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An exploratory study on how UP, UST and PUP journalism students view Rappler as a news source

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Angela Ysabel Lustre
June 2015

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY ON HOW UP, UST AND PUP JOURNALISM

STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS VIEW RAPPLER AS A NEWS SOURCE

ANGELA YSABEL LUSTRE

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STUDENTS AND PROFESSORS VIEW RAPPLER AS A NEWS SOURCE

by

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ABSTRACT

This study will explore how students and professors from University of the

Philippines Diliman, University of Sto. Tomas and Polytechnic University of the

Philippines view *Rappler*'s credibility as a news website. It will use three theories

namely Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovations and the Uses and Gratifications as its

backbone. With the use of individual interviews and survey, the study aims to evaluate

Rappler's position as a news source vis-à-vis traditional news media.

Rappler is a news website launched in 2012 with Maria Ressa, the former ABS-

CBN News and Current Affairs head, as its CEO. Its creators branded it as a "social news

network" because it fuses traditional journalism with social media. Aside from this,

Rappler aims to inspire community engagement and digitally fuelled actions for social

change. With this, the study would like to answer how journalism students and professors

respond to this new innovation.

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A. Background of the Study

The digital age has revolutionized the way news is disseminated and the way in which people consume it. (Thaler, 2011). Social networking sites, where people interact, share and discuss information about each other using a "multimedia mix of words, photos, videos and audio" (Curtis, 2013), has already become a source of unfiltered news. With the help of social networking sites, people are able to see events unfold real-time. However, Thaler stressed the importance of traditional journalism in sharing the bigger picture "through a trained eye, verified sources and a contextualized perspective."

Online journalism is a kind of journalism that uses a different technology, specifically the Internet, to report factual stories and allow the public to interact with the stories immediately (Deuze, 2001). It has been around in the Philippines as early as 1995 when *BusinessWorld* began publishing an online edition on the web. During this time, 70 percent of its readers were from overseas, most of which were Filipinos residing in the US. (Barilea, 1998). The *BusinessWorld* online edition was followed by *Manila Times* shortly after. In 1999, the *Manila Bulletin Online*, the *Philippine Star* and *Philippine Daily Inquire*r launched their respective news websites. (Manalastas & Martinez, 1999). Since then, the large potential for profit spurred the creation and launching of news websites in the Philippines. (De Guzman, 2006).

News websites in the Philippines still had a small local audience in 2006. (De Guzman, 2006). However, analytic company comScore's Southeast Asia Digital Future 2013 report showed that 37 percent of the Philippine population are Internet users.

Seventy-one percent of the Internet audience in the Philippines are in the 15 to 34 age bracket.

This increase in Internet users, especially among the youth, is giving more importance to news websites such as *Rappler.*

Rappler started out as a promising innovation to journalism. What sets *Rappler* apart from traditional news websites such as Inquirer.net and Philstar.com is that it fuses online journalism with social media. It brands itself as a "social news network" that aims to instigate change and strengthen public involvement by crowd sourcing emotions. *Rappler* uses a "heart and mind" approach to news, its CEO Maria Ressa said in a PJR Reports interview. Its use of interactive crowd sourcing tools such as the mood meter brought something new to traditional reporting.

Using the web as its medium, *Rappler* makes real time news reporting its forte. According to CMFR, *Rappler* "became a primary source for news about developments that were seen live on television with investigative reports that kept a loyal online following as glued to it as they were to the coverage." *Rappler*, in its three years of existence, has become the second most visited news website in the Philippines in terms of user hits according to Alexa traffic estimates.

Rappler is one of the many products of how the internet revolutionizes the media landscape. Being able to incorporate social media into traditional online journalism, it is a relatively new way of media reporting. With this, the researcher would like to explore how journalism majors and professors in universities considered by CHED as Centers of Excellence and Development in Journalism view *Rappler* as a new source. These

universities are University of the Philippines Diliman, University of Sto. Tomas and Polytechnic University of the Philippines.

B. Statement of the Problem and Objectives

I. *Research Question:*

- How do journalism students and professors of UP Diliman, UST and PUP view *Rappler* as a news source?

II. *Objectives*

- To explore the views of students and professors under CHED's Centers of Excellence and Development in Journalism on *Rappler*

- To determine their perception of *Rappler* in terms of credibility

- To evaluate *Rappler's* position as a news source vis-à-vis traditional news media

- To determine if the journalism education received affect their views on *Rappler*

- To see if journalism majors are able to see the ethical dilemmas and good points of media outlets even if they are still in college and without media experience

C. Significance of the Study

The shifting preference of media usage from print to online gives online websites more spotlight and at the same time, a bigger responsibility. *Rappler*, despite its young history, is one of the online news websites with a considerable size of audience. Due to the growing popularity of *Rappler* among Filipino digital users, it becomes necessary to evaluate how they view *Rappler* as a news source.

In relation to this, there is also a need to know whether journalism majors are able to see the ethical dilemmas and good points of media outlets even if they are still in college and without media industry experience.

D. Scope and Limitations

The study was limited to the views of students and professors under Centers of Development and Center of Excellence in journalism, namely, University of the Philippines Diliman, University of Sto. Tomas and Polytechnic University of the Philippines on the news website, *Rappler*. The results were drawn from surveys and interviews. The survey helped extract quantitative generalizations about the population while the interviews were used to find more information about the topic. The study was highly an audience study as it will look into the credibility of *Rappler* in the eyes of students and professors. Only *Rappler* readers were asked to rate their perceptions of *Rappler*.

Since the study only focused on *Rappler*, future researchers may want to study other news websites. The researcher would also like to encourage further studies related to the topic on a larger scale, may it be other journalism schools, other age brackets, etc.

II. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This literature review will start by providing a brief background of the journalism schools included in this research and their importance as either Centers of Excellence or Development. The next sections will contain discussions on the concepts of online journalism, social media and the fusion between the two. The background of the news website *Rappler* will be looked into, as well as the problem the virtual setting poses in news reporting. Findings regarding the related theories will also be tackled, specifically about the diffusion process, audience activity, opinion leadership and credibility.

A. Journalism Schools in the Philippines: UP, UST and PUP

Maslog (1971) described journalism education in the Philippines still at its infancy by 1931. This slow development, he said, was the product of "disdain, indifference and suspicion that practicing journalists have had for journalism schools and their graduates."

The University of the Philippines developed the first journalism curriculum in 1919 but its journalism school did not last long, according to an unpublished manuscript by John Lent in Silliman School of Journalism. In 1964, the University of Sto. Tomas Faculty of Arts and Letters was formed by the merger of the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters and the College of Liberal Arts. The newly formed faculty began offering the degree of Bachelor of Literature in Journalism shortly after. A year after, UP Diliman revived its journalism education. (Maslog, 1931). In 1979, the Polytechnic University of the Philippines developed a curriculum for the Bachelor in Business Journalism which became Bachelor in Journalism in 1984.

B. COEs and CODs

Centers of Excellence (COEs) and Centers of Development (CODs), according to the Commission on Higher Education (CHED), are selected among higher education institutions to be granted funding assistance such as student scholarships, faculty development, library and laboratory upgrading, research and extension services, instructional development and networking of existing COEs and CODs.

CHED carefully identifies which higher education institutions "have demonstrated the highest degree or level of standard along the areas of instruction, research and extension" to be granted COE or COD status. In 2013, the University of the Philippines was named as the only Center of Excellence in Journalism while the University of Sto. Tomas and the Polytechnic University of the Philippines were named Centers of Development in Journalism.

C. Importance of Having a Journalism Degree That Offers a Course on Ethics

Journalism "helps students become better thinkers, better communicators, and, as a result, better citizens" (Bowen & Tantillo, 2002). Moreover, UP, UST and PUP offer a subject solely dedicated for journalism or communication ethics. An ethics course equips journalism majors with knowledge on how to filter and be more critical of what mass media feed them.

According Tamsin Rutter's (2014) article published on the online website of The Guardian, having a journalism degree is an advantage. Journalists must be careful of everything from misspellings to libel. As what Sarah Dawood, a freelance journalist and a graduate of master's degree in magazine journalism at Sheffield University, said, "If I'd

had no knowledge of media law, I don't know if I'd have even understood why the statement was defamatory."

It is therefore important to know whether journalism majors are able to see the ethical dilemmas and good points of media organizations while still in college. If journalism majors are having a hard time distinguishing ethical problems, what more if they enter the newsroom?

D. Internet and Online Journalism

The internet was born due to the need of the United States Defense Department to look for a solution to protect its data in a case of nuclear war (Leiner et al., 2002). In 1969, the forerunner of the internet, called ARPANet, was initiated to enable scientists to share information and computer programs. Aside from this, it became a way to keep information immune from nuclear attacks. The first commercial version of the Internet was launched in 1973 and was popularized by Tim Berners-Lee with his invention of the World Wide Web in 1991. (Wright, 1997).

Bulletin Board Systems in the Philippines existed as early as 1980 but were not used as a means of distributing news. (De Guzman, 2006). Sending e-mails became possible in 1990 but was still very expensive. On March 29, 1994, UP, Ateneo, De La Salle and the University of San Carlos were able to connect to the internet at the Philippine Long Distance Telephone (PLDT) office. (Wong, 2004). "This was the first Philippine link to the internet." (De Guzman, 2006). Two months later, ComNet became the first commercial internet service provider in the Philippines under the name Mozaic Communications (Khan, 2006).

Online Journalism started in the Philippines in 1995 when *BusinessWorld* began publishing an online edition on the web. It was followed by *Manila Times* shortly after. In 1999, the *Manila Bulletin Online*, the *Philippine Star* and *Philippine Daily Inquire*r launched their respective news websites. (Manalastas & Martinez, 1999).

Deuze (2001) defines online journalism as a kind of journalism that uses different technology, specifically the internet, to report factual stories and allow the public to interact with the stories immediately. Even though traditional print journalism and online journalism have practically the same core goals, the difference in environment drastically changes the situations online journalists face. Nevertheless, "Online Media is treated both as an extension of traditional media and as a medium in itself." (De Guzman, 2006).

According to John Herbert (2001), "The speed of dissemination, the potential global audience, the possibilities for interactivity, competition from non-media companies and the increasing demand for profitability are changing the media environment." Kawamoto (2003) said that news posted on the web "was more likely be less accurate than news in print because the speed of updating lessened the online news publications' fact-checking time, and these online publications were usually not well-trained and staffed." In addition to this, "online journalists make decisions on how to tell factual stories through the Internet's capability for multimedia, interactivity and hypertext." (Deuze, 2001).

In a 2000 survey by Anderson and Arant, majority of the 680 online news managers in the United States revealed that the speed of the Internet and the lack of personnel for the operation were the reasons why online print outlets were not very motivated to follow ethical standards of print journalism.

A 2010 survey conducted by the Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism revealed that for the first time, more people in the United States get their news from the web than from newspapers. Forty one percent said they get most of their news online. Sixty five percent of the 18-29 year old age bracket said the internet was their main news source.

In the Philippines, Analytic company comScore's Southeast Asia Digital Future 2013 report showed that 37 percent of the population are Internet users. Seventy-one percent of the internet audience in the Philippines are in the 15 to 34 age bracket.

E.   Social Media

Social media, also known as social networking sites, are websites where people interact, share and discuss information about each other using a multimedia mix of words, pictures, videos and audio (Curtis, 2013). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) defined social media as "a group of internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technical foundations of Web 2.0, and that allow the creation and exchange of user generated content." Web 2.0 is the term introduced by DiNucci (1999) to describe websites that focus on user-generated content.

In these websites, individuals and groups create and exchange content and engage in person-to person conversations. Some examples of social networking sites are Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Tumblr, YouTube, Flickr and blogs. Social media sites are inexpensive and, more often than not, completely free to use. (Whiting & Williams, 2013).

Facebook and Twitter dominate the intersection of social media and news (Christian, Mitchell, & Rosentiel, 2012). These two social networking websites serve as a platform that "recommends" news to users. However, "the rise of social media recommendations at this point does not appear to be coming at the expense of people going directly to news sites or searching for news topics they are interested in." Instead, social media news consumption is supplemental.

In a 2013 study by Whiting and Williams, 25 individual interviews were done in order to explore why people use social media. The researchers made use of the Uses and Gratifications approach to support their study. Whiting and Williams found ten Uses and Gratifications in social media. These are social interaction (88 percent), information seeking (80 percent), pass time (76 percent), entertainment (64 percent), relaxation (60 percent), communicatory utility (56 percent), expression of opinions (56 percent), convenience utility (52 percent), information sharing (40 percent), and surveillance and watching of others (20 percent).

Eighty percent of the respondents reported using social media to seek out information. These respondents said they use social media to find information about sales, deals, products, businesses, events, parties and for self-education.

F. Rappler: A Fusion of Online Journalism and Social Media

The *Rappler* website was launched in January 2012 with Maria Ressa, the former head of ABS-CBN News and Current Affairs, as its CEO and Executive Director. From its root words, "rap" (to discuss) and "ripple" (to make waves), *Rappl*er aims to inspire community engagement and digitally fuelled actions for social change. It uses

crowdsourcing tools such as the Mood Meter that allows readers to dip their fingers in order to strengthen public involvement. *Rappler's* Mood Meter is an interactive tool that invites readers to select what they feel about an article.

Rappler, branded by its creators as a "social news network," brought something new to the traditional medium of journalism. With its interactive website layout and different digital media tools, as well as the established names of the people behind it, *Rappler* has already become one of the top news websites in the Philippines. According to Alexa's traffic estimates as of October 8, 2014, *Rappler* is the second most visited website in terms of unique hits in the country.

G. Media Credibility

"Journalism is built on trust" (France, 1999). Once readers believe a reporter is driven by hidden motives, "no amount of heroic reporting, graceful writing, or bold photography will ever win them over."

Gaziano and McKath (1986) used a variety of concepts to measure credibility in their study. "Table 1 shows the factor loadings (the higher the loading, the greater the relationship) of aspects of the credibility problem that were combined to create the overall credibility score. The table also shows the proportion of respondents rating newspapers or television highly on each characteristic."

Table 1. *Credibility Scores*

Measuring the Concept of Credibility   455

TABLE 1

Items Chosen for Newspaper and Television Credibility Scores[a]

Credibility Factor	Daily Newspapers		Television News	
	Factor Loading	% Rating Newspapers Highly on Item	Factor Loading	% Rating TV News Highly on Item
Is fair or unfair	.66	52%	.77	52%
Is biased or unbiased	.66	36%	.82	39%
Tells the whole story or doesn't tell the whole story	.71	43%	.71	40%
Is accurate or inaccurate	.69	49%	.68	50%
Invades or respects people's privacy	.66	30%	.66	24%
Does or does not watch after readers'/viewers' interests	.55	36%	.76	31%
Is or is not concerned about the community's well-being	.47	61%	.72	51%
Does or does not separate fact and opinion	.71	38%	.57	38%
Can or cannot be trusted	.72	51%	.57	48%
Is concerned about the public interest or is concerned about making profits.	.57	42%	.70	38%
Is factual or opinionated	.71	50%	.63	48%
Has well-trained or poorly trained reporters	.57	48%	.36	57%
Social Concerns Factor				
Cares or does not care what audience thinks	.71	44%	.78	44%
Sensationalizes or does not sensationalize	.55	30%	.38	20%
Is moral or immoral	.77	53%	.74	47%

[a]Subsample: Those who participated in Part 2 interview (N = 875).

H. Opinion Leaders and Credibility

Lazarsfeld (1968), in his book *The people's choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*, said that voters' choice depended more on their personal relationships with others in their networks than on mass media. The concept of opinion leadership was derived from Lazarsfeld's findings and from this, the Two-Step

Flow theory introduced. The theory was elaborated in Lazarsfeld and Katz's work

Personal Influence. The theory is focused on the role of opinion leaders in filtering media

messages.

In this study, the journalism professors are the opinion leaders. An opinion leader,

according to Katz and Lazarsfeld (1957), has at least one of these factors – expression of

values, professional competence and nature of social work. Similarly, teacher credibility

is defined by McCroskey (1998) as "the attitude of a receiver which references the degree

to which a source is seen to be believable." McCroskey also noted that teacher credibility

is affected by competence, character and caring. While caring might have little or nothing

to do with being an opinion leader, it is important to take note that the professors in this

case are both teachers and opinion leaders.

Although there are different views on the role of teachers in the learning process,

McCroskey and Richmond (1992) said that all share a common root assumption: "The

teacher will have sufficient power to influence the students to engage in the behaviors

necessary to achieve the desired learning outcomes." The researchers drew the following

generalizations from the results of their study:

> 1. Virtually all bases of power can be used effectively to
>
> get people to do what we want, so long as
>
> a. we are willing to watch them do it, and
>
> b. we do not care what they think of us afterward.
>
> 2. Both of the above conditions are seldom present outside
>
> of prisons.

3. The only power one person has over another is the power

granted by the other person.

4. Affinity (liking, admiring, respecting) in large part

determines the amount of power one person grants another.

5. People usually will comply with, rather than resist,

reasonable instructions or requests if they

a. like, respect, admire their supervisor

b. like, respect, admire their teacher

c. love their spouse

Hovland and Weiss (1951) tried to answer whether the perceived credibility of

opinion leaders has an effect on the behavior of the audience towards media specifically

acquisition of information and change in opinion. The study presented the subjects with

identical messages using two types of communicators. Each message was presented

individually by a communicator with a generally "trustworthy" (high credibility)

character while the other was an "untrustworthy" (low credibility) communicator.

The researchers found out from the results that subjects changed their opinion in

the direction advocated by the communicator in a significantly greater number of cases

when the material was attributed to a high credibility source than when attributed to a low

credibility one. In the case of influencing opinions, the most important factor was the

degree of acceptance of the material which can be attributed to the credibility of the

source.

Jenson and McCroskey (1975) also identified the five dimensions of source credibility as competence, character, sociability, composure and extroversion. Below is the researchers' Suggested Scales of Measurement of Mass Media News Source Image.

Table 2. *Suggested Scales for Measurement of Mass Media News Source Image*

TABLE I
Suggested Scales for Measurement of Mass Media News Source Image

	Primary Loadings*			Secondary Loadings*		
Dimension/Scales	Pilot Sample	Peoria Sample	ISU Sample	Pilot Sample	Peoria Sample	ISU Sample
COMPETENCE						
qualified-unqualified	.85(1)	.74(1)	.75(1)	.21(4)	.26(5)	.31(3)
expert-inexpert	.82(1)	.73(1)	.77(1)	.25(2/3)	.28(5)	−.35(5)
reliable-unreliable	.83(1)	.74(1)	.77(1)	.29(2/3)	.34(2)	.29(3)
believable-unbelievable	.78(1)	.71(1)	.69(1)	.33(2/3)	.35(2)	.24(2/3)
incompetent-competent	−.71(1)	−.66(1)	−.77(1)	−.35(2/3)	−.39(2)	.39(5)
intellectual-narrow	.58(1)	.71(1)	.70(1)	.24(4)	.33(3)	.29(3)
valuable-worthless	.74(1)	.74(1)	.75(1)	.34(2/3)	.27(2/3)	.28(3)
uninformed-informed	−.85(1)	−.63(1)	−.58(1)	−.16(4)	−.31(5)	.32(5)
CHARACTER						
cruel-kind	−.72(2/3)	−.74(2)	−.74(2)	−.23(4)	−.23(1)	−.24(3)
unsympathetic-sympathetic	−.59(2/3)	−.68(2)	−.63(2)	−.16(5)	−.31(1)	−.21(1)
selfish-unselfish	−.57(2/3)	−.64(2)	−.66(2)	−.19(4)	−.21(3)	−.25(1)
sinful-virtuous	−.57(2/3)	−.59(2)	−.63(2)	−.27(5)	−.28(1)	−.17(4)
SOCIABILITY						
friendly-unfriendly	.70(2/3)	.62(3)	.72(3)	.28(1)	.38(2)	.32(2)
cheerful-gloomy	.72(2/3)	.64(3)	.72(3)	.18(1)	.31(2)	.27(2)
good natured-irritable	.58(2/3)	.64(3)	.67(3)	.32(5)	.32(2)	.32(2)
sociable-unsociable	.75(2/3)	.58(3)	.59(3)	−.24(1)	.27(5)	.21(5)
COMPOSURE						
composed-excitable	.84(4)	.63(4)	.79(4)	−.24(1)	.27(1)	.14(2)
calm-anxious	.87(4)	.59(4)	.72(4)	−.23(1)	.33(5)	.22(1)
tense-relaxed	NA	−.61(4)	−.59(4)	NA	.38(2)	.19(5)
nervous-poised	−.59(4)	−.62(4)	−.58(4)	.37(5)	.32(2)	−.23(2)
EXTROVERSION						
meek-aggressive	−.77(5)	−.68(5)	−.68(5)	.11(1)	−.24(2)	.15(3)
timid-bold	−.82(5)	−.68(5)	−.75(5)	−.29(1)	−.26(2)	.15(3)
talkative-silent	.58(5)	.67(5)	.59(5)	−.23(2/3)	−.28(1)	.19(1)
extroverted-introverted	.68(5)	.59(5)	.57(5)	−.24(2/3)	.21(3)	.27(3)
verbal-quiet	NA	.69(5)	.58(5)	NA	.34(1)	.31(3)

* Numbers in parentheses after loading indicate factor on which loading appeared: 1-Competence, 2-Character, 3-Sociability, 4-Composure, 5-Extroversion, 2/3-Character/Sociability.

III. STUDY FRAMEWORK

This study will make use of three theories namely the Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovations and Uses and Gratifications. The necessary concepts will be explained individually per theory and will then be integrated into a theoretical framework that is applicable for the study. From the theoretical framework, a conceptual framework will be developed in order to define the study better.

A. Two-Step Flow

Figure 1. *Two-Step Flow Model*
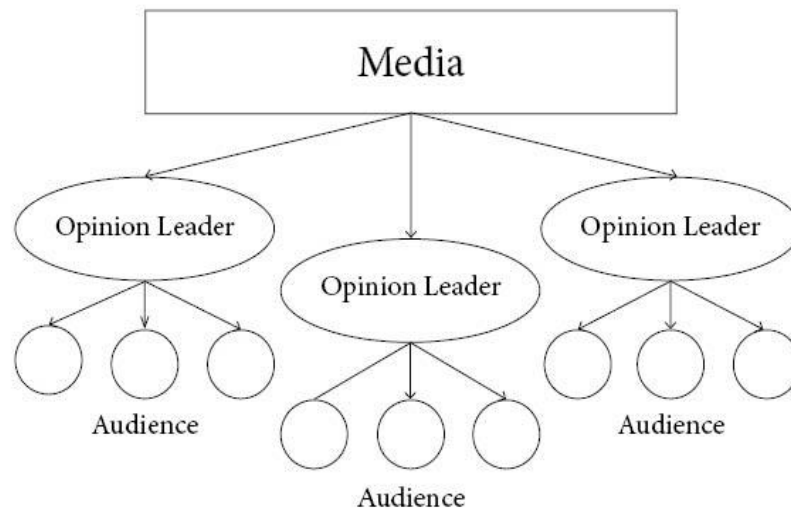
Lazarsfeld (1968), in his book *The people's choice: how the voter makes up his mind in a presidential campaign*, found out that voters' choice depended more on their personal relationships with others in their networks than on mass media. When people were asked why they changed their vote intention during the campaign, their answer was

personal influence. According to Lazarsfeld, "People tend to vote, it seems, the way their associates vote."

The concept of opinion leadership was derived from Lazarsfeld's findings. From this, the Two-Step flow theory was introduced. The theory was elaborated in Lazarsfeld and Katz's collaborative work *Personal Influence*. The Two-Step flow theory focused on the role of opinion leaders in filtering media messages. These opinion leaders are influenced by mass media and are present on every social and economic level. Katz said opinion leadership is not a trait. Rather, it is an important part of everyday communication and personal relationships.

In the Two-Step flow model, the flow of ideas would start from the media to opinion leaders to the less active sections of the population. The flow of opinion which are represented by the lines will depend on the relationship between the opinion leader and his/her audience. In the study, the journalism professors act as the opinion leaders. The professors who are affected by the media will interpret the messages they get from it and will try to pass it to their students in their classes.

B. Diffusion of Innovations

Figure 2. *Adoption Process*

| Awareness/ Knowledge | → | Interest/ Persuasion | → | Evaluation/ Decision | → | Trial/ Implementation | → | Adoption/ Confirmation |
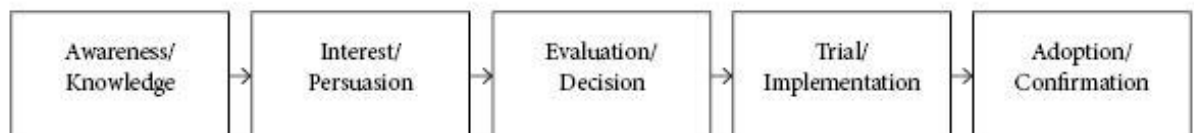
The Diffusion of Innovations Theory tries to explain how the diffusion process, the spread of a new idea from its source of invention to its adopters, happens. (Rogers, 1962). Aside from the adoption process itself, innovation attributes, cultural factors, opinion leaders and lead users are important considerations for potential adopters (Mourad and Toulba, 2011). Forming opinions is not an instantaneous process. Thus, this model will be useful in describing how students thoroughly form their opinions on *Rappler*.

Rogers (1962) discussed the stages of adoption in his book *Diffusion of Innovations* where the theory was popularized. According to Rogers, there are five stages of adoption – awareness or knowledge, interest or persuasion, evaluation or decision, trial or implementation and adoption or confirmation.

During the awareness stage, the individual is exposed to the idea but is not motivated to seek more information about it. The awareness stage functions to initiate the sequence of later stages to lead to eventual adoption or rejection of the idea. The interest stage is where the individuals starts getting interested in the idea and seeks more information about it. In the evaluation stage, the individual uses the information gathered about the idea and tries to apply them mentally to his/her past and anticipated future. After this, the individual demonstrates the idea in his/her own situation to determine its usefulness in the trial stage.

The individual then decides to continue the full use of the idea in the adoption stage. The main functions of this stage are the consideration of the trial results and the decision to ratify sustained use of the innovation in the future.

The attributes of innovations were identified by Rogers as relative advantage, compatibility, complexity, trial-ability and observability. Culture plays an important role in the diffusion process as innovations spread faster in collectivist cultures than in individualistic ones. (Mourad and Toulba, 2011). Communicability is also significant because it incorporates the role of word-of-mouth through opinion leaders and lead users.

C. Uses and Gratifications

Figure 3. *Uses and Gratifications Model*
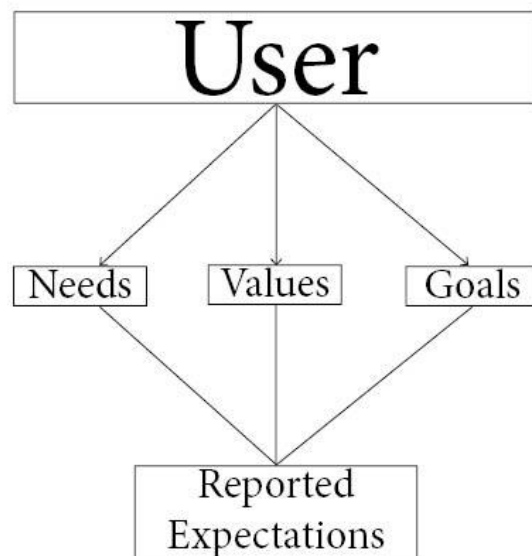
The Uses and Gratifications theory is one way to describe the relationship between media and audience. It explains how people actively seek media for their own needs which in turn, affects the media. According to Katz (1959), "it is the program that asks the question, not 'What do media do to people?' but 'What do people do with the media?'"

The Uses and Gratifications model shows that people form expectations based on their needs, values and goals. Mark Levy and Sven Windahl (1985) said that "media use is motivated by needs and goals that are defined by audience members themselves." The audience member expects to experience some form of satisfaction of needs in his/her media use behaviors. According to Lundberg and Hulten (1968), "Much mass media consumption may be interpreted as a response to needs felt by the audience member." In addition to this, people are able to identify their interests and motives or at least recognize them in many cases.

Lundberg and Hulten (1968) considered the "goals arising from the individual's experience of his social situation interesting and suggested that such goals, and their relation to mass media and other behavior, may indeed be fruitfully studied using a uses and gratifications approach." According to Tiihonen (1969), physical and social characteristics of the local environment affect motives of individuals which in turn, affect the patterns of their behavior. Reference to cultural values is also necessary in interpreting gratifications. Hedebro (1986) said an individual's ability to participate in a democratic society and their ability to influence their own life situations depend greatly on their ability to acquire information about their society.

The uses and gratifications approach is well suited for studying the World Wide Web as a whole and for examining specific types of sites within the Web. Since the audience are able to identify why they seek a certain medium, it will be possible to extract why journalism students use *Rappler*.

D. Theoretical Framework

Figure 4. *Theoretical Framework*
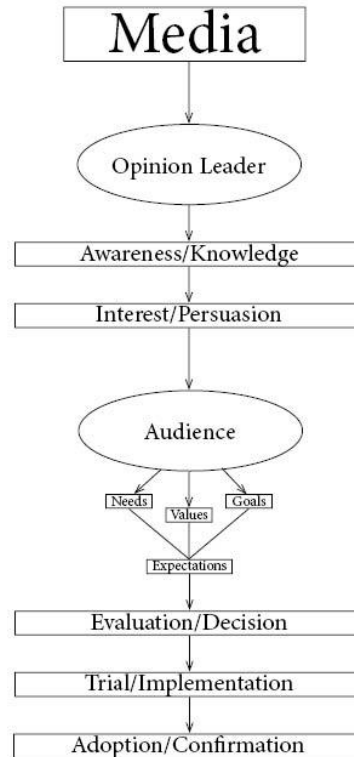
The integration of the Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovations and the Uses and Gratifications theories stresses the importance of the audience as active users. The audience may be influenced by the media and opinion leaders but they are motivated by their own needs, values and goals and have own expectations.

The flow of ideas will start from the opinion leaders who are directly influenced by media. The opinion leaders will then influence the audience in the first two stages of adoption. After the user, who is a part of the audience, has gathered the needed information with the help of the opinion leaders, he/she will move to the later stages. In

the last three stages, the user will incorporate the gathered information into his/her needs,

goals and values in order to determine whether he/she will adopt the idea.

E. Conceptual Framework

Figure 5. Conceptual Framework
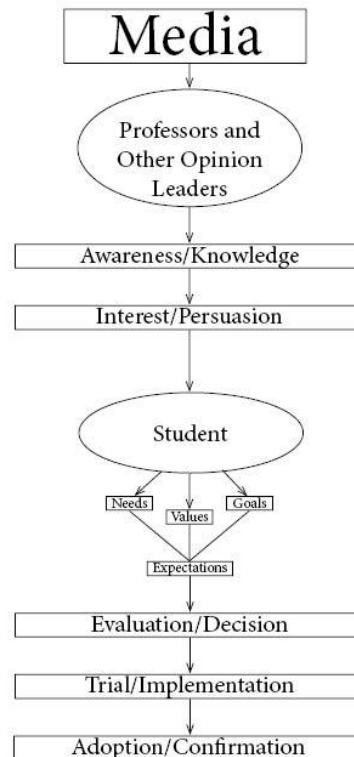
In the conceptual framework, the opinion leaders are the journalism professors

working for the Centers of Excellence and/or Development in journalism while their

students are the audience. The audience can also be viewed as the "less active sections of

the populations" relative to their professors. Others that may influence the students'

decisions are their parents, other media opinion leaders, seniors, etc.

In the awareness stage, the professors and other opinion leaders will be able to provide information about credibility of news sources. The effectiveness of the awareness stage will determine whether the students will be motivated to seek more information in the interest stage.

The latter stages of adoption will be greatly influenced by the students' needs, goals and values. These three factors, combined with what they have learned from the previous stages, will determine their expectations from *Rappler*.

The students will test whether their expectations will be fulfilled in the trial stage. Their view on *Rappler* as a news source, which will be formed in the adoption stage, will depend on their experience with it during the trial stage.

F.   Definition of Terms

1. Audience – receiver of the message

2. User – member of the audience

3. Opinion leader – an active media user who is able to influence less active members of the audience

4. Needs – a motivating force that requires satisfaction

5. Values – beliefs and ideals

6. Goals – desired result

7. Expectations – anticipation of what might happen

8. Gratifications – pleasure resulting from satisfaction of a desire

IV. METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

As an exploratory research, this study used both quantitative and qualitative approaches for data collection. Individual focus interviews with UP Diliman, UST and PUP journalism professors were conducted to gather qualitative data. The interviews provided some background on how the professors conduct their lessons in the classroom setting, as well as how they view *Rappler*.

A survey was also conducted among the journalism students from the three universities to extract both quantitative and qualitative data. The survey was done to determine the students' views on *Rappler* as a news source and to see if their internet behaviors and individual profiles, specifically whether they have taken subjects wherein *Rappler* was discussed, have correlation with their views.

B. Unit of Analysis and Sampling

For this study, 240 UP Diliman, UST and PUP journalism majors were used as the sample population. In every school, 20 respondents from each year level were selected while at least one professor from each school was interviewed.

The total population of registered journalism students in UP Diliman for the second semester of academic year 2014-2015 is 240. PUP and UST, on the other hand, have around 400-450 registered journalism students.

UP Diliman, UST and PUP were chosen in this study because these three universities were deemed by the Commission on Higher Education as institutions "which have demonstrated the highest degree or level of standard along the areas of instruction,

research and extension." Currently, the journalism department of UP Diliman is the only

Center of Excellence in the country while those of UST and PUP are both Centers of

Development.

C. Research Instruments

The researcher employed survey questionnaires to gather information needed for

this study. The main purpose of the survey is to explore the views of journalism majors

on *Rappler* as a news source and to determine whether their journalism education has an

effect on their views.

Aside from closed-ended questions, the survey questionnaire also consisted of

open-ended questions in order to give the respondents an opportunity to express their

opinions. The respondents were asked to evaluate *Rappler* in terms of the credibility

factors presented in Gaziano and McGrath's 1986 study. Similarly, respondents who have

already taken a journalism ethics course evaluated their ethics professors based on the

five dimensions of credibility proposed by Jenson and McCroskey (1975). The five-point

Likert scale was used to measure the intensity of respondents' approval or disapproval.

The interview questions for the ethics professors were structured to extract their

views on *Rappler* and to get an idea about their teaching methods. The interview also

gave a chance to explore other dimensions of the topic.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Profile of Respondents

A total of 476 respondents were surveyed – 104 are from PUP, 283 are from UST and 89 are from UP Diliman. In every school, only the first 20 valid responses from each year level were included in the analysis. The total number of the sample population used is 240.

Figure 6. *Sex of Respondents*
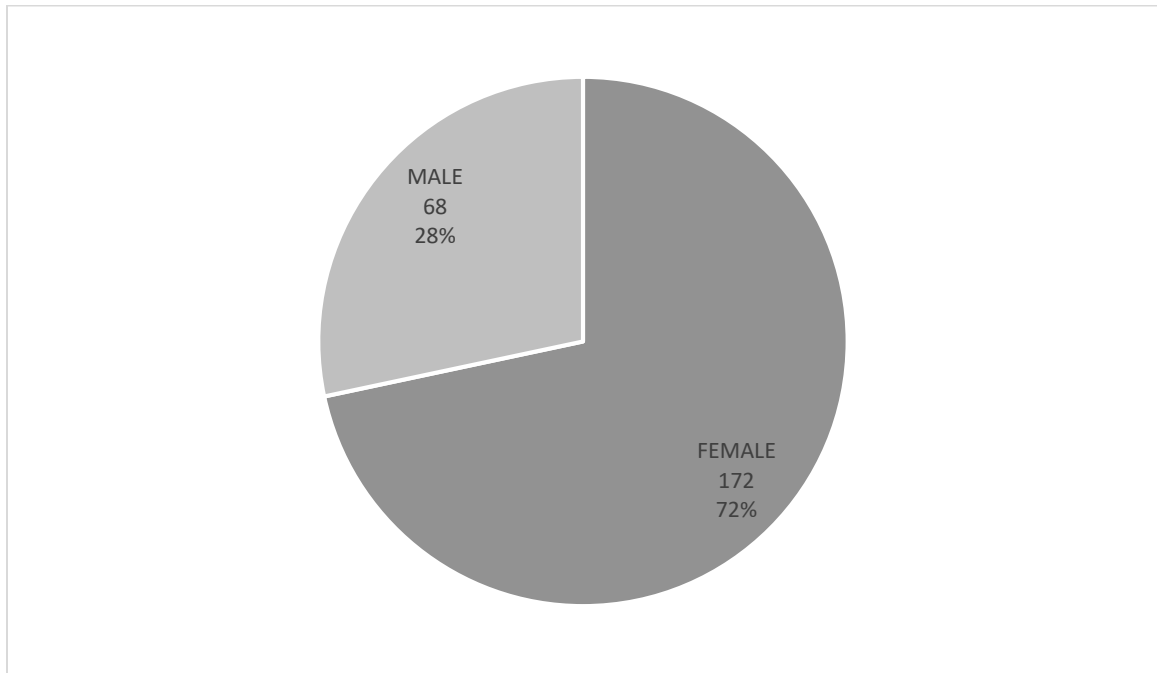
Figure 6 shows that out of 240 respondents, 72 percent are females and 28 percent are males. Their average age is 18.5 years old while their average daily internet use is 8.57 hours.

Figure 7. *Primary Internet Source*
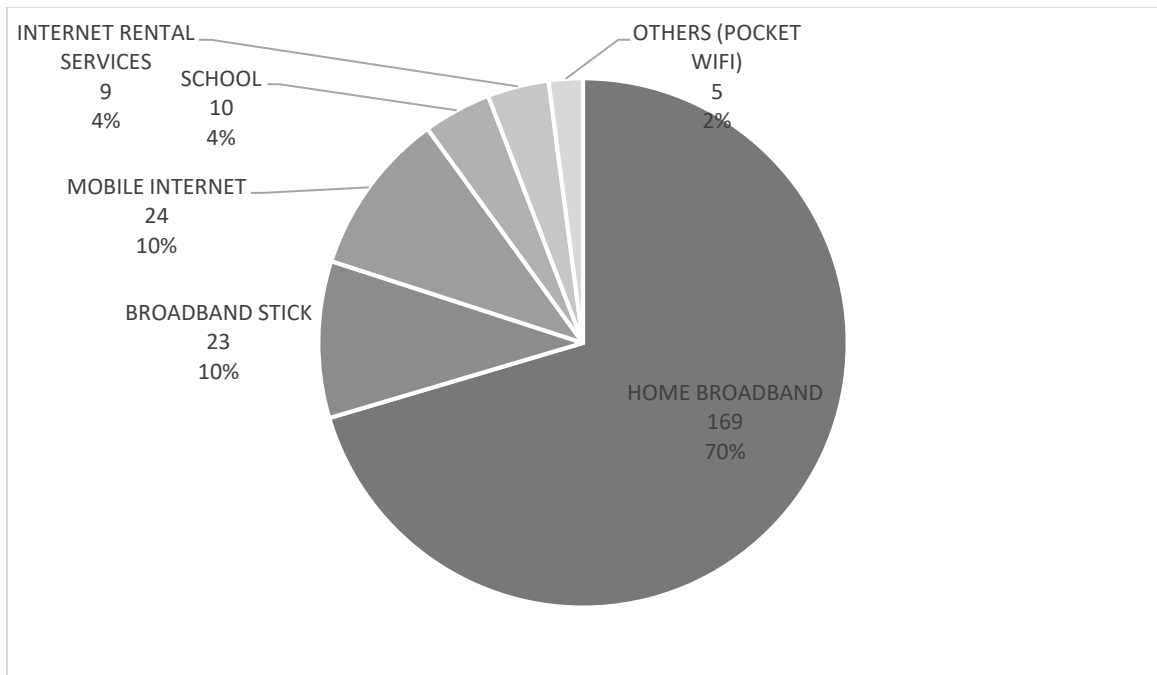
Figure 7 shows that 70 percent of the respondents use home broadband as their primary source of internet connection. Ten percent use broadband stick. Another ten percent use mobile internet. Those who use school internet services are four percent of the population, as well as those who mainly use internet rental services. The remaining two percent use pocket WiFi.

Figure 8. *News Sources*
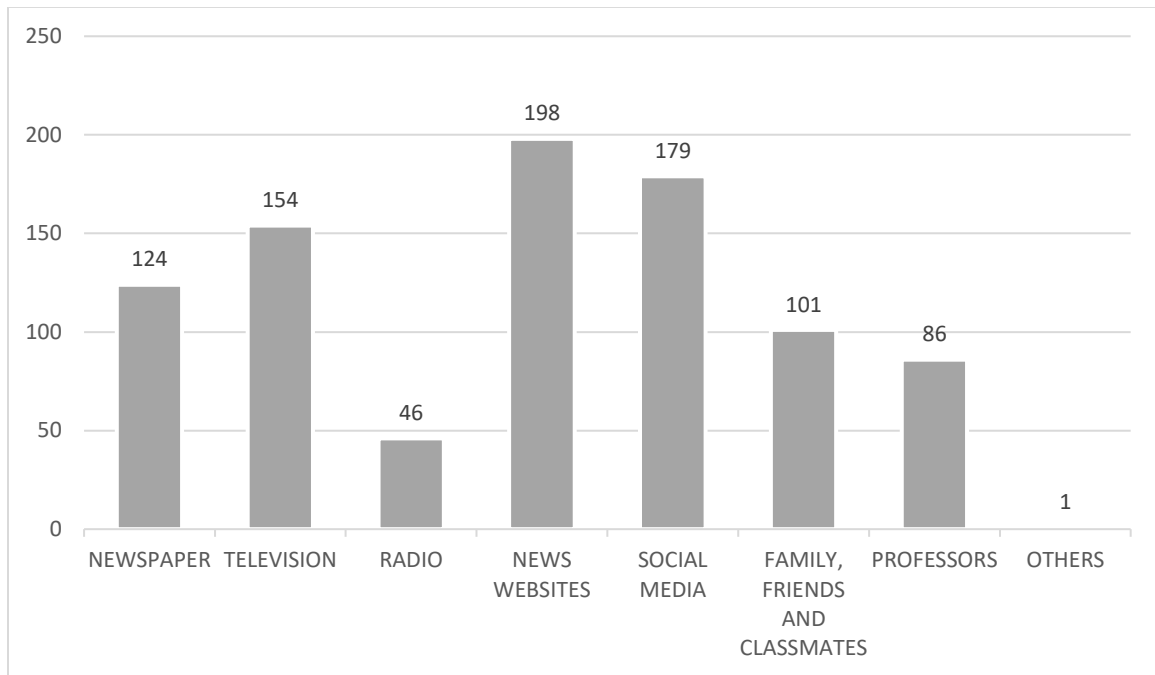
For this question, respondents were allowed to choose as many as were applicable. The most used news sources are news websites and social media which are both in the digital landscape. They are then followed by television, newspaper, family, friends and classmates and professors. Radio, on the other hand, has a significantly low number of users relative to the other choices. Respondent 31B (UST, second year) also cited The Varsitarian as one of his news sources.

Figure 9. *News Websites*
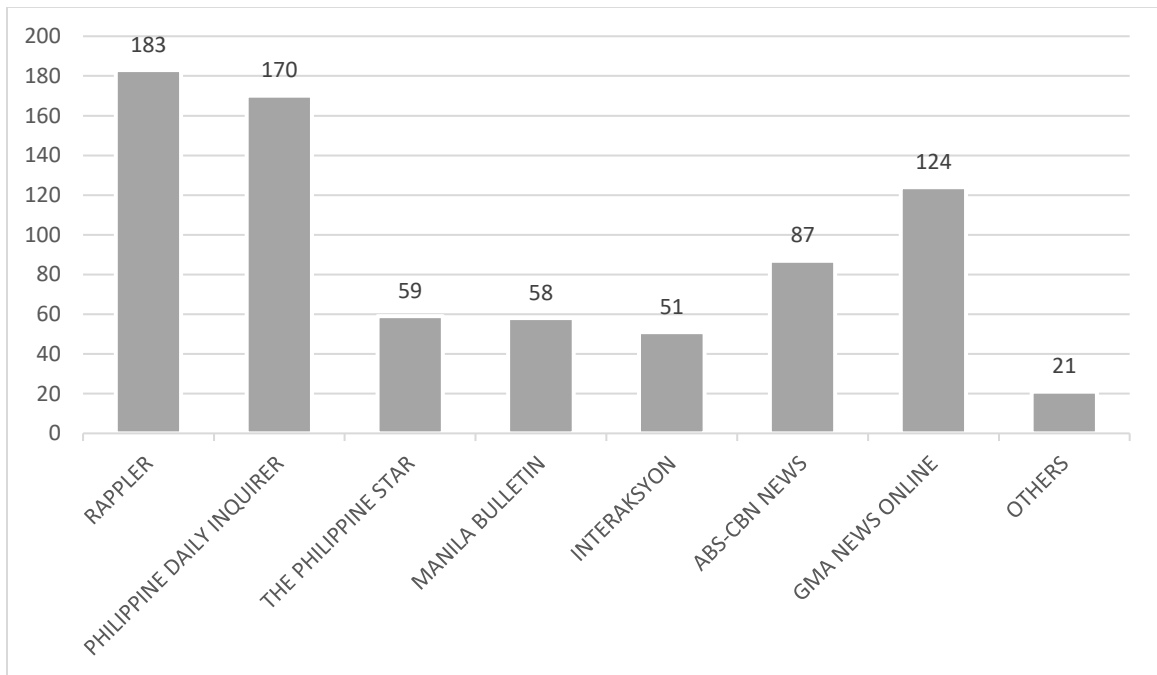
Figure 9 shows the news websites most favored by the respondents. *Rappler* tops

the list, followed closely by *Philippine Daily Inquirer* and *GMA News Online.* There

were 87 respondents who regularly visit the *ABS-CBN News* website while *Philippine*

Star, Manila Bulletin and *Interaksyon* are read by around 50 to 60 respondents.

Figure 10. *Other News Websites*

News Website	Count
YAHOO! NEWS	3
VERA FILES	1
UNTV	1
THE GUARDIAN	1
SPINBUSTERS	1
REUTERS	2
REDDIT	1
NEW YORK TIMES	1
MANILA TIMES	1
HUFFINGTON POST	3
CNN	3
BUSINESS INSIDER	1
BLOOMBERG	1
BBC	3
ANC NEWS	1
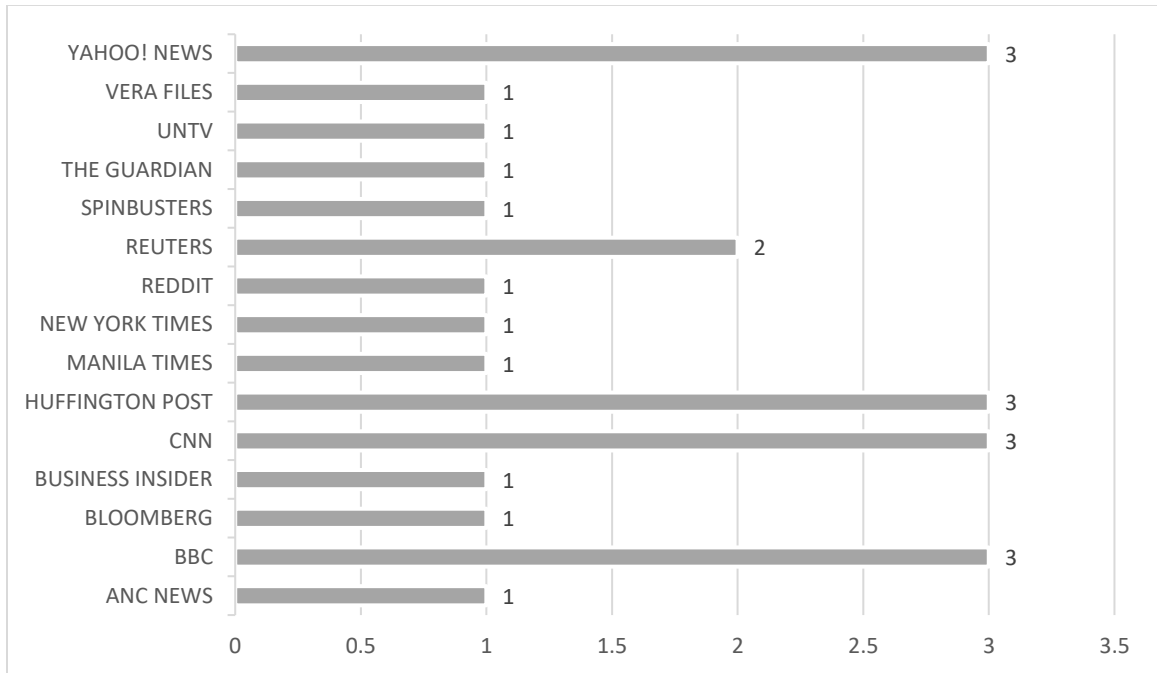
Other websites mentioned were also tallied. These are *Yahoo! News, Vera Files,*

UNTV, The Guardian, Spinbusters, Reuters, Reddit, New York Times, Manila Times,

Huffington Post, CNN, Business Insider, Bloomberg, BBC and *ANC News.*

B. Journalism Students' Perception of Rappler

Figure 11. *Rappler Readers and Non-Readers*
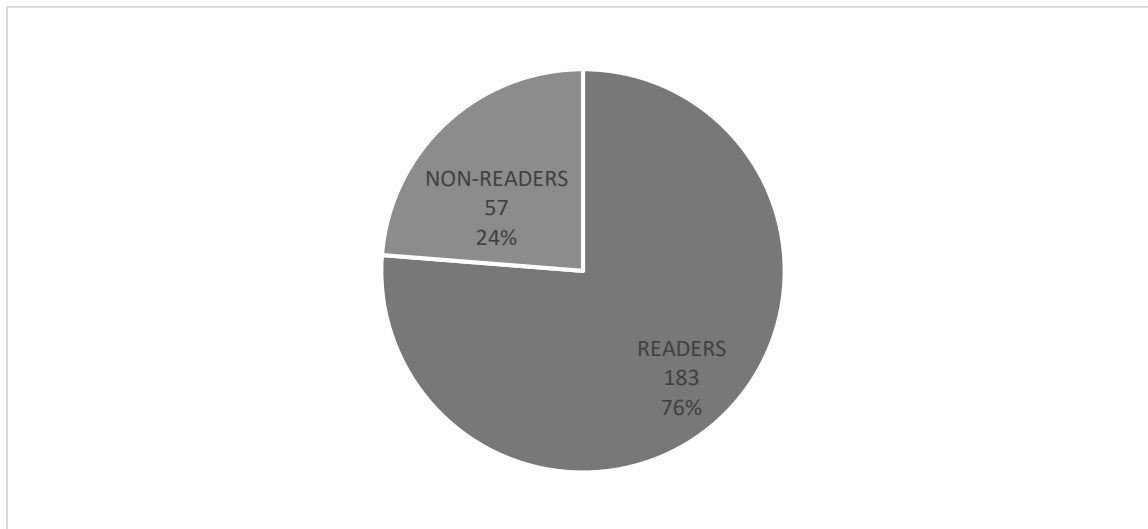
Among the 240 respondents, 183 are *Rappler* readers of which 31 percent are from PUP, 29 percent are from UST and 40 percent are from UP Diliman.

Figure 12. *Rappler Readers*
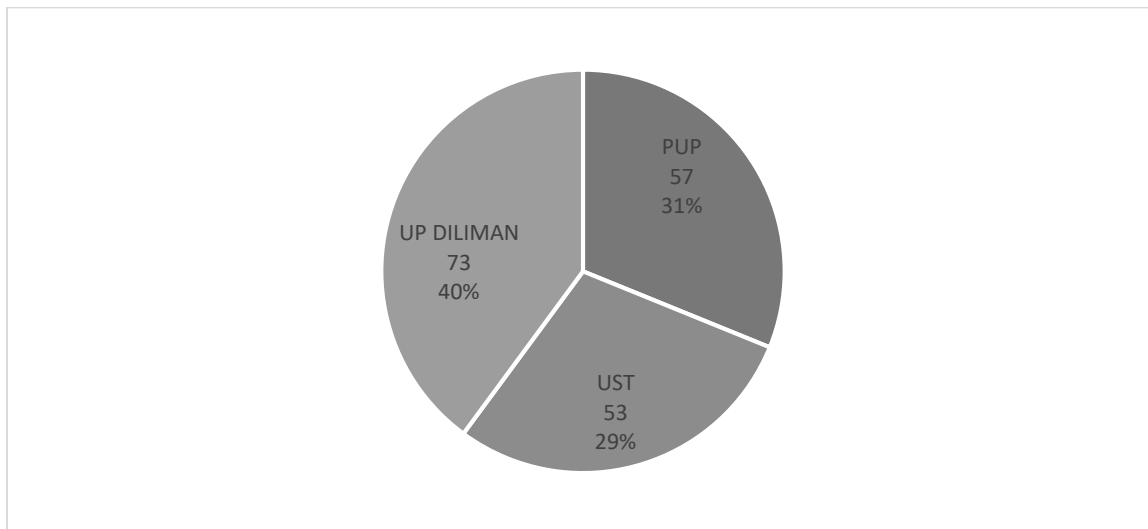
Figure 13. Frequency of Visiting Rappler
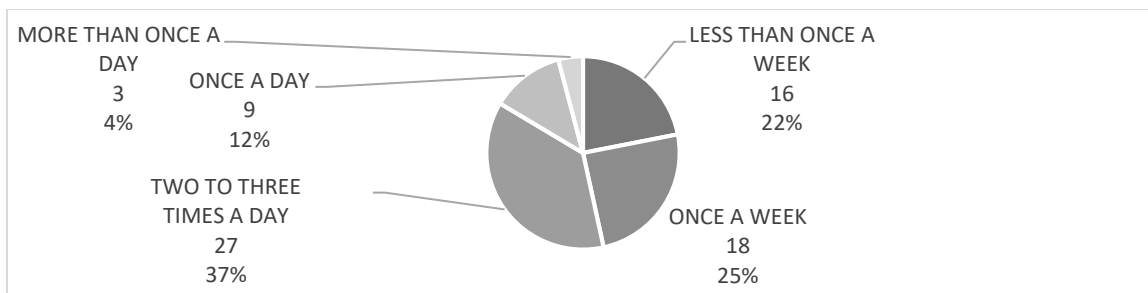
Figure 13 shows how often respondents visit *Rappler.* There are 16 respondents who visit less than once a week and 18 who visit once a week. They can be considered light users of *Rappler.* On the other hand, there are 27 average users or those who visit two to three times a week. Nine answered once a day and the remaining three answered more than once a day. These 12 can be considered heavy users.

Figure 14. Getting Into Rappler's Website
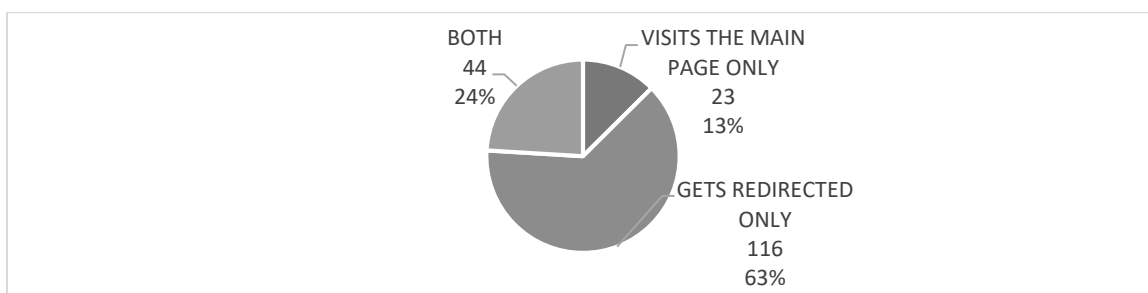
Figure 14 shows how respondents get into *Rappler's* website. There were 116 respondents who get redirected when they see articles of interest while 23 respondents visit the main page directly. The remaining 44, on the other hand, both visit the main page and get redirected.

Figure 15. Purpose of Visiting Rappler
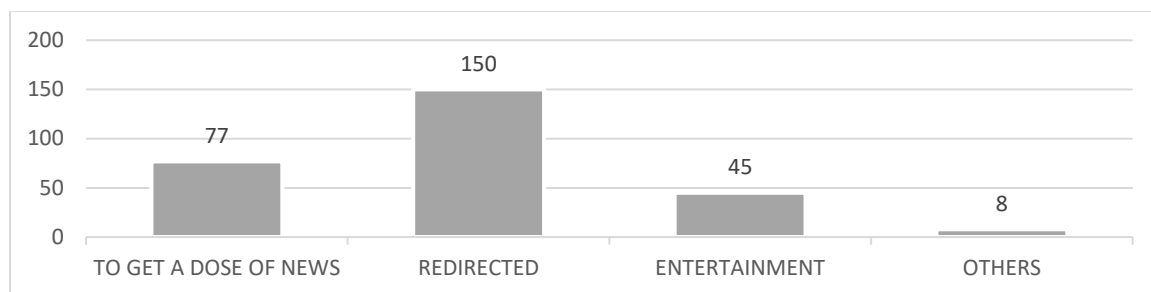
Figure 15 shows why respondents visit *Rappler*. For this part, respondents were allowed to choose more than one. Out of the 183 who answered, 77 visit *Rappler* to get a dose of news, 150 gets redirected when they see articles of interest being shared in social media and 45 visit for entertainment purposes. There were also eight respondents who specified other reasons. Two respondents cited curiosity. Another two said they visit to see the public mood through the Mood Meter while the remaining four cited research and class purposes.

Figure 16. *Respondents' Perception on Rappler*
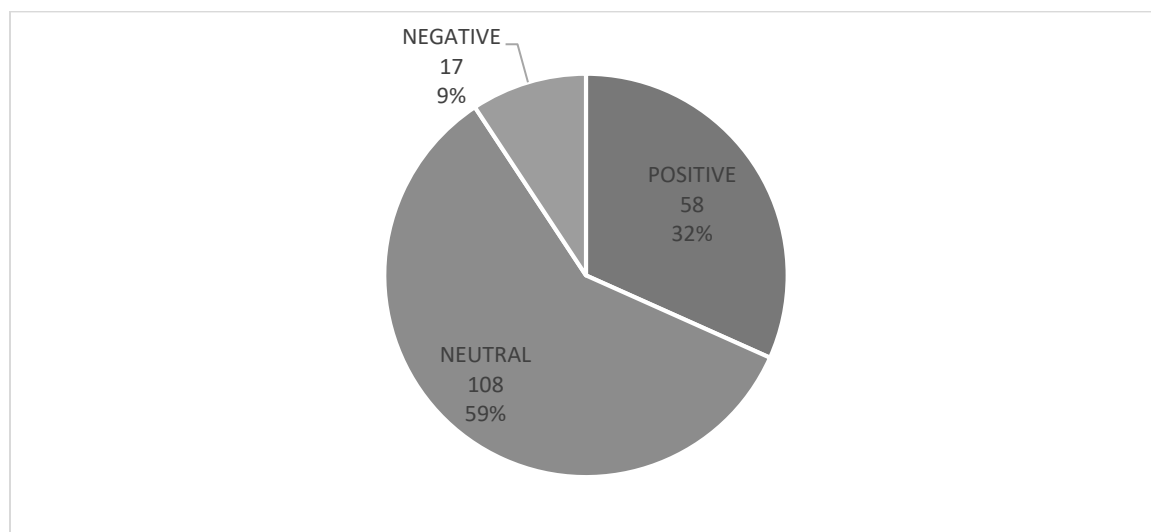
Figure 16 shows the perception of *Rappler* reader respondents to the said news website. Majority of the respondents view *Rappler* neutrally at 59 percent. Those who have a positive view on *Rappler* are 32 percent while those who have a negative view are nine percent. Non-readers did not answer this question.

One reason for the low number of respondents who view *Rappler* negatively is that many non-readers do not use *Rappler* as one of their news sources primarily because they do not trust the said news website. Since the students, according to the integrated framework of Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovations and Uses and Gratifications, are active users, they have the ability to choose whether or not to use a specific medium. In this case, some respondents chose not to use *Rappler* because they do not trust it as a news source.

Below are the views of some non-readers on *Rappler:*

Respondent 19 (PUP, first year): *I've visited forums on the internet questioning Rappler's overall credibility and the quality of work it produces while comparing it to other Filipino news websites that people see as more reliable such as the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Also, some people say that it's the Huffington Post of the Philippines. These comments are the reason why I avoid using Rappler as my source of news.*

Respondent 42A (PUP, third year): *Almost all discussions I've encountered regarding Rappler are either unfavorable or negative, especially when criticized by media practitioners such as my journalism professors and*

fellow journalism majors. I believe the negative perceptions of these people

aroused from Rappler's inaccuracy when delivering news.

Respondent 78A (PUP, fourth year): *Something of a benefit, that's just*

there. But to be an actual source, not quite.

Respondent 27B (UST, second year): *Rappler is a site where mainly*

tabloid news are presented. Rappler isn't really a great news platform.

Respondent 74B (UST, fourth year): *The discussion was mainly regarding*

an erratum released by Rappler on numerous occasions. I never really visit their

site but after the discussion, I am very distrustful of their website right now.

Respondent 75B (UST, third year): *Hating on Rappler seems like the cool*

thing to do in this part of journalism town. Pero personally, may basis naman

'yung hindi ko pag-digest ng news galing sa kanila since more often than not,

kulang talaga ang sources as they mainly cater to the millennial who shares links

on Facebook 24/7 for the sake of likes, not for actual information. (Hating on

Rappler seems like the cool thing to do in this part of journalism town. But

personally, there's a basis on why I don't digest their news. More often than not,

their sources are not enough as they mainly cater to the millennial who shares

links on Facebook 24/7 for the sake of likes, not for actual information.)

Respondent 47B (UST, third year): *I think of Rappler as incompetent*

based on the articles I have read from them. I think the style of writing is very

unprofessional and sometimes unethical.

Respondent 54B (UST, fourth year): *In our political journ subject. Our professor does not read from Rappler so my perception was affected. He says it is not credible so I never check Rappler for news.*

Respondent 59B (UST, third year): *I think Rappler is more of an opinionated site rather that a legitimate news site.*

Respondent 69C (UPD, fourth year): *I do not see it as a viable primary source for news. Rappler, to me, has shown on several occasions that it has the tendency to be biased and at times inaccurate (issues with fact-checking).*

Figures 17 to 19 show the perceptions of PUP, UST and UPD respondents on *Rappler*.

Figure 17. *PUP Respondents' Perception on Rappler*
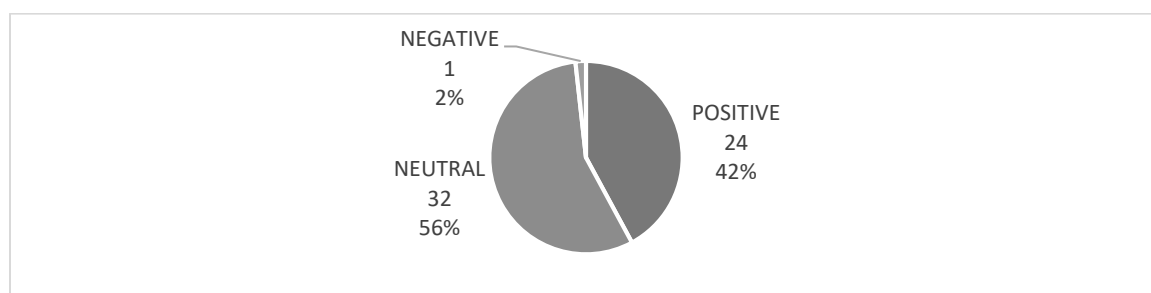
Figure 18. *UST Respondents' Perception on Rappler*
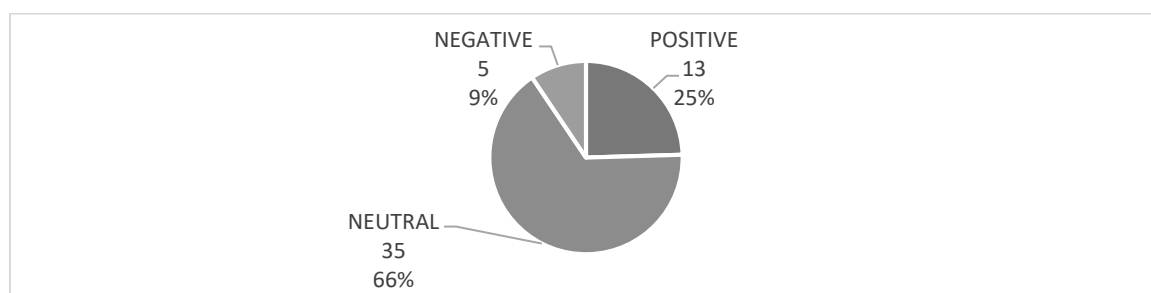
Figure 19. *UPD Respondents' Perception on Rappler*
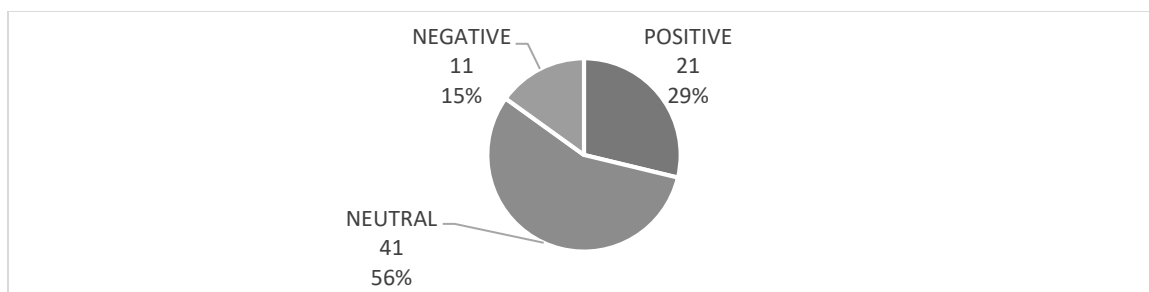
Table 3. *Rappler's Credibility Scores Given by Respondents*

FAIR		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	16	16
2	74	148
3	75	225
4	18	72
5	0	0
TOTAL	183	461
AVERAGE	461 / 183	2.52
UNBIASED		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	11	11
2	54	108
3	88	264
4	22	88
5	2	10
TOTAL	183	481
AVERAGE	481 / 183	2.63
TELLS THE WHOLE STORY		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	12	12
2	74	148
3	61	183
4	33	132
5	3	15
TOTAL	490	490
AVERAGE	490 / 183	2.68
ACCURATE		

CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	13	13
2	73	146
3	72	216
4	21	84
5	4	20
TOTAL	183	479
AVERAGE	479 / 183	2.62
RESPECTS PRIVACY		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	7	94
2	47	94
3	91	273
4	35	140
5	3	15
TOTAL	183	529
AVERAGE	529 / 183	2.89
WATCHES AFTER READERS' INTEREST		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	60	60
2	61	122
3	44	132
4	16	64
5	2	10
TOTAL	183	388
AVERAGE	388 / 183	2.12
CONCERNED ABOUT COMMUNITY'S WELL-BEING		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	33	33
2	68	136
3	61	183
4	21	84
5	0	0
TOTAL	183	436
AVERAGE	436 / 183	2.32
CAN BE TRUSTED		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	23	23
2	75	150
3	63	189
4	21	84
5	1	5
TOTAL	183	451
AVERAGE	183 / 451	2.46
CONCERNED ABOUT PUBLIC INTEREST		

CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	43	43
2	82	164
3	43	129
4	13	52
5	2	10
TOTAL	183	398
AVERAGE	398 / 183	2.17
FACTUAL		
CREDIBILITY SCORE	FREQUENCY	SCORE X FREQUENCY
1	27	27
2	71	142
3	56	168
4	28	112
5	1	5
TOTAL	183	454
AVERAGE	454 / 183	2.48

Table 3 shows *Rappler*'s credibility scores given by *Rappler* reader respondents through the five-point Likert scale, one being the highest and five being the lowest. Non-readers did not answer this portion.

The first column shows the scores one to five from the Likert scale. The second column shows the frequency for each score while the last column shows the value derived from multiplying the score and the frequency. The total was then divided by the number of *Rappler* reader respondents to get the credibility scores for each factor.

The factor about watching after readers' interest got the highest score (2.12). Professor Khan agreed that *Rappler* "obviously" watches after readers' interest because of how *Rappler* publishes stories that are aimed towards attracting readers. This is an example of what audience do to media, in reference to the Uses and Gratifications Theory. Since *Rappler* wants to gain readers, they release content the public wants.

The factor of being concerned about public interest also got a high score (2.17). This is not surprising as *Rappler* was initiated as a medium for investigative journalism. Until now, *Rappler* is still involved in investigative journalism through Newsbreak, its investigative and research arm.

Table 4. *Rappler's Credbility Scores Computation*

CREDIBILITY	SCORE
FAIR	2.52
UNBIASED	2.63
TELLS THE WHOLE STORY	2.68
ACCURATE	2.62
RESPECTS PRIVACY	2.89
READERS' INTEREST	2.12
COMMUNITY'S WELL-BEING	2.32
CAN BE TRUSTED	2.46
PUBLIC INTEREST	2.17
FACTUAL	2.48
AVERAGE	2.49

The table above shows the averaged values for each credibility factor. The ten values were averaged again to get *Rappler's* total credibility score which is 2.49. The average score given by the respondents lean on the positive-near-neutral side. Non-readers did not answer this portion, meaning the score could be lower because of some non-readers have a negative view on *Rappler*.

C. Views of Journalism Students and Professors on Rappler

For this part, the data were gathered from individual focus interviews with journalism professors and from the open-ended survey questions.

Four professors were interviewed. Professor Angelina Borican from PUP teaches news writing classes. Professor Jeremaiah Opiniano is from UST teaching media ethics and news writing classes. Both Professor Danilo Arao and Professor Rachel Khan, on the other hand, are from UP Diliman. Professor Arao teaches online journalism and media ethics while Professor Khan teaches online journalism and news writing classes.

1. Rappler's Medium as an Advantage

Professor Borican sees *Rappler* as an "easily accessible, well-written and instantaneous disseminator of information." Likewise, Professor Khan considers "availability" as a strong point of *Rappler*. Professor Arao, on the other hand, said *Rappler* practices competitive journalism but sometimes, "it also engages in gossip and trivia which makes it no different from other media organizations that would try to gain as much web traffic as possible from trending topics even if it would pertain to rumor."

There were also respondents who see *Rappler* as a credible news source.

Respondent 74A (PUP, fourth year): *For me, Rappler is one of the best sources of news in this digital age. I view Rappler as a credible source of information that will give its readers news or interesting stories to talk about. It delivers on the dot stories that can be shared by its readers through social networking sites. As a Journalism student, soon to be graduate, I can see Rappler as one of the most competent news sources*

because it does not only deliver news; it also gives stories that are more interesting than other news sources can give. I also commend how their writers write their articles and keep their readers interested.

Respondent 75A (PUP, fourth year): *I see Rappler as a news portal that isn't afraid to get dirty. In my experiences when reading their articles, I found myself much more satisfied than when I read articles from other sources, albeit there are times when I get annoyed as well. All in all, Rappler for me is a better source of news than the current mainstream news portals.*

Respondent 44A (PUP, third year): *I find Rappler as one of the most credible news websites in the Philippines. My blockmates have already interviewed some of the known reporters of Rappler, and they have found them interesting and good.*

Another strong point respondents see is how *Rappler* utilizes advanced technology to reach more audience and keep them interested.

Respondent 46A (PUP, first year): *Rappler is a social media medium that deals with the advanced way of delivering news and trend*

Respondent 53A (PUP, third year): *Comprehensive, inventive of ways to make news sharing more dynamic.*

Respondent 37C (UPD, second year): *Innovative. Up to date. It began a new kind of news medium in the Philippines.*

Respondent 60C (UPD, third year): *They are very interactive and well-shared by the people on SNS/netizens.*

Respondent 71C (UPD, fourth year): *I consider Rappler as an interesting foray into multimedia reporting in the country. Their clean webpage design and off-beat topics certainly add a new and much-needed dimension to Philippine media.*

Respondent 44B (UST, third year): *My high school brother finds (their) infographics very idiot-friendly.*

In relation to this, the Mood Meter, a tool created by *Rappler* in an attempt to measure the emotions of the public, gives plus points to the news website.

Respondent 5B (UST, first year): *I only enjoy the Mood Meter as it is amusing to see the "Don't care" articles and such things.*

Respondent 37B (UST, second year): *Rappler is an interactive website most especially with the use of its Mood Meter.*

Respondent 49C (UPD, third year): *I see it as an innovative site that tries to watch the public pulse and mood in order to provide news that the public wants and ultimately needs.*

However, Professor Arao said that one weakness of the Mood Meter is its positioning in the pages of the articles. Rather than being at the bottom, the Mood Meter is situated at the upper-right corner. With this placement, the tendency of the readers would be to input their mood upon reading the title.

Professor Arao also noted that sometimes, a person can have mixed emotions about certain sections of particular articles. In the first few paragraphs, a person could be happy. The next, he/she could be annoyed. But there's no way to know which part of the article made one feel what emotion.

Another weakness Professor Arao mentioned is that "the Mood Meter only gives you a percentage of emotions but not the actual number." For example, if there are only five people who said they're happy and all of them wrote happy, the mood meter would show 100 percent but not the number five. However, *Rappler's* Technology and Content Strategy Head Gemma Mendoza explained that if they show the nominal numbers, some may feel intimidated to be the first respondent and as a result, may not answer at all.

2. *Rappler's Medium as a Weakness*

While the medium of *Rappler* as a social news website can be considered an advantage, Professor Arao said that, "Because of its nature being in the social media platform, *Rappler* is prone to errors and corrections as it beats the timeliness element of print and other medium."

The usual practice of *Rappler* is to break news and update the articles from time to time as the story progresses. On example is how *Rappler* wrote the story of the delay of Mary Jane Veloso's execution for drug trafficking in Indonesia. The article started with a one-liner citing Jakarta Post but the writers kept changing the article as they were able to get more information. It was only 22 hours after the article was published that the writers were able to come up with the final version. This practice of breaking news and

updating regularly is frequently used by *Rappler* in big stories, as well as in popular sporting events.

Some respondents also said the speed of *Rappler* in delivering news compromises journalism values such as accuracy and reliability.

Respondent 31B (UST, second year): *As a student journalist, we have discussed among our circle that Rappler often compromises being factual for being the first to break the news. It's also a personal observation and is not just peer-influenced.*

Respondent 34B (UST, second year): *I think in most news articles, Rappler follows the 24/7 news cycle. I find their news sometimes unreliable because of its hasty purposes.*

Respondent 33C (UPD, second year): *Very quick to post news but lacks accuracy. Very mema (just to have something to say) and salsal (all talk) culture. Informative for teens. Quantity > Quality.*

Respondent 39C (UPD, third year): *I view it as a news organization which is quick in delivering news. However, it sacrifices the quality and accuracy of its content thereby making the news not credible.*

This could be the reason why some respondents prefer *Rappler* when getting "fast facts" and "updates" but still relies on other news sources to get the bigger picture.

Respondent 75C (UPD, fourth year): *It's an okay source for updates but I don't rely on it if I want all sides of a story and I expect bad facts and writing too.*

Respondent 20B (UST, first year): *Living in a dormitory, Rappler and other news portals help a lot in being updated on what's happening in the world. I usually visit Rappler as the fast facts provider whereas other news sites are the ones I refer to on depth of news stories.*

Professor Khan also brought up the issue of the nature of *Rappler* as a social news network blurring the line between soft news and hard news:

For somebody who doesn't know, like the general public, it's causing confusion. Their BuzzFeed-like entries are given equal importance or equal exposure to the serious news. It's easy for us to distinguish because we're trained for it but I'm thinking of the general public because they don't see the front page of a newspaper anymore that guides them on what is important.

3. Rappler on Readers' Interest

Going back to the strong points of *Rappler*, some respondents commended how the news website manages to attract the attention of readers by posting interesting stories with engaging writing style.

Respondent 51A (PUP, third year): *It makes way for news to reach people faster and captures wide range of netizens with not just the hard news but also with their salient features.*

Respondent 58B (UST, fourth year): *Rappler has always been good at reaching out to its readers by featuring stories of interest. I personally like their visuals and graphics, as well as the new techniques that they are introducing to the website in disseminating news. They have surely maximized the media platform. This gives them an edge over Inquirer.net and other news websites. They attract more readers.*

Respondent 38B (UST, second year): *Their articles are straight to the point and are presented in an interesting fashion.*

However, this "interesting fashion" comes off differently to other respondents.

Respondent 47B (UST, third year): *I think of Rappler as incompetent based on the articles I have read from them. I think the style of writing is very unprofessional and sometimes unethical.*

Respondent 12B (UST, first year): *I do believe that Rappler sort of lines with a blog rather than a news website.*

Respondent 65B (UST, fourth year): *My friends and I had discussions over Rappler stories that we find interesting or written in an odd way. Because of our exchange of opinion, my perception of Rappler has changed. I now often deem it as just a news source, not "THE" news source as I used to think of it as before.*

Respondent 66B (UST, fourth year): *I saw Rappler as sensationalizing news and felt more like a blog.*

Respondent 27B: (UST, second year): *I have been told that it isn't credible and formal as other news sources.*

Respondent 29B (UST, second year): *Rappler is not as credible as other major news sources. It may not be so formal.*

Respondent 75B (UST, fourth year): *They mainly cater to the millennial who shares links on Facebook 24/7 for the sake of likes, not for actual information.*

Respondent 59B (UST, fourth year): *I have seen some of their articles which I believe is not news. And because of this, my perception on Rappler is that Rappler tries to get the attention if the audience by providing stories that will catch their attention. Even if the topic is not news worthy, it will still catch the attention of audience.*

4. Rappler vis-à-vis Other Media Organizations

Comparing *Rappler* to other media organizations, some respondents said that *Rappler* is no different from the others.

Respondent 13B (UST first year): *I just heard before that Rappler is a non-reliable source of news. It does not really affect my perception on it because I also check other facts like the Manila Bulletin and GMA News and I find that it's just the same with the others. Given this situation, does it mean that other sources are not reliable? So I still believe in Rappler.*

Respondent 23B (UST, second year): *Rappler is just one of those news sites I compare with others.*

Respondent 22B (UST, second year): *Rappler isn't my only source of news information. I think Rappler is not more as credible as the other newspaper/network online websites but it has been the famous one solely for the internet world.*

Respondent 35C (UPD, fourth year): *Rappler can be reliable but like any other news sources, it can also be biased at times.*

Others, on the other hand, still prefer other media sources.

Respondent 33C (UPD, second year): *I don't trust it as much as I trust the PDI and mainstream media arms such as GMA News Online and its ABS-CBN counterpart.*

Respondent 78B (UST, fourth year): *I actually don't get my news from Rappler. Yes, they are fast in posting news but still, I trust more on the Inquirer and the TV Patrol. I also don't know about the ethical standards of Rappler.*

There are also those who have a negative view on *Rappler* for various reasons such as ethical issues that often affect *Rappler*'s credibility as a news source. Aside from inaccuracy, another issue respondents and professors saw is the difficulty of *Rappler* in distinguishing fact from opinion.

Respondent 42A (PUP, third year): *Almost all discussions I've encountered regarding Rappler are either unfavorable or negative, especially when criticized by media practitioners such as my journalism professors and fellow journalism majors. I believe the negative perceptions of these people aroused from Rappler's inaccuracy when delivering news.*

Respondent 63B (UST, fourth year): *Rappler was said to focus more on commenting its issues, rather than objectively disseminating the information as a news organization/site.*

Respondent 59B (UST, third year): *I think Rappler is more of an opinionated site rather that a legitimate news site.*

Respondent 7C (UPD, first year): *In terms of writing, it's great. I just wish that Rappler categorizes its stories into news or feature and upholds journalism standards by serving public interest.*

Professor Khan said that while *Rappler* labels which are straight news and which are opinion, she said *Rappler* still releases stories such as the list of hottest guys "which is clearly opinion."

5. *Plagiarism Cases*

Rappler has faced plagiarism cases such as when one of its writers, Lean Santos, copied quotes from Ben Arnold de Vera's Interaksyon article Foreign tourist arrivals breach 2-million mark at end-May published on July 24, 2013. De Vera complained about the plagiarism case in a tweet but Santos and Gemma Mendoza, *Rappler's*

Research and Content Strategy Head, insisted that Santos was present when De Vera and another reporter did the ambush interview. It turned out, however, that there was an error in the figures in De Vera's article which Santos also copied in his plagiarized piece. After it was proven that Santos indeed plagiarized, he was fired.

Another case was when *Rappler* used a photo of Erwin Aguilon, a DZIQ reporter, for its article Christmas Eve Divisoria fire under control published on October 20, 2013. Instead of citing Aguilon, *Rappler* placed its watermark on the photo. Professor Arao commended *Rappler* for quickly apologizing but he said that the fact that *Rappler* placed a watermark on the photo meant that there was an intention to claim it as its own.

Other plagiarized articles *Rappler* published were Villar pours P1-B into retail business and 10 The Killers moves in Manila which were taken down.

Seven respondents (55B, 63B, 66B, 68B, 73B, 77B and 79B) said the plagiarism cases affected how they view *Rappler*.

Respondent 66B (UST, third year): *I would hear my professors talking about it specifically one situation wherein a reporter plagiarized another reporter's work for he was not present when they got the scoop… Their credibility for me reduced like I have to verify it from other news websites.*

Respondent 68B (UST, third year): *Some of our professors told us plagiarism stories and there have been evidences. Yes, my perception of Rappler was affected. I actually don't read stories in Rappler at all.*

Respondent 77B (UST, third year): *Rappler posted stories that contained false/plagiarized info that compromises their credibility.*

Respondent 73B (UST, fourth year): *The plagiarism story about the tourism story affected my perception of Rappler as a credible, reliable and resourceful media organization.*

6. *Transparency and Accountability*

On October 20, 2013, *Rappler* released a statement through an article as a response to the complaints against it. In the article, *Rappler* said it conducted formal investigations in every plagiarism case reported. Of the four articles mentioned above, *Rappler* apologized to all the affected parties.

Aside from this, *Rappler* has a corrections page still active as of May 2015. The page includes all errors, from grammatical lapses to inaccuracy of information, sorted by month. *Rappler* also includes footnotes in all articles where there were corrections made.

7. *Investigative Journalism in a Profit-Driven Environment*

Professor Opiniano said *Rappler* began as a media organization geared towards investigative journalism. Until now, it claims to be "a social news network where stories inspire community engagement and digitally fuelled actions for social change." Likewise, Professor Arao commended *Rappler* for engaging "in a kind of journalism that tackles various issues." One example he gave was *Rappler's* coverage of the contractualization in the media industry in 2014.

Some respondents also recognize *Rappler* as a medium to spark social change.

Respondent 7A (PUP, second year): *Rappler affects my perception through opening my minds about fallacies done by our government.*

Respondent 45A (PUP, third year): *For several years Rappler earned its own brand of news reporting. There is a reason behind this and that is because Rappler continues to provide excellent features on different social concerns.*

Respondent 62C (UPD, fourth year): *I commend them for in-depth reporting and exposure on social media, plus the bold move to discuss topics not available in mainstream news which can gradually mold the internet viewers' perspective in society.*

However, Professor Opiniano said that in its current state, *Rappler* may be suffering from an "identity crisis" as its nature as a media corporation affects its reportage. Professor Khan sees the "market" as the reason why *Rappler* has moved from a medium of social change to a medium of "increasing stupidity." Professor Opiniano added that sponsors affect *Rappler's* objectivity by refraining from posting articles that may damage the names of its sponsors and advertisers. "They want to practice investigative journalism but at the same time, they want profit."

In relation to this, Professor Arao said that even though *Rappler* would not be paid by sponsors to come up with specific articles, some of its audience might still think that the articles are biased. One example was when the Center for Media Freedom and Responsibility (CMFR) "jeered" *Rappler* for publishing "one-sided articles about telecom companies which are outright advertorials." Rappler, in defense, said the articles were not advertorials and the writers were able to get all sides. Nevertheless, since Globe Telecom is a major sponsor of *Rappler*, readers might still think the writers of the articles were affected by the sponsorship. With this example, Professor Arao said "the problem is

faced more by the system in which it operates because the corporate structure would end up really with compromises, no matter how competent you are as an editor, no matter how high your ethical standards may be."

Showing that *Rappler* gives importance to profit like any other profit-driven media organizations, Professor Borican said *Rappler* tries to make their headlines and stories as catchy as possible in order to get more internet traffic. Professor Khan also criticized *Rappler* for posting too much celebrity articles and "stupid" stories such as the list of hottest guys in order to get more hits as "it is pulling down the intelligence of readers." Repondent 54C (UPD, third year) also noticed that "*Rappler* keeps on posting articles that cater more to the entertainment needs of the readers than their need for information." Its section named #AskMargie wherein clinical psychologist Margie Holmes discusses issues on sex and relationship came off negatively to some respondents.

Respondent 24C (UPD, second year): *Bilang isang news org, nakakapagtakang naglalabas sila ng mga istoryang tungkol sa mga adik sa sex o ng mga istoryang hindi naman dapat nilalabas ng isang news org. Sa tingin namin ay istratehiya ito upang kumalap ng maraming like at shares para pag-usapan ng media. (It's confusing why Rappler, as a news organization, releases stories about sex addicts or other stories that must not be published by a news organization. We think that this is a strategy to get more likes and shares to be talked about by the media.)*

Respondent 69B (UST, fourth year): *Sensationalized. "Sex sells." Opinionated. What's up with the sex column anyway?*

> Respondent 50B (UST, fourth year): *They focus more on sexually oriented news/blogs (especially the penis size) which is really unnecessary.*

Professor Arao said the different approaches used by *Rappler* give confusion among readers. This can be reflected on how some respondents view *Rappler*.

> Respondent 50C (UPD, fourth year): *Rappler is a decent source of news but not particularly engaged in social issues.*

> Respondent 72C (UPD, fourth year): *I only thought of them having difficulties asserting their identity.*

> Respondent 30B (UST, fourth year): *Personally, I view Rappler as an ambiguous news site. Its content is good with human interest stories but when it comes to hard news, it becomes doubtful.*

> Respondent 67B (UST, fourth year): *I'm not sure about how they want the public to see them. They still cannot establish brand in the industry.*

8. *Rappler as an Experimental Website*

Professor Opininano said that *Rappler* has not yet grasped where it must position itself in because it is still at its "experimental stage." After three years, Professor Opiniano said *Rappler* has proven that it has what it takes to stay in the business. Right now, *Rappler* is trying to stabilize itself by trying to experiment on different things. Hence, the identity confusion.

Respondent 77A (PUP, fourth year) also sees *Rappler* as an experimental news website:

> *I still see Rappler as an experimental news website. They may seem to deliver the news well just like the existing broadsheets which ventured lately by going online, but they only cater to the computer literate, including those who use mobile phones and other gadgets. They also have this mood meter so they can identify which articles the readers care/don't care about. Maybe in the other countries, traditional news are starting to migrate or shift to another form just like Newsweek, but for me, the Philippines still has a lot to discover and explore, aside from sticking with the old essentials.*

D. Class Discussions

In the individual focus interview with the journalism professors, their methods of teaching and conducting discussions were also inquired.

Professor Borican starts discussions in her news writing classes by having a group present about a certain news organization. She then lets the class take it as a whole first then proceeds to cite specific examples. Professor Borican noted that "students nowadays are more online consumers of news than the traditional sources. They are aware and conscious of the dangers of relying solely online; that's why they still verify information with other sources."

In relation to this, some respondents gave emphasis on being critical readers.

Respondent 57B (UST, fourth year): *In advanced grammar for journalism class, our professor cited that Rappler is not really entirely 'all that' and must rely on other websites also.*

Respondent 62B (UST, fourth year): *Rappler can be pretty biased on their articles but one has to be critical on what they read. Filter lang.*

Respondent 54C (UPD, third year): *I think Rappler can be a source of information but one needs to rely on other viable news sources to confirm whether or not what Rappler has released is true.*

Instead of focusing on news organizations, Professor Opiniano presents specific situations to be analyzed in his class. Professor Opiniano said he avoids mentioning names of media organizations because it would seem self-righteous to do so. He attributes it to the nature of the university that upholds the value of humility.

Professor Arao, in his ethics and online journalism classes, does not discuss *Rappler* as an institution. Rather, he focuses more on the mood meter as an innovative tool.

Professor Khan, on the other hand, only mentions *Rappler* as part of new trends in media for her online journalism classes. Professor Khan said she does not delve too much on *Rappler* as the focus of the subject is presenting news in multimedia fashion. In her news writing classes, Professor Khan always reminds her students that "good training in news writing is basically what *Rappler* should be. It's not medium specific. Whether you're print or online, the skills are the same, especially in news gathering."

E. Correlation between the Perceptions of Journalism Students and Professors

To test whether there is a correlation between the perceptions of the respondents and their professors on *Rappler*, the researcher made use of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. There were two tests made. The first test used the Spearman's rank correlation coefficient to compute the correlation between the students' and their professors' perception on *Rappler* taking into consideration how the students view their professors using the credibility factors presented by Gaziano and McGrath (1986).

Figure 20. *Subjects with Discussions on Rappler*
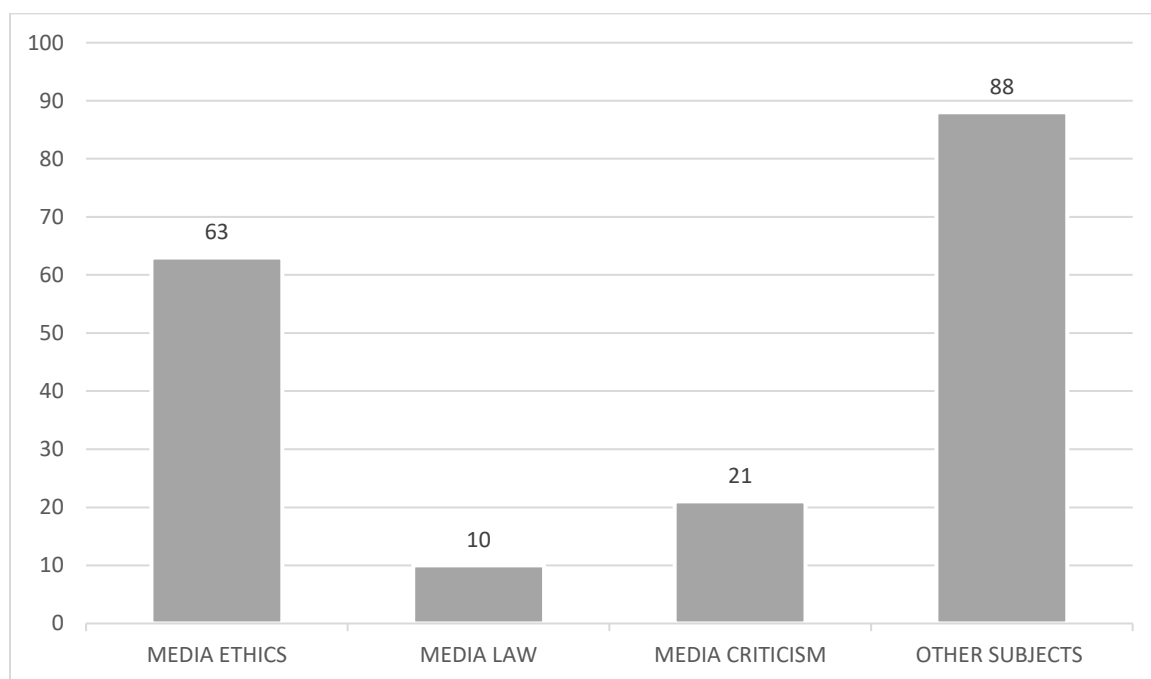
Figure 20 shows the number of respondents who were able to take subjects with discussions about *Rappler* while Tables 5 and 6 show the breakdown of the "other subjects" taken.

Table 5: *Other Subjects with Rappler Discussions*

OTHER SUBJECTS (UST)	
Communication Theories	8
Information Technology in the Newsroom	5
News Writing	22
Political Journalism	3
TOTAL	38
OTHER SUBJECTS (PUP)	
Introduction to Journalism	9
Introduction to Information and Communications Technology	2
Communication Theories	1
News Writing	3
Feature and Magazine Writing	1
TOTAL	16
OTHER SUBJECTS (UP)	
Business Journalism	1
College English	1
Communication Theories	1
Computer-Assisted Journalism	1
Introduction to Journalism	14
News Reporting	2
Online Journalism	10
The Newsroom	4
TOTAL	34

Table 6: *Consolidated Tally of All Subjects with Rappler Discussions*

OTHER SUBJECTS (ALL SCHOOLS)	
WRITING, REPORTING AND EDITING (Introduction to Journalism, News, Business Feature and Magazine Writing, The Newsroom, College English)	57
ONLINE JOURNALISM	18

(Online Journalism, Computer-Assisted Journalism, Information Technology)	
COMMUNICATION THEORIES	10
POLITICAL JOURNALISM	3
TOTAL	88

The data gathered were analyzed separately according to subject. For the ethics subject, Table 7 shows that the variables are negatively correlated (-.081). Here, it is important to take note that correlation value is almost zero and the significance value (.214) is greater than 0.1 which means that the correlation is insignificant.

Table 7. *Media Ethics Class Correlation Test 1*

Correlations

			question12	question15
Spearman's rho	question12	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.081
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.214
		N	240	240
	question15	Correlation Coefficient	-.081	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.214	.
		N	240	240

Question 12: What is your general perception on *Rappler* as a news source?

Question 15, 18, 21 and 24: What is your professor's general view about *Rappler*?

Question 16, 19, 22 and 25: How do you view your ethics course professor?

However, when the variable of the students' perceptions of their professors was ignored, the computation showed a positive correlation (.135) with significant value (less

than 0.1) as shown in Table 8. This is the second test. Here, the only variables taken into

consideration were the views of the students and that of their professors.

Table 8. *Media Ethics Class Correlation Test 2*

Correlations

Control Variables			question12	question15
competent16 & kind16 & sociable16 & calm16 & verbal16	question12	Correlation	1.000	.135
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.039
		df	0	233
	question15	Correlation	.135	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.039	.
		df	233	0

This positive correlation means that there are many respondents who view

Rappler the same way their professors do.

For the media law and media criticism subjects, all tests showed negative

correlation of insignificant value as shown in Tables 9 to 12.

Table 9. *Media Law Class Correlation Test 1*

Correlations

			question12	question18
Spearman's rho	question12	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.051
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.429
		N	240	240
	question18	Correlation Coefficient	.051	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.429	.
		N	240	240

Table 10. *Media Law Class Correlation Test 2*

Correlations

Control Variables			question12	question18
competent19 & kind19 & sociable19 & verbal19 & calm19	question12	Correlation	1.000	.071
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.276
		df	0	233
	question18	Correlation	.071	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.276	.
		df	233	0

Table 11. *Media Criticism Class Correlation Test 1*

Correlations

			question12	question21
Spearman's rho	question12	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.003
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.963
		N	240	240
	question21	Correlation Coefficient	.003	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.963	.
		N	240	240

Question 12: What is your general perception on *Rappler* as a news source?

Question 15, 18, 21 and 24: What is your professor's general view about *Rappler*?

Question 16, 19, 22 and 25: How do you view your ethics course professor?

Table 12. *Media Criticism Class Correlation Test 2*

Correlations

Control Variables			question12	question21
competent22 & kind22 & sociable22 & calm22 & verbal22	question12	Correlation	1.000	-.050
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.444
		df	0	233
	question21	Correlation	-.050	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.444	.
		df	233	0

In the other subjects wherein *Rappler* was discussed, the first test (Table 13) showed a negative correlation of insignificant value while the second test (Table 14) yielded a positive correlation (.120) of significant value (.067).

Table 13. *Other Subjects Correlation Test 1*

Correlations

			question12	question24
Spearman's rho	question12	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.032
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.622
		N	240	240
	question24	Correlation Coefficient	-.032	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.622	.
		N	240	240

Table 14. *Other Subjects Correlation Test 2*

Correlations

Control Variables			question12	question24
verbal25 & calm25 & sociable25 & competent25 & kind25	question12	Correlation	1.000	.120
		Significance (2-tailed)	.	.067
		df	0	233
	question24	Correlation	.120	1.000
		Significance (2-tailed)	.067	.
		df	233	0

Question 12: What is your general perception on *Rappler* as a news source?

Question 15, 18, 21 and 24: What is your professor's general view about *Rappler*?

Question 16, 19, 22 and 25: How do you view your ethics course professor?

In all the subjects, there is almost no correlation between the perception of the students and their professors of *Rappler* if the views of the students on their professors are to be considered. It can be interpreted here that the respondents may have not let their subjective perceptions of their professors affect their judgment on whether they will follow their professors' views or not.

Looking at the second test, the ethics subject and the other subjects showed positive correlation between the views of the students and their professors but there is almost none in the media law and media criticism subjects.

One reason for this can be the nature of the subjects. Respondent 76C (UPD, fourth year) said, "The ethics subject I took affected my view on *Rappler* but the media law subject did not. It's probably because in our media law, we were looking more on the laws related to journalists while in the ethics and media criticism, we were being trained to be critical."

Another reason could be the limited number of respondents who answered that they were able to discuss *Rappler* in their media law and media criticism subjects. In PUP and UST, media law and media ethics are integrated in one subject. Also, *Rappler*, ever since it was launched in 2012, has not yet faced any lawsuit. This could be a contributing

factor as to why there are only few respondents who satisfied the condition of experiencing a media law class wherein *Rappler* was discussed.

The media criticism subjects, on the other hand, are also incorporated in other subjects such as news writing, ethics, communication theories, political journalism, etc.

F. Factors That Affect How Students View Rappler

Many respondents, especially those from UST, have taken the same subjects and even the same professors. But why is it that their views and perceptions still vary?

Aside from the journalism education received, there are also other factors such as the students' discussions with family and friends, forums attended, other articles, research, etc. that affect their opinions. In the last part of the survey, the respondents were asked to cite other discussions on *Rappler* they encountered and whether those discussions affected their views. There were 76 respondents who cited at least one discussion. They cited friends, schoolmates, peers, family, relatives, seminar and forums, student media, student organizations other articles, research and social media. The next page shows the tally of the responses.

Table 15. *Other Discussions Encountered*

OTHER DISCUSSIONS	PUP	UST	UP	TOTAL
Friends, schoolmates, classmates and peers	10	24	13	47
Family and relatives	0	5	2	7
Seminars and forums	1	10	2	13
Student media, other articles, websites and research	1	3	5	9
Student organizations	0	2	6	8
Social media	2	17	0	19
Doesn't know Rappler	3	0	0	3

Some respondents said that the formulation of their opinions about *Rappler* are affected by others especially if the information is backed with evidences or if it comes from people they view as credible – the opinion leaders.

Respondent 53B (UST, fourth year): *All I hear so far are negative comments and I am starting to doubt the site as well because my professors are professionals. They know what is accurate and what is not.*

Respondent 54B (UST, fourth year): *Our professor does not read from Rappler so my perception was affected. He says it is not credible so I never check Rappler for news.*

Respondent 21 (UST, second year): *After our professor mentioned that Rappler can be trusted, we began to use it as a source of news.*

Respondent 28B (UST, second year): *Usually on Facebook. Sometimes, from my relatives. Yes, especially if it comes from people I trust like my family.*

Respondent 68B (UST, fourth year): *Some of our professors told us plagiarism stories and there have been evidences. Yes, my perception of Rappler was affected. I actually don't read stories in Rappler at all.*

Respondent 61C (UPD, fourth year): *I used Rappler as my case study for both my media ethics and online journalism subject. My research affected how I view Rappler but it was mostly my ethics professor who shaped my view."*

Respondent 70C (UPD, fourth year): *"At first, I liked Rappler but my ethics professor showed us ethical violations (with evidences) on the part of the news website. I still view Rappler as an effective news website because of my Online Journ class but not a credible news source."*

Nevertheless, it is still up to the "user" whether to adopt or reject the ideas presented. For this reason, the needs, values and goals of the respondents play an important role in the adoption process.

Respondent 69C (UPD, fourth year): *"I have discussed it at tomes with friends and family. They affect my perception a bit, but generally, I formulated my own views on Rappler."*

Respondent 22B (UST, second year): *Social media mostly. It affects my perception on Rappler depending on the news/discussion I had.*

Respondent 29B (UST, second year): *When I'm with my friends. Yes and a bit of a no. It really depends on me if I want to be affected or not.*

Respondent 52B (UST, third year): *"It is sometimes brought up during lectures. However, I'd like to consider myself as someone who is not so easily swayed so I guess those discussions do not really affect me as much as my own judgment does."*

Respondent 69B (UST, fourth year): *Most discussions on Rappler don't affect my judgment. My own perception on Rappler comes from personal observations and criticisms."*

Respondent 73B (UST, fourth year): *Most discussions on Rappler*

don't affect my judgment. My own perception on Rappler comes from

personal observations and criticisms. Others' opinion on Rappler, I

usually agree.

. One example that highlights the importance of a user's needs, values and goals is how Respondent 20B (UST first year) still uses *Rappler* even though she views the news website negatively. Because Respondent 20B lives away from home, she said Rappler helps her in getting updated on current events. In using *Rappler,* Respondent 20B's need and goal is to get updates but she uses other sources to get in-depth stories. This example shows that the audience have the ability to choose which media to use accordingly.

VI. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study was able to explore the views of students and professors of journalism departments considered by CHED as Centers of Excellence and/or Development and determine their perceptions of *Rappler* in terms of credibility through both quantitative and qualitative methods. It has also been proved that the journalism education received has an effect on how they view *Rappler* as many respondents referenced what they learned from their journalism classes in giving their views. Aside from this, the journalism students also exhibited the ability to point out the strong and weak points of the said news website based on journalism ethics and values.

Guided by the integrated theory of Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovations and Uses and Gratifications, the study was able to conclude that the respondents' decisions are affected by a combination of their own needs, values and goals, opinion leaders, experiences with the medium and other discussions encountered. While some respondents have reasons why they use *Rappler,* others also have reasons why they don't. Deciding whether to use a medium or not is the ultimate result of the Adoption Process from the Diffusion of Innovation theory.

Opinion leaders cited were professors, parents, media personalities, superior or someone they look up to. Students get ideas from the opinion leaders but they try to see whether the ideas are applicable or not. In formulating their opinions, the students also take into consideration their needs, values and goals. The values of the students can be reflected on their basis of choosing news sources such as the quality of reportage in terms of accuracy, fairness, public interest, etc. Some mentioned needs and goals of the respondents in using news sources were to get credible information, updates,

entertainment and for research purposes. Aside from this, discussions encountered in academic forums and social media also affect the decision-making process of the students as they open doors to more ideas and realizations.

VII. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Theoretical Issues

The findings of this study were able to confirm the integrated framework of the three theories, namely, Two-Step Flow, Diffusion of Innovation and Uses and Gratifications. According to the findings, the views of the journalism students are affected by opinion leaders such as their professors and other sources they trust. The students then evaluate the information that are being fed to them according to their needs, values and goals. After the evaluation stage, the students decide whether to still use *Rappler* or not.

The integrated framework proposed by the researcher can also be used in studying other groups of the population. It can also be further developed to explore the other factors that affect the audience's formulation of opinions and decisions.

B. Methodological Issues

Using quantitative and qualitative methods, the study answered the objectives of exploring the views of the journalism students and professors on *Rappler* and determining whether the journalism education received affects their views.

However, quantitative methods might not be the best in studying the relationship between the views of the students and their professors. Generalization is difficult as there are many external factors such as a person's other experiences, discussions with other people, articles encountered, research, etc.

In this case, it is recommended to focus on qualitative methods such as individual interviews and focus group discussions.

C. Practical Issues

This study highlights the role of ethics, media law and media criticism subjects among others, as well as the role of professors, in molding the journalism students to be critical media practitioners. The views of the professors and journalism students can also provide the public with an idea of what the strong points and weak points *Rappler* has as a social news network.

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IX. APPENDIX

A SURVEY ON HOW JOURNALISM MAJORS

VIEW RAPPLER AS A NEWS SOURCE

I.   PROFILE

1. Sex

    o   Female

    o   Male

2. Age: _____

3. Year level (standing)

    o   First year

    o   Second year

    o   Third year

    o   Fourth year

4. Have you taken a media ethics, media law or media criticism course?

    o   Yes.

    o   No.

I.   INTERNET ACCESS

5. What is your primary source of internet? *Please choose only one.*

    o   Home broadband

    o   Broadband stick

    o   Mobile internet

    o   School

    o   Internet rental services

    o   Others: _____

6. How many hours do you spend online per day? _____

7. What are your sources of news? *You may choose more than one.*

    o   Newspaper

- o Television
- o Radio
- o News websites
- o Social media
- o Family, friends, classmates
- o Professors
- o Others _____

8. What news websites do you visit?

- o Rappler (rappler.com)
- o Philippine Daily Inquirer (inquirer.net)
- o The Philippine Star (philstar.com)
- o Manila Bulletin (mb.com.ph)
- o Interaksyon (interaksyon.com)
- o ABS-CBN News (abs-cbnnews.com)
- o GMA News Network (gmanetwork.com)
- o Others: _____

If you visit Rappler, proceed to question no. 9. If not, proceed to question number 14.

II. RAPPLER

9. How often do you visit Rappler.com?

- o Less than once a week
- o Once a week
- o Two to three times a week
- o Once a day
- o More than once a day

10. How do you get into Rappler's website? *You may choose more than one.*

- o Visits the main page directly (Rappler.com)
- o Gets redirected by a person who posted an article of interest

11. For what purpose do you visit Rappler? *You may choose more than one.*

- o To get a dose of news

o   When I get redirected by a person who posted an article of interest

o   For entertainment purposes

o   Others: _____

12. What is your general perception on Rappler as a news source?

o   Positive

o   Neutral

o   Negative

13. How do you view Rappler as a news source in terms of credibility?

(Fair)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unfair)
(Unbiased)	1	2	3	4	5	(Biased)
(Tells the whole story)	1	2	3	4	5	(Does not tell)
(Accurate)	1	2	3	4	5	(Inaccurate)
(Does not invade)	1	2	3	4	5	(Invades privacy)
(Watches after readers' interest)	1	2	3	4	5	(Doesn't watch after (the readers' interest)
(Concerned about the community's well-being)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not concerned about community's well-being)
(Can be trusted)	1	2	3	4	5	(Cannot be trusted)
(Concerned about public interest)	1	2	3	4	5	(Not concerned) about the public interest)
(Factual)	1	2	3	4	5	(Opinionated)

III.   ETHICS COURSE

If you have not taken any journalism ethics, media law or communication criticism courses yet, please disregard this section.

14. Was the class able to conduct discussions on Rappler?

o   Yes.

o   No.

If the answer is yes, please proceed to question no. 15.

If the answer is no, please proceed to question no. 17.

15. What is your professor's general view about Rappler?

- o Positive
- o Neutral
- o Negative
- o Cannot determine: _____

16. How do you view your ethics course professor?

(Competent)	1	2	3	4	5	(Incompetent)
(Kind)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unkind)
(Sociable)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unsociable)
(Calm)	1	2	3	4	5	(Anxious)
(Verbal)	1	2	3	4	5	(Quiet)

IV.   MEDIA LAW COURSE

If you have not taken a media law course, please disregard this section.

17. Was the class able to conduct discussions on Rappler?

- o Yes.
- o No.

If the answer is yes, please proceed to question no. 18.

If the answer is no, please proceed to question no. 20.

18. What is your professor's general view about Rappler?

- o Positive
- o Neutral
- o Negative
- o Cannot determine: _____

19. How do you view your media law course professor?

(Competent)	1	2	3	4	5	(Incompetent)
(Kind)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unkind)
(Sociable)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unsociable)
(Calm)	1	2	3	4	5	(Anxious)
(Verbal)	1	2	3	4	5	(Quiet

V.   MEDIA CRTICISM COURSE

If you have not taken a media criticism course, please disregard this section.

20. Was the class able to conduct discussions on Rappler?

- o   Yes.
- o   No.

If the answer is yes, please proceed to question no. 21.

If the answer is no, please proceed to question no. 23.

21. What is your professor's general view about Rappler?

- o   Positive
- o   Neutral
- o   Negative
- o   Cannot determine: _____

22. How do you view your media criticism course professor?

(Competent)	1	2	3	4	5	(Incompetent)
(Kind)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unkind)
(Sociable)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unsociable)
(Calm)	1	2	3	4	5	(Anxious)
(Verbal)	1	2	3	4	5	(Quiet)

VI.   OTHER SUBJECTS

Please only answer this section if you have taken other subjects in which Rappler was discussed.

23. Course title: _____

24. What is your professor's general view about Rappler?

- o   Positive
- o   Neutral
- o   Negative
- o   Cannot determine: _____

25. How do you view your professor?

(Competent)	1	2	3	4	5	(Incompetent)

(Kind)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unkind)
(Sociable)	1	2	3	4	5	(Unsociable)
(Calm)	1	2	3	4	5	(Anxious)
(Verbal)	1	2	3	4	5	(Quiet)

VII.   OTHER DISCUSSIONS

Where else did you encounter discussions on Rappler? Did these discussions affect your perception on Rapper? Cite as many as possible.

_____
_____
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_____

How do you view Rappler?

_____
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_____
_____

END
Thank you for answering!

UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES DILIMAN

JOURNALISM CURRICULUM

First Year, First Semester

GENERAL ELECTIVE (ARTS & HUMANITIES 1) COLLEGE ENGLISH

GENERAL ELECTIVE (MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 1) GENERAL MATHEMATICS

GENERAL ELECTIVE (MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 2) FREE CHOICE

GENERAL ELECTIVE (SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY 1) PHILOSOPHICAL ANALYSIS

GENERAL ELECTIVE (SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY 2) KASAYSAYAN NG PILIPINAS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 1

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

First Year, Second Semester

GENERAL ELECTIVE (ARTS & HUMANITIES 2) FREE CHOICE

GENERAL ELECTIVE (MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 3) FREE CHOICE

GENERAL ELECTIVE (SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY 3) FREE CHOICE

GENERAL ELECTIVE (SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY 4) FREE CHOICE

HISTORY OF THE PRESS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 2

NATIONAL SERVICE TRAINING PROGRAM

Second Year, First Semester

GENERAL ELECTIVE (ARTS & HUMANITIES 3) ENGLISH

GENERAL ELECTIVE (ARTS & HUMANITIES 4) WIKA, KULTURA AT LIPUNAN

GENERAL ELECTIVE (MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 4) FREE CHOICE

GENERAL ELECTIVE (SOCIAL SCIENCES & PHILOSOPHY 5) FREE CHOICE

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

Second Year, Second Semester

GENERAL ELECTIVE (ARTS & HUMANITIES 5)

NEWS REPORTING

INTRODUCTION TO BROADCASTING

INTRODUCTION TO FILM

COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA THEORIES

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Third Year, First Semester

JOURNALISM ETHICS

JOURNALISM ELECTIVE

JOURNALISM ELECTIVE

LAWS ON COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA

MEDIA AND SOCIETY

INTRODUCTION TO MACROECONOMIC THEORY AND POLICY

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

Third Year, Second Semester

THE NEWSROOM

JOURNALISM ELECTIVE

JOURNALISM ELECTIVE

JOURNALISM ELECTIVE

CMC ELECTIVE

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

Third Year, Summer Semester

JOURNALISM INTERNSHIP

Fourth Year, First Semester

PUBLICATION DESIGN AND LAYOUT

SEMINAR (SPECIAL TOPICS)

RESEARCH IN JOURNALISM

THE LIFE AND WORKS OF JOSE RIZAL

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

Fourth Year, Second Semester

GENERAL ELECTIVE (MATH, SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 5) SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND SOCIETY

THESIS

CMC ELECTIVE

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

NON-CMC ELECTIVE

UNIVERSITY OF STO. TOMAS

JOURNALISM CURRICULUM

First Year, First Semester

INTRODUCTION TO COLLEGE ENGLISH

ECONOMICS

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

WORLD LITERATURES

HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION I

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIOLOGY, SOCIETY & CULTURE

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM & HISTORY OF PHL. MASS MEDIA

CONTENTUALIZED SALVATION HISTORY

First Year, Second Semester

READING & THINKING SKILLS FOR ACADEMIC STUDY

COLLEGE ALGEBRA

PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT AND CONSTITUTION

LOGIC

PHILIPPINE LITERATURE

CONTEMPORARY WORLD GEOGRAPHY

COMMUNICATION THEORIES

CHURCH AND SACRAMENTS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Second Year, First Semester

ACADEMIC WRITING SKILLS

STATISTICS

PHYSICAL SCIENCE

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

HISTORY OF CIVILIZATIONS

MAINLAND SOUTHEAST ASIA

NEWS WRITING I (NEWS REPORTING)

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 3

Second Year, Second Semester

KOMUNIKASYON SA AKADEMIKONG FILIPINO

ORAL COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

PHILIPPINE HISTORY

RIZAL COURSE

PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

ADVANCED GRMMAR FOR JOURNALISM

TEH SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CHURCH

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 4

Third Year, First Semester

ELEMENTARY SPANISH

PAGPASA AT PAGSULAT TUNGO SA PANANALIKSKIK

ART, MAN AND SOCIETY

SURVEY OF WORLD LITERATURE

NEWS WRITING

FEATURE WRITING I

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN THE NEWSROOM

PHILIPPINE POLITICS FOR JOURNALISTS

Third Year, Second Semester

RETORIKA

INTERMEDIATE SPANISH

SURVEY OF LITERARY MASTERPIECES II (WESTERN LITERATURE)

DESKTOP PUBLISHING

PHOTOJOURNALISM

SOCIAL PROBLEMS

RESEARCH IN THE MAJOR FIELD

Fourth Year

NEWS WRITING II (ADVANCED/INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING)

FEATURE WRITING II (NON-FICTION WRITING)

BROADCAST JOURNALISM

INTERNSHIP/PRACTICUM

LITERARY CRITICISM

ETHICAL SYSTEMS

THESIS WRITING

POLYTECHNIC UNIVERISTY OF THE PHILIPPINES

JOURNALISM CURRICULUM

First Year, First Semester

STUDY AND THINKING SKILLS IN ENGLISH

KOMUNIKASYON SA AKADEMIKONG PILIPINO

HEOGRAPIYA AT KASAYSAYAN NG PILIPINAS

SOSYOLOHIYA, KULTURA AT PAGPAPAMILYA

INTRODUCTION TO INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION

INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALISM

CIVIC WELFARE TRAINING SERVICE 1/

RESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS 1

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 1

First Year, Second Semester

WRITING IN THE DISCIPLINE

PAGBASA AT PAGSULAT TUNGO SA PANANALIKSIK

MATH IN BUSINESS

POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE WITH PHILIPPINE CONSTITUTION

FUNDAMENTALS OF HUMAN COMMUNICATION

FUNDAMENTALS OF NEWS WRITING

COMMUNICATION, SOCIETY AND DEVELOPMENT

CIVIC WELFARE TRAINING SERVICE 1/

ESERVED OFFICER TRAINING CORPS 1

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 2

Second Year, First Semester

RETORIKA (MASINING NA PAGPAPAHAYAG)

PHILIPPINE LITERATURE

ETHICS

MEDIA LAW AND ETHICS

PRINCIPLES AND TECHNIQUES OF PHOTOGRAPHY

JOURNALISTIC WRITING IN FILIPINO

VISUAL JOURNALISM

BIOLOGICAL SCIENCE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 3

Second Year, Second Semester

ARGUMENTATION AND DEBATE

INTRODUCTION TO HUMANITIES

GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY

BASIC ECONOMICS W/ TAXATION AND AGRARIAN REFORM

ECOLOGY

INTERNATIONAL/INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION

PHOTOJOURNALISM

FEATURE AND MAGAZINE WRITING

PHYSICAL EDUCATION 4

Third Year, First Semester

WORLD LITERATURE

GENERAL STATISTICS (APPLIED TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH)

INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNICATION RESEARCH

CORPORATE COMMUNICATION SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

SPORTS JOURNALISM

INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM

COMMUNICATION THEORIES AND MODELS

ELECTIVE 1

Third Year, Second Semester

BUHAY, MGA GAWAIN AT SINULAT NI RIZAL

COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGNS

MEDIA AND INFORMATION LITERACY

BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS JOURNALISM

EDITORIAL, COLUMN AND OPINION WRITING

CONFLICT WRITING

COMMUNICATION RESEARCH METHODS

ELECTIVE 2

Fourth Year, First Semester

ELECTIVE 3

PUBLICATION DESIGN WITH LABORATORY

JOURNALISTIC EDITING

THESIS WRITING AND DEFENSE

INTERNSHIP (PRINT)

Fourth Year, Second Semester

ELECTIVE 4

EDITORIAL MANAGEMENT

INTERNSHIP 2 (ALLIED MEDIA)

ONLINE JOURNALISM