

INFORMATION ON THE NEW ACADEMIC AND THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE DISSERTATION

Dissertation title: *Communication for countering fake news on the digital platforms of the Vietnamese Government at present*

Major: Public Relations

Code: 9320108

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Training cohort: K30.2 (2024–2027)

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Training institution: Academy of Journalism and Communication

New academic and theoretical contributions

In academic terms, the dissertation contributes to broadening the approach to communication for countering fake news from the perspective of public-sector public relations, rather than primarily viewing fake news as an object of technological detection, fact-checking, content management, or violation handling. Under this approach, communication for countering fake news is situated within the interactive relationship between the Government and its publics on digital platforms, in which official information serves both as communication content and as an important resource for the Government to proactively respond to false information, organize interaction, build trust, and maintain positive relationships with its publics. This approach contributes to expanding the scope of public-sector public relations research in the context of digital communication, while connecting research strands on fake news, government communication, digital platforms, and publics within a unified research framework.

In theoretical terms, the dissertation contributes to systematizing and clarifying the concept of communication for countering fake news on the Government's digital platforms as an organized, proactive, and continuous communication process encompassing the provision of official information, policy explanation, fact-checking, warning, correction, rebuttal, prevention, enhancement of the public's capacity to identify information, and organization of feedback. With the Shannon–Weaver model serving as the central theoretical framework and selected complementary theories being applied, the dissertation develops an analytical framework comprising four interrelated components: (i) actors and policies; (ii) communication channels, technologies, and algorithms;

(iii) communication content and data; and (iv) publics and feedback. This framework enables communication for countering fake news to be examined as an integrated process in which technology, data, algorithms, and public feedback feed back into the communication process.

In empirical terms, the dissertation develops and utilizes a dataset comprising 14,580 content units across 21 official communication channels of the Government Office, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Ministry of National Defence, and the Ministry of Public Security during the period from January 1, 2025 to May 30, 2026, combined with 327 survey responses retained after data cleaning and nine in-depth interviews. The triangulation of these three data sources makes it possible to identify the current state of communication practices, from the activities of communication actors, communication content and channels to public reception, interaction, and feedback, thereby adding empirical evidence to research on government communication and public-sector public relations in the digital environment.

Regarding the new arguments derived from the research findings, the dissertation shows that the effectiveness of communication for countering fake news depends not only on the capacity to detect and address individual instances of false information but also on the coordinated operation of the entire communication process, from actors and policies, channels and technologies, content and data, to publics and feedback. In the digital-platform environment, countering fake news is also a competition for information, attention, and trust; therefore, government communication needs to shift from reactive handling to proactive prevention and the early provision of information from official sources. In particular, the dissertation identifies that the public is not merely an information recipient; public feedback also constitutes a source of data that feeds back into the processes of detection, verification, and communication adjustment. Accordingly, communication for countering fake news aims not only to limit the impact of false information but also to enhance the public's capacity to identify information, disseminate official information, strengthen trust, and maintain positive relationships between the Government and citizens.

In summary, the contributions of the dissertation help supplement and develop the academic, theoretical, and empirical foundations of communication for countering fake news from the perspective of public-sector public relations,

while also broadening approaches to the study of government communication and communication governance in the digital environment. The research findings not only clarify the roles of actors, policies, technologies, data, content, publics, and public feedback within an integrated communication process, but also affirm the need to shift from reactive responses to proactive and preventive communication, with official information, interaction, and public trust as key factors. In practical terms, the findings provide a scientific basis for state agencies to improve coordination mechanisms, organize policy communication, develop and utilize data, apply technology, and strengthen interaction with the public, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of communication for countering fake news, reinforcing trust, and maintaining sustainable two-way relationships between the Government and citizens in the digital environment.

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