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Fake News Management Policy in Russia: Lessons for Vietnam in Intergating State Governance, Platform Responsibility and Media Literacy

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Abstract

The article compares the policies for managing “fake news” in the Russian Federation and Vietnam in the context of the digital age. It aims to analyze the legal frameworks, enforcement mechanisms, and policy effectiveness of both countries, thereby drawing relevant lessons for Vietnam. The study employs a document-synthesis and policy-comparison method: the author reviews key legal documents (Russia: *Law 31-FZ* and subsequent amendments; Vietnam: *Decree 15/2020* and *Decree 147/2024*), reports from international organizations, and academic literature on misinformation and disinformation. It also draws on other studies and case analyses related to the COVID-19 pandemic and recent information crises to illustrate how regulatory tools were applied in practice. The findings reveal that both Russia and Vietnam rely primarily on state-led instruments to address fake news, but with varying intensities. Russia prioritizes criminal sanctions, rapid content removal, and strong intervention by Roskomnadzor, while Vietnam combines administrative penalties with platform governance requirements, data-handling obligations, and cross-platform coordination, resulting in distinct implications for press freedom. The paper concludes with policy recommendations aimed at balancing the mitigation of fake news with the protection of freedom of expression, emphasizing that regulatory approaches must be complemented by media literacy education to ensure long-term societal resilience.

Keywords: fake news, fake news management, disinformation, misinformation, Federal Law No. 31-FZ, media literacy, Decree 15/2020/ND-CP, freedom of expression, media education.

1. Introduction

In the digital age, fake news has become a global challenge for both the media sector and state governance. Fake news is not merely inaccurate information; it is often deliberately crafted to manipulate public perceptions, undermine trust, or disrupt social order (Wardle, Derakhshan, 2017). During times of crisis—such as the COVID-19 pandemic—it has contributed significantly to what the WHO describes as a global “infodemic” (Nguyen, 2020; Quach, 2022; WHO, 2020).

In response, many countries have introduced various measures to curb the spread of fake news. Yet fake-news governance requires a delicate balance: protecting public interests and maintaining social stability without disproportionately infringing on freedom of expression and the right to access information (Le, 2022). For instance, France and Germany have enacted laws obliging social media platforms to remove false content within a specified timeframe (Vese, 2022). Russia adopted its anti-fake-news law in 2019, while several Southeast Asian countries have also tightened regulation of online content. However, the approach and degree of state intervention differ across countries, reflecting their political institutions and regulatory philosophies.

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Against this backdrop, the author examines the regulatory approaches of the Russian Federation and Vietnam as two representative case studies of state responses to fake news from the perspective of media governance and public administration. In Russia, *Federal Law No. 31-FZ 2019* enhances criminal liability for disseminating false information and authorizes the media regulator, Roskomnadzor, to block access to online content deemed harmful ([Committee to Protect Journalists, 2022](#)). Since 2022, Russia has gone further by criminalizing the dissemination of what it defines as “fake news” about military operations, with penalties reaching up to 15 years in prison ([Sherstoboeva, 2024](#)).

In Vietnam, the spread of fake news on social media platforms has also become increasingly complex. Forms of misinformation vary widely—from rumors about epidemics to fabricated reports concerning natural disasters or state policies. To address this issue, the Vietnamese government has introduced several regulatory measures, including *Decree 15/2020/ND-CP*, which stipulates administrative fines for individuals and organizations that produce or share false information online ([Nguyen et al., 2022](#)). In addition, Vietnam has enacted the 2018 *Cybersecurity Law*, alongside regulations governing the use of internet services and responsibilities of digital platforms in moderating harmful content ([Nguyen, 2023](#)).

In contrast to many Western countries—where the governance of fake news tends to rely on platform self-regulation and efforts to improve public media literacy—both Russia and Vietnam adopt approaches that are predominantly state-directed. A comparative examination of the fake-news management policies in these two countries therefore provides useful insights into how different political systems conceptualize and respond to the same problem. Identifying their points of convergence and divergence helps illuminate the strengths and limitations of each model, thereby offering practical lessons for Vietnam as it continues to refine its legal framework and policy measures for managing online information.

Although both Russia and Vietnam have acknowledged the harmful effects of fake news and have implemented strict management measures, several issues still require further examination. First, fake news continues to proliferate despite regulatory efforts. In Russia, shortly after the 2019 anti-fake news law came into effect, the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, triggering an explosion of rumors: in April 2020 alone, Russian authorities recorded at least 3,701 fake news items related to COVID-19 on the Russian Internet ([Pravo.ru, 2020](#)). Fabricated information surrounding disasters has also had serious consequences—for example, false reports about the 2018 Kemerovo shopping mall fire and the late-2018 Magnitogorsk explosion caused widespread public panic, prompting authorities to tighten legal controls ([Samorodova, 2020](#)).

In Vietnam, fabricated and distorted information circulates widely on social media, ranging from minor incidents (e.g., false rumors about personal lives or unsafe food) to major events (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic, natural disasters, political matters). During the 2023 flood, several individuals spread rumors about broken dikes, causing public alarm and forcing the police to intervene within 1-2 days ([Trong, Minh, 2024](#)).

Clearly, fake news remains a persistent problem that has not been thoroughly addressed, necessitating an analysis of why current policies have not achieved optimal effectiveness.

Russian and Vietnamese laws share a common feature: both grant significant power to the state in controlling online content. However, the question remains whether these regulations are sufficiently clear and practical. For instance, Russian law provides a relatively specific definition of “unreliable news”—information associated with risks to life, security, and public order ([Samorodova, 2020](#)). In contrast, Vietnamese law employs general terms such as “fake” or “untrue information” without detailing the degree of falsity or the contextual factors involved. This raises concerns about the criteria used to identify fake news and the distinction between false information and sensitive or counter-narrative content.

Moreover, the effectiveness of enforcement among agencies responsible for combating fake news varies. Russia has Roskomnadzor, which can monitor and block websites rapidly ([Dairbekov, Barata, 2019](#)), whereas Vietnam primarily requires social media platforms to remove violating posts within 24 hours under *the Cybersecurity Law* or imposes administrative fines on individuals who circulate such information. The level of coordination between agencies—such as the police, information and communications authorities, and network operators—also affects the overall effectiveness of efforts to counter fake news.

This study examines these issues to identify gaps and challenges in policy implementation in both countries. In summary, the research focuses on:

- (1) the current status and limitations of legal policies on fake news management in Russia and Vietnam;
- (2) the fundamental differences between the approaches adopted by the two countries; and
- (3) lessons that Vietnam can draw to strengthen its efforts to combat fake news in cyberspace.

2. Materials and methods

In communication and information-management research, “fake news” is generally understood as false or misleading information. However, scholars emphasize the importance of distinguishing among misinformation, disinformation, and malinformation (Broda, Strömbäck, 2023). In this sense, fake news may involve entirely fabricated content or information that blends truth with falsehood in order to deceive the public (Lazer et al., 2018). Although widely used, the term lacks a unified definition in the academic community. This conceptual ambiguity can be problematic: when “fake news” is defined too broadly, state authorities may exercise discretionary power over the flow of information, potentially infringing upon freedom of expression and press freedom (Altay et al., 2023). A clear and coherent theoretical framework is therefore essential for designing effective governance policies.

Another theoretical perspective treats fake news as an information-security threat, given that misinformation and disinformation can influence state institutions and society at large—not only by shaping policy outcomes but also by eroding public trust (Silva, Vaz, 2024). From this viewpoint, some countries seek to regulate digital infrastructure, platforms, and online content through measures such as access blocking, local data storage requirements, and content-monitoring mechanisms. Fake-news governance can thus be understood within a broader platform-governance paradigm that includes three main options: self-regulation, state regulation, and media-literacy-based approaches (Vese, 2021). Among the factors, media literacy plays an important role in reducing the impact of misinformation by enhancing users' ability to evaluate information (Potter, 2022; Rivotella, 2020). Research on internet governance in the post-truth era further demonstrates that governments must determine “who is responsible” for online information—users, platforms, or the state—and what degree of regulatory intervention is appropriate (Horne, 2021). The choice of approach varies depending on each country's social and political system.

Drawing on the theoretical discussions above, this article proposes an analytical framework consisting of five key components. First, the definition and classification of fake news are examined based on purpose, form, and level of harm, allowing for a more precise understanding of different types of misleading information. Second, platform self-regulation is considered, focusing on the internal governance mechanisms adopted by social media companies. Third, state regulation refers to legal, administrative, and technical measures used by governments to control harmful content and maintain information security. Fourth, public education and media literacy emphasize the role of enhancing citizens' abilities to identify, interpret, and critically evaluate online information. Finally, policy implementation and effectiveness assessment address the capacity of institutions to detect, respond to, and mitigate the spread of fake news.

This analytical framework highlights the importance of achieving an appropriate balance between protecting the public from harmful misinformation and ensuring that measures taken do not unduly restrict freedom of expression within society.

The article employs a qualitative document analysis methodology. First, the author examines legal documents related to fake news management in Russia and Vietnam, such as Russia's *Federal Law No. 31-FZ of 2019* and subsequent amendments in 2020 and 2022, as well as Vietnam's *Decree 15/2020/ND-CP* and the 2018 *Cybersecurity Law*. These documents are analyzed to clarify the legal definitions, regulatory scope, authorities responsible for enforcement, and the sanctions applied to fake news within each legal system.

Next, the study synthesizes materials from academic sources and reputable reports, including scholarly articles, theses, and monographs in Russian, Vietnamese, and English. For example, an article in *Mediascope* provides an academic perspective on anti-fake news legislation in Russia and internationally; an ISEAS report highlights how “anti-fake news” measures have been used as tools for censorship in several Asian countries; and related analyses are presented in the *Vietnam Law Journal*. In addition, the author incorporates statistical data—such as the number of penalties issued for fake news and notable cases reported by credible organizations—to support the analysis.

A comparative method is then applied to assess the management approaches in the two countries, identifying similarities and differences in the definition of fake news, enforcement mechanisms, and the political contexts influencing legal implementation. Based on these analyses, the article offers observations and policy recommendations for Vietnam.

3. Discussion

Russia's fake news management policy is considered based on different criteria such as: Legal framework and definitions, Sanctions and enforcement mechanisms and Effectiveness.

Legal framework and definitions: The Russian Federation officially enacted its anti-fake news legislation on March 18, 2019, through two related laws: *Federal Law No. 31-FZ amending the law on Information, Information Technologies, and Information Protection*, and *Federal Law No. 27-FZ amending the Code of Administrative Offenses* (Samorodova, 2020). *Federal Law No. 31-FZ*—commonly referred to as the Fake news Law—grants the Federal Service for Supervision of Communications, Information Technology, and Mass Media (Roskomnadzor) the authority to restrict access to online content deemed “unreliable” information (Pollicino, 2019). The law provides a clear definition of “unreliable news” as false information about a socially significant event, presented as factual news, that is capable of causing harm to human life, health, or property; provoking wide-scale public disorder; or obstructing the functioning of critical infrastructure, including transportation, energy, finance, and telecommunications systems (Samorodova, 2020). This definition emphasizes the element of public danger, thereby distinguishing serious forms of harmful misinformation from ordinary false news.

Sanctions and enforcement mechanisms: First, Roskomnadzor has the authority to demand the removal of fake news. If the violating website does not comply within 24 hours, the agency can order that the site be blocked throughout Russia (VOV, 2019). The procedure operates as follows: once a violation is detected, Roskomnadzor notifies the editorial board of the website that the unlawful information must be deleted. After receiving the notice, the website is obligated to remove the unreliable content. If it fails to do so, Roskomnadzor instructs internet service providers to restrict access to the site. Second, administrative fines are imposed on individuals and organizations that disseminate fake news. Individuals may be fined between 30,000 and 100,000 rubles; public officials between 60,000 and 200,000 rubles; and organizations between 200,000 and 500,000 rubles (Duma..., 2019). These penalties are considered sufficiently deterrent and are designed primarily to prevent the spread of fake news in a timely manner rather than punish media outlets. As a result, the central objective is to block harmful information before it circulates widely and causes public panic (Andrey, 2019).

After 2019, Russia continued to amend its legislation to address fake news in exceptional circumstances. In April 2020, amid a surge of COVID-19-related misinformation, Russia introduced Articles 207.1 and 207.2 to *the Criminal Code*, establishing criminal liability for spreading false information about emergency situations that endanger life and health. Under these provisions, individuals disseminating fake news about epidemics that result in serious consequences may face up to three years of imprisonment, or up to five years if the consequences are particularly severe (Duma..., 2025). This criminalization reflects the high priority the Russian government places on preventing fake news, especially misinformation deemed to threaten public health and public security.

Effectiveness: The promulgation of the 2019 fake news law has had a noticeable social impact. Statistics show that the number of mentions of the phrase “fake news” in the Russian mainstream press increased 13.5 times on the day following the law’s passage, indicating that the issue immediately became a focal point of public discourse (Samorodova, 2020). A 2018 survey by VCIOM (the Russian Public Opinion Research Center) reported that 83 % of respondents supported the initiative to introduce an anti-fake news law, and more than half expected the legislation to help reduce misinformation in the media (VCIOM, 2019). These findings suggest broad public approval of state efforts to foster a healthier online information environment. In terms of enforcement, Roskomnadzor has acted actively, compiling a list of websites that repeatedly disseminate fake news. According to a June 2020 report, the Russian government had sanctioned dozens of violations and blocked multiple pieces of misinformation related to the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, an individual in Moscow was criminally prosecuted for spreading false information about the number of COVID-19 deaths at a local hospital, and a YouTube channel promoting conspiracy theories about the virus was also removed (Pravo.ru,

2020). However, Russia's fake news policy has also faced criticism from human rights organizations. *The Russian Presidential Human Rights Council* (HRC) sent a letter to *the Federation Council* opposing the bill, arguing that it "restricts the constitutional right to freedom of speech" (Interfax, 2019).

Meanwhile, fake news in Vietnam is defined and managed in a way that reflects the country's specific political and social characteristics.

Legal framework and definition: Under Vietnamese law, fake news is defined as information that is partially or entirely false compared with the truth, created by one or more individuals to serve specific purposes or intentions (Government of Vietnam, 2024). The management of false information on the Internet is regulated through various legal documents, the most prominent of which are *Decree 15/2020/ND-CP* (effective April 15, 2020) and *Decree 14/2022/ND-CP*, which amends and supplements several provisions of Decree 15 and has been in effect since 2022. *Decree 15/2020* establishes administrative sanctions for violations in the fields of postal services, telecommunications, and information technology. Accordingly, providing or sharing fake or false information; distorting or slandering; or insulting the reputation of agencies and organizations, as well as the honor and dignity of individuals, results in fines ranging from VND 10 million to VND 20 million for individuals, with organizational fines typically doubled (up to VND 40 million). The Decree also requires violators to remove illegal content they have posted (Government of Vietnam, 2020). In addition, it sets penalties for disseminating information that causes public panic, incites violence, or promotes social evils. The issuance of *Decree 14/2022/ND-CP* demonstrates the Vietnamese government's intention to strengthen its response to online violations, including fake news. Under this Decree, fines between VND 300 million and VND 400 million may be imposed for posting or distributing distorted or fabricated information that causes confusion among the public (Government of Vietnam, 2022). Beyond Decree 15, Vietnam has several other legal documents that indirectly address the issue of fake news. The 2018 *Law on Cybersecurity* prohibits the dissemination of information that is "distorted or untrue, causing public confusion; damaging socio-economic activities; or creating difficulties for state agencies." The law authorizes *the Ministry of Public Security* to request service providers, such as Facebook and Google to remove violating content and provide user data for investigative purposes (Vietnam National Assembly, 2018). The growth of social media has significantly accelerated the spread of misinformation in cyberspace (Magin et al., 2022). Beginning December 25, 2024, Vietnam will implement *Decree 147/2024/ND-CP* on the management, provision, and use of Internet services and online information. The decree introduces several notable new provisions, including: (i) requiring online platforms to remove infringing content within a short timeframe-typically 24 hours-upon request from competent authorities; (ii) regulations on account verification and enhanced obligations for storing and providing data for state management; (iii) mechanisms for permanently locking accounts, groups, or channels in cases of serious violations; and (iv) clearer responsibilities for coordination between platform operators and regulatory agencies (Government of Vietnam, 2024).

From an anti-fake news policy perspective, *Decree 147/2024* represents a shift from primarily penalizing individual users (Government of Vietnam, 2020) to strengthening platforms' obligations in "content management," such as content removal, account blocking, and data provision. This shift enhances the state's ability to control large-scale misinformation and shortens the response time for addressing harmful online content.

Enforcement and effectiveness: Recently, Vietnam has intensified the monitoring and handling of false information on digital platforms. In Quang Ninh, authorities detected and addressed nearly 80 cases of individuals posting false information about the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in total fines exceeding VND 200 million (Quang Ninh Newspaper, 2021).

In Ninh Binh, during the first six months of 2025, the Department of Culture and Sports, in coordination with relevant agencies, reviewed and requested the removal of nearly 100 false articles and videos circulating on social networks (Ninh Binh..., 2025). As of December 2024, *the Vietnam Fake News Handling Center* (VAFC) had received 1,378 complaints, 591 of which involved toxic content (Department of Radio, Television and Electronic Information, 2025).

In addition to imposing sanctions on individuals, Vietnam has required social media platforms to cooperate in the removal of fake news. Official statistics indicate that in 2022 alone, Facebook blocked or removed 2,751 posts identified as false news, anti-Party, anti-State, or defamatory toward individuals and organizations; YouTube removed 7,935 videos; and TikTok

deleted hundreds of videos and accounts. Furthermore, Force 47 under *the Ministry of National Defense*, along with cyber security units, actively monitored, detected, and promptly prevented the dissemination of harmful and toxic information ([Committee to Protect Journalists, 2023](#)).

Table 1. Comparison table of fake news management models between the Russian Federation and Vietnam

Criteria	Russian Federation	Vietnam
Legal framework	A strict legal system with heavy penalties: Law 31-FZ and amendments. High levels of administrative and criminal sanctions.	A rapidly expanding and updated legal framework: Decree 15/2020, Decree 53/2022, Decree 147/2024/ND-CP. Clear classification of administrative vs. criminal violations and enforcement authority.
Policy approach	Security-oriented - information control, focusing on removing content that affects government agencies, political issues, or “social stability”	A combined approach of management - education - platform cooperation. Aims to reduce harmful information, protect users, and enhance cybersecurity.
Role of social media platforms	Platforms are required to place servers/representative offices in Russia; rapid content removal requirements; policies for sharing/handling over user data.	Vietnam has achieved a 90-95% cooperation rate with Facebook, TikTok, Google during 2023-2024; no requirement yet for data localization under Decree 53/2022.
Penalties	Heavy punishments (including imprisonment and large administrative fines). Some scholars warn of risks of “overblocking” and limited freedom of expression.	Penalties expanded under Decree 15/2020 & 147/2024; administrative sanctions prioritized but with clear provisions for special cases.
Cooperation in combating misinformation	Limited due to tensions with Western countries; policies on “information sovereignty” reduce the scope for international cooperation.	Actively participates in ASEAN, APAC, EU, WHO, UNESCO forums on combating misinformation.
Effectiveness	Controls harmful content but is evaluated by the international community as restrictive of freedom of speech.	Vietnamese data shows improvement in handling, reducing harmful content, but challenges remain due to limited resources.

4. Results

Level of state intervention and legal framework: Both Russia and Vietnam follow a model of active state intervention in controlling fake news, treating it as a core task of state information security management. However, Russia’s legal framework is more detailed and stringent, featuring a dedicated anti-fake news law that clearly defines violations and prescribes sanctions, including criminal penalties. In contrast, Vietnam does not have a standalone law on fake news; instead, it regulates false information primarily through administrative decrees integrated into other legal instruments, with fines imposed on individuals and organizations. Vietnam has not criminalized the independent act of spreading fake news, and serious cases are often prosecuted under other offenses, such as slander or sabotage. This comparison suggests that Vietnam could benefit from developing a comprehensive and clearly articulated legal framework to reduce overlap and ambiguity. Specifically, Vietnam might consider creating a dedicated law or specialized legal document on fake news that clearly identifies particularly dangerous types-such as content threatening public safety or distorting state policies-similar to the Russian approach. A precise definition would make enforcement more transparent and predictable. At the same time, care should be taken to avoid overly broad definitions, which could inadvertently turn anti-fake news policies into tools of censorship. To achieve this balance, Vietnam could draw on the expertise of domestic and international media specialists and legal scholars. At the same time, it is necessary to

balance regulatory intervention with the development of digital literacy among citizens (Buckingham et al., 2021).

Censorship and content removal mechanism: In Russia, the government agency Roskomnadzor has the authority to rapidly block access to websites that disseminate fake news. In Vietnam, by contrast, the primary mechanism relies on requesting social media platforms to remove or restrict access to offending content. Despite the procedural differences, the end result is similar: false information is removed from public view-through site blocking in Russia and content deletion or de-display on platforms in Vietnam. Russia's approach is generally more forceful and comprehensive, allowing authorities to completely block offending websites, including electronic newspapers that fail to promptly remove "fake news" (VOV, 2019).

Vietnam has rarely implemented technical measures such as DNS or IP blocking, except in special cases. This suggests that Vietnam could consider using technical blocking selectively—for example, when fake news sources are malicious, operate servers abroad, and deliberately ignore removal requests. However, website blocking must be carefully weighed against potential impacts on users' rights to access information, press freedom, and freedom of expression. Sometimes, technological factors, such as deepfakes, also increase skepticism about the authenticity of information, thereby putting pressure on the content control mechanisms of platforms and regulatory agencies (Vaccari, Chadwick, 2020).

As an intermediate approach, Vietnam has emphasized close cooperation with social media platforms. Platforms are required to actively remove content that violates Vietnamese law and to implement measures to prevent and eliminate false or harmful information. Major platforms such as Facebook, Google, and TikTok have applied AI technologies to automatically detect and manage violating content in response to requests from the Ministry of Information and Communications (Authority of Broadcasting and Electronic Information, 2024). Regulating platforms needs to consider public values and social responsibility, not just simply blocking information (Seipp et al., 2023; Taylor, West, 2021). It requires a combination of efforts from governments, platforms, and users.

Sanctions for violators: Russia maintains a clear and tiered system of sanctions for spreading fake news, including administrative fines and criminal penalties, which vary depending on the severity and consequences of the violation. In Vietnam, enforcement primarily relies on fines. While these fines are generally lower than in Russia, they are relatively substantial in relation to average income, and the total number of fines imposed is high. Unlike Russia, Vietnam has not yet established criminal penalties specifically for spreading fake news.

Vietnam could consider introducing sanctions proportionate to the seriousness of the violation, particularly for cases that threaten public safety or social order. For example, *the Criminal Code* could include a dedicated offense for spreading false information that results in severe consequences, such as riots, injuries, or deaths caused by misinformation. Currently, such cases are prosecuted indirectly under offenses like disturbing public order or sabotage, but a specific criminal provision could enhance deterrence and facilitate prosecution. At the same time, criminal sanctions should be applied cautiously to avoid perceptions of repression in cases that are not socially dangerous. For most violations, administrative fines, public education, and corrective measures—as currently practiced in Vietnam for false rumors—remain sufficient to deter individuals without imposing excessive pressure on human rights. This balanced approach allows authorities to address serious threats while protecting freedom of expression in less harmful cases.

The role of media literacy and public awareness: Both Russia and Vietnam recognize that legal measures alone are insufficient to manage fake news; public knowledge and media literacy are equally crucial for helping people identify and avoid misinformation. Media literacy is widely regarded as an essential component in combating misinformation. Legal measures alone cannot create long-term resilience; individuals must be able to critically evaluate, verify, and interpret digital content (Buckingham et al., 2021).

In the Vietnamese context, integrating media literacy into educational curricula and mass media campaigns can help mitigate the negative impact of online content on users. Psychological factors, such as the level of attention to accuracy or the tendency to think habitually rather than analytically, make users more likely to believe and share information (Pennycook, Rand, 2021).

A brief intervention can also help increase the ability to distinguish real news from fake news (Guess et al., 2020). Furthermore, media literacy is understood as incorporating pre-bunking interventions into educational programs, which are considered a sustainable psychological strategy

to combat fake news (Neylan et al., 2023; Roozenbeek, van der Linden, 2022), rather than a substitute for law (Lewandowsky et al., 2021).

In Russia, beyond the legal framework, specialized platforms have been developed to support information verification. For instance, *the Global Fact-Checking Network website* provides verification and data comparison tools to help users access reliable sources. *The War on Fakes channel* functions as a platform to synthesize, analyze, and respond to information deemed false, particularly in matters related to Russia. These initiatives demonstrate an effort to establish systematic information control and filtering mechanisms to address the challenges posed by fake news in the modern media environment.

In Vietnam, press agencies and media management authorities have implemented multiple measures to identify, prevent, and refute false information. A notable example is the *FactcheckVN* project by *the Vietnam News Agency*, operating on TikTok with a concise and engaging format that enables young audiences to access verified information easily. Verifying public information, or in other words, media education for the public, should not only target young audiences but also special population groups, such as the elderly, to be more effective in combating fake news (Moore et al., 2022). Along with verifying information, proofreading also helps reduce cognitive bias, thereby limiting the spread of fake news (Vraga, Bode, 2020). This represents a significant shift from traditional reporting to active verification.

Additionally, *the Portal for Receiving and Handling Fake News (Tingia.gov.vn)*, operated by the Ministry of Information and Communications, serves as a link between the public and regulatory authorities, processing thousands of complaints annually, primarily related to toxic content and online scams. Another notable initiative is the *Tin Campaign*, implemented by *the Department of Radio, Television and Electronic Information* in collaboration with *VnExpress*, which raises public awareness and encourages the dissemination of positive, accurate content.

Beyond large-scale projects, many media outlets-including *VTV*, *VietnamPlus*, *Tuoi Tre Online*, *Thanh Nien*, and *VnExpress*-regularly produce programs, articles, and columns to educate the public on identifying fake news and understanding its societal impact. These efforts collectively reflect Vietnam's commitment to combining legal enforcement with media literacy and public engagement as part of a comprehensive strategy against misinformation.

The comparison indicates that Vietnam and Russia share the same fundamental goals and approaches in combating fake news: the state plays a central role, and legal mechanisms are employed to prevent the spread of misinformation. However, the extent of legal enforcement and the effectiveness of these measures differ due to variations in political and social contexts. Russia tends to act more decisively and strongly, which can provoke mixed reactions domestically and internationally.

Vietnam can adopt a more flexible and cautious approach in applying laws and state management. For instance, regulations perceived as overly harsh by the public could be amended to align with international standards, thereby preventing anti-fake news policies from becoming a target of criticism by human rights organizations. At the same time, Vietnam can draw lessons from Russia regarding the importance of coordinated action among regulatory bodies, law enforcement, and judicial authorities, which enhances the effectiveness of fake news management.

5. Conclusion

Fake news is a pressing issue in the information age, threatening multiple aspects of social life, including security, politics, the economy, health, and public order. Governments worldwide, including those of the Russian Federation and Vietnam, have been compelled to adopt measures to manage this phenomenon. Through comparative research, it is evident that Russia's anti-fake news policy stands out for its decisive approach-establishing a comprehensive legal framework, implementing strict sanctions, and ensuring rapid responses. In contrast, Vietnam primarily relies on administrative penalties and has not yet criminalized violations related to fake news. However, the general trend is toward strengthening control to prevent the spread of fake news that could negatively impact society and the country's image.

The analysis identifies several similarities between the two countries: both consider combating fake news essential for protecting public interest, grant significant powers to information management agencies (Roskomnadzor in Russia; the Ministry of Information and Communications and the Ministry of Public Security in Vietnam), and employ measures such as fines, forced content removal, and access blocking when necessary. At the same time, notable

differences exist: Russia has a specialized legal system and is willing to impose imprisonment on individuals who spread fake news, whereas Vietnam relies primarily on administrative sanctions. Russia exercises direct control over content, while Vietnam depends more on cooperation with service providers to remove violating content. These differences reflect each country's political and social contexts and policy priorities, while also providing valuable lessons for Vietnam.

For Vietnam, the most important lesson is likely the need to strike a balance: protecting information security and social order while safeguarding freedom of speech and press rights as guaranteed by the Constitution. Vietnam should continue to improve its legal framework on fake news in a specific, transparent, and controlled manner—for example, by adding clear definitions, categorizing levels of fake news, and regulating handling procedures with judicial supervision when necessary. At the same time, Vietnam can learn from Russia's adaptability—being ready to update laws as new forms of fake news emerge, as Russia did during the COVID-19 pandemic and other special circumstances.

Furthermore, lessons from both countries show that building societal resilience against fake news is a sustainable solution. Vietnam should invest more in media education and public awareness, enabling people to verify information independently. When the majority of the public develops the habit of checking information, fake news is less likely to spread, and the risk of state overreach in censorship is reduced. Only then can a healthy and transparent information environment be established, contributing to social stability and maintaining public trust in policies and the law.

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