

CENTRE FOR A DIGITAL SOCIETY / CENTRE FOR MEDIA PLURALISM AND MEDIA
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Understanding and addressing digital inequalities

Socioterritorial Impacts of
Disinformation: Global
Challenges, Local Perspectives

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Purpose and Relevance

Significance in Professional Field

- Disinformation = top global risk (WEF, 2025).
- * Unequal impact: Black, Indigenous, peripheral and traditional communities are hit hardest.
- * Vulnerabilities: structural inequality, connectivity gaps, low institutional presence.
- * Everyday life decisions—health, identity, safety—are directly affected.



How do traditional Brazilian territories perceive informational risk, construct trust, relate to AI, and respond to disinformation?



Overview of research inputs

Quilombo Santa Rita do Bracuí (Rio de Janeiro)

500 hectares

Memory, ancestry, strong community leadership

Aldeia Multiétnica Filhos da Terra (São Paulo)

* Multiple Indigenous peoples

* Collective decision-making, spiritual leadership

Co-designed questionnaire with local leaders

* 26 participants

* Local training for fieldwork

* Four axes of analysis:

1. Information access and sharing

2. Perceptions of disinformation

3. Trust and authority

4. Artificial intelligence & risk perception



Main Results Obtained

Highlights and Implications

1. Authority grounded in proximity

Information is validated through people, not institutions.

Trusted actors include:

- * community leaders
- * health agents
- * spiritual leaders
- * educators
- * elder women
- * youth communicators

2. Institutional authority is fragile

Government, mainstream media, and experts are often seen as distant or unreliable—unless mediated by someone local.

3. Spiritual authority (Indigenous territory)

Decisions about information, health, and risk undergo collective deliberation and spiritual leadership.

4. Ancestral authority (quilombo)

Elders, griôs, and long-term leaders act as epistemic guardians.

5. AI does not replace authority—it reinforces local authority

People trust AI only when explained or mediated by someone they know.

AI does not create new authority; it amplifies existing territorial authority structures.

Perceptions of Artificial Intelligence

- * 58% have heard of AI
- * Feelings toward AI:
 - * 42% → risk (loss of control, manipulation, inequality)
 - * 38% → curiosity
 - * 20% → indifference

AI is interpreted through historical experiences of exclusion.



Community Strategies of Resistance

- * Curated local WhatsApp groups
- * Use of community radio
- * In-person meetings to clarify rumors
- * Women as information mediators
- * Youth as digital interpreters
- * Ancestral knowledge as a validation filter



**Territories produce their own infrastructures of informational resilience.

Acknowledgments

Summary of key findings

- * Addressing disinformation = combining digital justice and cognitive justice
- * Public policies must acknowledge the territory as a site of knowledge production.
- * Communities offer models of relational authority, ethical mediation, and collective care.
- * AI governance must include Global South epistemologies.



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Thank You for Your Attention



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