MEDIA EDUCATION AND THE FIGHT AGAINST FAKE NEWS: PREPARING STUDENTS FOR CRITICAL THINKING

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ABSTRACT

Media education is an essential tool in combating fake news, especially in a global scenario marked by the massive dissemination of misleading information on digital platforms. This article aims to explore how media literacy can promote critical thinking, empowering students to identify and analyze false information, as well as fostering an ethical and responsible stance in the consumption and sharing of content. Through a literature review, we analyzed scientific articles, books, and theses published between 2015 and 2024, through Bardin's content analysis. The discussion covers concepts of media education, impacts of fake news, pedagogical strategies and barriers to the implementation of this approach in schools. The results show that the integration of media education in school curricula is fundamental to form critical and informed citizens, prepared to face the challenges of the contemporary digital society. This work contributes to the theoretical and practical advancement of the theme, highlighting the role of educational institutions in the construction of a more responsible and conscious informational culture.

Keywords: Media Education. Fake news. Critical Thinking. Pedagogical Strategies. Digital Citizenship.

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INTRODUCTION

The dissemination of information is today broader and faster than at any other time in history, since communication has become a globalized experience through digital technologies. On the other hand, this perspective has brought with it considerable challenges. One of these is the attention of fake news, also known as fake news, which has caused profound social, political, and cultural impacts. Fake news directly affects public opinion and replaces fundamental institutions for democracy (Spinelli; Portas, 2022).

Given that social media has become the go-to source of information for millions of people around the world, it's crucial to possess the ability to differentiate what's true from what's not. That is the reason why media literacy should become the central part of school curricula and develop a critical mindset among students. Most importantly, this approach not only helps to combat the spread of fake news but also solidifies ethical citizenship (Silva et al., 2023).

The media literacy approach, which develops critical activities, is an effective way to deal with fake news. This level instructs tactics of examination, confirmation of sources, and positioning of the narrative, decreasing the likelihood of people being deceived or manipulated into a common pattern through journalistic fear (Vasconcelos et al., 2023). In addition, there is the ethical issue of the responsibility of the consumer of the message, when the type of training makes the individual understand the weight of his participation and know how to identify misinformation. In this sense, there is the social aspect and the consumption of beliefs, which shape trust and strengthen society against mass manipulation (Boechat et al., 2023).

Another relevant contribution is the interdisciplinary accessibility offered by instructive communication. As it provides data from fundamental domains such as history, social sciences, and languages, academic ideas connect to practical everyday issues, promoting engagement and deeper understanding of today's world (Doyle, 2022). However, the lack of a comprehensive public policy and adequate educational resources remains a major obstacle to effective media literacy. Many educational institutions simply do not have the resources or knowledge to implement such a policy in practice. The lack of special training for educators and deficits in up-to-date teaching materials considerably reduce the scope ôf this pedagogical effort (Grossi et al., 2021).

The inclusion of digital technologies in the educational process provides a valuable perspective to overcome these barriers. Tools such as fact-checking platforms, video

editors, and social media can turn learning into an interactive and practical experience when used pedagogically. These technologies not only bring students closer to the real context but also increase their critical thinking capabilities (Castro, 2024). In addition, it is also important to raise awareness among the entire school community about the importance of the media education process. Within the school environment, the representatives of principals, teachers and the students themselves have complementary roles that jointly contribute to the implementation of a culture of critical analysis, as well as accountability for the production and dissemination of information (Marques; Fráguas, 2021).

The need to combat fake news becomes even more pressing in crisis situations, such as elections, pandemics, and natural events. In these situations, misleading information can cause social panic, polarization, and even acts of violence. Thus, it is a priority to prepare people to know how to deal with these possible situations in an informed and conscious way (Nascimento; Morais, 2024). It is with clear reason that media education emerges as a powerful strategy in preparing individuals for the future. By teaching processes and practices of verification and analysis, the school fulfills the social role of forming autonomous and reflective citizens (Ribeiro; Modesto, 2023).

Therefore, this article proposes how media literacy can be used as an effective tool to combat fake news. He highlights pedagogical methodologies, the challenges involved in their implementation and presents examples of good practices. The main objective is to provide a theoretical basis that supports the integration of this theme into school curricula, as well as to inspire educational initiatives that are as innovative as responsibilities.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative approach and is based on a literature review, which is widely used in academic research to identify, gather and critically analyze information from various reliable scientific sources. A literature review is a methodology that allows the researcher to explore the state of the art of a topic, contributing to the advancement of knowledge by synthesizing the main findings of different authors (Severino, 2017). This method is especially suitable for investigating how media literacy can be an effective tool in combating fake news, given the vast scientific production available on the subject.

The selection of sources was carried out based on previously established criteria, such as the relevance of the content, the quality of the publications and the timeliness of

the information. Scientific articles, books, theses, and dissertations published between 2015 and 2024, available in databases such as Scielo, Google Scholar, and CAPES journals, were analyzed. The choice of the time frame reflects the need to use studies that dialogue directly with the current scenario, marked by the intensification of fake news and the growing importance of media education (Santos, 2020).

The analysis process was continuous based on the critical reading of the selected texts, based on thematic categories related to media education, fake news, critical thinking and pedagogical strategies. The qualitative analysis of these categories made it possible to identify patterns, gaps and trends in publications, allowing an in-depth discussion on the potentialities and challenges of integrating media education into school curricula (Bardin, 2016).

The methodology adopted allows a comprehensive understanding of the theoretical discussions on media education and its impact on the fight against fake news. Based on the synthesis of the available evidence, this work seeks to offer theoretical subsidies that guide educators, policymakers, and researchers interested in strengthening critical thinking and informational responsibility in the school and social context (Severino, 2017; Bardin, 2016).

THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA EDUCATION

Media Education seeks to prepare students in a broad and effective way to understand, analyze and criticize the media in their plurality and diversity, ranging from traditional media, such as newspapers and radios, to modern digital platforms, including social networks and blogs. (Spinelli; Portas, 2022) Through carefully planned and optimized educational methods, Media Education aims to promote the development of critical thinking, essential for the analysis and evaluation of the information that circulates, in addition to training students to be able to discern reliable information from false information. (Silva et al., 2023)

The aim is to provide a deeper, more complex and richer understanding of the social, political and cultural impacts that the media has on society. (Boechat et al., 2023) This innovative and comprehensive approach is not just limited to training conscious and critical consumers; It also seeks to prepare responsible, active and participatory citizens in the context of contemporary digital society, enabling them in a solid way to interact in a

reflective and informed way with the different types of media that surround them and influence their daily lives. (Vasconcelos et al., 2023) Thus, Media Education becomes a fundamental tool for the empowerment of individuals in the information age, promoting the critical analysis of media messages and strengthening the ability to position oneself in an ethical and informed way in the contemporary discussions that shape our world. (Doyle, 2022)

The definition of Media Education encompasses a broad and diverse set of fundamental practices, methods, and competencies that are absolutely necessary for individuals to understand, interpret, and at the same time, produce media content in a critical and reflective way. (Grossi et al., 2021)

The importance of this education goes far beyond the simple understanding of communication; It is directly related to the development of essential skills that enable them to identify the veracity of available information, question media discourses that may be biased and, likewise, understand the strategies that are elaborated and used to manipulate public opinion on various platforms. (Castro, 2024)

By promoting media literacy effectively and comprehensively, educational institutions not only prepare students for the digital age filled with varied and complex information, but also for a world where the ability to accurately interpret and contextualize information becomes absolutely crucial for citizen participation that is both active and responsible. (Marques; Fráguas, 2021)

This preparation is vital to train individuals who can critically navigate the various sources of information available, allowing them to make informed and conscious choices in their social, cultural and political interactions, thus contributing significantly to the construction of a more just and enlightened society. (Nascimento; Morais, 2024).

THE IMPACT, PROPAGATION AND CONSEQUENCES OF FAKE NEWS IN SOCIETY

Fake news has an extremely significant and deeply disturbing impact on modern society, and can considerably influence public opinion and, in extreme cases, even result in very negative and harmful consequences for democracy as a whole. (Quixabeira; Leite, 2024)

The rampant and accelerated spread of fake and misleading news, often facilitated by social media and new technologies, can lead to an alarming increase in political polarization between different social groups, fomenting divisions and antagonisms. This

situation generates widespread distrust in government institutions and traditional sources of information, which already face additional challenges in maintaining their credibility and relevance. (Ribeiro; Modesto, 2023)

In critical and sensitive situations, the spread of incorrect or misinterpreted information can even lead to violent and extremist actions that pose a serious threat to peace and public order. Thus, it is essential and urgent to deeply understand the seriousness of this complex and multifaceted problem that affects all of us, in different ways. (Junior; Silva Alfaya, 2023)

In addition, it is necessary to seek effective and innovative ways to combat it in a comprehensive and coordinated manner. This involves the active participation of civil society, the media, digital platforms, and even the authorities in the collective effort against disinformation. Dialogue, media literacy, and the promotion of critical thinking must be at the heart of these initiatives, so that we can restore trust in truthful and reliable information, which is essential for the healthy functioning of a democracy. (Souza et al., 2024)

The spread of fake news is historically facilitated by social networks and the incredible speed with which information is shared between users of different digital platforms. The constant interconnection of individuals creates an environment conducive to fake news spreading easily and quickly. (Paes Delgado; Milaré, 2022)

This results in alarming and, in many cases, devastating consequences, such as the uncontrolled spread of disinformation, which can have a profound impact on the construction of public opinion, provoke crises of trust in essential institutions, and even influence electoral processes crucial to democracy. (Marini, 2023)

In addition, the phenomenon of fake news also contributes to the reinforcement of harmful stereotypes and prejudices, which spread easily, fueling a culture of intolerance and social divisions that become increasingly evident. This environment of misinformation and unwanted manipulation of mass social behavior becomes a worrying reality, affecting the way people perceive and interact with the world around them and shaping their opinions and actions. (Pessoa et al., 2023)

It is crucial and urgent to proactively address the devastating consequences of fake news, adopting an active and conscious stance in the search for truth, which must be a collective priority. Empowering individuals, especially students and young people, to actively identify, analyze, and question the information they consume in their daily lives is fundamental to the formation of critical and conscious citizens. (Massini et al., 2023).

This critical education therefore becomes a powerful tool in defending against the spread of misleading content and, at the same time, promotes an informed society that can withstand the negative impact of misinformation and manipulation. By adopting this approach, it is possible to cultivate a culture of critical thinking and responsibility that is essential for strengthening democracy, social coexistence, and promoting a healthier environment for dialogue and interpersonal relationships (Scarcella, 2024).

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO PROMOTE MEDIA EDUCATION

To promote media literacy in a truly effective and comprehensive way, it is really essential to adopt diversified pedagogical approaches that encourage the active and engaged participation of students throughout the learning process. (Duarte, 2024) Strategically, initiatives such as teaching based on collaborative projects and enriched with dynamic group discussions, in addition to the critical analysis of real and contemporary cases, emerge as fundamental and essential methods aimed at engaging students in a meaningful and productive way. (Malta et al., 2024)

Such approaches not only favor deeper and more lasting learning, but also promote the development of students' critical thinking about news, information, and the various forms of media that permeate their daily lives and influence their lives. (Silva et al., 2023) In addition, it is of paramount importance and high relevance to integrate media education in existing disciplines, such as history, social sciences and Portuguese language, as well as in other curricular components that make up the rich and diversified teaching grid. (Fortes; Silva, 2024)

This integration not only provides students with a comprehensive and deeply contextualized view, but also allows them to understand the significant relevance and impact of media on their lives and contemporary society (Guimarães et al., 2023). In short, by implementing diversified methodologies and integrated interdisciplinary content, we can foster an educational environment where media is not only consumed but also critically and consciously understood, preparing students to be more informed and active citizens in the modern and ever-evolving digital age (Oliveira et al., 2023).

Among the efficient pedagogical approaches to promote media literacy, a series of diverse strategies stand out, including the careful use of methodically crafted case studies, which provide students with a deep analysis of real and complex scenarios, and practical

activities that involve verifying reliable sources of information, allowing students to develop a critical and accurate look at the avalanche of data they receive daily (Doyle, 2022).

Simulations of real situations that students can experience more engagingly are another fundamental tactic, as they create an active and interactive learning environment (Sousa; Albuquerque, 2024) The continuous stimulus to the production of informative and critical content represents a valuable proposal for the formation of informed citizens; by creating and sharing their content, students hone their writing and argumentation skills, while also gaining a deeper understanding of the mechanisms that govern the flow of information in today's society (Oliveira et al., 2024).

By engaging students in activities that reproduce the contemporary and complex media environment, it is possible to develop important skills of critical analysis and discernment. (Raminho et al., 2024) These effective processes enable students to accurately identify and effectively combat the fake news that frequently circulates on the various digital platforms they use daily, increasing their resistance to misinformation and helping them to become active agents in the fight against information manipulation (Silva; Silva Bertotti; Vitorino, 2022)

In addition, the creative use of digital technologies and social media as educational tools can make the learning process much more dynamic, engaging, and closer to the students' reality, allowing them to become more conscious, critical, and responsible consumers and producers of information in their interactions and sharing, cultivating a reflective and ethical posture in the face of the information they receive and disseminate (Almeida; Andresen, 2024).

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES AND MEDIA EDUCATION

Digital technologies play a fundamental and crucial role in media education, offering a multitude of essential tools and resources that are indispensable for the teaching process and effective learning (Veloso et al., 2023). Among the various examples that we can consider, we have social media platforms that, in essence, allow dynamic interaction and the enriching exchange of ideas between students and educators, promoting a collaborative environment (Júnior et al., 2024).

There are also websites dedicated to fact-checking, whose function is to help ensure the veracity and reliability of the information shared in the vast network of content available on the internet (Souza, 2023). In addition, video and image editing software become

valuable tools that enable the creation of attractive and informative audiovisual content, playing an essential role in the expressiveness and creativity of students. Not forgetting the educational podcasts and blogs, which emerge as rich sources of knowledge and discussion around various relevant and contemporary topics (Santos; Veraszto, 2024)

These are just a few of the numerous innovative tools that can be used with the explicit intent of promoting effective media literacy and the development of meaningful critical thinking in students of all ages and backgrounds. (Silva; Monteiro, 2024). The integration of these technologies into the learning environment not only improves the overall educational experience but also empowers students to explore, analyze, and create content more productively and effectively, always seeking to adapt to different learning styles and paces (Moura et al., 2024). This process, in turn, contributes to the development of crucial skills that enable students to identify false information, understand different points of view, and communicate in an ethical, responsible, and informed manner in a world that is becoming increasingly interconnected and complex (Ledur; Santos, 2021; Furtado et al., 2023).

The adoption of these technologies, therefore, proves to be an indispensable aspect in the formation of critical and well-informed citizens in contemporary society, preparing them for the challenges of the future and positive and healthy engagement in their communities, as well as in the vast digital world in which we are immersed. This commitment to media education is essential to ensure that young people become not only receivers of information, but also conscious and responsible producers who contribute to a space for dialogue and continuous learning (Silva, 2022).

In the incessant and constant search to promote quality media education, dedicated and committed educators have at their disposal a wide and varied range of highly effective and innovative tools, resources, and methodologies (Pederzini, 2024). These options make the teaching process not only more engaging and interesting for students, but also more dynamic, interactive, and stimulating. Fact-checking platforms, such as Snopes and other similar ones, play a fundamental and crucial role in this educational process (Nazareno; Reisdörfer, 2024).

They help develop and enhance students' critical thinking, an essential skill these days. This becomes even more relevant and imperative when assessing the veracity and reliability of the information that is disseminated on social networks, in the vast and comprehensive vastness of the internet and other means of communication (Soares et al.,

2024). The information that circulates can often be misleading, biased, provocative, or even completely false. Therefore, the ability to discern the true from the false, from the correct from the incorrect, is more important and necessary than ever in today's society (Faustino, 2023).

EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING STRATEGIES

Assessing the effectiveness of the various teaching strategies about media education and the fight against fake news is extremely crucial and relevant to verify not only the real impact of teaching these essential skills in our current scenario, but also for the future of education in an increasingly globalized and digital world (Alves; Grohs, 2024)

Through analyses that can be both qualitative and quantitative, it is possible to accurately observe how the development of critical thinking in students occurs, as well as their ability to identify, discern and analyze fake news that comes from different sources of information, whose consequences can be quite harmful in various social contexts (Santos, 2023).

This analysis not only reveals the significant improvement in the skills of evaluating information sources, but also highlights the need to promote education that encourages a critical look at the media, skills that are now more fundamental than ever in a world rife with misinformation and data manipulation (Spinelli, 2021). In addition, the measurement of student engagement, which is a fundamental and essential aspect in the learning process, and the practical application of the knowledge acquired in everyday contexts, in real and everyday situations, are very important indicators that serve to accurately measure the success of the teaching strategies that have been implemented in this very pertinent field, impactful and current, reflecting its relevance in contemporary social dynamics (Wiese et al., 2024).

Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the methodologies used can also lead to the improvement and constant improvement of the educational curriculum, favoring a more adequate preparation of students in the face of the challenges that misinformation presents in modern society (Araújo et al., 2024).

Indicators of success in media literacy are fundamental and encompass students' ability to effectively discern between true information and that which turns out to be false and misleading. The increase in distrust of dubious news and information is an essential aspect that cannot be neglected (Passos et al., 2021).

In addition, students must develop the critical ability to analyze, evaluate and question the sources of information they encounter in their daily lives. This not only involves the identification of reliable and credible sources, but also a deeper understanding of the social, historical, and cultural contexts in which this information emerges and circulates (Lessa; Leal, 2023).

Improving argumentation skills is equally relevant and indispensable, as students able to debate in a grounded and reasoned way, using concrete facts and relevant data, help to create a more robust educational environment that is conducive to learning. Promoting debates that are rooted in data and evidence is an important step in this long training process (Coimbra et al., 2021).

In addition, awareness of the impact of fake news in today's society, on social networks, and the formation of public opinion, deserves special attention and is a relevant aspect to be considered as an indicator of success in media education (Coimbra et al., 2021). In the long term, students' commitment to the search for truth, ethics in communication, and the responsible and conscious dissemination of information will be clear indications of the positive impact of media education and the commitment to effectively combat fake news that proliferates in society (Marques et al., 2022). This promotion of critical thinking, responsibility when sharing information, and careful analysis of data is fundamental and crucial to form more informed, critical, and aware citizens who can act responsibly in today's society (Coimbra et al., 2021).

CHALLENGES, BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MEDIA EDUCATION

The implementation of Media Education faces a variety of significant challenges, which are many and varied, such as the resistance of some educators, which is evident in the incorporation of new pedagogical practices, which is often justified by the fear of the unknown and the lack of familiarity with new emerging and innovative technologies (Silva, 2021).

In addition, there is also the issue of the lack of specific training for teaching media skills, a skill that is fundamental to prepare students for the contemporary world, which is saturated with diverse and often conflicting information. Another evident obstacle is the difficulty in finding adequate, up-to-date, and relevant resources and materials to be used effectively in classroom classes (Coimbra et al., 2021).

However, it is perfectly possible to overcome these barriers, challenges and difficulties through consistent and continuous investments in teacher training, providing them with the necessary knowledge to face these innovations. The development of robust partnerships with communication institutions can bring vitality, innovation, and additional resources to enrich teaching, while the creation of training programs in media education offers a solid and strategic path to give educators the tools they need to adapt their pedagogical practices. In addition, the integration of Media Education into broader and more comprehensive educational policies, as well as the adaptation of modern digital technologies for the promotion of critical thinking, emerge as valuable and unique opportunities that can considerably boost the effectiveness of this innovative, transformative, and essential educational approach in the present day (Júnior et al., 2023).

The barriers in the implementation of Media Education are diverse and may include the lack of adequate technological resources in schools, the resistance of some educational institutions to the change of traditional pedagogical paradigm, and the scarcity of specific teaching materials aimed at media education (Grecco et al., 2023). However, it is feasible to find creative and effective ways to overcome these obstacles. Among the possible strategies, the creation of partnerships with technology companies stands out, which can provide not only equipment, but also know-how and technical support. In addition, the active search for funding for the acquisition of equipment and resources is essential for all schools to integrate Media Education into their pedagogical practices (Borges et al., 2021).

Another important aspect to be considered is the development of educational policies that contemplate the insertion of media education in school curricula, ensuring that this theme is addressed systematically and comprehensively (Júnior et al., 2023). In addition, the constant training of teachers is essential, as they are the main agents responsible for articulating and implementing this new approach. The promotion of events, workshops, and seminars on media education can contribute significantly to overcoming these barriers, allowing an exchange of experiences and the dissemination of this innovative and necessary educational practice (Coimbra et al., 2021). With these efforts, it will be possible to advance in the effectiveness of Media Education in our educational system.

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES AND TRENDS IN MEDIA EDUCATION

With the rapid and impressive expansion of technology and the constant evolution of the various digital platforms, media education will certainly continue to adapt and transform in a significant way, to prepare students for the complex and dynamic and ever-changing scenario we face today (Ribeiro et al., 2024).

The integration of new and innovative forms of media, such as augmented reality and artificial intelligence, will play a crucial and revolutionary role in shaping students' critical thinking skills, as well as contributing to a better understanding of the profound impact that information can have on contemporary societies (Silva et al., 2024).

In addition, media literacy, over time, is likely to increasingly focus on practical and essential skills, such as fact-checking, critical analysis, and judicious evaluation of sources, to empower students to become true responsible and well-informed consumers of information (Oliveira et al., 2023).

This will allow them to develop a healthier, more critical, and more conscious relationship with the vast amount of data and information to which they are exposed daily, promoting a healthier environment for dialogue and exchange of ideas, as well as a more rigorous and grounded thinking about the content they consume (Fortes; Silva, 2024).

Technological innovations are significantly and impactfully shaping the way media education is approached and perceived in various spheres of contemporary society. Advanced tools such as artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and other emerging technologies are increasingly being used by educators, researchers, and communication professionals to identify and understand the complex disinformation trends that affect many aspects of the daily lives of modern citizens (Mota; Lozada, 2023).

In addition, these innovative technologies also effectively assist in detecting patterns and spreading fake news that circulates widely on the internet, compromising the quality of the information we receive daily. Virtual reality, in turn, offers new and exciting opportunities to simulate immersive and engaging media consumption experiences in a way that has never been possible before (Fonseca; Belli, 2023).

This type of innovative and interactive approach allows students to experience practical learning scenarios that more effectively promote the development of critical thinking and reflective analysis, which are essential in an informed society (Steveen; Claudio, 2023). These technological innovations represent not only a promising and fascinating path, but also a fundamental element to improve contemporary educational

practices. They strengthen students' ability to critically discern between reliable and misleading information that permeates the digital environment, thus stimulating a more informed, critical society that is aware of the realities that surround us daily, promoting a more constructive dialogue about the challenges present in the current flow of information and its implications for daily life (Moreno-Rodríguez; Del Pino, 2023).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the in-depth discussions carried out throughout this work, the importance of media education, as well as critical thinking, in the formation and development of contemporary students is evident. In today's complex and information-filled society, students must be trained to discern between fact and fiction, especially in the face of the significant and worrying impact of fake news, which has proliferated in alarming numbers. Thus, it is essential that educational institutions, together with communication professionals, are always attentive to the development and implementation of efficient and effective teaching strategies, which can equip students with the necessary tools to critically navigate the vast ocean of available information.

In addition, the continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of these teaching strategies and methodologies, through concrete indicators of success, is essential to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of media education today. Therefore, a joint and collaborative effort between schools, universities and communication professionals is highly recommended to promote media education broadly and comprehensively, developing curricula that integrate these practices in a coherent and meaningful way, thus preparing today's students to face the complex and varied challenges of the digital age in which we live, where information, when misinterpreted, can have serious consequences for society as a whole.

Throughout this work, several relevant and fundamental topics were addressed that are closely related to media education and the effective fight against fake news, which have become a growing and alarming problem in our contemporary society. From the clear definition and vital importance of media literacy to the varied teaching strategies and the diverse digital technologies available today, the discussion significantly emphasized the urgent need to promote and strengthen critical thinking in students.

Students need to develop critical skills that enable them to discern truthful information from misleading and potentially harmful news, all of which can have profound

impacts on their lives and society as a whole. In addition, the indisputable responsibility of educational institutions, both public and private, and the crucial and active role of communication professionals, who are fundamental elements for the success of media education in the proper formation of citizens, was highlighted.

Given the various challenges faced and the opportunities identified in the current scenario, it is crucial to seek efficient and innovative solutions that ensure the effective implementation of media education in schools, preparing students adequately to deal with fake news in a critical, conscious, and informed manner.

In this way, this research contributes not only to the adequate preparation of students, but also to the formation of more aware and participatory citizens, capable of facing the complex demands of the contemporary society that surrounds us, thus promoting a culture of information that is more responsible, critical and conscious, which benefits everyone in our community. This scenario clearly shows that knowledge and education are the most powerful weapons we possess to combat disinformation, and by investing in this, we ensure not only a brighter future, but also the integrity of our modern society.

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