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Vietnamese Press in the Fight Against Fake News on Social Networks: Challenges and Solutions

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Abstract. The rapid expansion of social networks has profoundly transformed the contemporary media environment, while simultaneously accelerating the spread of fake news and other forms of information disorder. In Vietnam, the widespread circulation of misinformation on digital platforms poses serious challenges to public trust, information security, and social stability. This study examines the role of the Vietnamese press in combating fake news on social networks, identifies key challenges, and proposes a systematic response model adapted to the digital media context. Drawing on three theoretical frameworks — Agenda Setting Theory, Gatekeeping Theory, and the Information Disorder approach — the study analyzes how professional journalism contributes to shaping public opinion and restoring information order. Methodologically, the research adopts a mixed-methods approach combining document analysis with case studies of three representative initiatives in Vietnam: FactCheckVN (Vietnam News Agency), the tingia.gov.vn information portal, and the “Tin Nên Tin” (Standard News — Real News) campaign understanding public awareness and countering misinformation. The findings reveal that although the Vietnamese press has actively implemented fact-checking initiatives, public reporting mechanisms, and awareness campaigns, it continues to face major obstacles, including the rapid spread of misinformation on social media, limitations in legal regulation, insufficient technological resources, and declining audience trust. Based on these findings, the study proposes a four-layer Anti-Fake News Model (4L-AFM) comprising early warning, verification, correct news publishing, and public media education. This model emphasizes the pivotal role of professional journalism while underscoring the collective responsibility of the state, media institutions, and the public in building a resilient and trustworthy information ecosystem.


Keywords. Fake news, Vietnamese press, information disorder, media literacy, fact-checking.

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Original article

Вьетнамская пресса в борьбе с фейковыми новостями в социальных сетях: вызовы и решения

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Аннотация. Стремительное развитие социальных сетей радикально трансформировало современную медиасреду, одновременно способствуя быстрому распространению фейковых новостей и других форм информационного беспорядка. В условиях цифровизации проблема дезинформации становится одной из ключевых угроз общественному доверию, информационной безопасности и социальной стабильности, особенно в развивающихся странах, включая Социалистическую Республику Вьетнам. В статье анализируется роль вьетнамской профессиональной прессы в противодействии фейковым новостям в социальных сетях, выявляются основные вызовы и предлагаются системные решения, адаптированные к современным цифровым условиям. Теоретико-методологической основой исследования служат теория установления повестки дня, теория «привратника информации», а также концепция информационного беспорядка, которые позволяют раскрыть ответственность СМИ в формировании общественного мнения и поддержании здоровой информационной среды. Методология исследования основана на сочетании анализа научных и нормативных источников с кейс-стади трех репрезентативных моделей борьбы с дезинформацией во Вьетнаме: FactCheckVN, государственного портала tingia.gov.vn и общественной коммуникационной кампании «Tin Nê Tin». Результаты исследования показывают, что, несмотря на активную деятельность вьетнамской прессы в сфере проверки фактов и медиапросвещения, сохраняются существенные проблемы, связанные с высокой скоростью распространения дезинформации, несовершенством правового регулирования, ограниченностью технологических ресурсов и снижением доверия аудитории. В качестве научного вклада предлагается четырехуровневая модель противодействия фейковым новостям (4L-AFM), подчеркивающая ключевую роль профессиональной журналистики и коллективную ответственность государства, СМИ и общества в обеспечении устойчивости информационного пространства.

Ключевые слова. Фейковые новости; вьетнамская пресса; информационный беспорядок; медиаграмотность; фактчекинг

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Introduction

Currently, social networks have become the mainstream media environment, where billions of people around the world

access, share and create content. According to Datareportal's Digital 2025 Report, Vietnam alone has more than 77 million social network users, accounting for near-

ly 80 % of the population, with an average usage time of more than 2 hours per day¹. Along with that strong development, “fake news” has also appeared, spread and become one of the urgent issues on digital platforms. Fake news not only distorts the truth, causing confusion in public opinion, but also threatens information security, social trust, and even affects political stability and economic and cultural development of the country [1].

In Vietnam, many specific cases have shown the serious impact of fake news. During the COVID-19 pandemic, thousands of pieces of false information about the epidemic situation, treatment drugs, or epidemic prevention policies have spread rapidly on TikTok, Facebook*² and Zalo, causing many difficulties in medical communication work [2]. Similarly, during important political and social events, fabricated, edited, or distorted information has been exploited to cause misunderstanding and division among the people. Although authorities at all levels have made efforts to prevent many incidents, the “war against fake news” is still intense, requiring multi-dimensional, multi-sectoral, and multi-field coordination, from technology, media education to policy [3]. Given the rapid spread of information on social networks, the press not only needs to be fast and accurate, but also creative in its approach to the public. However, reality shows that the press still faces many difficulties in the fight against fake news. The question is: How is the Vietnamese press currently responding to the wave of fake news on social networks? What strategies and tools do press agencies use to ver-

ify information? How can the press ensure accuracy while maintaining the appeal and trust of the public in the modern media environment?

Unlike previous studies that mainly focus on legal or technological aspects of fake news control, this study proposes an integrated, press-centered multi-layer model tailored to the Vietnamese media ecosystem.

Literature Review

Nowadays, social networks are not only platforms for entertainment but also key channels through which users access and disseminate information. In Vietnam, the most popular platforms include Facebook*, YouTube**³, TikTok, and Zalo, with Facebook* alone having more than 76,2 million users as of 2025⁴. This trend has created a new media ecosystem where everyone can become a potential source of information, thereby challenging the traditional agenda-setting role of the press and media organizations. As algorithms prioritize speed and virality, the digital environment has become fertile ground for the proliferation of fake news. Moreover, numerous cases of celebrities sharing unverified information have further amplified the reach and impact of misinformation.

“Fake news” is a term that has become popular in the digital media era, referring to content created with the purpose of deceiving readers, causing misunderstanding, or manipulating public opinion for political, economic, or social purposes. Many theoretical and empirical studies emphasize that “fake news” needs to be considered multidimensionally instead of considering

¹ Digital 2025: Vietnam / S. Kemp // DataReportal. URL: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-vietnam>.

² * Здесь и далее по тексту: Facebook, отмеченный звездочкой * — входит в корпорацию Meta, которая признана экстремистской и запрещена в России / Here and further on: Facebook, marked with an asterisk * — part of the Meta Corporation, which is recognized as extremist and banned in Russia.

³ **Здесь и далее по тексту: сервис YouTube, отмеченный звездочками ** — принадлежит компании Google LLC, нарушающей законодательство Российской Федерации / Here and further on: The YouTube service marked with asterisks ** belongs to Google LLC, which violates the laws of the Russian Federation..

⁴ Digital 2025: Vietnam / S. Kemp // DataReportal. URL: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-vietnam>.

it as a single concept [4]. Accordingly, fake news is also understood as information disorder. Wardle and Derakhshan believe that information disorder includes three main forms: unintentionally false information (misinformation), intentionally false information (disinformation), and correct information used in the wrong context to cause harm (malinformation) [5]. According to Atanesyan, fake news needs to be understood more broadly as a complex socio-cultural phenomenon, where distortions arise not only from the intention to deceive but also from the subjective interpretation of the recipient [6]. The common point of fake news is that it spreads quickly, is difficult to control, and easily creates negative social impacts because the influence of fake news spreads through crowd psychology, social networks, and algorithms [7]. Meanwhile, Dorofeeva emphasizes the difficulties of typologizing fake news and highlights its communicative and social nature, analyzing misinformation as a structural challenge to contemporary media systems [8]. Prior Russian research has conceptualized the fake news phenomenon with specific attention to its typologies and countermeasures. For example, Sukhdolov and Bychkova frame fake news as stylistically crafted but partially or wholly false media content and offer a classification scheme along with measures for counteraction, highlighting the role of digital platforms in their propagation [9]. Building on both international and Russian scholarship, this study adopts the following working definition: fake news is deliberately or factually false information presented in the format of journalistic content and disseminated through digital platforms, capable of misleading audiences and influencing public perception regardless of the initial intent of dissemination.

The growing body of journalism scholarship also calls for evidence-based evaluation of verification practices and their impact [10]. As Barabash argues, all information possesses both positive and neg-

ative dimensions; the issue lies not in the content itself, but in its influence on individuals [11]. Empirical studies have also demonstrated that fake news spreads faster and penetrates deeper than factual news, largely because of its emotional appeal and novelty [12]. Open platforms can foster 'virtual socio-cultural worlds' built around shared meanings and values, which may intensify group-based interpretations of events and increase susceptibility to misinformation [13].

Methods

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach that combines secondary document analysis with case study research. First, document analysis was conducted to establish the theoretical foundation of the study. The communication theories referenced include the Agenda Setting Theory, Gatekeeping Theory, and the Information Disorder framework.

The first is the Agenda Setting Theory proposed by McCombs and Shaw, which asserts that the press can direct public attention toward issues deemed important, meaning that the media does not tell the public what to think, but rather what to think about [3]. This theory remains highly relevant in today's digital media era, which is flooded with fake news, where public perception is increasingly dominated by emotions and subjective beliefs rather than facts [14]. Therefore, the press's selection, emphasis, and analysis of verified and authentic topics constitute a form of agenda setting, helping the public focus on reliable information sources instead of being swept away by misinformation and disinformation. In Vietnam, a similar trend can be observed, as online journalism has become increasingly instrumental in shaping public understanding of socio-political issues [15].

Second, the Gatekeeping Theory underscores the crucial role of journalists and news organizations in selecting, verifying, and disseminating information to the pub-

lic [16]. The evolution of journalism theory in Russia also demonstrates how classic communication approaches are adapted to national media contexts, supporting the use of agenda-setting and gatekeeping lenses in contemporary digital studies [17]. As McQuail notes, “the basic social task of journalism is to avoid inciting hatred or damaging the reputation of others, and to truthfully and comprehensively report significant events in social life” [18]. The gatekeeping process operates not only at the individual level of journalists or editors, but is also shaped by institutional and contextual influences, including regulatory bodies and broader political and social environments. As the boundary between professional journalists and social media users becomes increasingly blurred, the verification process grows more complex, requiring journalists to integrate traditional reporting skills with technological competencies in order to verify information rapidly and accurately [5].

Third, Wardle and Derakhshan's Information Disorder theory provides a comprehensive analytical framework for the phenomenon of fake news, in which the press plays a central role in restoring information order and protecting the truth⁵. As Kopceva notes, truth is a multifaceted concept that includes ontological, value-based, and epistemological aspects of human existence. Journalism's endorsement of information is its participation in this process of moving toward “truth” [19]. In addition, other studies on the spread of fake news in Russian society also provide a new perspective, showing that public perception and trust in information are strongly influenced by cultural and political factors. The expansion of media theory in the digital era highlights the increasing complexity of media communication and the need for new conceptual frameworks to understand phenomena such as misinformation and public trust in journalism [20].

⁵ Digital 2025: Vietnam / S. Kemp // DataReportal. URL: <https://datareportal.com/reports/digital-2025-vietnam>.

The combination of three theories: Agenda Setting, Gatekeeping and Information Disorder creates a comprehensive analytical framework to analyze the impact of fake news as well as how the Vietnamese press responds to fake news.

The corpus of materials reviewed comprised international studies on fake news, academic publications on the impact of social networks, as well as legal documents, government decrees, and institutional reports issued by Vietnamese media management agencies. Second, a case study analysis was carried out focusing on three representative models in Vietnam, namely FactcheckVN (Vietnam News Agency), the tingia.gov.vn portal, and the “Tin Nên Tin” campaign. These cases were selected to represent the three primary categories of actors within the anti-fake news ecosystem: press organizations, state management agencies, and community-based media initiatives. The aim of this methodological design was to ensure that the assessment of the current state of Vietnamese journalism in combating fake news on social networks was both theoretically grounded and empirically connected to the realities of the digital media environment.

Results

Current practices of the Vietnamese press in combating fake news

According to the Vietnam Fake News Handling Center (VAFC), as of December 2024, the tingia.gov.vn portal had received a total of 1,378 reports, including 591 reports of harmful or toxic content, 434 cases of online financial fraud, and 68 reports of impersonation involving fake news dissemination⁶.

⁶ Ministry of Information and Communications of Vietnam [Bộ thông tin và truyền thông Việt Nam]. Nearly 16,000 violating contents have been removed from cross-border platforms [Gần 16.000 nội dung vi phạm đã được gỡ bỏ trên các nền tảng xuyên biên giới]. URL: <https://abei.gov.vn/thong-tin-dien-tu/gan-16000-noi-dung-vi-pham-da-duoc-go-bo-tren-cac-nen-tang-xuyen-bien-gioi/118629>.

Faced with this situation, Vietnamese press and media regulatory agencies have proactively implemented various concrete measures to identify, prevent, and counteract false information. One notable initiative is the FactcheckVN project, launched by the Vietnam News Agency (VNA). This project serves as an information verification channel operating on the social media platform TikTok, aimed at debunking fake news that spreads rapidly within online communities.

With its concise, dynamic, and youth-oriented communication style, FactcheckVN has quickly become a credible reference point that helps internet users distinguish between authentic and false information. The establishment of FactcheckVN not only demonstrates the VNA's pioneering role in integrating technology into journalism, but also signifies an important transition from conventional news reporting to verification-based journalism.

Alongside this effort, the Portal for Receiving and Handling Fake News (tingia.gov.vn), operated by the Ministry of Information and Communications, has emerged as a vital platform connecting citizens with state management agencies. Through this portal, the public can submit reports and provide information about suspected cases of fake news for official verification and resolution. Each year, tingia.gov.vn receives thousands of public submissions, most of which concern malicious content and online financial fraud.

In addition, the “Tin” Campaign (also known as #AntiFakeNews or “Tin Nên Tin”, meaning “What Should Be Believed”), jointly organized by the Department of Radio, Television and Electronic Information and VnExpress Newspaper, has made a significant contribution to public communication and awareness-raising. The campaign not only focuses on exposing fake news, but also encourages social media users to share constructive and positive content, thereby fostering a “clean” and humanistic media environment. Through competitions, viral

TikTok videos, workshops, and public seminars, the “Tin” campaign has successfully reached millions of young people — the demographic most vulnerable to misinformation and disinformation.

In addition to large-scale initiatives such as FactcheckVN and the [Tingia.gov.vn](http://tingia.gov.vn) portal, many Vietnamese press and media organizations have proactively implemented specialized programs, articles, and communication campaigns to help the public gain a deeper understanding of the nature, characteristics, and social impacts of fake news. On Vietnam Television (VTV), a variety of programs such as “Morning Coffee”, “24h Movement”, and “Today’s Rhythm of Life” regularly broadcast reports that warn audiences about fake news and guide them on how to identify and verify information before sharing it online. Similarly, leading online news outlets such as VietnamPlus, Tuoi Tre Online, Thanh Nien, and VnExpress have published numerous analytical articles that examine how fake news is produced and disseminated, as well as its broader consequences for society.

Key challenges

The fight against fake news on social networks poses significant challenges for Vietnamese press organizations, not only in terms of journalistic professionalism, but also regarding technology, legal regulation, and audience trust. Firstly, the speed at which information spreads on social media far exceeds the response capacity of traditional journalism. While news outlets must comply with strict processes of fact-checking, editing, and approval before publication, fake news can circulate within seconds through user interactions such as sharing and commenting, or through algorithmic amplification on platforms like Facebook*, TikTok, and X [1]. This race against the speed of misinformation often places newsrooms in a reactive position-by the time verified news stories appear, fake content has already circulated widely and

shaped waves of public opinion. Moreover, fake news is often intentionally crafted to be emotionally engaging, employing sensational headlines, provocative language, and shocking images or videos to capture attention—elements with which mainstream journalism, bound by standards of accuracy and objectivity, finds it difficult to compete.

Secondly, the decline in public trust in the press represents a significant obstacle. In today's digital media era, users tend to consume information from multiple sources within an increasingly fragmented media environment, including social networks. However, many audiences now conflate online content with professional journalism, which further blurs the boundary between real and fake news. Under the pressure of audience engagement and online visibility, some news organizations have unintentionally contributed to the circulation of false information, for instance, by reposting unverified content or using misleading headlines in pursuit of higher traffic and interaction rates. Although journalists remain fully aware of the serious consequences that fake news poses to both the community and the integrity of the journalistic profession, readers have become increasingly skeptical of mainstream media — especially when news lacks transparent sourcing or appears later in the press than on social media platforms [8].

Third, the legal framework and mechanisms for information management on social networks still exhibit several structural weaknesses, making it difficult for press organizations to coordinate actions and effectively address the spread of fake news. Although Vietnam has promulgated a number of relevant legal instruments, including Decree No. 72/2013/NĐ-CP and Decree No. 15/2020/NĐ-CP (amended and supplemented in 2022), their enforcement remains inconsistent and limited in scope. Current regulations primarily impose administrative fines, which are insufficient to effectively deter organizations or individ-

uals who intentionally disseminate false information. Furthermore, most major social media platforms such as Facebook*, YouTube**, and TikTok are operated and governed by foreign corporations, which complicates efforts to verify information, request content removal, or trace the original sources of fake news circulating online.

Solutions and proposal

The fight against fake news on social networks is a long-term and complex process that requires close coordination among government authorities, press organizations, journalists, and the public. To achieve greater effectiveness, a comprehensive and synchronized implementation of the following solution groups is essential.

In order for the press to fulfill its role as a “gatekeeper” in the digital era, the improvement of the legal framework for preventing and combating fake news has become an urgent priority. This entails the clarification and harmonization of provisions within the Press Law (2016), the Cybersecurity Law (2018), and accompanying decrees and circulars that guide the governance of information in cyberspace. The legal system should provide precise definitions of relevant concepts to avoid overlap and ambiguity during enforcement. It is also vital to clearly delineate responsibilities among content creators, information sharers, and social media platforms in the dissemination of false information. Furthermore, the State should establish a transparent coordination mechanism connecting regulatory bodies, press agencies, and technology enterprises in the detection, management, and removal of fake news, ensuring both timeliness and accountability. The ongoing operation of the Fake News Feedback Portal (tingia.gov.vn) represents a positive institutional development, yet it still requires a more rapid response system and stricter sanctions to enhance deterrence. Strengthening these mechanisms will con-

tribute to the creation of a safer, more transparent, and socially responsible digital information environment.

In addition, journalists and editors must be equipped with new competencies appropriate for the digital media environment. Journalism education should treat digital-media competencies — verification routines, platform logic, and multimedia storytelling — as core professional skills in the contemporary newsroom [21]. The demands for professional innovation among journalists extend beyond news writing skills to include the use of digital technology and adaptation to the speed of online news [22]. Beyond traditional reporting skills, today's journalists are expected to verify information obtained online, examine images and videos to detect potential manipulation, and analyze data to identify suspicious or unreliable sources. Journalism schools and media organizations should therefore integrate new subjects into their curricula and professional training programs, including fact-checking techniques, journalistic ethics, and information security. Regular refresher courses are also essential to ensure that media practitioners can adapt to the rapidly evolving digital ecosystem. Furthermore, each newsroom should establish an internal transparency and accountability code, requiring explicit source attribution, public disclosure of verification procedures, and prompt corrections when inaccuracies occur. These measures not only strengthen professional standards and editorial integrity, but also play a crucial role in rebuilding public trust in the press.

Although technology cannot fully replace the role of journalists, it has become an indispensable tool in detecting, analyzing, and responding to fake news. According to Trofimov, recent advances in artificial intelligence enable the simulation of both linguistic styles and visual formats of authentic news, making it increasingly challenging to distinguish between real and fabricated content [23]. As information circulates at

unprecedented speed across social media platforms, press organizations must invest in technological integration to enhance their monitoring and early-warning capabilities. Advanced tools for online content analysis, keyword tracking, and trend detection—often referred to as social listening systems—enable the early identification of rumors or abnormal information patterns as they emerge. Simultaneously, the adoption of image and data verification tools, such as Google Fact Check Tools, InVID, and TinEye, allows journalists to trace the origin, publication time, and degree of manipulation of digital content including texts, images, and videos. When implemented in a coordinated manner, these AI-assisted technological solutions not only reduce journalists' workloads but also increase the speed and accuracy of newsroom responses, thereby strengthening the press's function as a "gatekeeper" in the fight against fake news.

One of the key reasons for the rapid spread of fake news is the public's limited ability to distinguish credible information from falsehoods. According to recent studies, the primary causes of users' susceptibility to fake news are a low level of media literacy and a tendency toward confirmation bias, in which individuals accept information that aligns with their pre-existing beliefs [24]. The rise of "unofficial" content producers on social media has transformed the modern media landscape, creating abundant but often difficult-to-verify sources of information [25]. Many social media users lack the necessary skills to evaluate the credibility of news sources, leading to the unintentional dissemination of false or misleading content. Therefore, alongside the verification efforts undertaken by press organizations, media literacy education and public awareness initiatives must be significantly strengthened. At the general education level, curricula should integrate modules on "identifying and preventing fake news" into subjects such as Civic Ed-

education or Information Technology, enabling students to develop critical thinking, analytical reasoning, and responsible information-sharing habits. In addition, press agencies can collaborate with educational institutions to organize communication campaigns, seminars, and online training courses aimed at enhancing media literacy and promoting a culture of fact-checking among students and young audiences. Such initiatives would not only empower individuals to navigate digital information environments more safely, but also foster a more informed and resilient society in the face of misinformation.

Based on research, the author proposes a systematic anti-fake news model as follows (Figure):

Layer 1 — Early Warning:

The early warning level serves as the initial and foundational stage in the Vietnamese press’s anti-fake news model. At this stage, the primary objective is to detect abnormal patterns in the flow of information across cyberspace in a timely manner, particularly on platforms with large user bases such as Facebook*, TikTok, and Zalo.

Press agencies can implement a social media monitoring system (social listening) — a tool that enables the continuous monitoring, collection, and analysis of vast amounts of online data in real time. By establishing a set of key keywords, sensitive topics, or potentially distorted events, these systems can automatically identify content that exhibits unusual frequency,

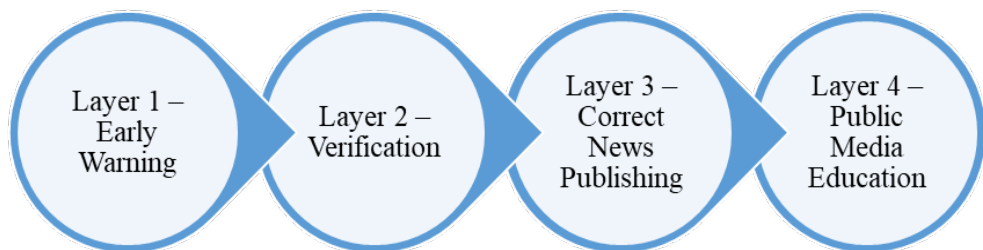
abnormally high engagement levels, or disproportionate negative sentiment.

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) significantly enhances the accuracy and efficiency of the early warning process. Machine learning algorithms can detect linguistic cues associated with misinformation, such as manipulative wording, sensational headlines, or emotionally charged narratives appearing in posts, comments, videos, or images. At the same time, AI-based analytics can classify dissemination sources including personal accounts, public groups, and unverified news sites to rapidly identify and isolate emerging viral content.

Through this proactive monitoring mechanism, the press is not only able to respond quickly after fake news emerges, but can also anticipate communication risks and prepare early countermeasures before misinformation escalates. Consequently, the early warning layer functions as the “first line of defense” in protecting the integrity of the digital information environment and safeguarding public trust.

Layer 2 — Verification:

Once anomalies have been detected at the early warning layer, the verification layer assumes a central role in examining and validating the accuracy of information. This stage represents a crucial transition from detection to investigation, where news organizations engage in systematic verification and authentication of sources to ensure that only credible and factually accurate information reaches the public.



Four-Layer Anti-Fakenews Model (4L-AFM)

Within this framework, each newsroom should establish a dedicated fact-checking unit composed of journalists, editors, technology specialists, and data analysts. This interdisciplinary team is responsible for evaluating content authenticity through three primary criteria: (1) the origin of the information, (2) data consistency across sources, and (3) the reliability of visual or audiovisual evidence.

Modern digital verification tools — such as Google Fact Check Tools, InVID, and TinEye — can assist in comparing publication timestamps, detecting manipulated images, and tracing the provenance of videos or original posts. Simultaneously, information should be cross-referenced with official data from relevant authorities, international organizations, and subject-matter experts to minimize the risk of bias or misinformation.

Furthermore, the verification process requires a contextual media assessment, addressing key questions such as who disseminated the content, for what purpose, and whether the information has been selectively edited or misinterpreted from its original form. This comprehensive approach ensures that verification is not merely technical, but also ethical and interpretive, reinforcing the press's mission to uphold truth and transparency in the digital information ecosystem.

Layer 3 — Correct News Publishing:

Upon completion of the verification process, the correct news publishing layer marks the stage at which the press fulfills its core social function of providing accurate, timely, and ethically responsible information to the public. The objective of this layer is not only to rectify misinformation but also to proactively guide public understanding, ensuring that citizens have access to reliable and verified information sources.

Press agencies should develop rapid-response communication strategies, in which verified information is simultaneously disseminated across multiple platforms includ-

ing official websites, social media channels (such as Facebook*, TikTok, YouTube**, and Zalo), and mobile news applications. The diversification of dissemination channels enables verified news to compete in both speed and audience reach with fake news circulating online.

Moreover, journalistic products should be crafted to be concise, engaging, and visually informative, incorporating infographics, short videos, and podcasts to enhance accessibility and appeal while maintaining factual accuracy and ethical standards. In cases where misinformation causes public confusion or anxiety, the press should collaborate with governmental agencies or independent experts to conduct transparent fact-checking and provide clear, evidence-based explanations to the audience.

Ultimately, the correct news publishing layer functions not merely as the final phase of the verification process, but as a crucial mechanism for rebuilding public trust. It reinforces journalism's enduring role as a credible "gatekeeper" of truth in the post-truth era, where information accuracy and social responsibility are inseparable pillars of press integrity.

Layer 4 — Public Media Education:

The final layer of the anti-fake news model, public media education, plays a pivotal role in the long-term effort to combat misinformation. While the previous three layers focus primarily on the technical and professional activities of press agencies, this layer aims to enhance the public's capacity to receive, evaluate, and respond critically to information circulating in the digital environment.

First, press organizations should collaborate with educational institutions, social organizations, and technology enterprises to integrate the topic of "identifying and preventing fake news" into formal education curricula, particularly at the secondary and university levels. Students should be trained in fundamental media literacy skills, including verifying sources, recogniz-

ing misleading headlines, identifying manipulated content, and understanding how social media algorithms influence visibility and engagement. Cultivating critical thinking at an early stage enables young people not only to become informed consumers of information but also responsible participants in the digital media ecosystem.

Beyond formal education, the press should actively implement community-based communication initiatives such as workshops, viral video campaigns, content creation contests, and online discussion forums to promote awareness of information safety and ethical media use. These initiatives can be carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Communications, social media platforms, and non-governmental organizations.

For 4L-AFM to function effectively, it is essential to establish a coherent operational framework that ensures coordination among the four layers. At the same time, the model recommends enhanced cooperation and data sharing between press agencies and state management bodies to strengthen both accuracy and early warning capacities. If implemented systematically, the 4L-AFM is expected to reduce response time to emerging misinformation, thereby minimizing its social impact and contributing to a healthier, more trustworthy information ecosystem.

Conclusion

The rapid expansion of social networks has fundamentally transformed the ways in which individuals receive, process, and disseminate information. Alongside the benefits of enhanced accessibility and the democratization of information, this environment has also led to an unprecedented

surge in fake news, misinformation, and broader forms of information disorder. In the Vietnamese context, fake news not only distorts social perception but also undermines public trust, threatens information security, and affects socio-political stability. Consequently, the Vietnamese press faces an urgent and strategic responsibility: to safeguard informational authenticity and to guide public opinion in a complex digital landscape.

This study asserts that the application of the 4L-AFM-comprising Early Warning, Verification, Correct News Publishing, and Public Media Education-offers a feasible, systematic, and sustainable framework for addressing the challenges of misinformation. Each layer plays a distinct yet interrelated role: from the early detection of irregular information patterns and verification of factual accuracy, to the dissemination of verified content and the long-term cultivation of media literacy among the public.

However, the press cannot combat fake news in isolation. A multi-sectoral collaboration involving state management bodies, technology enterprises, educational institutions, and civil society organizations is essential to building a transparent and resilient media ecosystem. Equally important, the public itself must evolve into a “second gatekeeper”, capable of critically evaluating and responsibly sharing information.

Ultimately, only through collective cooperation among the press, the state, and the public can Vietnam foster a healthy, trustworthy, and ethically grounded media environment — one in which truth is respected, trust is reinforced, and the moral foundations of journalism are firmly upheld.


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