

## **Fact-Checking Practices by Canadian Adults During an Era of Misinformation and Disinformation**

*Giuliana Cucinelli,  
Leelan Farhan*

Concordia University, Canada

---

### ***Abstract:***

Since 2016, the term “fake news” has become incorrectly synonymous with the concepts of misinformation, disinformation, propaganda, and even conspiracy theories, leading to the assumption that they are interchangeable (Guess & Lyons, 2020). Fact-checking can be viewed in two ways: fact-checking conducted by fact-checking organizations – third-party or otherwise – and an independent person fact-checking information they have come across, using a fact-checking website, or their own methods. We surveyed 99 Canadian adults (aged 18-64) on how they define and practice fact-checking using an open-ended, qualitative method. The study results reveal that Canadians engage in a diverse range of fact-checking behaviors. Specifically, we found 10 distinct approaches to fact-checking that are also consistent with how these participants defined fact-checking, with the most common four being: Google and cross-referencing, credibility of source, different perspectives, and skeptical/anti-mainstream. The findings of this study provide Canadian researchers, educators, and policy makers with a greater sense of clarity on the issue of fact-checking practices within Canada, and consequently, provide promising practices for how to engage in fact-checking.

***Keywords:*** Fact-Checking; Misinformation; Disinformation; Fake News;  
Social Media

---