

- Fake news

Fake news vs responsible journalism

THE media is the least trusted institution in the world. This was the result of the survey conducted by the 2018 Edelman Trust Barometer in 28 countries. Survey results showed that seven in 10 respondents worry about disinformation and fake news being used as a "weapon." Some 63 percent of respondents also said that the average person does not know how to differentiate between good journalism and rumors or falsehoods.

In the Philippines, no less than President Rodrigo Duterte accused media of peddling fake news. The situation raises the question of how fake news affect responsible journalism. Tita Valderama, training coordinator of The Manila Times College, asked students from TMTC, University of Santo Tomas and Lycum of the Philippines University during their internship run for their thoughts.

Majorie Abeleda: Fake news is made to purposely mislead people and to gain popularity and approval in politics. It affects responsible journalism because fake news is written to appear factually accurate, but it fails to present the different sides of a story. People would start reading these "news" from sources [of fake news] even though these do not have credibility, which leads to legitimate news sites and organizations being overlooked.

Lady Agot: Fake news impacts on the credibility of responsible journalists who are just doing their jobs. Many Filipinos are susceptible to fake news due to lack of media literacy, which is the reason why they fall victim to disinformation.

Luis Miguel B. Arucan: Fake news damages the reputation of responsible journalists because the public confuses them with the dishonest ones. Honest journalists can best protect themselves by trusting in their morals and continuing to do their job well, proving to their audience who the trustworthy ones are. Journalists should respect the public enough to believe that

they are intelligent enough to learn how to spot fake news.

Shaïna Cate Col: Fake news is everywhere and credible journalism is affected because people believe that news stories from untrustworthy online sites and [mainstream] newspapers are both fake news. They also think that everything they read or hear is filtered or modified. It is also because of fake news that people think media stories have been paid for.

Ralph Daniel Crisostomo: People around the globe rely a lot on technology to the point that they get all the information they need on social networks. The problem with the fast access to so much information is that fake news tends to outshine and negatively affect responsible journalism, undermining its credibility.

Mark Lester Andrie Cruzet: Based on a survey, roughly 78 percent of roughly one thousand Americans feel that fake news has damaged the overall credibility of the media industry. Fake news confuses readers from distinguishing what is true from hoax. We can consider misinformation and disinformation as "viral infections," which poisons the minds of people.

Kathrina Mariel DJ Pelaez: Fake news has always been one of the major hurdles of responsible journalism; it makes or breaks the quality of news stories that journalists produce. It challenges their ability to discern authentic information from the fake even as it improves their critical thinking and urges them to put everything of quality on the plate.



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Angel B. Dukha 3rd: If fake news is to affect responsible journalism, it will not affect the journalists but the people. The citizens who consume news will be greatly affected in the way that they can be confused and misinformed. This fake news is propaganda to confuse the mass and to attempt to make the [Duterte] administration more appealing to them, as they do not verify news frequently. This will create division among the people. More importantly, the fourth state can fall and the people will lose faith in responsible journalists.

Ma. Agatha Nicole T. Fabricante: With the fear of being fooled again by fake news, some people do not trust the real, responsible journalism anymore — they think that everything they read now is fake, which leads them to think that they are being misinformed. It is the media's responsibility to produce news that is solely fact-checked and accurate. It is the people's responsibility, however, to also be more critical and not believe everything they read online. It is a two-way relationship.

Christine Fabro: Some people tend to have a black-and-white interpretation of the media, which affects the reputation of the people behind it. They start to toggle on social media in gathering information because they believe that it is more accessible

than the traditional print media. And under the Duterte administration, the mainstream media has become more impulsive in providing the latest and most appealing news to the public but has on many occasions neglected to be wise in disseminating information.

Deni Elois Gonzales: Fake news misshapes true and responsible journalism, destroying the reliability and credibility of the media. The mainstream media definitely has a bias when covering the Duterte administration. Despite its biases, the mainstream media has not failed to disseminate information regarding events during the past three years of his [President Rodrigo Duterte] regime.

Fatima Layson: The number of fake news has greatly increased these past few years. The internet is the number one platform of people behind these fake news, and readers tend to believe what they see and read on the internet. The main goal of journalists is to tell the truth. Fake news destroys that goal since what it is telling are stories with little to no evidence.

Miguel Raphael C. Peconcillo: One of the ways fake news affects the profession is that governments are now passing anti-fake news laws. While these laws may seem harmless at first, these can threaten the freedom of the press. Governments may resort to clos-

ing down media outlets if they have reported any unfavorable but factual news about them. In some cases, it can even change the course of history — see the 2016 American presidential elections for example.

Rudolf Kyle Peralta: One characteristic that a journalist must exhibit is to not be gullible when it comes to writing. A journalist must not be affected by any misinformation from fake news because writers do only stick with what is right, true and accurate. Thus, fake news does not, should not affect responsible journalism.

Liezelle S. Roy: Because fake news is rampant, it is harder to make people believe the media and it is harder to investigate on particular issues.

Rian Gabriella Sablan: Fake news, like a disease, affects not only one — but also several individuals. It spreads all over, like some bacteria or virus going everywhere to poison every single thing around it. In the Philippines, fake news has become quite an issue especially since the start of the campaign of the Duterte administration. Most readers can barely distinguish between "fake news" and "real news." This gives way for people to fool around and troll others by giving false information.

Nicole Sta. Clara: People, most especially those who are not open-

minded to the other side of the story, are prone to being tricked by fake news. Fake news knows its audience and will do everything to deceive them.

Theresa Tañas: The effectiveness of false information to promote propaganda against its target has negatively affected, not only the concerned subject, but also the credibility of established news organizations. Because of fake news, the public begins to question the way news media presents a story — they often perceive journalists as biased negatively. This has become a challenge to all journalists and news organizations to be more efficient in disseminating news to regain public trust.

Samantha Abbygail Tio: False information may be enough to cause mass confusion and disorganization. Responsible journalism is making sure the news relayed to the public is as accurate as possible to prevent misinformation and disinformation.

Julius M. Villavieja: [T]he nature and the objectives of fake news are essentially corrosive and corruptive of good and honest practice in journalism. It undermines responsible and serious journalism and makes it more difficult to cover significant news stories because of writers who deliberately spread fake news that imitate news from genuine sources. The similarities in appearance generally make it difficult for the public to identify between news that is written based on facts and news that is written with inaccurate information and news with a slant that favors personal and often malicious agenda.

Yanni Wingarts: Fake news creates distrust within the reader. When a journalist publishes an unbiased article, the reader may still negatively perceive it because of personal distrust. There is also a common act on online comment sections, wherein some people would automatically comment "fake news" or "biased." These comments affect other readers into thinking that the article is not worth reading, which redounds to more mistrust.