

## Singapore Management University Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University

Research Collection Lee Kong Chian School Of  
Business

Lee Kong Chian School of Business

2-2019

# Communicating in the post-truth era: Analyses of crisis response strategies of Presidents Donald Trump and Rodrigo Duterte

Natasha binte Mohamed ISMAIL  
*Nanyang Technological University*

Marie Angeline PAGULAYAN  
*Nanyang Technological University*

Carlo Miguel Alfonso FRANCIA  
*Nanyang Technological University*

Augustine PANG  
*Singapore Management University, augustine@smu.edu.sg*  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1883>

Follow this and additional works at: [https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb\\_research](https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb_research)

Part of the [Asian Studies Commons](#), [Business and Corporate Communications Commons](#), and the [Social Influence and Political Communication Commons](#)

### Citation

ISMAIL, Natasha binte Mohamed; PAGULAYAN, Marie Angeline; FRANCIA, Carlo Miguel Alfonso; and PANG, Augustine. Communicating in the post-truth era: Analyses of crisis response strategies of Presidents Donald Trump and Rodrigo Duterte. (2019). *Journal of Public Affairs*. 19, (1), e1883: 1-11. Research Collection Lee Kong Chian School Of Business.  
**Available at:** [https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb\\_research/5947](https://ink.library.smu.edu.sg/lkcsb_research/5947)

This Journal Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Lee Kong Chian School of Business at Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University. It has been accepted for inclusion in Research Collection Lee Kong Chian School Of Business by an authorized administrator of Institutional Knowledge at Singapore Management University. For more information, please email [libIR@smu.edu.sg](mailto:libIR@smu.edu.sg).

## ACADEMIC PAPER

# Communicating in the post-truth era: Analyses of crisis response strategies of Presidents Donald Trump and Rodrigo Duterte

Natasha Binte Mohamed Ismail<sup>1</sup> | Marie Angeline Pagulayan<sup>1</sup> |

Carlo Miguel Alfonso Francia<sup>1</sup> | Augustine Pang<sup>2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup>Wee Kim Wee School of Communication and Information, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

<sup>2</sup>Professor of Corporate Communication (Practice), Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University, Singapore

## Correspondence

Augustine Pang, Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University, 50 Stamford Road, Singapore 178899.  
Email: augustine@smu.edu.sg

The rhetoric of then U.S. President-elect Donald Trump and Philippines' President Rodrigo Duterte had triggered a shift in global political discourse (Greene, 2016). This study examines their responses on three similar crises: disrespectful remarks towards women, associations with controversial political figures, and remarks threatening geopolitical relations. Data from prestige publications, Washington Post (U.S.) and the Philippine Daily Inquirer, were analyzed during the acute stage of each crisis. Findings showed that both men employed confusing strategy combinations in their crisis responses. Despite incoherent application and contradictory strategies, they survived threats to their image as evidenced by poll results. New strategies (diversion and logorrhea) and a strategy amplifier (machismo) were uncovered. These strategies tapped on ambiguity and were found to be successfully employed in a post-truth landscape. This study builds on Benoit's (2006) argument that "any attempt by a president to repair a damaged image ... clearly merits scholarly attention" (p. 138).

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Crisis situations are unavoidable (Pang, 2016) regardless of one's standing in life, and presidents, who are chief politicians, are no exception. They frequently encounter crises (Sheldon & Sallot, 2009), with their image and reputational assets coming under threat (Benoit & Pang, 2008). Their crisis response requires careful negotiation as their work affects the public, and they may find it difficult to openly admit mistakes (Benoit, 1997). In responding, they must consider the following factors: minimized reelection possibilities, attacks from opposition politicians who want to protract the crises in the public eye, potential litigation, personal and economic sanctions, and reputational damage to their countries. As such, their image repair efforts warrant rigorous academic scrutiny (Benoit, 2006).

### 1.1 | The importance of effective crisis response for leaders and nations

Crises around leaders can result in personal sanctions. Robert Mugabe, former president of Zimbabwe, was stripped of his honorary degrees

(Szep, 2008) and knighthood (Tran, 2008) after links to atrocities committed in the early 1980s emerged.

Furthermore, a government that mishandles crisis puts the trust of its citizens and its international reputation at stake (Cai, Lee, & Pang, 2009). There is an inextricable link between a leader and a nation's image such that crises surrounding its leader impact the country's reputation negatively (Pang, Damayanti, & Woon, 2017). For instance, Russia's "state-sponsored homophobia" (Burton, 2017) put a damper on Russia's hosting of the World Cup. Algerian president Abdelaziz Bouteflika's harassment of media and political opponents ("Algeria urged to end," 2016) and his failures as a leader tarnished his country's reputation (Ghanem-Yazbeck, 2016). Both are listed as least reputable countries (Joseph, 2017).

International reputation is constructed by opinions of international stakeholders (Kang & Yang, 2005), and intrinsic to their opinions is the concept of global power. Global power, identified as Nye's (1990) "soft power," is defined as the ability of one country to "get other countries to want what it wants." Critics, including Nye (2018), have attributed U.S. president Donald Trump's lack of diplomacy and brash behavior as some of the reasons for the decline of its reputation and soft power (Bershidsky, 2018; Brands, 2018). Similarly, Philippines' president Rodrigo Duterte's erratic behavior,

particularly his assault on media freedom, has dented the country's "vibrant" image (Reed, 2018).

Recent world events have seen Trump and Duterte cross paths (Holmes, 2017) and are topics of numerous news reports where they are constantly referred to as strongmen (Quezon, 2017) and post-truth presidents (Tapsell, 2017).

## 1.2 | Thriving in post-truth: Donald Trump and Rodrigo Duterte

Post-truth—Oxford Dictionaries' Word of the Year for 2016 ("Post-truth declared," 2016)—was coined in 1992 by playwright Steve Tesich, who suggested that truth has become irrelevant (Gaffey, 2016), and because people associated truth with bad news, they did not want to know the truth anymore (Kreitner, 2016).

The year 2016 saw how Trump and Duterte maneuvered the post-truth political landscape to ascend to power. Trump appealed to his supporters' emotions by feeding them lies (Tsipursky, 2017). Similarly, Duterte campaigned that a vote for him was a vote against the country's drug problem, despite evidence stating otherwise (Tapsell, 2017). The two leaders have been described as "kindred" spirits ("Pivot or pirouette?" 2017).

Greene (2016) noted that both succeeded in creating a perception of strength, simplifying politics for the masses and defying a political system that the electorate desired freedom from. However, their lack of diplomatic skills (Katigbak, 2016) was the cause of their offensive comments (Chandran, 2016).

Although studies confirm the relationship between a country leader's image and a nation's reputation (Pang et al., 2017; Yoo & Jin, 2015), the post-truth environment can result in low accountability for leaders.

## 1.3 | Purpose of this study

Trump and Duterte's political triumphs pioneering their churlish approaches not only signals a change in global politics but also presents an opportunity for further developments in crisis communication research. First, there is a disproportionate amount of literature towards image repair for businesses and celebrities but not for politicians in crisis (Johnson, 2018). Second, Trump and Duterte's unpredictability presents an opportunity to determine new crisis response strategies (CRS) and thus expand on current theories (Hu & Pang, 2016; Huang, Lin, & Su, 2004). Lastly, with Trump and Duterte being heads of Western and Asian governments, respectively, there is also an opportunity to identify differences in their CRS (Low, Varughese, & Pang, 2011). Taking all these points into consideration, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- a. examine the crisis response strategies of presidents Trump and Duterte,
- b. analyze the efficacy of these strategies, and
- c. uncover new strategies outside of the theoretical framework of Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) and Image Repair Theory (IRT).

In doing so, we aim to add to our understanding of crisis response strategies and build on literature particularly to examine differences between Western and Asian governments' image repair efforts as represented by the two presidents. We also aim to add to the repertoire of strategies which leaders can use in times of crises. Although there are quantitative studies dealing with image repair with findings that aim to be prescriptive and inferential (Dardis & Haigh, 2009) and generalizable (Johnson, 2018), this paper is a descriptive study, therefore the authors submit that the findings simply detail the CRS used and whether or not they were successful but are not suggested to be predictive. However, the findings gleaned may be used as basis for further empirical study to test for predictive ability for other leaders' image repair within the post-truth political landscape.

This study uses Benoit and Pang's (2008) IRT and Coombs' (2008) SCCT to investigate the rhetorical strategies employed by Trump and Duterte. Similar crisis situations were determined for both to ensure an accurate identification of the differences and similarities in their CRS, despite the different cultures (Low et al., 2011). The two leaders experienced similar crisis types (a) disrespectful remarks towards women, (b) associations with controversial political figures, and (c) remarks threatening geopolitical relations.

## 1.4 | Background of crises

### 1.4.1 | Disrespectful remarks towards women

#### Duterte's rape remark

On April 12, 2016, Duterte joked about the rape and murder of Australian missionary and prison worker Jacqueline Hamill and insinuated that "he should have been first" (Corrales, 2016a).

#### Trump's locker room talk

On October 7, 2016, The Washington Post released a video of Trump discussing his sexual advances on a married woman (Fahrenthold, 2016). The video outraged many who called for him to step down as presidential candidate.

### 1.4.2 | Association with controversial political figures

#### Duterte's Hitler reference

On September 30, 2016, Duterte justified the killings of drug offenders by comparing himself to Adolf Hitler. He said "If Germany had Hitler, the Philippines would have [points to himself.]" The remark drew criticism, especially from the international Jewish community (Lema & Mogato, 2016).

#### Trump and Vladimir Putin

Trump hinted at a relationship with Putin and complimented his leadership style (Smith, 2016). On July 22, 2016, a collection of Democratic National Convention (DNC) emails regarding Russian intelligence services was leaked (Hamburger & Nakashima, 2016). Trump reversed his talk about Putin.

### 1.4.3 | Remarks threatening geopolitical relations

#### Duterte versus the U.S. and President Obama

On September 5, 2016, Duterte called U.S. President Barack Obama “a son of a whore,” in response to the U.S.’ criticism of the killings. He threatened to “break up” with the U.S. at their joint military exercises and hinted at a foreign policy pivot towards Russia and China (Bernal & Yan, 2016).

#### Trump versus Mexico

On June 16, 2015, Trump called Mexicans rapists and criminals (Edelman, 2016), resulting in Mexico’s Univision withdrawing from a partnership with Trump for the Miss Universe pageant (Itkowitz, 2015).

## 2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

Crisis refers to wrongdoing that threatens an entity’s reputation and requires defense (Coombs, 2014). CRS are used to carry out this defense. Persuasive attempts are made to reshape the audience’s attitude towards an entity (Benoit, 2014). Research in crisis communication focusing on shaping strategies in response to a crisis has relied on the image repair (IR) and the situational crisis SCCT for analyses (Diers-Lawson & Pang, 2016). Arguably, these are the two dominant theories dominating crisis research (Frandsen & Johansen, 2017).

### 2.1 | Image repair theory

The IRT offers five categories of strategies: denial, evasion of responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification (Benoit & Pang, 2008). They are the following:

- Denial, with two variants: Simple denial involves either denying that an offense occurred or refuting allegations that the accused performed the offense. Shifting the blame asserts that another party is responsible.
- Evasion of responsibility, with four variants: Provocation suggests that the offense was committed in response to a prior offense by another party. In defeasibility, the accused contends a lack of information or control. Accident asserts that the situation occurred unintentionally. Good intentions suggest that the offense was committed with expectations of a positive outcome.

- Reducing offensiveness, with six variants: Bolstering highlights positive traits of the accused. Minimization suggests that the offense is less serious than perceived. In differentiation, the offense is compared with a more undesirable event. Transcendence are attempts to reframe the offense positively. Attacking the accuser strives to reduce the credibility of accusers, and compensation occurs when something of value is offered to the victims.
- Corrective action reassures stakeholders that steps are being taken to solve or prevent future crisis.
- Mortification involves an admission of wrongdoing and apology.

### 2.2 | Situational crisis communication theory

Coombs’ SCCT (2008) is predicated on the need for a situational approach to selecting CRS (Coombs & Holladay, 2002). Unlike the IRT, SCCT provides a matching system that links crisis types to CRS. Coombs’ SCCT (2008) presents 10 CRS divided into three postures: deny, diminish, and deal.

Deny has three subcategories. Denial is that no crisis has occurred. The accused may attack the accuser by confronting their claims or employ a scapegoat, blaming others for the offense.

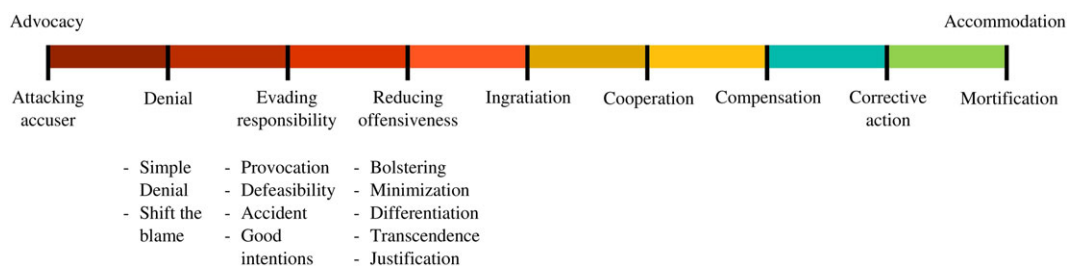
Diminish has two strategies. Excuse is responsibility minimization—denying intent to commit offense or claiming a lack of control. In justification, the accused minimizes the seriousness of the offense.

Deal includes five subcategories. In ingratiation, stakeholders are praised to remind the public of their good work. Concern may be expressed for victims, or compensation provided in the form of gifts or money. The accused express regret by indicating remorse for the situation or issue an apology by taking responsibility and seeking forgiveness.

### 2.3 | Amalgamation of theories

A study by Pang, Ho, and Malik (2012) proposed a model combining IRT and SCCT strategies along a continuum of advocacy and accommodation pictured in Figure 1.

The model was devised from an earlier one posited by Jin, Pang, and Cameron (2006), which amalgamated SCCT together with contingency theory. In this study, we use this framework as they consolidate



**FIGURE 1** Proposed extended crisis responses framework

the most comprehensive set of strategies in crisis response (Pang et al., 2012).

Although both SCCT and IRT have been studied extensively for individual politicians who faced threats in their reputation, these have not been examined before in relation to the post-truth landscape. In the case of Trump and Duterte, the need for further research becomes more evident as they represent clear examples of world leaders who are building and promoting a political reputation that challenges the status quo. In doing so, they seem to engage in rhetoric that run counterintuitive from the traditional public relations playbook.

Using the theoretical framework presented above, the following research questions are posited:

RQ1: What are the CRS employed by Trump and Duterte relating to each of the issues?

RQ2: How effective were the CRS employed by Trump and Duterte for each of the issues?

RQ3: What were other strategies outside of IRT and SCCT employed by Trump and Duterte for each of the issues?

### 3 | METHOD

#### 3.1 | Data collection

Data were collected from newspaper and online reports by The Washington Post, one of the prominent newspapers in the U.S. (Gerber, Karlan, & Bergan, 2009), and The Philippine Daily Inquirer, one of the top mainstream English-language dailies in the Philippines (Tuazon, 2015).

Articles and published interview transcripts that focus on identified crisis themes were sampled through a keyword search on Factiva database (see Table 1). The articles covered the acute stage of each crisis, 3 weeks from when the crisis first broke. Three weeks to a month has been recognized as the most acute period of the crisis (Jin, Pang, & Cameron, 2012; Vasterman, 2005). Opinion editorials are excluded from the sample. From The Washington Post, 741 news articles were accessed and examined. Ten were found to be relevant for analysis. From the Philippine Daily Inquirer, 301 news articles were accessed and examined. Eight were found to be relevant for analysis.

#### 3.2 | Data analysis

As one of the dominant research methods in crisis communication research (Coombs & Holladay, 2010), textual analysis “does not attempt

to identify the correct interpretation of text” but rather the interpretations that are “possible and likely” (Lockyer, 2012, p. 865). This qualitative method involves selecting the most parts of the text that are relevant to the questions under study (McKee, 2002). This study employs textual analysis of news reports, which has been the prevalent and primary method of analysis in image repair studies (Benoit, 2000; Hu & Pang, 2018; Low et al., 2011). This qualitative method allows the researcher to make an educated guess of the likely interpretation of the text (Garyantes, 2006) when questions about the social impact of the message are asked (Wimmer & Dominick, 2006). The texts were analyzed on the basis of the categorizations of crisis response framework posited by Pang et al. (2012). Durham (2005) argued that the selection, emphasis, and exclusion of texts enable the researcher to grapple with the complexity, nuances, and contradictions of media artifacts. Hu and Pang (2018) argued that this method allows the researcher to consider the contents or statements at the level of a context.

In their investigation of the difference in image repair strategies of Western and Asian governments, Low et al. (2011) employed a three-stage textual analysis, an approach the authors have adapted for this study.

In the first stage, the published stories from The Washington Post and The Philippine Daily Inquirer were read to understand the general context of the predefined crises themes. The direct statements that indicate crisis response efforts were then extracted for analysis. In the second stage, these were further categorized on the basis of the extended IR theoretical framework. The strategies were plotted on a chart to determine, which were more prominent. This analysis allowed the authors to scrutinize the consistencies and contradictions in Trump's and Duterte's rhetoric. The insights gained helped define crisis strategies that did not fit the framework.

In the third stage, efficacy of the strategies was evaluated using public opinion polls before and after each crisis timeframe. Although polls may have limitations such as sampling methods and statistical measurements, they have been used as indicators of success or failure of IR discourse in crisis communication research for politicians (Benoit, 2016; Len-Rios & Benoit, 2004). The authors also assessed the CRS on the basis of proposed suggestions for the successful use of these strategies from IRT and SCCT theories. Together, they provided substantial context in the analysis allowing the authors to make precrisis and postcrisis comparisons to affirm the findings.

### 4 | FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

RQ1 examined the CRSs employed by Duterte and Trump, and RQ2 analyzed the effectiveness of these CRSs. These two research questions will be examined together.

**TABLE 1** Data collection timelines and search terms

	Issues	Keywords	Timeframe
Duterte	Rape remark Hitler reference Obama insult	Duterte, rape Duterte, Hitler Duterte, Obama	April 12, 2016, to May 3, 2016 September 30, 2016, to October 21, 2016 September 5, 2016, to September 26, 2016
Trump	Locker room talk Relationship with Putin Remarks about Mexico	Trump, woman Trump, Putin, relationship Trump, Mexico, Mexican	October 7, 2016, to October 28, 2016 July 26, 2016, to August 16, 2016 June 16, 2015, to July 7, 2015

## 4.1 | Disrespectful remarks towards women

### 4.1.1 | Duterte's rape joke

#### Minimization

Duterte refused to apologize, stating that his statement “was not a joke” (Alconaba & Calleja, 2016) and that he was “derogating the act of rape” (Gomez & Calleja, 2016).

#### Apology

However, he later said “I am sorry in general ... to the Filipino people.” (Alconaba & Calleja, 2016).

#### Defeasibility

Duterte blamed his personality, saying, “It's my style, it's my mouth. I said it in the heat of anger” (Alconaba & Calleja, 2016).

#### Attack the accuser

In response to U.S. and Australian diplomats chastising Duterte's comment of rape and murder (Corrales, 2016b), he told them to “shut up” and “stay out of local politics” as they are “not Filipinos” (Burgos, 2016). He called a women's group complaint “silly” and accused them of being paid hacks (Burgos, 2016).

#### Transcendence

Duterte defended himself saying he meted out justice by executing the 16 perpetrators who attacked Hamill (Gomez & Calleja, 2016). Responding to condemnation from a local Catholic congregation, Duterte stated “I thought ... I was doing my duties for humanity. And now they're castigating me for my mouth?” (Gomez & Calleja, 2016).

#### Differentiation

Duterte asserted that he is “a foul mouth who kills criminals,” but he is “not a thief” (Gomez & Calleja, 2016).

Duterte's discourse was marked with contradictions. First, he downplayed the verbal faux pas even when a viral video showed otherwise. Second, although he issued a broad apology, it was not clear to whom it was directed at, provoking a storm of further criticism (Sauler & Carvajal, 2016). Third, when his party released a five-paragraph apology, Duterte claimed that he was not aware (Andolog, 2016), nullifying the good intention of his team and confusing the rhetoric further (Ho, 2016).

Despite flaws in Duterte's CRS, he maintained his lead with a support of 33% (“BusinessWorld-SWS May 1-3,” 2016), and on May 9, he clinched the presidency with over 16 million votes (“Final results: 2016 presidential,” 2016).

### 4.1.2 | Trump's locker room talk

#### Apology

Trump apologized (Fahrenthold, 2016), admitting wrongdoing and regretting his behavior.

#### Attack the accuser

Believing that Clinton released the video to sabotage his campaign, Trump maligned her by casting her as the vengeful wife who bullied

Bill Clinton's victims (Fahrenthold, 2016). He dismissed the women who accused him of sexual assault as “attempting to poison the minds of American voters,” and the media as a powerful, corrupt, and abusive force that was dangerous to the public (DelReal & Johnson, 2016).

#### Differentiation

Comparing himself with Bill Clinton, he said “there's a big difference between the words and actions of other people. Bill Clinton has actually abused women” (Fahrenthold, 2016) and that Bill Clinton had committed worse acts than his sexual comments alleged (DelReal, 2016).

The apology, issued alongside attacks on his opponents and critics, seemingly undermined its effect, on the basis of Pang et al.'s (2012) assessment of defensive-accommodative mixed strategies.

Despite the controversy, he still had support from Republican voters (Dara, 2016).

## 4.2 | Association with controversial political figures

### 4.2.1 | Duterte's Hitler reference

#### Apology

On October 4, 2016, during a Rosh Hashanah observance with the Philippines Jewish community, Duterte stated “First because I'd like to greet you on your holiday and second because, I would like to apologize. And it comes from the heart” (“Full text: Duterte's speech,” 2016).

#### Shift the blame

Despite evidence of his comparison with Hitler, Duterte insinuated that the media “portrayed and pictured [him] as a Hitler (sic)” (“Full text: Duterte's speech,” 2016).

#### Defeasibility

Similar to the rape joke incident, Duterte alluded to his personality as the reason for his behavior and exhaustion as another. (“Full text: Duterte's speech,” 2016).

#### Accident

Duterte said that the Hitler allusion “was not intended” and “a slip” (“Full text: Duterte's speech,” 2016).

#### Transcendence

Duterte juxtaposed his Hitler reference with the alleged magnitude of drug problems, the potential loss of property and innocent lives (“Full text: Duterte's speech,” 2016).

Duterte employed a combination of CRS across the advocacy-accommodation continuum; however, this can potentially undermine overall persuasiveness of strategies (Pang et al., 2012).

Despite outcry over the Hitler reference (“Jewish leaders react,” 2016), Duterte emerged unscathed. A *Pulse Asia* poll from late September to early October 2016 showed Duterte with a significant 86% satisfaction and trust ratings (“September 2016 Nationwide Survey,” 2016).

### 4.2.2 | Trump's relationship with President Putin

#### Simple denial

In a radio interview on July 26, 2016, Trump said “I have nothing to do with Russia, nothing to do, I never met Putin. I have nothing to do with

Russia whatsoever.” The same message was repeated in subsequent interviews and press conferences (Bump, 2016).

### Differentiation

Trump referenced Clinton's email scandal to show that it was worse than his alleged links to Russia and Putin—“they hacked – they probably have her 33,000 e-mails. I hope they do” (Bump, 2016).

### Transcendence

Trump suggested that his relations with Putin would benefit the U.S., “There's nothing that I can think of that I'd rather do than have Russia friendly as opposed to the way they are right now so that we can go and knock out ISIS together” (Bump, 2016).

Trump's CRS was marked with inconsistencies beginning with his backpedaling of Putin. And when he tried to distance himself from Russia's alleged involvement in the DNC hack, he confused his own rhetoric by saying, “Russia, if you're listening, I hope you're able to find the 30,000 e-mails that are missing” (Bump, 2016).

## 4.3 | Remarks threatening geopolitical relations

### 4.3.1 | Duterte versus the U.S. and President Obama

#### Simple denial

In a speech on September 9, 2016, during a Filipino community meeting in Indonesia, Duterte said that he “never confronted Obama” (Cabacungan, 2016).

#### Shift the blame

Duterte said that the Filipino cuss word was incorrectly translated into English by the international media (Cabacungan, 2016).

Duterte downplayed his tough talk, refusing to admit the offense. Consistent with his CRS above, his spokesperson issued a statement “... while the immediate cause was my strong comments to certain press

questions that elicited concern and distress, we also regret it came across as a personal attack on the US President ...” (Ramos, 2016).

Despite the offense, another poll showed Duterte's trust ratings at 83% (Javil, 2016).

### 4.3.2 | Trump versus Mexico

Trump did not attempt to repair his image with a distinct CRS. Although it appeared as if he attempted to employ bolstering or ingratiation by repeatedly saying, “I love Mexico” and “I love the Mexican people” (Hicks, 2015), these statements cannot be classified as either nor within other CRS under IRT and SCCT.

Trump justified his derogatory statements with claims of protecting the U.S. (“Full text: Donald Trump,” 2015). For example, he accused the Mexican government of pressuring Univision to sever ties because he was “exposing to the public, and the world, the significant damage that is being done at the southern border” (Itkowitz, 2015). Although he attempted to soften his attacks by declaring his affinity for Mexico and its people, they were often followed by disparaging remarks such as “I do business with the Mexican people, but you have people coming through the border that are from all over. And they're bad. They're really bad” (Rucker, 2015).

A summary of the strategies and their effectiveness can be found in Table 2.

## 4.4 | CRS outside of IRT and SCCT

RQ3 aimed to uncover CRS outside of IRT and SCCT that Duterte and Trump used. The authors discovered three rhetorical strategies: (a) diversion and (b) logorrhea as well as a strategy amplifier, (c) machismo.

### 4.4.1 | Diversion

Identified as a CRS by Huang et al. (2004) and Hu and Pang (2016; under the title “Setting up new topics”). Huang et al. (2004) define diversion as

**TABLE 2** Summary of CRS employed and effectiveness of CRSs

Crises set	Crisis	CRSs employed	Effectiveness of CRSs
Disrespectful remarks towards women	Duterte's rape joke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apology</li> <li>Minimization</li> <li>Transcendence</li> <li>Differentiation</li> <li>Defeasibility</li> <li>Attack the accuser</li> </ul>	Effective despite contradictory discourse
	Trump's locker room talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apology</li> <li>Differentiation</li> <li>Attack the accuser</li> </ul>	Effective even though attacking the accuser undermined the apology
Association with controversial political figures	Duterte's Hitler reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apology</li> <li>Transcendence</li> <li>Accident</li> <li>Defeasibility</li> <li>Shift the blame</li> </ul>	Effective even though use of CRS combinations across the advocacy-accommodation continuum undermined overall persuasiveness
	Trump's relationship with Putin	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Transcendence</li> <li>Defeasibility</li> <li>Denial</li> </ul>	Effective despite confusing and inconsistent rhetoric
Remarks threatening geopolitical relations	Duterte vs. the U.S. and President Obama Trump vs. Mexico	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shift the blame</li> <li>Denial</li> <li>No CRS used</li> </ul>	Effective through consistent use of CRS

Note. CRS: crisis response strategies.

“strategies that try to put the issue to rest or distract public or media attention by creating a different issue or temporarily easing public anger by showing regards (while not apologizing)” (p. 235). Huang et al. included three substrategies: (a) showing regards/sympathy, (b) building a new agenda to switch or distract public attention—similar to Hu and Pang’s setting up new topics, and (c) differentiating (attempting to distinguish the act from other similar but more offensive actions). Diversion in all three forms were employed by Trump and Duterte.

#### 4.4.2 | Showing regards/sympathy

Duterte attempted to mollify the Jewish community by praising their leader (“Full text: Duterte’s speech,” 2016). He also drew links by mentioning his wife’s Jewish lineage and stating commonality of his and the Jewish community’s devotion to one God (“Full text: Duterte’s speech,” 2016). Likewise, for Trump’s use of “I love Mexico/the Mexican people” (Hicks, 2015).

As mentioned earlier, this strategy bears similarities to bolstering and ingratiation. However, in the aforementioned strategies, stakeholders are reminded of good works by the offender. In showing regards/sympathy, good works by the offender are not discussed. Instead, focus is on the offended group to divert narrative to show sympathy.

#### 4.4.3 | Building a new agenda

Duterte diverted narrative from the U.S./Obama controversy by attacking the media, then reversed his stance and defended them by saying, “Do not hesitate to attack me, criticize me, if I do wrong in my job... It is your sworn duty to ask questions” (Corrales, 2016c).

Trump diverted attention from his relationship with Putin by reframing the conversation towards Clinton’s email controversy and the DNC hack (Bump, 2016).

#### 4.4.4 | Differentiating

Trump employed both differentiation and differentiating in his discourse on the locker-room talk crisis. He used differentiation when he compared his locker-room talk with Bill Clinton’s alleged indiscretions (Fahrenheit, 2016). He referenced his own offensive actions to reduce offensiveness. He employed differentiating when his campaign orchestrated the press conference with four women who had accused Bill Clinton of sexual assault before the second presidential debate. Through this, Trump dramatized and created a publicity stunt (Hu & Pang, 2016) to divert attention. Duterte employed differentiating by diverting discussion from his most recent crisis to another ongoing crisis. In his apology to the Jewish community, Duterte referenced his ongoing crisis with the U.S. and Obama (“Full text: Duterte’s speech,” 2016). It is unusual for an individual whose image is under threat to refer to their own crises and make statements that could potentially exacerbate them. However, Duterte was eager to divert the narrative.

#### 4.4.5 | Logorrhea

In this strategy, individuals talk incessantly without conveying true meaning or explanations to avoid further questions. The authors posit that

logorrhea is similar to silence; it is not a proactive CRS. Benoit (2014) explains that he resists including silence within the IRT because he was only “interested in messages intended to repair a damaged reputation, not in messages never sent” (p. 11). In logorrhea, individuals bombard the public with messages not intended to repair their reputation.

Trump’s response to his relationship with Putin included a lengthy story about his friend visiting France (Bump, 2016). He employed logorrhea with George Stephanopoulos who asked him about Russian investors and his debt. He said, “No debts. I have very little debt to anybody. I don’t need debt. You know, it’s very interesting. I’m so liquid, I don’t need debt. And if I need debt, if I want debt, I can get it from banks in New York City very easily” (Cillizza, 2016).

#### 4.4.6 | Machismo

The authors posit machismo as a CRS amplifier rather than a CRS. Machismo refers to exhibition of strong and aggressive masculine pride.

Duterte often used shock tactics in his rhetoric. The phrase “I killed ... /I will kill you” were featured in two of his crisis discourse (“Full text: Duterte’s speech,” 2016; Gomez & Calleja, 2016). Despite employing apology as CRS, Duterte and Trump asserted their unwillingness to apologize (Alconaba & Calleja, 2016; “Full text: Duterte’s speech,” 2016; Lee, 2015). Both used machismo as an overarching amplifier that allowed them to appeal to their supporters. This amplification strengthened their support and contributed to the masculine image they had built.

### 4.5 | Classification of new strategies as crisis response strategies

Benoit (2014) referred to CRS as persuasive attempts made to reshape the audience’s attitude towards an entity under reputational threat. Diversion and logorrhea do not explicitly fulfill these criteria as they operate as distraction tactics that do not address the entity’s reputation. Machismo is designed to amplify existing support from audience members who have not experienced a change in perception towards the entity. The argument against inclusion of these new strategies as CRS supports Benoit’s (2014) assertion that crisis response messages should be sent with reparation intent.

### 4.6 | Redefining crisis response

The success of Trump and Duterte in their applications of diversion, logorrhea, and machismo however demand renegotiation of the definitions of crisis response. Extant literature posits CRS as deliberate and organization focused. Findings in this paper, however, suggest that alternative methods can achieve the defense outcomes that crises demand without obeying the existing academic definitions of crisis response.

It is critical to note that this paper is contextualized within a post-truth political landscape. Evolving landscapes may compel further redefinition of crises as well as crises response.

Using logorrhea and diversion, both effectively sidestepped truth telling, which traditional crisis response dictates. Underlying the success of these CRS was machismo, an amplifier that energized their overall rhetoric and lent perceived strength to their questionable



strategies and claims. Although they have competently navigated the post-truth landscape, it remains to be seen if they can sustain this while in office and if other politicians can achieve the same outcomes. Contingent factors such as personality, image, political environment, and public perception are crucial determinants in the use of these strategies. In Len-Rios and Benoit's (2004) study of Gary Condit's image-repair strategy, the authors surmised that Condit's combined CRS of determined denial and differentiation failed. Possible attribution for his failure could lie in his personality or the political landscape of the time. This merits further research, namely, in three areas: (a) factors that enable machismo to be used as a strategy amplifier, (b) other instances where logorrhea and diversion have been used as CRS, and (c) comparison of CRS combinations used within and outside of a post-truth landscape.

Additionally, despite the differences in nationality and cultures, there are no discernible distinctions between Western and Asian politicians under study. Another area for further research can address sociocultural factors that may have influenced Duterte and Trump's employment of CRS. As both politicians are at the start of their 6- and 4-year terms, respectively, potential for more crises and analyses abound.

## 5 | CONCLUSION

This study has examined the CRS of Duterte and Trump and uncovered potential new strategies they have used. Although extant literature posits CRS and combinations that are traditionally effective (Pang et al., 2012), both appear to successfully subvert these within the post-truth landscape. Their contradictory CRS combinations were effective as evidenced by their success, proving that the public's search for truth was overridden by emotive rhetoric that appealed to their supporters' prejudices.

As this is a qualitative study, one of its limitations is the lack of generalizability. Another limitation is that despite examination of hundreds of news articles, the number of news articles relevant for analysis was limited. Regardless of the methodological limitations, it is argued that the findings provide useful insights on how future research can be conducted. Some suggestions include examining the factors that enable machismo to be used as a strategy amplifier. Another would be instances where logorrhea and diversion have been used as CRS. Last but not least, sociocultural factors that influence the employment of CRS in the post-truth landscape.

### ORCID

Augustine Pang  <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-2802-5010>

### REFERENCES

- 'Post-truth' declared word of the year by Oxford Dictionaries. (2016, November 16). *BBC News*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-37995600>
- "Pivot or pirouette?" (2017). *The Economist*, 25 February, p. 23.
- Alconaba, A. & Calleja, N. (2016, April 17). Despite outcry over rape 'joke,' Duterte refuses to say sorry. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved October 15, 2016 from Factiva database.
- Algeria urged to end harassment of critical media. (2016, July 8). *International Press Institute*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <https://ipi.media/algeria-urged-to-end-harassment-of-critical-media/>
- Andolog, I. (2016, April 20). Duterte's 'apology' creates confusion. *CNN Philippines*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/04/19/Duterte-apology-rape-remark.html>
- Benoit, W. (2014). Preface. In *Accounts, excuses, and apologies: Image repair theory and research* (2nd ed.). Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.
- Benoit, W., & Pang, A. (2008). Crisis communication and image repair discourse. In H.-H. B-Neff (Ed.), *Public relations: From theory to practice* (pp. 244–261). Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn & Bacon.
- Benoit, W. L. (1997). Hugh Grant's image restoration discourse: An actor apologizes. *Communication Quarterly*, 45(3), 251–267. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463379709370064>
- Benoit, W. L. (2000). Another visit to the theory of image restoration strategies. *Communication Quarterly*, 48(1), 40–44. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01463370009385578>
- Benoit, W. L. (2006). Image repair in President Bush's April 2004 news conference. *Public Relations Review*, 32, 137–143. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2006.02.025>
- Benoit, W. L. (2016). Barack Obama's 2008 speech on Reverend Wright: Defending self and others. *Public Relations Review*, 42(5), 843–848. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.09.003>
- Bernal, B. & Yan, H. (2016, October 4). Philippines' president says he'll 'break up' with US, tells Obama 'go to hell'. *CNN International*. Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://edition.cnn.com/2016/10/04/asia/philippines-duterte-us-breakup/index.html>
- Bershidsky, L. (2018, January 13). Trump finds a new way to squander soft power. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved March 8, 2018 from <https://www.bloomberg.com/view/articles/2018-01-12/trump-finds-a-new-way-to-squander-soft-power>
- Brands, H. (2018, January 18). Not even Trump can obliterate America's soft power. *Bloomberg*. Retrieved March 8, 2018 from <https://www.bloomberquint.com/opinion/2018/01/18/not-even-trump-can-obliterate-america-s-soft-power>
- Bump, P. (2016, July 27). Donald Trump's falsehood-laden press conference annotated; every last word. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from Factiva database.
- Burgos Jr., N. (2016, April 20). Duterte tells U.S., aussie envoys: Shut up, stay out of PH politics. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/138772/duterte-tells-us-aussie-envoys-shut-up-stay-out-of-ph-politics>
- Burton, T. I. (2017, August 2). How Russia's strongmen use homophobia to stay in power. *Vox*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <https://www.vox.com/identities/2017/8/2/16034630/russias-strongmen-homophobia-power-kadyrov-chechnya-lgbtq>
- BusinessWorld-SWS May 1–3, 2016 Pre-election survey: Duterte leads Poe, Roxas, and Binay in Presidential race; Marcos and Robredo tied for the lead in Vice-Presidential race; Drilon, Sotto, Pangilinan, Pacquiao and Hontiveros lead in Senatorial race; AKO BICOL leads 16 with guaranteed Party List seats. (2016, May 16). *Social Weather Stations*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://www.sws.org.ph/swsmain/artcldisppage/?artcsyscode=ART-20160524115053>
- Cabacungan, G. (2016, September 9). Duterte on Obama 'slur': I never made statement; it's media spin. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved October 31, 2016 from Factiva database.
- Cai, P., Lee, P. T., & Pang, A. (2009). Managing a nation's image during crisis: A study of the Chinese government's image repair efforts in the 'Made in China' controversy. *Public Relations Review*, 35, 213–218.
- Chandran, N. (2016, April 29). Rodrigo Duterte, known as Asia's Donald Trump, leads race for Philippines presidency. *CNBC Online*. Retrieved October 6, 2016, from <http://www.cnbc.com/2016/04/29/rodrigo-duterte-known-as-asias-donald-trump-leads-race-for-philippines-presidency.html>
- Cillizza, C. (2016, August 1). Donald Trump's ABC interview may be his best/worst yet; Trump, annotated. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from Factiva database.

- Coombs, W. T. (2008). Crisis communication and image repair discourse. In Hansen-Horn, T. and Neff, B. (Eds.) *Public relations: From theory to practice* (pp. 262–280). Boston, MA: Pearson Allyn & Bacon.
- Coombs, W. T. (2014). *Applied crisis communication and crisis management*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2002). Helping crisis managers protect reputational assets: Initial tests of the situational crisis communication theory. *Management Communication Quarterly*, 16(2), 165–186. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089331802237233>
- Coombs, W. T., & Holladay, S. J. (2010). *The handbook of crisis communication*. [electronic resource]. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd., 2010. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444314885>
- Corrales, N. (2016a, April 17). Duterte rape joke on Australian missionary: Too much? *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved from March 8, 2017 from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/779912/viral-duterte-rape-joke-on-australian-missionary>
- Corrales, N. (2016b, April 21). Duterte twits U.S., Aussie envoys for 'meddling' in PH politics. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved October 15, 2016 from Factiva database.
- Corrales, N. (2016c, September 10). Duterte to media: Go ahead, criticize me. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/814366/duterte-to-media-go-ahead-criticize-me>
- Dara, L. (2016, October 9). Poll: Vast majority of Republican voters don't care much about the leaked Trump tape. *Vox*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://www.vox.com/2016/10/9/13217158/polls-donald-trump-assault-tape>
- Dardis, F., & Haigh, M. M. (2009). Prescribing versus describing: Testing image restoration strategies in a crisis situation. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 14(1), 101–118. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563280910931108>
- DelReal, J. A. (2016, October 11). At first post-debate rally, Trump continues talking about Bill Clinton's scandals; Trump claimed he won an overwhelming victory against Clinton in Sunday night's presidential debate. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from the Factiva database.
- DelReal, J. A. & Johnson J. (2016, October 22). Trump, threatening nearly a dozen sexual assault accusers, vows to sue. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from the Factiva database.
- Diers-Lawson, A., & Pang, A. (2016). Did BP atone for its transgressions? Expanding theory of ethical apology in crisis communication. *Journal of Contingencies & Crisis Management*, 24(3), 148–161.
- Durham, F. (2005). Public relations as structuration: A prescriptive critique of the StarLink Global food contamination case. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 17(1), 29–47. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjpr1701\\_4](https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532754xjpr1701_4)
- Edelman, A. (2016, August 31). A look at Trump's most outrageous comments about Mexicans. *New York Daily News*. Retrieved November 16, 2016 from <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/politics/trump-outrageous-comments-mexicans-article-1.2773214>
- Fahrenthold, D. (2016, October 8). Trump recorded having extremely lewd conversation about women in 2005. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from the Factiva database.
- Final results: 2016 presidential and vice presidential canvass. (2016, May 27). *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/787867/philippine-elections-final-results-2016-congressional-canvass-presidential-vice-president-race>
- Frandsen, F., & Johansen, W. (2017). *Organizational crisis communication*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Full Text: Donald Trump announces a presidential bid. (2015, June 16). *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from the Factiva Database.
- Full text: Duterte's speech, apology to Jewish community. (2016, October 5). *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved November 7, 2016 from the Factiva Database.
- Gaffey, C. (2016). Lies, damn lies and post-truth. *Newsweek Global*, 167(21), 57.
- Garyantes, D. (2006). *Coverage of the Iraqi elections: A textual analysis of Al-Jazeera and the New York Times*. Dresden, Germany: ICA.
- Gerber, A. S., Dean, K., & Bergan, D. (2009). Does the media matter? A field experiment measuring the effect of newspapers on voting behavior and political opinions. *American Economic Journal: Applied Economics*, 1(2), 35–52.
- Ghanem-Yazbeck, D. (2016, April 28). Algeria on the verge: What seventeen years of Bouteflika have achieved. *Carnegie Middle East Center*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <http://carnegie-mec.org/2016/04/28/algeria-on-verge-what-seventeen-years-of-bouteflika-have-achieved-pub-63438>
- Gomez, C. & Calleja, N. (2016, April 19). Digong chides bishops, slams Australia. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/780171/digong-chides-bishops-slams-australia>
- Greene, R. (2016, September 19). Donald Trump; the Rodrigo Duterte of America. *The Huffington Post*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-greene/donald-trump-the-rodrigo\\_b\\_12081580.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/richard-greene/donald-trump-the-rodrigo_b_12081580.html)
- Hamburger, T. & Nakashima, E. (2016, July 25). The anxiety for Democrats: Are more leaks to come? *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/Politics/the-Anxiety-for-democrats-are-more-leaks-to-come/2016/07/25/Od8798e8-5282-11e6-bbf5-957ad17b4385\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/Politics/the-Anxiety-for-democrats-are-more-leaks-to-come/2016/07/25/Od8798e8-5282-11e6-bbf5-957ad17b4385_story.html)
- Hicks, J. (2015, June 24). Is Donald Trump the honey badger of American politics? *The Washington Post*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/24/is-donald-trump-the-honey-badger-of-american-politics/?utm\\_term=.cbe32d4eac94](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/24/is-donald-trump-the-honey-badger-of-american-politics/?utm_term=.cbe32d4eac94)
- Ho, A. (2016, April 20). Sorry or not: Duterte keeps people guessing. *CNN Philippines*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://cnnphilippines.com/news/2016/04/19/Duterte-apology-rape-remark.html>
- Holmes, O. (2017, November 13). Trump hails 'great relationship' with Philippines' Duterte. *The Guardian*. Retrieved August 7, 2018 from <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2017/nov/13/trump-hails-great-relationship-with-philippines-duterte>
- Hu, Y., & Pang, A. (2016). Public relations practitioners' perceptions of the use of crisis response strategies in China. *Public Relations Review*, 42(2), 333–335. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.02.006>
- Hu, Y., & Pang, A. (2018). The indigenization of crisis response strategies in the context of China. *Chinese Journal of Communication*, 11(1), 105–128. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17544750.2017.1305978>
- Huang, Y. H., Lin, Y. H., & Su, S. H. (2004). Crisis communicative strategies in Taiwan: Category, continuum, and cultural implication. *Public Relations Review*, 31, 229–238.
- Itkowitz, C. (2015, June 26). Univision cuts all ties with Donald Trump over immigrant 'rapist' comments; Univision announces it will no longer air Miss Universe or Miss USA, or any other Trump-related project. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved November 17, 2016 from the Factiva database.
- Javil, R. F. (2016, October 11). Duterte's public trust rating steadies in 'excellent' territory. *BusinessWorld*. Retrieved from <http://www.bworldonline.com/content.php?section=TopStory&title=duterte&8217s-Public-trust-rating-steadies-in-&145excellent&8217-territory&id=134692>
- Jewish leaders react to Rodrigo Duterte Holocaust remarks. (2016, September 30). *BBC News Asia*. Retrieved November 7, 2016 from <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37515642>
- Jin, Y., Pang, A., & Cameron, G. T. (2006). Strategic communication in crisis governance: Analysis of the Singapore management of the SARS crisis. *The Copenhagen Journal of Asian Studies*, 23(1), 81–104. <https://doi.org/10.22439/cjas.v23i1.693>
- Jin, Y., Pang, A., & Cameron, G. T. (2012). Toward a publics-driven, emotion-based conceptualization in crisis communication: Unearthing dominant emotions in multi-staged testing of the Integrated Crisis Mapping (ICM) model. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 24(3), 266–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2012.676747>
- Johnson, T. (2018). Deny and attack or concede and correct? Image repair and the politically scandalized. *Journal of Political Marketing*, 17(3), 213–234. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377857.2015.1039745>

- Joseph, R. (2017, June 30). Canada back on top of world's most reputable countries list. *Global News*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <https://globalnews.ca/news/3567232/canada-back-on-Top-of-worlds-most-reputable-countries-list/>
- Kang, M., & Yang, S. (2005). Comparing effects of country reputation and the overall corporate reputations of a country on international consumers' product attitudes and purchase intentions. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 13(1), 52–62.
- Katigbak, T. (2016, September 7). Duterte and Trump: A comparison. Intropective. *The Philippine Star Online*. Retrieved October 6, 2016 from <http://www.philstar.com/opinion/2016/09/07/1621172/duterte-and-trump-comparison>
- Kreitner, R. (2016). Post-truth and its consequences. *Nation*, 303(25/26), 7.
- Lee, M. (2015, July 8). Donald Trump's false comments connecting Mexican immigrants and crime. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/?utm\\_term=.b19e05d78e0d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/fact-checker/wp/2015/07/08/donald-trumps-false-comments-connecting-mexican-immigrants-and-crime/?utm_term=.b19e05d78e0d)
- Lema, K. & Mogato, M. (2016, October 1). Philippines' Duterte likens himself to Hitler, wants to kill millions of drug users. *Reuters*. Retrieved October 6, 2016 from <http://www.reuters.com/article/us-philippines-duterte-hitler-idUSKCN1200B9>
- Len-Rios, M. E., & Benoit, W. L. (2004). Gary Condit's image repair strategies: Determined denial and differentiation. *Public Relations Review*, 30(1), 95–106. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2003.11.009>
- Lockyer, S. (2012). Textual Analysis. In L. M. Given (Ed.), *The SAGE encyclopedia of qualitative research methods* (pp. 865–866). <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412963909>
- Low, Y. S., Varughese, J., & Pang, A. (2011). Communicating crisis: How culture influences image repair in Western and Asian governments. *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 16(3), 218–242. <https://doi.org/10.1108/13563281111156880>
- McKee, A. (2002). Textual analysis. [Electronic Resource]: A Beginner's Guide [e-book]. London: Sage Publications Ltd., Available from: NTU Library Catalogue, Ipswich, MA.
- Nye, J. (1990). Soft Power. *Foreign Policy*, 80, Twentieth Anniversary (Autumn, 1990), 153–171.
- Nye, J. (2018, February 11). Donald Trump and the decline of US soft power. *TODAY Newspaper*. Retrieved March 8, 2018 from <https://www.todayonline.com/commentary/donald-trump-and-decline-us-soft-power>
- Pang, A. (2016). Crisis communication research in Singapore. In A. Schwarz, M. W. Seeger, & C. Auer (Eds.), *Handbook of international crisis communication research* (pp. 283–291). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118516812.ch26>
- Pang, A., Damayanti, R., & Woon, E. (2017). When a nation's leader is under siege: Managing personal reputation and engaging in public diplomacy. In B. V. Ruler, I. Smit, S. Romenti, & O. Ihlen (Eds.), *How strategic communication shapes value and innovation in society. Advances in Public Relations and Communication Management book series.* (pp. 37–67). Bingley, UK: Emerald.
- Pang, A., Ho, B., & Malik, N. (2012). Repairing an organization's image in times of crises: What strategies to use when? *Proceedings of the 11th Conference on Corporate Communication*, 485–507.
- Quezon, M., III. (2017, November 12). When strongmen meet: Trump and Duterte in Manila. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved August 7, 2018 from [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/11/12/when-strongmen-meet-trump-and-duterte-in-manila/?noredirect=on&utm\\_term=.ba35fc2d50da](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/democracy-post/wp/2017/11/12/when-strongmen-meet-trump-and-duterte-in-manila/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.ba35fc2d50da)
- Ramos, M. (2016, September 7). Duterte voices regrets for insult on Obama. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved from <http://globalnation.inquirer.net/144076/duterte-voices-regrets-for-insult-on-obama>
- Reed, J. (2018, January 18). Media curbs dent Philippines' reputation as vibrant democracy. *Financial Times*. Retrieved August 7, 2018 from <https://www.ft.com/content/3fe66b5e-fb80-11e7-9b32-d7d59aace167>
- Rucker, P. (2015, July 2). Trump's poll surge cheered by (a) Trump, (b) Democrats. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from the Factiva database.
- Sauler, E. & Carvajal, N. (2016, April 20). Digong finally says sorry for rape joke. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved March 8, 2016 from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/780430/digong-finally-says-sorry-for-rape-joke>
- September 2016 Nationwide Survey on the Performance and Trust Ratings of the Top National Government Officials and Key Government Institutions. (2016, September). *Pulse Asia*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 <http://www.pulseasia.ph/september-2016-nationwide-survey-on-the-performance-and-trust-ratings-of-the-top-national-government-officials-and-key-government-institutions/>
- Sheldon, C. A., & Sallot, L. M. (2009). Image repair in politics: Testing effects of communication strategy and performance history in a faux pas. *Journal of Public Relations Research*, 21(1), 25–50.
- Smith, A. (2016, September 11). Donald Trump praised Vladimir Putin on the national stage again—Here's what it all means. *Business Insider Singapore*. Retrieved October 6, 2016 from <http://www.businessinsider.sg/donald-trump-vladimir-putin-strong-leader-obama-2016-9/?r=US>
- Szep, J. (2008, June 13). University of Massachusetts revokes Mugabe degree. *Reuters*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-zimbabwe-mugabe-degree/university-of-massachusetts-revokes-mugabe-degree-idUSN1245221420080612>
- Tapsell, R. (2017, February 17). Post-truth politics in Southeast Asia. *Inside Story*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://insidestory.org.au/post-truth-politics-in-southeast-asia>
- Tran, M. (2008, June 25). Foreign Office revokes Mugabe knighthood. *The Guardian*. Retrieved March 5, 2018 from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2008/jun/25/zimbabwe.foreignpolicy1>
- Tsipursky, G. (2017). Towards a post-lies future: Fighting 'Alternative Facts' and 'Post-Truth' politics. *The Humanist*, 77(2), 12–15.
- Tuazon, R. (2015, April 15). The print media: A tradition of freedom. *National Commission for Culture and the Arts*. Retrieved March 8, 2017 from <http://ncca.gov.ph/subcommissions/subcommission-on-cultural-disseminationscd/communication/the-print-media-a-tradition-of-freedom/>
- Vasterman, P. L. (2005). Media-hype: Self-reinforcing news waves, journalistic standards and the construction of social problems. *European Journal of Communication*, 20(4), 508–530. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0267323105058254>
- Wimmer, R. D., & Dominick, J. R. (2006). *Mass media research: An introduction*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Yoo, J., & Jin, Y. (2015). The effects of leader image on national reputation: Influence of Chinese presidents Hu Jintao and Xi Jinping on Korean perceptions and attitudes toward China. *Corporate Reputation Review*, 18(1), 50–64. <https://doi.org.ezlibproxy1.ntu.edu.sg/10.1057/crr.2014.20>. Retrieved from <https://search-proquest.com.ezlibproxy1.ntu.edu.sg/docview/1651263579?accountid=12665>

## AUTHOR BIOGRAPHIES

**Natasha Binte Mohamed Ismail** received her Bachelor of Business Administration (Hons) from the National University of Singapore and her Master of Mass Communication from the Nanyang Technological University. Ismail is currently a communications lecturer in Republic Polytechnic in Singapore. She has presented conference papers on crisis communication, television archiving, and queer representations.

**Marie Angeline Pagulayan** has worked in corporate communication functions for multinational companies, with a focus on public relations and branding at a regional level. She is a graduate of Master of Mass Communication from Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, with a Bachelor of Arts in Journalism degree from University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines.

**Carlo Miguel Alfonso Francia** received his undergraduate Communication Arts degree from Colegio de San Juan de Letran in Manila and his Master of Mass Communication from Nanyang Technological University in Singapore. Francia is a former faculty member of both Letran and De La Salle University-Manila's communication departments. He has held key editorial positions at lifestyle Philippine publications over the years. He is concurrently the managing editor of Wedding Essentials Magazine and chief communications officer of Ticket2Me, a blockchain-enabled ticketing platform.

**Augustine Pang** is Professor of Corporate Communication (Practice) at the Lee Kong Chian School of Business, Singapore Management University. He specializes in crisis management and communication, image management and repair, media

management, and corporate communication management. He is thankful for the top research awards won, including the coveted 2016 Kitty O. Locker Outstanding Researcher award from the Association of Business Communication (U.S.) for his body of work on crisis management and communication. He is a member of the prestigious Arthur W. Page Society (U.S.). He is also an Honorary Fellow at Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

**How to cite this article:** Ismail NBM, Pagulayan MA, Francia CMA, Pang A. Communicating in the post-truth era: Analyses of crisis response strategies of Presidents Donald Trump and Rodrigo Duterte. *J Public Affairs*. 2019;19:e1883. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1883>