship                | 7iber4  |
| 2017-01-12 | Post-Truth Media: Lie Until I See You                              | 7iber5  |
| 2018-05-20 | Why Did American Media Coverage of Gaza Seem Different?            | 7iber6  |
| 2018-10-16 | How We Continue: Dialogue on Independent Media                     | 7iber7  |
| 2020-03-04 | Is American Media Hostile to Bernie Sanders?                       | 7iber8  |
| 2021-03-23 | How Scientists Underestimated Coronavirus Mutations                | 7iber9  |
| 2021-06-02 | Facebook and Twitter Policies and Institutions                     | 7iber10 |
| 2022-02-06 | Coronavirus Will Surprise Us Again                                 | 7iber11 |
| 2022-05-19 | Pharmaceutical Companies and the COVID-19 Pandemic: Mutual Benefit | 7iber12 |
| 2023-07-30 | Death of Facebook                                                  | 7iber13 |
| 2023-10-26 | Soldiers in Journalist Vests: Western Media as Israeli Battalion   | 7iber14 |
| 2024-03-04 | ZAKA and Western Media: Alliance That Fabricated October 7 Lies    | 7iber15 |
| 2025-10-01 | Larry Ellison and TikTok Acquisition: Israel's Long Arm            | 7iber16 |

Source: Authors' own work

#### In-Depth Interviews

The study used in-depth interviews with five key individuals within the 7iber organization to supplement the content analysis. The interviews revealed the why and how, the editorial decision-making, the strategic thinking behind the use of multimedia tools, the perceived impact on audiences, and the internal challenges faced in producing this work, while the content analysis reveals the what of 7iber's strategies. These interviews would be semi-structured in a real-world research setting, allowing for both flexibility to explore emergent themes and a consistent line of inquiry. (Aleessawi, 2023). Table 1 lists the interviewees' roles and demographics.

Table 2. Profile of Interview Participants

| Name | Gender | Age | Yrs. of Experience | Role                            |
|------|--------|-----|--------------------|---------------------------------|
| P1   | Female | 50  | 10                 | Editor-in-Chief                 |
| P2   | Female | 45  | 9                  | Senior Investigative Journalist |
| P3   | Male   | 35  | 5                  | Multimedia Producer             |
| P4   | Male   | 40  | 7                  | Editor                          |
| P5   | Male   | 48  | 9                  | Reporter                        |

Source: Authors' own work

#### Data Analysis

The analysis of the collected data proceeded in two parallel streams: a qualitative content analysis of the article corpus and a thematic analysis of the interview transcripts:

#### Content Analysis

A strict qualitative content analysis was applied to the 16 articles in the corpus. It is an approach that presupposes the systematization of textual and visual data through coding and interpretation, enabling the identification and grouping of key themes and patterns. (Neuendorf & Kumar, 2015). The coding frame used in the analysis was constructed using both a deductive approach, in which coding concepts were identified through the literature review, and an inductive approach, in which new codes were generated from the data itself. (Aleessawi, 2023). This mixed methodology has enabled this analysis to be both theoretical and empirically sensitive. The article itself, including its text, headlines, pictures, and integrated multimedia elements, served as the unit of analysis. The coding frame is presented below (Figure 1):

- **Primary Disinformation Theme:** Political Propaganda, Health Misinformation, Media Manipulation, and Corporate Disinformation
- **Counter-Disinformation Strategy:** Debunking/Fact-Checking, Deconstruction, Contextualization, and Narrative Framing
- **Multimedia Element:** Data Visualization, Interactive Element, Audio/Video Report, and Infographic

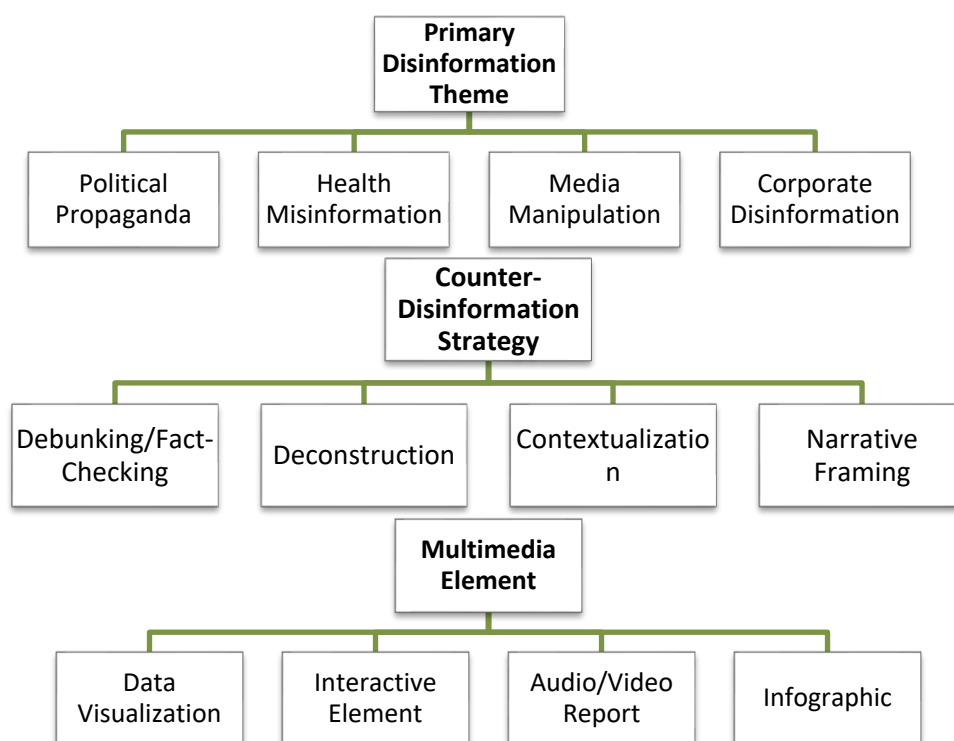


Figure 1. Content Analysis Coding Frame

Source: Authors' own work

The content analysis coding frames are shown in figure 1. Primary Disinformation Themes category determines the main themes of fake stories and their sources. Political Propaganda is the most common of these themes and encompasses politically driven or state-funded disinformation that is aimed at shaping the perception of the population in the face of a

crisis or a policy debate. **Health Misinformation:** The dissemination of false or misleading claims regarding medical-related issues and crises in the health of the population, which is particularly evident during such events as the COVID-19 pandemic. **Media Manipulation:** There are instances where local or international media houses manipulate the facts, favor their narrations, or leave out certain facts to promote a particular ideological or political agenda. **Corporate Disinformation:** Misinformation that is propagated by a corporate actor (e.g., pharmaceutical or energy firm) to protect a financial or reputational advantage by employing misleading PR campaigns (Makanai et al., 2022).

Fact-checking and debunking are the most direct approaches to disinformation fighting. This entails the systematic disproving of certain false claims using verifiable evidence, which is normally done by making keen visual comparisons in order to determine the truth. (2) **Deconstruction.** This applies journalistic methods of analysis to deconstruct disinformation stories and reveal how fake information is created, propagated, and amplified, usually by tracing their origins. (3) **Contextualization.** This includes trying to offer a larger historical, political or social background to disprove misleading or non-contextual arguments, such as trying to use the history of the conflict to redress contemporary distortions. (4) **Narrative Framing:** An imaginative and strategic response to the disinformation that is utilized on the human-centered narrative. These reframe the problem by using real life stories (who the people who went through it were) to create empathy and create awareness, instead of addressing the lie. Multimedia elements refer to the different formats employed to add value to content and make it more engaging to the audience. In the case of complex information (e.g. government spending), data visualization employs charts, maps, and graphs to make the information available and clear to the viewers so that they can see the patterns behind it. (5) **Interactive Content:** Elements that encourage participation, allowing audiences to learn more about the material, such as by viewing interactive timelines of a misinformation campaign. (6) **Audio and Video Reports:** Critical devices to bring credibility and emotional authenticity, including first-hand accounts, professional commentary, and scenes on the ground. (7) **Infographics:** Quick visual overviews of important facts, typically used as instructions (e.g., how to tell a deepfake or a manipulated image).

#### Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis framework (six stages) by Braun and Clarke (2006) was applied to the interview transcript. This process can be done in the following way: (1) familiarization with the data by reading it multiple times; (2) identifying the first theme codes that define interesting characteristics of the data; (3) searching the existence of broader themes by combining codes into possible thematic groups; (4) reviewing these themes by determining whether they make sense and are well supported by the data; (5) defining and naming final themes that will be reported in the analysis; and (6) creating the final report, which will tie the analysis of the themes back to the research question. This logical procedure enabled the determination of the patterns of recurrence in both the strategic thought and the operational styles of the 7iber team.

#### Ethical Considerations and Limitations

Interviews were also considered as a secondary data collection tool, which is more comprehensive and illustrative. The research design involved obtaining informed consent of all participants, allowed them to withdraw, and ensured their anonymity and confidentiality. The case study was not intended to be statistically generalized but analytically generalized where the results support theoretical constructs and give a detailed exemplification that makes it easy to comprehend similar situations. (Chen, 2022). In order to minimize the bias of researchers in analyzing qualitative data, a strict systematic analytical process was embraced.

### 4. Results and Discussion

This part is devoted to the discussion of the research results and answering the key question: What strategies does 7iber employ in fighting misinformation with the help of multimedia storytelling? Thematic analysis of in-depth interviews with five prominent members of the 7iber team is discussed in addition to the findings of a study that involved 16 articles published by 7iber between 2013 and 2025. The section incorporates both the outcomes of the analyses.

#### Overview of 7iber's Counter-Disinformation Content

The content analysis will demonstrate the main trends in the publication schedule of the journal "7ibr" and the subjects of its interest. According to this strategy, the sixteen articles were classified in terms of their key themes to make them easily available. A visual representation of the data as shown in figure 2 indicates how these articles are distributed among the main themes.

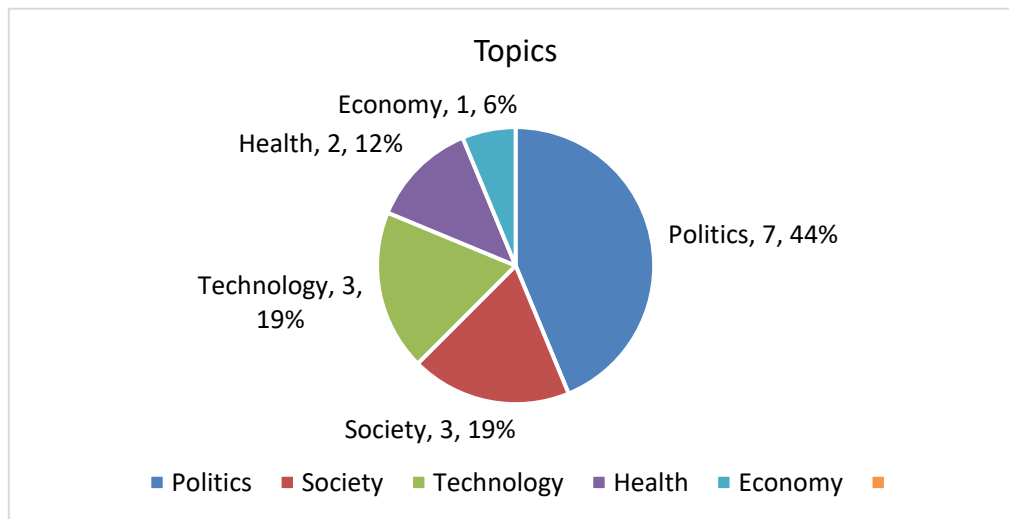


Figure 2. Distribution of 7iber articles by thematic category (2013-2025)

Source: Authors' own work

Figure 2 shows the thematic trend that highlights the interest of the study in political disinformation and demonstrates the broad editorial approach of 7iber, which involves various industries that influence the perception of the population and the well-being of democracy. The fairly equal representation of non-political groups highlights the fact that 7iber is aware that disinformation is not a political issue only, but a widespread problem in society. Moreover, the prevalence of political content indicates that the platform depends on the deconstruction, contextualization, and investigative stories, which have developed in high-stakes political conditions. Lastly, the fact that sixteen articles have been produced in a span of twelve years shows that counter-disinformation journalism has been institutionalized and is a sustainable practice in 7iber. This supports its credibility and strength, and its dedication to independent, truth-oriented reporting under pressure and systemic censorship. P1 (personal communication, 2025) noted that *"politics is the main battleground for narrative control in our region. Misinformation is not random; it is a tool of power. Therefore, our work must be directed towards power structures, and this is political in nature."*

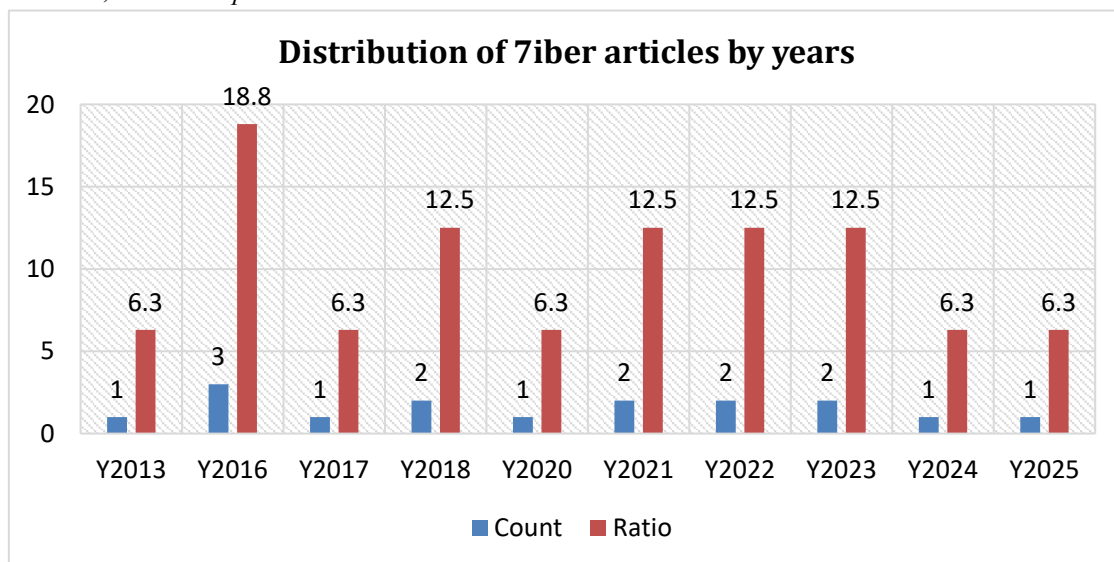


Figure 3. Distribution of 7iber articles by years (2013-2025)

Source: Authors' own work

The figure illustrates the distribution of 16 articles on disinformation on the 7iber website across five thematic categories from 2013 to 2025. This suggests that 7iber's editorial focus has been shaped by regional political dynamics and its role as a watchdog. Political disinformation accounts for most of the content, with seven articles (44.0%) demonstrating that false information in the Arab world is primarily used as a tool of government propaganda and to consolidate power. The next tier, society and technology (each with 18.8%), illustrates 7iber's interest in how false information affects people and how



digital platforms can spread and control false stories as digital authoritarianism grows. Health-related disinformation (12.5%) has become more prominent during the COVID-19 pandemic, but its small presence suggests it is less prevalent in Jordan. The least prevalent type of disinformation is economic disinformation (6.2%), likely because it frequently intermingles with political stories.

The temporal pattern of the articles, represented in Figure 3, indicates a continuous, if not always level, preoccupation with disinformation themes across the 12 years. The publication frequency shows spikes in some years (e.g., three articles in 2016), which tend to coincide with major political events or changes in the media environment, such as the growing state presence in online spaces. The regular patterns of output over the years (2021-2025) indicate that combating disinformation has emerged as an increasingly core and institutionalised dimension of 7iber. This fact is in line with the larger trend that literature has shown in recent times, as media organizations have had around the world to build a more situated response to tackle what the WHO defined as “infodemic.” (WHO, 2020).

#### Types of Multimedia Elements Are Used

Table 3. Types of Multimedia Elements Used by 7iber news stories (N=16)

| Sub-Category                          | F  | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|----|------------|
| Articles (text-based)                 | 16 | 100.0      |
| Videos                                | 2  | 12.5       |
| Infographics/Data Visualizations      | 2  | 12.5       |
| Images (photos)                       | 14 | 87.5       |
| Social media posts (embedded)         | 4  | 25.0       |
| Multimedia (text with multiple types) | 13 | 81.3       |

Source: Authors' own work

The media mix analysis of 7iber shows a highly developed dedication to the fight against information disorder, which is strategically oriented on the academic principles but limited by the need to use the traditional, text-based forms of communication. Statistics show that articles (100.0%) and images (87.5%), in-depth analysis in the form of written analysis has become one of the major trends in "7ibr." This highlights the essence of the deconstruction, contextualization, and promotion of media literacy (62.5% of the content). This is a prerequisite of systematic critique: as explained by P1, it is not enough to declare something as being incorrect; it is necessary to demonstrate to our readers how they are being manipulated by revealing the mechanisms of disinformation. This methodological effort requires a long-established and developed argument in the text, which is necessary to create credibility in an environment of mistrust like the Middle East and North Africa (Howard and Hussain, 2013).

Moreover, the use of embedded Social Media Posts (25.0%) plays a vital role in that it allows the article to serve as a case study in media literacy (P5: *"We are not merely giving them the fish; we are teaching them how to fish"*), whereby the original artefact is deconstructed in context (Lai, 2024). Though both Videos and Infographics/Data Visualizations have low usage at 12.5%, this is a strategic vulnerability in an age of digital visual information.

The lack of infographics undermines the success of the Strategic Multimedia for Verification method. P3 refers to the significance of "journalistic transparency" through visuals: *"A graph can often be more powerful than a paragraph of text."* When complex evidence (like scientific information on health disinformation) is presented in the form of mainly text, its initial, coercive force is undermined, although research verifies that images enhance credibility and message recall (Čatipović, 2024).

Low video utilization reduces the effectiveness of Human-Centered Narrative Framing. P2 makes a point that the best counter to disinformation is to "re-humanize the story" to create empathy. Video is the best medium to achieve that since stories are more persuasive than rigorously logical arguments. (Fisher, 1984). By grounding emotional resonance in text, 7iber will not necessarily connect well with users who primarily use sources of information optimized for short-form, high-intensity video consumption.

#### The Sources of Information Does 7iber Rely On

Table 4. Sources of Information (N=16)

| Sub-Category                                   | F  | %    |
|------------------------------------------------|----|------|
| Primary sources (interviews, surveys)          | 10 | 0.62 |
| Secondary sources (academic articles, reports) | 12 | 0.75 |
| Expert opinions or testimonies                 | 14 | 0.87 |
| User-generated content                         | 8  | 0.50 |
| Official documents/government data             | 15 | 0.93 |
| Eyewitness accounts                            | 12 | 0.75 |
| Anonymous sources (protected)                  | 4  | 0.25 |

Source: Authors' own work

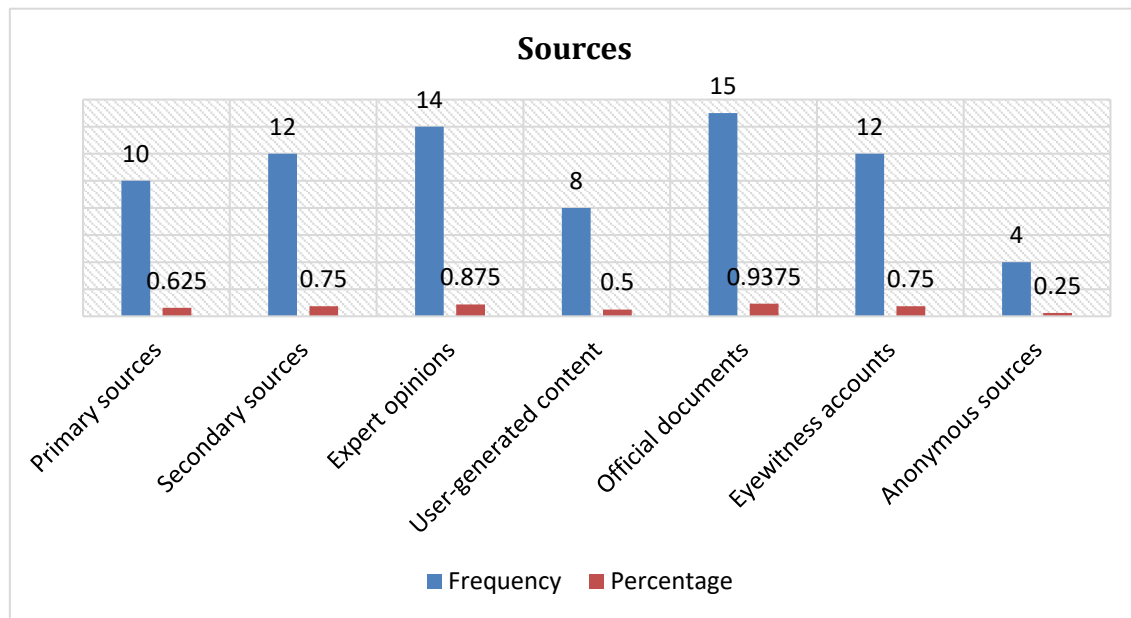


Figure 4. The Sources of Information Does 7iber Rely On

Source: Authors' own work

The results displayed in Table 4 and Figure 4 suggest a distinct sourcing pattern in 7iber's journalistic work, characterized by a firm reliance on institutional and expert sources, with a cautious use of community-based and human-interest sources. The findings suggest that official reports and government statistics (93%) combined with expert opinions and witness statements (87%) constitute the nucleus of 7iber's reporting frame. This priority reinforces an editorial strategy that prioritizes credibility. In this strategy, verifiability and traceable evidence protect against false information and bias. This reliance aligns with the post-2016 global journalistic trajectory of transparency and documentation, as noted by Wardle & Derakhshan (2017), who argued that credible journalism must achieve "cognitive flexibility" through institutional verification. Likewise, Allcott and Gentzkow (2017) show that verifiable sources fight the viral distortions of the internet era by basing stories on facts and not emotions. The high percentage of secondary sources (research reports and graduate studies, 75%), as well as eyewitness accounts (75%), is an effort on the part of 7ibr to balance the analytical richness of graduate studies with the practicality of life. This two-fold approach is a fine line between objectivity and humanism- applying facts to provide credibility and leaving the personal testimonies to draw a picture of social reality. This strategy is a veiled assertion of journalistic autonomy in the contexts where state narratives are expected to take center stage in the discourse of the masses.

On the other hand, preliminary interviews and surveys (62%) and user-generated content (50%) suggest that 7iber has been lagging behind in adopting participatory journalism, which is in line with recent suggestions by Roozenbeek and van der Linden (2019) and WHO (2020), which have emphasized the importance of community engagement and contextual reporting in the fight against misinformation. Nonetheless, this inclusion is still censored user generated content is not considered as an independent source of truth but as advice that should be checked. The fact that the number of anonymous sources used is low (25) shows that 7iber is interested in transparency but also creates ethical issues regarding suppressed or intimidated voices in politically sensitive cases. We begin with what we can certify documents and data as explained by a 7iber editor (P4) in an interview but we do not stop there. We interview victims, yet all narrations must go through the fact-checking process. When people are given confidentiality, they have first been proved to be true by us. The report represents a hybrid newsroom model, which is based on institutional authority, its truthfulness being checked by expert intervention, and supplemented by human sources. The results indicate that 7iber is shifting to a multi layered and hybrid source model that integrates factual and narrative awareness. This is in line with international best practices on fighting disinformation. Combining official facts, professional analysis, and a human point of view, 7iber does not only increase the transparency and credibility of its reporting but also creates a regional model of independent journalism based on verification and civic participation.

### Core Strategies for Countering Disinformation

Qualitative analysis of the article collection and interview data revealed five key, interconnected strategies that define 7ibr's strategy for combating disinformation through multimedia storytelling. These are: (1) deconstruction and contextualization rather than simple refutation; (2) framing the narrative around people; (3) the strategic use of multimedia for interaction and verification; (4) investigative journalism as a core pillar; and (5) fostering media literacy through journalistic practice.

Table 5. Core Strategies for Countering Disinformation

| Strategy                                     | F | 7iber Articles  |
|----------------------------------------------|---|-----------------|
| (1) Deconstruction & Contextualization       | 5 | 1, 4, 6, 8, 14  |
| (2) Human-Centered Narrative Framing         | 1 | 3               |
| (3) Multimedia for Engagement & Verification | 3 | 9, 11, 12       |
| (4) Investigative Journalism                 | 2 | 15, 16          |
| (5) Fostering Media Literacy                 | 6 | 2, 5, 7, 10, 13 |

Source: Authors' own work

The table summarizes the prevalence and intensity of five dominant strategies (deconstruction and contextualization, human-centered narrative framing, strategic use of multimedia, investigative journalism, and promoting media literacy) across sixteen articles from the 7iber website. Overall, the results demonstrate a sophisticated, hybrid model of counter-disinformation journalism that combines critical research, in-depth narrative analysis, and multimedia verification. The following analysis describes each strategy set, its notable strengths, and its function within 7iber's editorial system. Each of these strategies is discussed in detail below.

#### Deconstruction and Contextualization

The deconstruction and contextualization is one of the most outstanding strategies of 7iber, which is a high percentage of the analyzed content (31.25%). This plan specifically aims at disinformation, which is a purposeful creation of false information that is meant to harm. Deconstruction is not just the process of correcting a misstatement, it is the process of showing how and why the story was created, identifying the political agendas, sources of funds, and methods of manipulation (P1, Personal Communication, 2025). Scholarly studies suggest that simple debunking may undermine trust in specific claims, but it is important to put them into perspective to challenge the structural determinants and information environment that support propaganda (Wardle and Derakhshan, 2017). This critical analysis makes 7iber look more credible as an alternative source of information, even where the population does not trust mainstream media that is controlled by the state.

#### Fostering Media Literacy

The other preventive measure to increase audience resilience is Fostering Media Literacy, which has an equivalent prevalence rate as deconstruction (31.25%). This plan is grounded on the inoculation theory that states that prior exposure to weakened instances of manipulation techniques or pre-disinformation may cause resistance to the later exposure to more complicated disinformation. (Roizenbeek & van der Linden, 2019). It aims to make the audience focus not on the assessment of the content but on the assessment of the source and motivation and then on the critical questioning of them (P5, Interpersonal Communication, 2025). This is significant since the social media algorithms are biased towards emotionally charged information, which spreads misinformation faster (Allcott and Gentzkow, 2017). The way 7ibr frames the articles as case studies in media literacy directly deals with how the audience is able to cope with a more complex information environment.

#### Strategic Use of Multimedia for Verification

18.75% of articles employ multimedia strategically for verification, aiming to enhance the transparency and credibility of the evidence. This strategy acknowledges that lengthy texts often omit information, such as scientific data or financial reports. To counter this, 7iber utilizes graphical techniques, interactive charts, and scientific diagrams. This visual approach is not merely a tool but also "*an act of journalistic transparency*" (P3, Personal Communication, 2025). Research demonstrates that the use of visual evidence—i.e., charts or image-modified comparisons—can significantly enhance the credibility of corrective messages and lead to greater information retrieval compared to textual corrections alone (Čatipović, 2024). Therefore, this approach is essential to support the rigorous research conducted within 7iber's other strategic pillars.

#### Investigative Journalism as a Pillar of Strength

One of the essential mechanisms of establishing trust and determining high-risk disinformation campaigns, which are normally political or institution-based, is investigative journalism (12.5%). It is a time-consuming and

resource-intensive method whereby it takes a lot of time and resources to create well-documented and in-depth reports that can challenge strong narratives. The architecture of the product makes it a strict guard against the next generation of acts of disinformation, which improves the image of the company as one that does its due diligence and is open and transparent (P4, Personal Communication, 2025). In the case of low trust in the environment, frequent performance of credible investigative reporting will contribute to the formation of trust as it will give the people a familiar and trustworthy source in the surrounding confusing information.

### **Human-Centred Narrative Framing**

Human-Centered Narrative Framing (6.25) is an emerging strategy of pushing the disinformation that narrows complex truths into simplifications and dehumanizations. It has used the Narrative Paradigm. What (Fisher, 1984) assumes is that human beings are by nature, *homo narrans* (story people) who are more readily persuaded by stories that exhibit a sense of coherence and faithfulness to their own experience of life than they are persuaded by logical argument *per se*. Through narrating the story about a person or people who were the victims of policies or wars that were likely to mislead people, 7iber aims to make the story more human and create empathy (P2, personal communication, 2025). Such an affective appeal has a significant protective effect against the black-and-white, often hateful, slogans spread by unfriendly actors, and it demonstrates that corrections made in the form of narratives can be rather effective in transferring the real-life effect of disinformation. (Okuhara et al., 2025).

As a media outlet, 7iber has a hybrid strategy in fighting against disinformation, which would enhance resilience of the population against systematic manipulation by media. The analysis identified five main strategies that were mainly aimed at preventative intervention methods and not corrections as reactive. The two most widespread strategies that are deconstruction and contextualization and media literacy building, are associated with the critique and prevention, respectively. To the political goal of fighting disinformation, deconstruction can be used to reveal the machismo of fake news. (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). This can also be achieved through media literacy which tries to equip the audience with an inoculating theory that can help the audience to resist manipulation (Roozenbeek & van der Linden, 2019). The analytical endeavors are backed by strategic application of multimedia verification that uses data visualization to make evidence more credible and transparent. (Čatipović, 2024). The importance of low-frequency storytelling, investigative journalism, and human-based framing will be crucial: the former creates the institutional legitimacy of the long term that allows challenging the dominant actors, and the latter successfully uses the sympathetic and model-based narrative as the means of dehumanizing propaganda. (Fisher, 1984). Collectively, these techniques show an advanced and situation-specific approach to the information disruption management.

### **5. Conclusion**

The paper has found that 7iber has created a sustainable institutional framework of counter-disinformation journalism, which is based on the level of analytical depth and a civic mission. The review of 16 articles (2013-2025) and interviews with team members show that disinformation countering is a highly established editorial priority at the platform.

The 7iber content is dominated by political disinformation (44%), which demonstrates the impact of disinformation/misinformation on political manipulation in the Arab region. Nonetheless, the social, technological, health, and economic coverage shows that 7iber perceives disinformation as a social issue that is endemic. The fact that these reports were continued over 12 years in the same publication proves the editorial coherence as well as the institutionalization of the reporting by facts and politics was the main battlefield in the battle of domination of the narratives. The results show that the stories that 7iber writes are based mostly on textual narratives (100%), and images (87.5%), which is a high level of adherence to analytical writing. Nevertheless, the absence of video and infographic media (12.5) is a gap that could have been used to create more visual appeal and user-engagement. The items such as including social media posts (25%) would enable the site to educate the readers on how to recognize the deceptive messages so that every article will be a form of successful media literacy exercise. Moreover, its use of official documents (93%), expert opinion (87%), and witness testimonies (75%) provides 7iber with the advantage in the aspect of the transparency and credibility. Its prudent application of user-created content (50%), and anonymous (25%), is a sign of ethical wisdom in delicate political circumstances which balances institutional caution with human testimony.

Thematic analysis shows that 7iber has five strategies that make up its approach; deconstruction and context (31.25%), media literacy promotion (31.25%), strategic use of multimedia (18.75%), investigative journalism (12.5%), and Human-Oriented Narrative Structuring (6.25%). Combined, these strategies indicate a prolific, organized and instructional model of journalism, one which seeks to create societal resilience instead of refuting lies. HIBER is a local framework of disinformation fight. Though it has had limited multimedia features, its mix of fact-checking, storytelling, and civic engagement is a local model of independent journalism that fights disinformation and rebuilds trust in the population in the era of global infodemic. The authors suggest the following to be based on the findings:

The multi-faceted, resilient strategy (both media houses and journalists) would not only help citizens to discern lies but also to learn how and why disinformation is perpetrated, which would help to create the long-lasting resilience among the citizens, instead of making one-time amends.

- Adopting a comprehensive, resilient approach (for both media outlets and journalists) would empower citizens not only to distinguish falsehoods but also to understand how and why disinformation occurs, thus contributing to building sustainable public resilience rather than relying on temporary fixes.
- The authors recommend long-term, sustainable funding for media development organizations and donors to produce high-quality, in-depth investigative and multimedia journalism, which is essential for credibility and long-term impact.
- Expanding the reach of trusted and independent media on technology platforms to prioritize trustworthy content in algorithms, particularly during times of crisis or politically charged situations.

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### **Author contributions**

Prof. Kamel Murad and Dr. Najm Aleessawi conceptualized the study, designed the research framework, and supervised the whole manuscript. Dr. Samar Makanai contributed to the literature review, data organization, and preliminary analysis. Dr. Khalaf Lafee Alhammad conducted data collection and supported methodological validation and interpretation of findings. Dr. Ismat Haddad participated in drafting sections and refining the discussion. Najm Aleessawi also contributed to the paper's final academic editing. All authors participated in revising the manuscript, approved the final version for publication, and agreed on the authorship order.

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