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Criticizing the MBG Program: An Entman Framing Analysis of Kompas Coverage in Ketapang

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Abstract
This study aims to analyze the framing employed by Kompas.com and Kompas TV in reporting the alleged food poisoning case associated with the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in Ketapang. The study adopts a qualitative approach using Robert N. Entman's framing analysis as the primary theoretical framework and Peter L. Berger's social construction of reality as a supporting theory. Data were obtained through documentation of online news reports addressing issues related to the shark-meat menu, poisoning victims, acknowledgments of negligence, expert responses, and institutional evaluation. The findings show that the media framed the MBG case as an issue of food safety, implementation negligence, and weak accountability among program organizers. Kompas positioned shark meat, the Nutrition Fulfillment Service Unit (SPPG), mercury risks, and food-processing procedures as the central causes of the incident, while also constructing a moral judgment centered on child protection. This framing contributed to the formation of a public reality in which the MBG program was evaluated not merely in terms of food distribution, but also in relation to safety, supervision, and institutional responsibility.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) once again attracted public attention following an alleged mass food poisoning incident at SDN 12 Benya Kayong, Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan, which was reportedly triggered by the consumption of fried shark meat served as part of the MBG meal package. Kompas.com reported that 25 people, consisting of 24 students and one teacher, required medical treatment after experiencing fever, nausea, and abdominal pain following consumption of the meal. The West Kalimantan MBG Regional Head even acknowledged serious negligence in menu selection, as shark meat was considered uncommon for children and potentially contained mercury. The media narrative was further reinforced by statements from nutrition experts and academics who regarded the use of such food ingredients as evidence of weak supervision in the implementation of the MBG program. These facts indicate that problems in program implementation are not limited to food distribution, but also involve consumption safety, the quality of supervision, and the responsibility of program organizers for students' health (Zahra & Pratiwi, 2025).

The public attention surrounding the MBG case in Ketapang demonstrates the strategic position of the media in shaping public perceptions of government policy. The media do not merely report information about poisoning incidents but also influence how society interprets them through the selection of facts, perspectives, and the emphasis placed on particular issues in news coverage (Puspa

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Izzati Annisa, 2025). Kompas.com, as one of Indonesia's major online news portals, has substantial influence in shaping social opinion due to its credibility and extensive information reach. The intensity of reporting on the alleged negligence of MBG organizers has positioned the media as an active actor in constructing the public image of the program. This condition demonstrates that media constructions of reality are never entirely neutral because they always involve processes of selection and emphasis on particular meanings (Pranandana et al., 2025).

The construction of reality produced by the media can be observed in the diction used in reporting the MBG case in Ketapang. Terms such as "negligent," "careless," "inappropriate," and "unnecessary experimentation" emphasize the perceived mistakes of program organizers. The placement of statements from sources highlighting the potential dangers of shark meat and weak food supervision further strengthens a negative image of MBG implementation. Such reporting patterns indicate that the media do not simply present factual events but also construct interpretive frameworks through which audiences understand who should be held responsible and how the issue should be interpreted. This process reflects the practice of framing in news production.

Framing practices in mass media are important to examine because they are closely related to the ways in which the media construct social reality for the public. Framing not only determines which aspects of information are considered important but also directs audiences toward particular interpretations of an event. Coverage of the MBG case in Ketapang demonstrates a stronger emphasis on negligence, health risks, and weak program supervision than on other aspects, such as the social objectives of the MBG program or government efforts to maintain its continuity. Such emphasis may influence the level of public trust in government policies currently being implemented. This situation makes framing analysis particularly relevant for examining how the media construct reality through news coverage (Teresa, 2022).

The framing approach adopted in this study refers to Robert N. Entman's framing model, which emphasizes four main elements: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting remedies. This model is considered relevant because it enables an in-depth examination of the patterns of news construction used by the media in reporting the MBG case in Ketapang. The emerging coverage indicates that the media defined the poisoning incident as a serious problem, positioned program organizers as responsible actors, constructed moral judgments concerning the use of shark meat, and encouraged a comprehensive evaluation of MBG implementation. This structure demonstrates a strong correspondence with Entman's framing elements.

The use of Entman's framing model also allows this study to examine how the media direct public attention toward particular dimensions of an issue. The emphasis on food safety in MBG reporting indicates an effort by the media to raise awareness of the importance of food quality supervision for schoolchildren. The inclusion of academics and nutrition experts as sources functions as a legitimizing strategy through which the constructed framing appears objective and scientifically grounded. In this context, the media no longer function merely as transmitters of information but also participate in shaping social standards for evaluating whether the implementation of a public policy is appropriate or problematic. This influence demonstrates the considerable power of media framing in shaping public opinion.

The power of media framing in the MBG issue is particularly significant because the program constitutes a national policy closely associated with the government's agenda for human resource development. Negative reporting concerning alleged mass poisoning may influence public confidence in the overall success of the MBG program. Public perceptions formed through media coverage may affect policy legitimacy and social support for government programs. This situation illustrates the media's capacity to amplify particular issues to the point that they may generate public concern, anxiety, or distrust. Consequently, reporting on the MBG program cannot be regarded merely as routine information.

Research on media framing of the MBG issue in Ketapang is also important because studies specifically examining the construction of news coverage concerning this program in Indonesian online media remain limited. Previous research has tended to focus more heavily on policy effectiveness or public nutrition issues, while analyses of how the media shape public perceptions of the MBG program remain relatively scarce. Yet the media play an important role in producing social meaning and determining the direction of public discourse surrounding policy. This research gap provides an opportunity for the present study to contribute to scholarship in mass communication and media analysis.

A review of previous studies is important for positioning this research within the broader landscape of media framing studies, particularly those addressing public policy issues in online media.

Three previous studies demonstrate that Robert N. Entman's framing analysis has been widely used to examine how the media shape public understanding of government policies, including the Free Nutritious Meal Program, the homecoming travel ban, and online schooling policies during the pandemic. Susanto et al. provide the closest point of comparison because their study also discusses the MBG Program and includes Kompas.com as one of the media objects, thereby offering an initial basis for understanding how MBG-related issues are constructed within digital news spaces (Susanto et al., 2026). Hidayat and Prasetyo further demonstrate that the media can frame public policies by emphasizing implementation failures, particularly when government programs generate controversy or operational problems in the field (Hidayat & Prasetyo, 2023). The main distinction of the present study lies in its more specific focus on the alleged MBG poisoning case in Ketapang as reported by Kompas.com and Kompas TV, as well as its use of Peter L. Berger's theory of the social construction of reality to strengthen the analysis of how media framing not only shapes news meaning but also constructs social reality concerning food safety, organizer negligence, and the accountability of the MBG program.

The urgency of this study lies in revealing how Kompas.com frames the alleged MBG poisoning case in Ketapang through its news construction. This study is expected to identify the framing patterns used by the media in defining the problem, determining the actors held responsible, constructing moral judgments, and proposing solutions to issues developing in the public sphere. The findings are also expected to provide a deeper understanding of the relationship between media, the construction of reality, and the formation of public opinion regarding government policy.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed a qualitative research method with a case study approach to gain an in-depth understanding of the construction of news coverage concerning the alleged food poisoning incident associated with the Free Nutritious Meal Program (MBG) in Ketapang as reported by Kompas.com. A qualitative approach was selected because the study focuses on interpreting meaning, understanding context, and conducting an in-depth examination of media narratives in framing an event. The case study design was used because the research specifically investigates media coverage of the MBG case in Ketapang as a single case that attracted considerable public attention. This approach enables the study to examine in detail how the media construct social reality through published news texts (Assyakurrohim et al., 2022).

The data sources in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from a number of news reports published by Kompas.com concerning the alleged MBG poisoning case in Ketapang, particularly reports related to the use of fried shark meat as a meal menu, alleged negligence by program organizers, and the government's evaluation of the implementation of the MBG program. The news items were selected based on their relevance to the research focus on media framing of the controversial MBG program. Secondary data were obtained from various supporting sources, including online information, scientific journals, books, academic articles, and previous studies related to media framing, mass communication, the social construction of reality, and Robert N. Entman's framing theory. These secondary sources were used to strengthen the theoretical foundation and support the interpretation of the research findings (Sulung & Muspawi, 2024).

Data collection was carried out through online observation and documentation. Online observation involved directly examining patterns of media coverage of the MBG case in Ketapang through digital news portals, particularly with regard to headline selection, diction, source placement, and the emphasis placed on specific issues within the news texts. Documentation was conducted by collecting, recording, and archiving the news reports that served as the research objects for further analysis. The documentation process also included the collection of supporting references such as articles, journals, and other scholarly sources relevant to the research topic. These techniques were employed to ensure that the data were collected systematically and were capable of providing a comprehensive representation of media framing construction.

Data analysis was conducted using content analysis combined with Robert N. Entman's framing model. The analysis identified how the media defined the problem, diagnosed its causes, made moral judgments, and proposed solutions regarding the MBG issue in Ketapang (Anggraeni, 2018). The analytical process was carried out in several stages, including data reduction, classification of news content, interpretation of meaning, and drawing conclusions concerning the framing patterns used by the media. Data credibility was maintained through source triangulation by comparing news reports, academic references, and other supporting information to strengthen the validity of the findings. Source

triangulation was employed to ensure that the research interpretation did not rely solely on a single source of information but was supported by multiple interrelated sources.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Framing the Alleged MBG Food Poisoning Case in Ketapang: A Study of Kompas.com's News Construction

The analysis of four news reports published by Kompas.com and Kompas TV concerning the alleged food poisoning incident associated with the Free Nutritious Meals Program (*Makan Bergizi Gratis*, MBG) in Ketapang Regency, West Kalimantan, reveals a consistent framing tendency that emphasizes food safety, negligence in program implementation, and institutional accountability. Drawing on Robert N. Entman's framing model, particularly the *define problems* dimension, the news coverage of 24 students and one teacher who reportedly experienced health problems after consuming meals provided through the MBG program constructs the incident as a public policy implementation issue rather than merely an isolated health emergency within a school setting. The emphasis on the number of victims, the inclusion of fried shark meat in the meal menu, and the responses of program administrators serves to establish the urgency and public significance of the incident. Zahra and Pratiwi (2025) highlight the importance of appropriate food selection in ensuring the safety of school meal recipients, while Amar and Dzulfaroh (2025) broaden the discussion by examining the social consequences of the incident and the responses of local government authorities. These findings demonstrate that the selection and salience of particular information constitute central mechanisms through which news media construct the meaning of public events. As framing scholarship suggests, presenting information from particular perspectives can shape how audiences interpret social problems and public policies (Teresa, 2022).

Regarding the *diagnose causes* dimension, the findings indicate that Kompas.com and Kompas TV predominantly attribute the incident to insufficient consideration in food selection and potential weaknesses in food preparation and quality control procedures. Statements made by the Head of the MBG Regional Office in West Kalimantan regarding the negligence of the Mulia Kerta Nutrition Fulfillment Service Unit (*Satuan Pelayanan Pemenuhan Gizi*, SPPG) serve as authoritative sources that reinforce the attribution of responsibility to program implementers. Nevertheless, the causal framing presented in the news coverage extends beyond the selection of fried shark meat. Safrina and Rastika (2025) emphasize that additional factors, including ingredient freshness, water quality, equipment sanitation, and food handling procedures, should also be investigated. Accordingly, the news reports construct two interconnected causal interpretations: deficiencies in menu selection and potential weaknesses in food safety management throughout the preparation and distribution process. Importantly, the consumption of shark meat and the potential presence of mercury are presented as possible health risks within the news narratives rather than medically established causes of the incident. Without conclusive laboratory findings, such explanations cannot be treated as verified causal evidence. From a theoretical perspective, these patterns illustrate how news media construct institutional responsibility through the selective presentation of information, authoritative sources, and the prioritization of particular aspects of policy implementation (Hidayat & Prasetyo, 2023).

The *make moral judgement* dimension demonstrates that the news coverage extends beyond the technical aspects of food provision to establish normative expectations regarding the government's responsibility to protect schoolchildren. Statements from nutrition experts suggesting that MBG menus should avoid unnecessarily unusual food choices reflect broader concerns about precautionary principles in providing meals to children (Zahra & Pratiwi, 2025). These moral evaluations are further reinforced through reports highlighting parents' concerns and criticism from the Governor of West Kalimantan regarding inadequate coordination among program administrators. In this context, expressions such as "negligent," "careless," "inappropriate," and "commotion" function as linguistic framing devices that emphasize the seriousness of the incident while directing attention toward institutional responsibility. Kompas TV (2025), for instance, employs a headline emphasizing public commotion following the inclusion of shark meat in the MBG menu, whereas Kompas.com provides more extensive explanations from experts and relevant authorities. Such differences indicate that news framing operates not only through the selection of factual information but also through linguistic choices, the representation of social actors, and the construction of moral evaluations. These findings are consistent with Pranandana et al. (2025), who examine the framing of the MBG program as part of the broader process through which online news media construct public narratives surrounding government policies.

In the *treatment recommendation* dimension, the findings reveal that the solutions emphasized in the news coverage involve two principal aspects: improvements in food safety management and the strengthening of institutional accountability. Technical recommendations include laboratory testing of food samples, assessments of ingredient suitability, improved sanitation monitoring, investigations into food processing procedures, and the selection of food ingredients appropriate for schoolchildren. Meanwhile, institutional responses include the temporary suspension of kitchen operations, the removal of the SPPG unit's leadership, improved coordination among program administrators, and the possibility of permanently closing food preparation facilities if investigations establish violations of food safety standards. Safrina and Rastika (2025) emphasize the importance of comprehensive evaluations of food handling procedures, while Amar and Dzulfaroh (2025) highlight the role of local government accountability and administrative interventions in addressing the controversy. Collectively, the four news reports demonstrate that media narratives extend beyond the immediate medical treatment of affected individuals and emphasize continuous monitoring as an essential requirement for effective program implementation. Thus, the proposed solutions construct food safety governance and institutional responsibility as central conditions for ensuring the credibility and sustainability of the MBG program. However, recommendations reported by the media should not be interpreted as evidence that all proposed corrective measures have been implemented.

A comparison between Kompas.com and Kompas TV reveals similarities in their overall framing orientation, alongside differences in narrative depth and information salience. Kompas.com tends to construct the incident through detailed explanations provided by nutrition specialists, academics, government officials, and parents, while also exploring several possible factors contributing to the alleged food poisoning. In contrast, the analyzed Kompas TV coverage adopts a more concise narrative structure, emphasizing the number of affected individuals, acknowledgment of negligence, potential health risks associated with shark meat consumption, and possible sanctions against the responsible food preparation unit (Kompas TV, 2025). These distinctions suggest that differences in news presentation influence which aspects of an event receive greater prominence, even when the two media outlets share an emphasis on student safety and institutional accountability. The findings are relevant to Susanto et al. (2026), who examine the framing of the MBG program in Kompas.com and Detik.com using Entman's analytical framework. However, the present study offers a more specific analysis by focusing on the alleged food poisoning incident in Ketapang and comparing its representation across two news platforms within the Kompas media ecosystem. Furthermore, this study extends discussions of public policy framing developed by Hidayat and Prasetyo (2023), particularly by demonstrating how challenges in policy implementation can be transformed into broader narratives of institutional responsibility and governance.

From the perspective of Peter L. Berger's social construction of reality, the findings illustrate how news coverage constructs social representations of risk and responsibility in the implementation of the MBG program through the selective emphasis of facts, sources, and interpretations. The process of *externalization* can be understood through the articulation of victims' experiences, statements from government officials, expert assessments, and parental concerns that subsequently enter the public sphere through news reporting. The process of *objectivation* is reflected in how these perspectives are organized into a relatively coherent narrative emphasizing alleged negligence, inadequate supervision, and the need for institutional evaluation. As discussed by Adhi (2018), the social construction of reality involves meaning-making processes through which interpretations become socially recognized and institutionalized. In the context of this study, the media provide a discursive space in which the alleged MBG food poisoning incident is represented as a broader public concern rather than an isolated experience affecting individual victims. Meanwhile, *internalization* may be understood as the potential process through which audiences adopt and interpret these media narratives. Nevertheless, because the present study does not directly examine audience perceptions or responses, the occurrence of internalization cannot be empirically confirmed. Accordingly, the findings primarily explain the construction of meaning at the level of news discourse rather than establishing a direct causal relationship between media framing and changes in public opinion or institutional trust.

Overall, this study demonstrates that the framing of the alleged MBG food poisoning incident in Ketapang establishes a connection between food safety, child protection, institutional governance, and the legitimacy of government policies. Its principal contribution lies in integrating Entman's framing model with the social construction of reality perspective to explain how technical problems in school meal provision are represented as broader issues of institutional responsibility within media discourse. The findings indicate that public evaluations of government programs may be shaped not only by their

normative objectives but also by media representations of implementation quality and institutional performance. Compared with Susanto et al. (2026), who examine the framing of the MBG program from a broader perspective, the present study specifically highlights the construction of food-related risks and accountability within a controversial local incident. Theoretically, these findings contribute to the understanding of framing as a mechanism for organizing and communicating meanings associated with the social construction of reality. Practically, they underscore the importance of information transparency, effective risk communication, food safety monitoring, and interinstitutional coordination in the implementation of the MBG program. Nevertheless, the analysis is limited to four news reports, and its findings should not be generalized to all Kompas news coverage or interpreted as evidence of broader public perceptions. Future research involving larger news corpora and audience reception studies is therefore recommended to investigate the consistency of media framing patterns and their potential relationship with public trust in government programs.

4. CONCLUSION

The findings of this study show that Kompas.com and Kompas TV framed the alleged MBG food poisoning case in Ketapang as an issue of food safety, implementation negligence, and weak accountability among program organizers. The coverage did not merely position the incident as a school-based health case, but also as a public issue related to child safety, the quality of supervision, and the legitimacy of the government program. Through Robert N. Entman's four framing devices, the media defined the problem as a food safety crisis, identified negligence by the SPPG and the selection of shark meat as the main causes, constructed a moral judgment that program organizers had failed to exercise sufficient caution in protecting students, and proposed solutions through technical evaluation, investigation, institutional sanctions, and stronger coordination. This framing pattern indicates that the MBG case in Ketapang was constructed not as an isolated incident, but as a reflection of broader governance problems in the school meal program that require stricter safety standards and more rigorous supervision.

An interpretation based on Peter L. Berger's theory of the social construction of reality further strengthens the understanding that the media actively shape public reality surrounding the MBG case. Facts concerning the victims, statements from officials, expert opinions, parental concerns, the governor's anger, and lexical choices such as "mass poisoning," "negligent," "careless," "inappropriate," and "uproar" were organized into a social construction in which MBG was not assessed solely in terms of the distribution of free meals, but also in relation to food safety, provider capacity, institutional responsibility, and child protection. This study confirms that media framing can influence the boundaries of the social legitimacy of a policy, particularly when the policy directly affects vulnerable groups such as schoolchildren. The main contribution of this study lies in its specific interpretation of the MBG poisoning case in Ketapang as an intersection of food issues, child protection, media representation, and public trust in government programs.

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