



**NRCP**  
**RESEARCH JOURNAL**

## Full Paper

# Press Unreleased: The Lived Experiences of Filipino Journalists Amidst the Pandemic

Raphaelle Jazmine D. Rodriguez, Mayumi Limboc, James Christian P. Mendoza, Carel Jermione P. Ortega, Janeson M. Miranda, and Christian P. Gopez

Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, De La Salle University, Manila

[raphaelle\\_jazmine\\_rodriguez@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:raphaelle_jazmine_rodriguez@dlsu.edu.ph), [mayumi\\_limboc@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:mayumi_limboc@dlsu.edu.ph),

[james\\_christian\\_mendoza@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:james_christian_mendoza@dlsu.edu.ph), [carel\\_jermione\\_ortega@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:carel_jermione_ortega@dlsu.edu.ph),

[janeson.miranda@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:janeson.miranda@dlsu.edu.ph), [christian.gopez@dlsu.edu.ph](mailto:christian.gopez@dlsu.edu.ph)

In this study, we described the lived experiences of eight Filipino journalists by centering on the changes and challenges they encountered in their profession during the COVID-19 pandemic and their prospective outlook on journalism practice in the future. We observed the following criteria in the selection of the journalists who participated in the study: a) the journalist has experienced pre-pandemic fieldwork; b) is active in the profession during the pandemic; and c) continues to be active in the journalism industry in the present. From the thematic analysis, we noted that the eight journalist informants navigated the shifts and struggles brought about by the pandemic with (1) restricted reportage, (2) health and economic challenges, (3) rampant disinformation and public distrust of the media, (4) continuous attacks, and (5) persistent sustenance of journalism as a practice. Despite all the dangers that come with their profession, journalists remain optimistic and unrelenting in pursuing their careers due to the fulfillment of the job and remain hopeful for the years to come. In light of the findings, we recommend further studies that will uncover the factors influencing the perils and threats to journalists and the varied experiences of these journalists from different media types.

**Keywords:** alternative media, COVID-19, dominant media, Filipino journalist, Philippine press, journalism

## Article history

Received : March 4, 2024

Revised : April 29, 2024

Accepted: May 1, 2024

## Introduction

Journalism is the most dangerous job in the Philippines (Cullen, 2020). According to the Global Impunity Index (GII) curated by the Committee to Protect Journalists, the Philippines ranks as the eighth deadliest country for journalists worldwide in 2023 (Reyes, 2023), with 13 unsolved murders (Subingsubing & Santos, 2022; Dunham, 2021). The Philippines also has a streak of being in the Top 5 deadliest countries for journalists for 10 years from 2011 to 2021 (Manahan, 2021), setting the country's inclusion in the impunity list for 15 years. This extends even into the post-pandemic era and into the Marcos administration, with 75 incidents of media attacks recorded from June 2022 to April 2023 (De Jesus, 2023).

Tandoc (2016) noted that journalism in the Philippines is more perilous than in its neighboring countries as it faces media violence and lapses in professionalism, among other threats. According to Westfall (2020), Filipino journalists face media repression and belittlement from the country's highest officials. From a historical lens, the Philippine media has been at the forefront of the receiving end of attacks and oppression. Some of the most notable instances of media oppression in Philippine history are the media silencing incidents during the Martial Law era from 1972 to 1986, where countless media personnel were imprisoned and killed without due cause or process (Westfall, 2020), the seizing of the Department of Defense on September 22, 1972, of the broadcasting rights of the local news network, ABS-CBN, from airing in national television due to "possible utilization for anti-government propaganda" (Lim, 2020), the writers of Women Writers in Media Now (WOMEN) who were victims of military intimidation and were accused of being members of the Communist Party of the Philippines

due to an article entitled "Human Right Exposés" (Astorga-Garcia, 2021), and the Maguindanao Massacre that took place in 2009 resulting in the deaths of 30 journalists (Beiser, 2020).

Furthermore, the database of the Committee to Protect Journalists stated that the year 2009 took the record high of journalists being killed in a year with 33 cases in this year alone. In addition, from July 1, 2016 to October 31, 2018, 99 cases of direct and indirect assaults against journalists and news agencies were reported. The 99 cases reported within the Duterte administration consist of 17 online harassment, 12 killings, 12 libel cases, 11 SMS (short message service) threats, seven slay attempts, and more (CMFR Staff, 2018). The International Federation of Journalists (2021) also states that the Philippines has had 21 journalists murdered since 2016.

These repressions are further highlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the onset of the pandemic in 2020, journalists have been imprisoned, with some even being killed. Media outlets that serve as the main source of news for the public have been crippled and shut down (Subingsubing; 2021; Rivas; 2020), and the threats journalists received through social media and red-tagging of journalists have become more apparent with the passing of the Anti-Terrorism Law in 2020, granting the state power to tag any citizen a terrorist. This premise has been utilized to attack Filipino journalists, mainly through red tagging. Aside from red tagging, libel cases filed against journalists increased from 2020 to 2021. Santos (2021) states that during the period of the pandemic alone, 20 out of 37 libel cases were filed. The conflict of press freedom in the Philippines further extends to the killings of individual news personnel. The table below outlines a few of these killings and other related incidents.

**Table 1.** Media personnel killings and other related incidents

Incident/s	Source/s
1. death of internet broadcaster Jobert Bercasio	(Barcia, 2020),
2. unresolved death of Orlando Dinoy after being shot six times before the International Day to End Impunity for Crimes Against Journalists	(International Federation of Journalists, 2021)
3. threatening of campus journalists at the University of the Philippines	(Ines, 2021)
4. arrest of two journalists, Mario Batuigas and Amor Virata, who were accused and convicted of spreading "false information"; media outlets such as Bulatlat being denied access to report the situation of quarantined areas in Luzon	(Jerreat, 2020)

**Table 1.** Continuation

Incident/s	Source/s
5. the filing of complaints against Radyo Natin Guimba, a local radio station in Nueva Ecija, for alleged false reports	(Tuquero, 2020)
6. the conviction of the first Filipino Nobel Peace Prize recipient, Maria Ressa, for a cyber libel case for an article written in 2012	(Vitug, 2020)
7. killing of Rey Blanco and Percy Lapid, broadcasters and known critics of the government	(Kumar, 2023)
8. rejection to unblock Bulatlat and its affiliates' website after it was shut down by the National Telecommunications Commission due to red-tagging	(Beltran, 2022; Hassan, 2023; Patag, 2022)
9. the controversial shutdown of one of the biggest media entities in the Philippines, ABS-CBN, due to failure of franchise renewal	(Rivas, 2020)

Despite the risks to life and safety implied in the job, Filipino journalists, both old and new, continue to pursue the profession of delivering news and information to the public, especially at the height of a public health emergency and global crisis. The need for reliable news information during these times has been heavily emphasize by the alarming increase in the suppression of press coverage in the country. Further, as stated by Haron (2021) and by Ressa, as quoted by Pazzanese (2021) in her *The Harvard Gazette* article, the spread of false information regarding the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the disinformation that targets journalists not only endangers the public but also endangers democracy in the Philippines.

With this disappointing state of journalism in the country, we discussed in this study the experiences of journalists who, despite the dangers of the pandemic, have been vehemently active in reporting and informing the masses about the situation of the country during the pandemic. At a time when our story bearers are silenced and oppressed, the call for the amplification of their state and situations as journalists is imperative for us to understand the stories of the people who bring the world's stories to us and to find ways for us to be advocates of free journalism and defend press freedom. Specifically, we sought to answer the following questions in this study:

1) What are the challenges that Filipino journalists encountered during the COVID-19 pandemic?

2) How do Filipino journalists face the changing demands of delivering news reports despite the risks of their profession?

3) How has the COVID-19 pandemic changed the landscape of Philippine journalism in the post-pandemic era?

## Methodology

We used a case study to gain a more contextualized and deeper description of select Filipino journalists' lived experiences during the pandemic. We employed purposive sampling technique to select key informants. A total of eight Filipino journalists from dominant and alternative media were chosen for this research according to the following criteria: 1) has experienced pre-pandemic fieldwork, 2) is still in the profession amidst the pandemic, and 3) continues to be active in the journalism industry in the present. Table 2 further presents the background information of the informants. Data were collected from in-depth interviews via Zoom platform from October 2021 to January 2022, with approximately 1 to 2 hours allotted for each session. A questionnaire was utilized to structure the interview, with the questions translated in both English and Filipino languages, following the preference of the informants. The first part of the interview focused on building rapport with the informants and explaining the rationale behind the research project. The question proper included the background of the informants, their everyday lives as journalists, the impact of the pandemic on their lives as journalists, how they conducted their profession in the middle of the pandemic, and their vision and motivations in moving forward with post-pandemic journalism.

All interviews were manually transcribed, and the transcripts were read and verified by five other researchers to ensure correctness and avoid misrepresentation. The transcriptions were also sent

to the informants for confirmation and verification. Although valuable quotations delivered in mixed Filipino and English languages were translated into English during the presentation of findings as suggested by some scholars (e.g., van Nes et al., 2010), the researchers performed actual data analysis on the original transcriptions (Nikander, 2008) to ensure alignment of meanings. The data were processed and examined by implementing the step-by-step procedures of thematic analysis. Clarke and Braun (2014) stated that thematic analysis

indicates a primary understanding of identified patterns across the qualitative data; hence, it was made sure that familiarization with the dataset, systematizing of codes, and reviewing of themes were orderly applied. The shared experiences within the daily lives of the informants were also interpreted into rationales that decontextualized validities and truths. The analysis method further aided in having an objective evaluation of the reports in a way that was consistent with the structure and theme of the research.

**Table 2.** Background profile of the informants

Name of Informants	Affiliations (Media Company & Work History)	Nature of Work	Years Active in the field of Journalism
Mr. Danilo A. Arao	University of the Philippines (UP); Bulatlat (BLT)	Associate Professor of Journalism, Writer and Board of Editor	June 2001–present July 2001–present
Mr. Rolando Defeo Jr.	GMA News and Public Affairs	Writer	2017–present
Ms. Katrina Domingo	ABS-CBN News	Multi-Platform Journalist	2011–present
Ms. Janess Ann J. Ellao	Bulatlat (BLT)	Writer	2009–present
Ms. Ronalyn V. Olea	National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP); Bulatlat (BLT)	Secretary General Editor-in-Chief	2004–present 2022–present
Mr. Ratziel San Juan	One Mega Group, Inc. (OMG); Altermidya (ALM); Philippine Daily Inquirer (PDI)	Writer Volunteer Journalist Editorial Production Assistant	January 2022–present February 2021–present July 2021–December 2021
Anonymous Informant #1	ABS-CBN News	Radio Patrol Reporter	August 2017–present
Anonymous Informant #2	ABS-CBN News	Multi-Platform Political Correspondent	August 2003–present

## Results and Discussion

### Filipino journalists vs. COVID-19

The Filipino journalists involved in our study shared varied challenges they faced in their profession's conduct during the pandemic. Clearly, journalism during the pandemic brought about sudden changes in the usual flow of Philippine journalism, mainly because many journalists were abruptly propelled to work from home and shift to a completely online modality (Tantuco, 2020). Nevertheless, they strategically faced and navigated these challenges. These predicaments and how they maneuvered these challenges amidst the pandemic were

discussed thematically below.

### Restricted reportage

Evidently, the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in restricted reportage. The act and practice of journalism have changed drastically due to the myriad of limitations that make the profession even more challenging during this global health crisis. One informant, Olea (NUJP/BLT), an alternative media personnel, shared her experience and laid down other issues driven by the pandemic:

[It is] very challenging to access information because of the restrictions. Many journalists



were also accused of violating the “Bayanihan to Heal as One” act and were charged [with] libel. The ABS-CBN shutdown also happened during the pandemic. Everything is done completely online (beats, press briefings). It’s harder to verify and get sources at this time. The first few months were really challenging for them, switching to mobile, limited transportation, mobility, and more.

From gathering information and curating news to publishing stories, the pandemic has dented the industry in the Philippines enough for noticeable changes to occur. The apparent safety restrictions hampered the media’s ability to cover and deliver news due to the finite access to information and the suppression of press freedom (Bernadas & Ilagan, 2020). Such concerns were also echoed by another research informant, Ellao (BLT):

When it comes to gathering news, a lot has changed. When I was covering human rights issues before the pandemic, I had to travel and go outdoors physically to attend court hearings, whereas nowadays, I work from home. To cover a press conference, it is a must to go physically. So, in the present, things have changed. I now have to conduct my interviews online, either via Zoom or over the phone.

Compared to the usual practice of journalists of going straight to the site of the news, writing and publishing the report on the spot, the restrictions imposed upon journalists, such as antigen tests, physical distancing, limitation of participants during crucial live coverages and events, a significant decrease in the responses they receive due to the online modality of asking questions, and other mandated protocols made it difficult for them to gather, deliver and, produce news (Lewis, 2020; Perreault & Perreault, 2021; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2020).

Furthermore, while the journalist informants reported some pros that the pandemic had given many of their colleagues, such as the ease of scheduling and gathering interviews, these were countered by not being able to see the gestures and body language of the interviewee face-to-face. The limited screen time given to the interviewers also hindered the quality of news and the quantity of facts presented to the public. Additionally, the media types—dominant and alternative media—play a role in the differences in the journalists’ experience. Going to the field at the height of the pandemic to report and deliver news is one of the

most significant risks journalists face while on duty. During the need to conduct face-to-face interviews or covers, dominant media journalists were given the privilege of having free antigen and RT-PCR tests, as well as company-sponsored transportation to accompany them in covering news. On the other hand, alternative media journalists had to shoulder all their fees out of personal savings, from Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs), regular RT-PCR Tests, and transportation. Hence, alternative journalists’ comfort, security, and safety are compromised.

### **Health and economic challenges**

The effects of the pandemic on journalists are far-reaching as it goes past their lifestyle shifts and dents their finances. The Philippine media industry has felt the drastic plummeting of the economic sector during the pandemic, especially the alternative media outlets, as they experienced a decrease in pay and, worse, unemployment, with some journalists having to be made to make ends meet. Some of the informants expressed this struggle during the interviews. “We experienced a 50% pay cut, closing of newspaper companies, unpaid overtime, relief of benefits, reduced work hours, and some were even fired. Other journalists also worked multiple jobs just to provide for their family” (Olea, NUJP/BLT). She also expressed that dominant media reporters differ extensively from alternative journalists in terms of financial support given during the pandemic since the former “...compared to alternative media outlets that are not well-financially supported, ...had to shoulder all their expenses out of their own pockets.” A similar sentiment was shared by Domingo (ABS-CBN), “No stipends, financial aid, or cash grants from the government were given to journalists. Dominant media journalists financially thrived more since private companies have more allowance and funding sources.”

In addition, given the unfavorable impact that the pandemic has inflicted on journalists, specific adjustments and adaptations must be made to ensure the swift delivery of the same quality of news and reporting information to the people. This puts more stress on journalists than what is usually called for in their jobs. Olea (NUJP/BLT) mentioned that journalists like her faced a considerable amount of work-related stress due to the “changes in everything.” Arcalas et al. (2022) found that journalists experience creative blocks due to this added stress and have attempted various coping mechanisms to fulfill their tasks in and out of their profession. One research informant added, “You’re always subjected to trolling. If you’re always called names...[it] can’t be necessarily good for your mental

health, (Anonymous 2, ABS-CBN)."

The hurdles posed to journalists both in and out of their careers made a call for support for journalists. The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines (NUJP), in collaboration with UNESCO, held a variety of peer support training workshops throughout the nation. Such programs began to teach journalists how to successfully manage the stress that comes with their jobs and duties as journalists (Clarín, 2021). Apart from the added stress, Arcalas et al. (2022) reported that journalists experienced professional challenges that blurred the line between their personal and professional lives. Also, there have been anxiety, burnout, and emotional toll from writing stories of death by COVID-19 (Salvosa and Esguerra, 2021), as well as safety concerns for themselves and their loved ones as they experience constant online harassment, attacks, death threats, as what Olea (NUJP/BLT) shared in one of her interviews in Muller's (2022) blog article, red tagging (Lee-Brago, 2023) and other threats to their freedom of profession and speech.

### **Rampant disinformation and public distrust of media**

While the grave issue of dwindling public trust in media and the widespread disinformation had been a concern even in pre-pandemic society, these have worsened during the COVID-19 pandemic. As a television news writer, Defeo (GMA), one of our journalist informants from dominant media, relayed that the workflow had become "challenging" during the pandemic since many are prone to disinformation. Similarly, San Juan (OMG/ALM/PDI), a newspaper and volunteer journalist, mentioned that there is a plethora of information accessed by the public that makes it very difficult to determine if it is "false and misleading."

Apparently, the sudden restriction caused by the pandemic made it harder for journalists to gather and verify information, as well as the increase in social media usage, which makes its users prone to "fake news." A research informant said, "...news is supposed to be the truth, right? So fake news is caused by a variety of factors" (Anonymous 1, ABS-CBN). During the instances they could participate in live interviews with officials, journalists have to work twice as hard and use more of the newsrooms' resources to fact-check the information, especially COVID-19-related information meant to be reported to the public. This was because questions sent for online forums were being screened during the pandemic, rendering some questions unanswered due to possible political bias and agenda (Salvosa

II & Esguerra, 2022). This, in turn, results in a lack of information and incomplete data. Journalists, at this point, had to make sense of what was given and exhaust more time to make sure that they delivered reliable and credible news to the public. According to an interview conducted by Salvosa II and Esguerra (2022), journalists spend more time combating disinformation due to the variety of information being released. These inconsistencies may be rooted in the Philippine government's lack of concrete plans and actions during the height of the pandemic. There were various inconsistencies present in the information being released to the public by the government, and searching for the most unbiased and objective data was one of the biggest challenges journalists faced (Salvosa II and Esguerra, 2021). Based on a survey done by the Social Weather Stations (SWS), a total of 51% of Filipinos cannot distinguish which news speaks the "truth" (Tuquero, 2022). Since everything was done entirely online, it was troublesome for the journalists to work with minimal data and resources and still produce substantial news.

Aside from the rampant disinformation, there is now a growing distrust among the Filipino public in the country's media entities. Arao (UP/BLT), our research informant who is an alternative media journalist and a professor, argued:

...[I]f we look at [the] surveys, the trust ratings or approval ratings of ABS-CBN and Rappler are very low. This means that the government narrative is working to some extent because the distrust of ABS-CBN has become real because of the attacks of the government media.

This low trust ratings of Philippine media, particularly of the ones demonized by the government, is "disturbing," as described by Yvonne Chua, the scholar who wrote the Philippine situation report in the annual Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism (Rappler, 2023). As Arao (UP/BLT) explained, the dismal trust score of both ABS-CBN and Rappler can be attributed to former President Rodrigo R. Duterte's "enabling environment" for attacks. Such a position connects to Dienla et al.'s (2022) claim that "[p]opulist rhetoric breeds distrust in dominant media sources" (p. 175) and that this type of rhetoric that is vastly present on social media either challenges or invalidates legitimate news reports by the dominant media, a type of populism that allowed President Duterte to wield power over Philippine media during his presidency (Tapsell, 2021).

### **Filipino journalists under attack**

Besides the restricted reportage, health and economic challenges, rampant disinformation, and dipping public trust in legitimate media outlets, exacerbated by the pandemic repercussions, perhaps the most serious threat many journalists face is the constant attacks they receive from critics and even government officials. While it is true that Filipino journalists have been under siege even before the pandemic in the forms of violence towards media in rallies, shootings, and accusing journalists of peddling fake news and weaponizing these to silence them through intimidation or imprisonment (Coronel, 2018; Gavilan, 2018) among others, threats and attacks to media personnel and entities persist during the pandemic and even up to now (Freedom for Media, Freedom for All Network, 2020). One of our journalist informants remarked:

The risks have changed, but they are still there. I mean, if you're talking about assaults, assault is not necessarily just assault on life, with liberty or health. It can also be [an] assault on your freedom, assault on your capacity to do your work." (Anonymous 2, ABS-CBN)

Most journalist informants agreed that journalism and media are under attack, not only in the Philippines but worldwide. The online set-up made journalism even more dangerous for journalists who actively engage in obtaining and conveying fresh news. As shared by Arao (UP/BLT), "We're seeing right now an intensification of repression, not just against the media but against ordinary citizens." With the privilege of concealing the attackers' identity through the anonymity of social media, journalists have reported receiving harsher threats along with events of red-tagging, cyberbullying, and accusations of cyber libel. Journalism is "under attack from trolls, it's under attack with fake news, it's under attack from governments who cannot handle journalists speaking truth to power" (Anonymous 2, ABS-CBN).

Unsurprisingly, when inquired about their accounts, seven of the eight informants of the study have experienced a form of media attack at least once in their career, with some having a greater degree of threat than others, such as threats to the safety and liberty of the journalist. Attacks, either physical threats sent out in the field or virtual ones sent out through online articles and the social media of the journalist, affect both the safety of the journalist and the news that they deliver.

Moreover, as these threats increased, the world

where journalists, especially women, exercise their profession became smaller, and the already menacing job became much riskier as every report they wrote dug their graves deeper, primarily reports that target high-ranking members of the society (Villavecer, 2020). As shared by one of our female informants, there were "gender attacks faced by women journalists...and [r]ed-tagging is very real" (Ellao, BLT). Succinctly, Arao (UP/BLT) explained that media repression was always present, but there was a pretension of democracy, and the attacks made against the press were more public. The attacks faced by the journalists immensely affect their performance as journalists have become increasingly cautious of the reports they produce and have taken extra steps to avoid online harassment from the public and governmental institutions that red-tag journalists. The susceptibility of the Philippine press to political pressure is still an issue to unpack (Coronel, 2019).

Concerning the types of media, attacks on both alternative and dominant media journalists became more significant under the Duterte administration, as narrated by most of the journalist informants. Threats to the safety of journalists have been more significant during this period, as the actions taken upon journalists were blatant to the public. Since the beginning of the Duterte administration in 2016, half of the 233 cases of attacks and threats against Philippine media are associated with the government. Forty-two cases were from the military and police, 38 from the local government, and 34 cases linked are from national government officials themselves (Philippine Centre for Investigative Journalism, 2021). This also includes the shutdown of one of the most extensive networks in the Philippines, ABS-CBN, which the administration's critics labeled as a "threat to free press" and "a repeat of the Marcos dictatorship" (Heydarian, 2020; Osmena, as stated in Domingo, 2020). Dominant media journalists receiving attacks are not a common occurrence since the duopoly of media companies in the country provides a vast network and attracts public scrutiny and uprisings of movements across the country. Yet, both alternative and dominant media have been at a higher risk of danger due to aggravated threats across multiple platforms. At a time when lies surround the state, and state-initiated attacks continue to endanger press freedom and, consequently, freedom of speech in the Philippines, journalism continues to hang by a thread while emphasizing its importance today (Salud, 2022).

Finally, it can be gleaned from the experiences of



our journalist informants that despite the similar tone of struggles present within the media groups, the difference of these struggles is underscored by the frequency of visibility of the attacks received by the dominant and alternative media, which distinguishes the individual experiences of the said media categories. For one, the struggles of the members of the dominant media are more known to the public than alternative media, as the former has a more expansive and further reach than the latter. Alternative media also has arguably fewer resources and exposure to the public as this media mainly consists of small groups or independent journalists who only function on raw manpower (Gopez, 2020; Gopez, 2021).

### **Sustaining Philippine journalism during the pandemic**

Amid the nexus of challenges faced by Filipino journalists, they have maintained to uphold journalism during the pandemic. All our journalist informants shared narratives of triumph. While new to the demands that the pandemic has required of them, they were able to perform their job. Although our journalist informants' responses when asked about their lives as journalists during the pandemic were a mixture of different answers, knowing that they perform different journalistic functions and responsibilities, they all agreed with the notion that they were able to sustain journalism amid the series of difficulties that the pandemic has brought about. One informant, Defeo (GMA), shared:

The everyday life of a journalist during the pandemic is like functioning as a zookeeper since you're testing the different kinds of animals you're watching, the information you'll gather from different sources. For example, you have a different approach when you deal with a giraffe from the way you deal with an elephant.

Defeo (GMA), trained as media personnel from the dominant media, emphasized that even though the pandemic has altered their perspective and way of gathering and handling information, they still can get their job done. In the same vein, Anonymous 1 (ABS-CBN), an informant from the dominant media, narrated how the pandemic has tremendously changed her way of doing her job as compared before, when most of the conceptualizing and editing work could be done in the newsroom physically, stories now before they get to the public must be processed and created remotely through the use of messaging applications. Laconically, she shared that journalism

is "very much thriving" amidst the pandemic. Her colleague, Anonymous 2 (ABS-CBN), quipped, "You really just have to work with it. I mean, if the idea is to work with the pandemic or to social distance, then just work with the technology." Statements such as these prove that the commitment of many Filipino journalists amid the threats caused by COVID-19 has remained steadfast. Their creativity in performing their job amid the pandemic is both their "purposive fulfillment" and "personal flourishing" (Arcalas et al., 2024, pp. 89-90).

Nonetheless, besides the creative and persistent ways of navigating the logistical and production-related challenges in exercising journalism during the pandemic, many Filipino journalists have sustained their roles as truth-tellers amid the intensified waves of misinformation and disinformation and a barrage of attacks on the media, which can be argued to have been exacerbated by this global health crisis. One of our alternative media journalist informants, Olea (NUJP/BLT), said, "...the advocacy to defend press freedom is always twinned with your job as a journalist." Similarly, Defeo (GMA), a research informant from the dominant media, underscored that no matter how hard the situation is, no matter how filthy the "game" is in media, the government, and our society in general, journalists like them "stick to the core...stick to the goal to report truthfulness." While fighting for the truth and holding the people in power accountable to the public they ultimately serve have been a long-standing battle, the journalistic spirit lives on. One informant explained:

If the idea is to survive and to strive amidst the shoring and the people who are attacking or assaulting press freedom...the best way is to assert the right to publish. Just like what is said in the movie *The Post*, "The best way to assert the freedom to publish is to publish," and that doesn't just apply to print, it also applies to all forms of news media. (Anonymous 2, ABS-CBN)

With the narratives shared by our research informants, it can be said that the sustenance of journalism during the pandemic is critical to a country such as the Philippines. Given that fake news plays a pivotal role in Philippine government politics (Ragragio, 2020) and Filipino youths' political polarization (Deinla et al., 2021), journalism's function to combat these societal challenges can never be understated. While the pandemic has changed the Philippine journalism landscape, Filipino journalists' diligence and moral obligation to tell the truth remain robust (Salvosa II & Esguerra, 2022). Certainly, the duties



and work journalists fulfill are crucial in our day-to-day lives and political conception as journalism, at times, even goes beyond democracy (Hanitzsch & Vos, 2016), and that will always hold true in the Philippine society.

### **Filipino journalists and post-pandemic journalism**

The last overarching theme we dissected deals with Filipino journalists and post-pandemic journalism, portraying the media practitioners' contextualized stances on what the future holds for Philippine journalism amid the changing times.

As shared by the research informants, post-pandemic journalism is not any different from pandemic journalism. The same threats to press freedom, Philippine media and journalism, and the journalists themselves are still conspicuous in the local sphere. Even with the dawning of the Marcos administration and the end of the worldwide pandemic, journalists still experience the aftermath of the events that shook the industry in the past years (Chua, 2023). The battle against disinformation still stands, but it is now made harder due to the loss of analog platforms brought upon by the closure of ABS-CBN and other news outlets' TV and radio broadcasting stations. The National Union of Journalists Philippines (NUJP) has recorded 60 violations against journalists since the beginning of Marcos' term in June 2022 to April 2023, with one of the notable incidents being the killing of Rey Blanco and Percy Lapid, a broadcaster and known critics of the government (Kumar, 2023). Amidst these continuous attacks and threats on media, journalists remain firm in their pledge to truth-finding and truth-telling. As one of our journalist informants stated, "Journalism is only supposed to have one stance, and that is for the truth. Speaking truth to power, always keeping the public's interest in mind (Anonymous 2, ABS-CBN)."

Further, our journalist informants view journalism not only as a job but as a way of life and see themselves still pursuing the career, no matter how dangerous it may be, to do their part in society as well as for their own self-purpose and self-fulfillment as they live their childhood dream. One research informant shared:

"The purpose, the people. Like that, you always write about people's issues, even if you're only working with or without a small allowance, it's enough. Even if you write every day or so forth, you know that there is a concrete approach to what you are doing" (San Juan, OMG/ALM/PDI).

Likewise, other journalist informants emphasized the importance of passion for their job to wade through the challenges that changing times have given them. Defeo (GMA) underscored the essence of passion and acting upon these challenges and changes. He shared that his passion and his ways of navigating difficulties have been the things that excite him as a media practitioner.

In agreement, journalist informants said that they write or report with the motivation of publishing stories, news, and information that will benefit the public, doing so with a sense of duty and honor. Within the avalanche of threats and complexities of misinformation and disinformation, journalists' duty and unique role in disclosing truths and mistruths should be underscored (Balod & Hameleers, 2019). Clearly, the study's journalist informants continue to write until the present time to help the masses be aware of what the country is facing and to stand their ground in protecting free speech and press freedom. They ground their passion deeper than just a profession. They also hold hope for a change in the atmosphere of Philippine journalism. As Olea (NUJP/BLT) mentioned in an interview with Muller (2022), even if the new administration presents itself with a lack of transparency and a blurry vision of rectifying the bans and dangerous provisions that the previous administration filed against journalists, she still remains hopeful that Marcos' administration will look at journalists with a more optimistic perspective and at the very least amend the Anti-Terrorism act that stifles upon the freedom of journalists as well as stand against killing and filing of libel suits against Filipino journalists. This is in pattern of the legacy of his father and former strongman, Ferdinand Marcos Sr., who also faced the same issue of media oppression during his regime. In an interview following the shooting of Juan Jumalon, a journalist from the southern Philippines, Marcos Jr. condemned the killings and attacks on journalists, and they "will not be tolerated in our democracy" (Reuters, 2023). This was also followed by the acquittal of Maria Ressa on a tax evasion charge, which is considered 'a victory, not only for Rappler, but also for everyone who has kept the faith for responsible and free press' (Baizas, 2023). This fact indicates that it is indeed a challenge for journalists to exercise this profession during this modern media crisis (Novio, 2022).

Clearly, the study's journalist informants' panoramic views of post-pandemic journalism in the Philippines are apparently fuelled by their passion and persistent desire to help create a society in the future where freedom and equity thrive no matter how long and

arduous their journalistic jobs may be. As one of our research informants shared:

"If I stop doing what I'm doing now, what kind of society will my daughter inherit, right? So I have to do something so that hopefully, my daughter will grow up in an environment that's the exact opposite of this one." (Arao, UP/BLT)

In line with this, when asked if they will still encourage the younger generation to pursue journalism given the vast array of challenges and predicaments that they may encounter in pursuing this career, the journalist informants persuaded the youth to be aware of the truth and stand by these truths through joining the media workforce—should this be their passion—as they attest that journalism is a very fulfilling field. The dangers and threats in pursuing a career in journalism cannot take away the drive and dedication to express solidarity with the masses, especially the oppressed and marginalized part of society. Thus, the eight Filipino journalists in our study further believe that the youth's fresh sense of optimism will contribute to Philippine journalism's development.

Indeed, post-pandemic journalism in the Philippines will thrive so long as there are passionate journalists who stay true to their commitment to truth-seeking and truth-telling. While the functions of journalists in 21st-century society have become more difficult than before (Weaver & Willnat, 2020), they play a critical role in helping to reconstruct democracies (Muller, 2021). In addition, non-profit media civil society organizations should come into the picture when talking about the future of Philippine journalism since they have been found to be contributory to society's democratization and journalism practices (Opiniano & Romero, 2019). Given the diverse issues and problems influenced by its unique and multi-layered geographical conditions, the Philippines should foster many new civil media organizations, such as alternative media agencies to which some of our study's journalist informants belong, since they can investigate issues that are often overlooked by dominant media entities and expose how national issues impact marginalized communities using the lens and voices that are authentically from the ground.

## **Conclusion and Recommendation**

After analyzing the lived experiences of eight Filipino journalists from dominant and alternative media, it is clear that Filipino media practitioners have been

facing a long-standing siege that threatens press freedoms and their safety as individuals. Even before the pandemic, the dangers and threats that Filipino journalists faced were apparent. Violence targeted against media personnel, vexations against journalists, and the hazards brought upon by reporting even during calamities or exposing news about high-profile individuals were only a few of the challenges that are laid on journalists upon taking the role of being the world's storytellers. However, the onset of the pandemic has exacerbated said trials.

The sudden shift to the modes of reporting, adjustments to the remote setup of reporting and writing news articles, checking the authenticity and accessing information from sources, complying with new protocols and measures against the pandemic, facing new forms of attacks against journalists that take place in social media platforms, vilifying journalists and going lengths to intimidate journalists are some of the major challenges that are unique to the time of the pandemic. The struggles of Filipino journalists have been highlighted during the pandemic since their oppression became louder, with dominant media being directly affected by the shutdown of ABS-CBN Corporation and the imprisonment of Nobel Peace Prize awardee Maria Ressa.

Cyberattacks, threats, red-tagging, detaining, and killing of journalists are readily seen in the Philippine context, with most journalists experiencing or have experienced this throughout their profession. However, diving deeper into the situation, the divide between dominant media and alternative media has become more definitive during the COVID-19 pandemic. Alternative media journalists struggle with graver offenses towards their members, although little to no instances of their personal encounters have reached the mainstream news. Hence, it became harder for the masses to know about the situation of alternative media journalists. Being one of the stark differences between the two media types, the lack of financial support for alternative media journalists—with the journalists commonly ending up supporting their own coverages, being underpaid for their work, or being under poor labor conditions. As for the dominant media journalists, attacks on the sector are not a common occurrence, knowing that instances of violence against the dominant media can easily cause an uprising and public scrutiny. However, this concept changed during the pandemic while under the Duterte administration. Despite the differences between the attacks and struggles dominant and alternative journalists face,

both media types suffered from pay cuts, mass unemployment, and having to report on the field despite the risks brought upon by the pandemic, which had much less room to work with and much less support to utilize. These troubles brought upon Filipino journalists should be a catalyst for Filipinos to be more critical in consuming information and scrutinizing the events happening in the country to become a beacon of light amidst the darkness of disinformation and cultivate a critical and well-informed Filipino society.

Gearing towards and into post-pandemic journalism, journalists hold out hope that this crisis awakens a more inquisitive mindset amongst Filipinos and to be in one with the Philippine media in pursuit of truth and justice. Looking beyond the dangers and risks in journalism, the informants are still fuelled by their passion for their profession and their dedication to their craft, and still look forward to practicing the profession in the far future and wish to encourage those who are seeking to venture speaking truth to power to pursue this career in the future. Their main motivations are their belief that this profession will bring about the crucial change needed in our society and that journalism has the power to mould and hone the minds of the society today and pave the way for a much more informed and knowledgeable future generations.

We recommend an in-depth study of the reasons behind the attacks that Filipino journalists experience. It is also recommended that future researchers delve into details of the actions that have been taken and take a stand against the crimes committed against journalists by making programs and advocacies that would help ensure the physical, emotional, and mental welfare of journalists. Further recommendations are to gather insights from the new journalists or students who are going to pursue a career in journalism and their thoughts on the lives and experiences of Filipino journalists, as well as supplementary studies to the realm of dominant and alternative media to enrich the discourse of this research. As we live in the post-pandemic Philippines, we recommend conducting a follow-up study on how the situation of the Philippine media has improved throughout the Marcos administration and how the status of press freedom has improved (or regressed) in the Philippines.

### **Ethics Statement**

In accordance with our institutional policies, we have thoroughly reviewed important documents such as the University's Code of Research Ethics

and Guide to Responsible Conduct of Research, the Operational Guidelines for the Research Ethics Review Committee, the Integrated School Senior High School Research Manual, and the Data Privacy Policy. An informed consent form was disseminated to all informants, stating the goal of the study, research procedures, clauses for confidentiality, voluntary participation, risks, benefits, and contact information of the researcher and the institution. Through the said document, the informants were briefed regarding their rights as informants, together with the privacy and data handling protocols that would be implemented throughout the research. Since the informants are journalists with public profiles, it is important to note that most of them agreed to disclose their names. Only Anonymous Informant #1 and Anonymous Informant #2 declined the request.

### **Declaration of conflict of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

### **Author contributions**

Rodriguez, Ortega, Limboc, Mendoza, Miranda, & Gopez contributed to the conceptualization, data collection and analysis, original draft preparation, and review and editing. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

### **Funding**

The authors received no specific funding for this work but thanked the Department of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Senior High School Division of De La Salle University for the support.

### **References**

- Arao, D. A. (2021, November 7). Press freedom is no joke in the Philippines. *East Asia Forum*. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2021/11/07/press-freedom-is-no-joke-in-the-philippines/>
- Arcalas, J. E., Tuazon, J. P. L., & Opiniano, J. (2022). How journalists cope with news work's stresses while remaining creative amid the COVID-19 pandemic: A phenomenological study. *Journalism Practice*, 18(1), 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2022.2151039>
- Astorga-Garcia, M. (2021). Surviving media repression before and during Martial Law in the Philippines. *Media Asia*, 48(2), 1–6. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01296612.2021.18>

81874

fraught-time-for-press-freedom-in-the-philippines

- Baizas, G. (2023, December 11). Journalists still need to hold the line in 2023 and beyond. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/journalists-still-need-hold-line-2023-beyond/>
- Balod, H. S. S., & Hameleers, M. (2021). Fighting for truth? The role perceptions of Filipino journalists in an era of mis-and disinformation. *Journalism*, 22(9), 2368-2385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884919865109>
- Barcia, R. (2020, September 14). Former radio reporter killed in Sorsogon shooting. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/radio-reporter-death-sorsogon-shooting>
- Beiser, E. (2020, October 28). Getting Away with murder. *Committee to Protect Journalists*. <https://cpj.org/reports/2020/10/global-impunity-index-journalist-murders/>
- Beltran, M. (2022, August 20). Philippine media under pressure as Marcos Jr. courts influencers. *Al Jazeera*. <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/8/20/philippine-media-under-pressure-as-marcos-jr-courts-influencers>
- Bernadas, J. M. A. C., & Ilagan, K. (2020). Journalism, public health, and COVID-19: some preliminary insights from the Philippines. *Media International Australia*, 177(1), 1329878X2095385. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1329878x20953854>
- Chua, Y. T. (2023, June 14). Philippines. *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digital-news-report/2023/philippines>
- Clarín, A. (2021, March 16). How COVID-19 attacked journalists' resilience. *National Union of Journalists of the Philippines*. <https://nujp.org/diarista2021/how-covid-19-attacked-journalists-resilience/>
- Clarke, V., & Braun, V. (2014). Thematic analysis. *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*, 6626–6628. Springer. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5\\_3470](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_3470)
- CMFR Staff. (2018, November 23). The State of Philippine Media: Relentless attacks and threats online, on ground, across the nation. *Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility*. <https://cmfr-phil.org/press-freedom-protection/attacks-and-threats-against-the-media/the-state-of-philippine-media-relentless-attacks-and-threats-online-on-ground-across-the-nation/>
- Coronel, S. (2018, January 17). A "fraught time" for press freedom in the Philippines. *NPR.org*. <https://www.npr.org/sections/parallels/2018/01/17/578610243/a-fraught-time-for-press-freedom-in-the-philippines>
- Coronel, S. S. (2019). Press freedom in the Philippines. In *Press Freedom in Contemporary Asia* (pp. 214-229). Routledge. <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429505690-14/press-freedom-philippines-sheila-coronel>
- Cullen, S. (2020, November 1). Journalism: Most dangerous job in the Philippines. *The Manila Times*. <https://www.manilatimes.net/2020/11/01/opinion/columnists/topanalysis/journalism-most-dangerous-job-in-the-philippines/789719>
- De Jesus, M. (2023, May 3). State of press freedom in the Philippines. *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism*. <https://pcij.org/article/10122/2023-state-of-press-freedom-in-the-philippines>
- Deinla, I. B., Mendoza, G. A. S., Ballar, K. J., & Yap, J. K. (2022). The link between fake news susceptibility and political polarization of the youth in the Philippines. *Asian Journal of Political Science*, 30(2), 1–22. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02185377.2022.2117713>
- Domingo, K. (2020, February 25). ABS-CBN shutdown threat "definitely a repeat" of Marcos dictatorship - Binay, Osmeña. *ABS-CBN News*. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/02/25/20/abs-cbn-shutdown-threat-definitely-a-repeat-of-marcos-dictatorship-binay-osmea>
- Dunham, J. (2021, October 28). Killers of journalists still get away with murder. *Committee to Protect Journalists*. <https://cpj.org/reports/2021/10/killers-of-journalists-still-get-away-with-murder/>
- Freedom for Media, Freedom for All Network. (2020, May 4). Press freedom further restricted amid Covid-19 pandemic. *Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ)*. <https://pcij.org/article/4009/state-of-media-freedom-in-ph-2>
- Gavilan, J. (2018, January 17). From Marcos to Duterte: How media was attacked, threatened. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/iq/193882-threats-attacks-philippines-media-timeline/>
- Gopez, C. (2020). Ang alternatibo sa alternatibong pamamahayag ng altermidya - people's alternative media network. *Animo Repository*. [https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/etdm\\_fil/10/](https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/etdm_fil/10/)
- Gopez, C. (2021). Ang alternatibo sa alternatibong pamamahayag: Isang kritikal na diskursong analisis sa mga balita ng AlterMidya. *Daluyan*, 27(2), 92–108. [https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/faculty\\_research/8034/](https://animorepository.dlsu.edu.ph/faculty_research/8034/)



- Hanitzsch, T., & Vos, T. P. (2018). Journalism beyond democracy: A new look into journalistic roles in political and everyday life. *Journalism: Theory, Practice & Criticism*, 19(2), 146–164. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916673386>
- Haron, K. (2021). Journalism matters more in a pandemic (Industry op-ed). *SEARCH Journal of Media and Communication Research (SEARCH)*, 13(2), 101–107. <https://fslmjournals.taylors.edu.my/wp-content/uploads/SEARCH/SEARCH-2021-13-2/SEARCH-2021-IndustryPaper-13-2.pdf>
- Hassan, T. (2023, December 29). Philippines: Events of 2022. *Human Rights Watch*. <https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2023/country-chapters/philippines>
- Heydarian, R. (2020, May 18). Duterte government's shutdown of ABS-CBN threatens Philippine freedom. *Nikkei Asian Review*. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Duterte-government-s-shutdown-of-ABS-CBN-threatens-Philippine-freedom>
- Ines, J. (2021, April 2). With anti-terror law, red-tagged campus press struggle to report during pandemic. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/moveph/with-anti-terror-law-red-tagged-campus-press-struggle-report-coronavirus-pandemic>
- International Federation of Journalists. (2021, November 3). Philippines: Journalist shot and killed by unidentified gunman in Davao del Sur / IFJ. *International Federation of Journalists*. <https://www.ifj.org/media-centre/news/detail/category/press-releases/article/philippines-journalist-shot-and-killed-by-unidentified-gunman-in-davao-del-sur.html>
- Jerreat, J. (2020, March 24). Quarantine press pass amounts to censorship, Philippine journalists say. *Voice of America*. <https://www.voanews.com/press-freedom/quarantine-press-pass-amounts-censorship-philippine-journalists-say>
- Kumar, R. (2023, August 11). The year-long fight of a Filipino news site against red-tagging and state censorship | Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism. *Reuters Institute*. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/news/year-long-fight-filipino-news-site-against-red-tagging-and-state-censorship>
- Lee-Brago, P. (2023, March 22). Red-tagging, journalist attacks continue in Philippines – US report. *Philstar.com*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2023/03/22/2253460/red-tagging-journalist-attacks-continue-philippines-us-report>
- Lewis, S. C. (2020). The objects and objectives of journalism research during the coronavirus pandemic and beyond. *Digital Journalism*, 8(5), 681–689. <https://doi.org/10.1080/021670811.2020.1773292>
- Lim, M. O. (2020, July 16). ABS-CBN shutdown: 1972 and 2020 - Blueboard by Millard O. Lim. *Ateneo de Manila University*. <https://www.ateneo.edu/ls/soss/political-science/news/research/abs-cbn-shutdown-1972-and-2020-blueboard-millard-o-lim>
- Manahan, J. (2021, October 29). PH still 7th most dangerous country for journalists. *ABS-CBN News*. <https://news.abs-cbn.com/news/10/29/21/ph-still-7th-most-dangerous-country-for-journalists>
- Muller, M. (2022, November 30). Safety of journalists in the Philippines: New administration, same challenges. *Free Press Unlimited*. <https://www.freepressunlimited.org/en/current/safety-journalists-philippines-new-administration-same-challenges>
- Muller, D. (2021). Journalism and the future of democracy. *Springer*.
- Nikander, P. (2008). Working with transcripts and translated data. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 5(3), 225–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14780880802314346>
- Novio, E. B. C. (2022). Marcos presidency and the challenges to journalists and educators in the Philippines. *Media Asia*, 50(1), 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01296612.2022.2104489>
- Opiniano, J. M., & Romero, A. D. B. (2019). Media sustainability, ethics and democratization: Cases of Philippine media civil society organizations. *Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies*, 8(1), 91-114.
- Patag, K. J. (2022, July 22). Court rejects Bulatlat.com's plea to unblock access to website; trial to proceed. *Philstar.com*. <https://www.philstar.com/headlines/2022/07/13/2195100/court-rejects-bulatlatcoms-plea-unblock-access-website-trial-proceed95100/court-rejects-bulatlatcoms-plea-unblock-access-website-trial-proceed>
- Pazzanese, C. (2021, November 18). Maria Ressa warns of authoritarians, social media, disinformation. *Harvard Gazette*. <https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2021/11/maria-ressa-warns-of-authoritarians-social-media-disinformation/>
- Perreault, M. F., & Perreault, G. P. (2021). Journalists on COVID-19 journalism: Communication ecology of pandemic reporting. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 65(7), 000276422199281. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764221992813>

- Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIJ). (2021, May 3). State agents linked to over 100 attacks, threats against PH media under Duterte admin. Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism (PCIG). <https://pcij.org/2021/05/03/state-agents-linked-to-over-100-attacks-threats-against-ph-media-under-duterte-admin/>
- Ragragio, J. L. D. (2020). Strongman, patronage and fake news. *Journal of Language and Politics*, 20(6). <https://doi.org/10.1075/jlp.20039.rag>
- Rappler. (2023, June 16). Media trust scores in PH “disturbing,” says author of country report in journalism study. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/media-trust-scores-philippines-disturbing-author-reuters-digital-news-report-2023/>
- Reuters. (2023, November 5). Philippines’ Marcos condemns killing of journalist, orders investigation. *Reuters*. <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/philippines-marcos-condemns-killing-journalist-orders-investigation-2023-11-05/>
- Reyes, D. (2023, November 4). PH 8th most dangerous for journalists. *Inquirer.net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1854777/ph-8th-most-dangerous-for-journalists>
- Rivas, R. (2020, May 5). ABS-CBN goes off-air after NTC order. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/abs-cbn-goes-off-air-ntc-order-may-5-2020/>
- Salud, J. P. (2022, May 23). In a nation neck-deep in lies, journalism is a necessity. *Philstar Life*. <https://philstarlife.com/news-and-views/608792-lies-journalism-press-freedom?page=4>
- Salvosa II, F. F., & Esguerra, C. V. (2022). Reporting in the “new normal”. How the COVID-19 pandemic affected journalistic practice in the Philippines. *Fides, Ratio et Patria. Studia Toruńskie*, 17, 290–306. <https://doi.org/10.56583/frp.2262>
- Santos, J. (2021, July 25). State of media 2021: Coming together under crisis conditions. *National Union of Journalists of the Philippines*. <https://nujp.org/diarista2021/state-of-media-2021-coming-together-under-crisis-conditions/>
- Subingsubing, K. (2021, May 4). ABS-CBN’s ordeal and its “chilling effect” on media. *Inquirer.net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1427319/abs-cbns-ordeal-and-its-chilling-effect-on-media#:~:text=Biggest%20impact>
- Subingsubing, K., & Santos, T. (2022, November 4). PH still among most dangerous countries for journalists. *Inquirer.net*. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/1689131/ph-still-among-the-most-dangerous-countries-for-journalists>
- Tandoc, E. C. (2016). Watching over the watchdogs. *Journalism Studies*, 18(1), 102–117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2016.1218298>
- Tantuco, V. (2020, May 7). How the COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the media. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/newsbreak/in-depth/259757-how-covid-19-pandemic-affecting-media/>
- Tapsell, R. (2022). Divide and rule: Populist crackdowns and media elites in the Philippines. *Journalism*, 23(10), 2192–2207. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884921989466>
- Tuquero, L. (2020, May 22). Nueva Ecija town set to file complaint against local radio station. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/261742-nueva-ecija-town-file-complaint-against-local-radio-station/>
- Tuquero, L. (2022, February 26). 51% of Filipinos find it difficult to spot fake news on media – SWS. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/sws-survey-fake-news-december-2021/>
- van Nes, F., Abma, T., Jonsson, H., & Deeg, D. (2010). Language differences in qualitative research: is meaning lost in translation? *European Journal of Ageing*, 7(4), 313–316. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10433-010-0168-y>
- Villavecer, N. (2020, December 26). Attacks and harassment: Women journalists in the Philippines on the cost of truth-telling. *Rappler*. <https://www.rappler.com/nation/attacks-and-harassment-women-journalists-in-the-philippines-on-the-cost-of-truth-telling/>
- Vitug, M. D. (2020, June 16). Maria Ressa’s conviction shows Philippine rule of law is broken. *Nikkei Asia*. <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/Maria-Ressa-s-conviction-shows-Philippine-rule-of-law-is-broken>
- Wahl-Jorgensen, K. (2019). An emotional turn in journalism studies? *Digital Journalism*, 8(2), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2019.1697626>
- Weaver, D., & Willnat, L. (2020). Journalists in the 21st century: Conclusions. In *The global journalist in the 21st century*, (pp. 529-551). Routledge.
- Westfall, S. (2020). Growth of a young journalist amid the pandemic and media repression. *Media Asia*, 47(1-2), 83–84. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01296612.2020.1824342>