



Framing Analysis of News About Damaged Roads in East Cirebon Regency on Cirebon People's Online Media for the Period of April 2025"

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Abstract

Background. In the contemporary communication landscape, online media has transformed into a central pillar in the dissemination of information and the formation of public opinion. The speed, accessibility, and global reach of digital platforms enable news and information to spread instantly, transcending geographical and temporal constraints.

Aims. This study aims to analyze how the local media outlet *Rakyat Cirebon* framed news coverage of damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency during April 2025. The issue of road infrastructure gained public attention due to its significant impact on residents' daily lives and economic activities.

Methods. Using a qualitative approach and the framing analysis model developed by Robert N. Entman, this research explores how the media selects, emphasizes, and structures information to shape particular meanings in its audience's minds.

Result. The findings reveal that *Rakyat Cirebon* consistently framed road damage as a failure of the local government to respond to public needs. The four framing elements—problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation—indicate a strong narrative that criticizes the executive branch while portraying the regional legislature (DPRD) as an active defender of public interests. Visual strategies, including emotive photographs, dramatic language, and selective sourcing, further reinforce the dominant frame presented.

Conclusion. This study highlights that media framing is not merely a reflection of social reality, but an active process of constructing that reality through deliberate editorial choices. As such, media outlets hold an ethical responsibility to provide balanced and accurate reporting.

Implementation. The findings also underline the importance of media literacy among the public, enabling citizens to engage critically with the narratives constructed by the press. On the other hand, local governments must be more proactive and transparent in addressing public issues in the media.

Keywords: Framing, Local Media, Damaged Roads, Cirebon People, Entman



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INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary communication landscape, online media has transformed into a major pillar in the dissemination of information and the formation of public opinion. The speed, accessibility, and global reach of digital platforms enable news and information to spread instantly, transcending geographical and temporal constraints (Castells, 2010). This phenomenon not only changes how people consume news but also gives the media significant power to influence public perception of social, political, and economic issues. In Indonesia, the rapid growth of internet users has spurred the proliferation of online news portals, including local media, which play a vital role in voicing regional issues and facilitating public participation in local discourse (Ohorella, 2019).

One of the crucial issues often highlighted by the local media is infrastructure, especially road conditions. In various regions of Indonesia, including Cirebon Regency, damaged roads often trigger public unrest and various forms of protest. Poor road conditions not only hinder mobility and economic activities but also have the potential to cause accidents and material losses for residents (Pambudi et al., 2022). This phenomenon creates complex dynamics between local governments, communities, and the media. Local media, in this context, often serve as a mouthpiece for people's aspirations and complaints, as well as a platform to monitor the government's performance in addressing urgent infrastructure issues. The case of damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency, which triggered citizen protests, is a real example of how local issues can attract media attention and become a public agenda.

In the context of damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency, Cirebon People's online media plays a central role in shaping public narratives and perceptions. As a local media outlet in the region, we are the primary source of information for the public on the development of this issue, including the authorities' response and citizens' protests. However, the role of the media does not stop at the mere presentation of facts. Through selection, prominence, and framing, the media can direct public attention, shape opinions, and even influence policy agendas (Choiriyati, 2015). Therefore, it is important to analyze how people in Cirebon frame news coverage of this damaged road, given its potential impact on public understanding and pressure on local governments.

The main problem in reporting sensitive issues, such as damaged roads, is how the media selects and presents information. This process, known as framing, involves highlighting certain aspects of reality while ignoring others, thereby shaping a particular interpretation in the minds of

the audience (Entman, 1993). In the case of the damaged road in East Cirebon, the crucial question is how the people of Cirebon frame the issue: do they highlight the government's failures, the suffering of citizens, or the proposed solutions? Each framing choice will yield a different narrative and may influence the public's perception of responsibility, the cause of the problem, and possible solutions. Without careful analysis of this framing, our understanding of the media's role in local issues would be incomplete.

The impact of media framing on the issue of damaged roads extends beyond shaping public opinion and also affects local government accountability. If the media consistently frames this issue as a failure of the government, this can increase public pressure for improvements and reforms. Conversely, if framing tends to distract from government responsibility or blame other factors, it can reduce the urgency of problem-solving. Therefore, framing analysis is essential for understanding how the media shapes the dynamics of government accountability and responsiveness to community needs. This study will investigate how people in Cirebon assign responsibility and present solutions in their reporting, which directly affects public perception of local government performance (Rangkuti, 2024).

Although there has been extensive research on framing analysis in media reporting, studies specifically examining local media framing of infrastructure issues, such as damaged roads, remain relatively limited, especially in Indonesia. Most framing research tends to focus on national media or larger political and social issues. These limitations create a gap in our understanding of how local media, which are in proximity to communities and grassroots issues, construct reality and influence opinion at the regional level. In fact, local media are often the only source of information relevant to the community in a particular area, so the framing they use has a significant impact. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the literature gap by focusing on the Cirebon People's online media and the issue of damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency.

The novelty of this research lies in its specific focus on local online media, *Rakyat Cirebon*, in framing the issue of damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency. In contrast to previous studies that may have been more general or focused on national media, this study provides in-depth insights into how framing dynamics operate at the local level, where the media has a more intimate relationship with communities and issues that affect daily life. In addition, by analyzing concrete infrastructure issues that directly impact society, this study offers a new perspective on the role of media in advocacy and oversight of regional development. This approach allows the identification

of framing patterns that may be unique to local contexts and specific issues, thereby enriching the field of communication science, particularly in media analysis and local journalism.

Based on the phenomena, problems, and research gaps described, this study formulates the central question: How does the Cirebon People's online media frame news about damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency during the April 2025 period? To answer this question, this study has specific objectives: (1) To identify the selection of issues carried out by the people of Cirebon in reporting on damaged roads. (2) Analyze the prominence of certain aspects in the news. (3) Examine how the people of Cirebon define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and recommend solutions related to the issue of damaged roads, in accordance with Robert N. Entman's framing analysis model (Entman, 1993). Thus, this research is expected to provide a comprehensive understanding of the construction of local media reality on crucial infrastructure issues.

The expected solution from this research is not only limited to academic understanding, but also has significant practical implications. By revealing how the people of Cirebon frame the issue of damaged roads, this research can provide valuable insights for local governments to understand public perceptions shaped by the media, enabling them to formulate more effective and responsive communication strategies. For the media themselves, the results of this research can be a mirror to evaluate their journalistic practices, encouraging more balanced and responsible reporting. Meanwhile, for the public, understanding the mechanisms of framing will improve media literacy, allowing them to become more critical consumers of information and not be easily influenced by a single narrative. Ultimately, this research contributes to collective efforts to create a healthier and more accountable information ecosystem at the local level.

Overall, this research offers an important contribution to understanding the role of local media in shaping public opinion on infrastructure issues. Using Robert N. Entman's framing analysis, this study not only identifies how the people of Cirebon frame the news of damaged roads but also analyzes the implications of the framing on public perception and government accountability. The findings of this study are expected to be a valuable reference for academics, media practitioners, local governments, and the general public in navigating the complexities of the digital media landscape and local development issues. This research reaffirms that the media is a key actor in the construction of social reality, and critical analysis of framing becomes an indispensable tool for understanding these dynamics.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Framing is the leading theory in this study, rooted in mass communication and critical media studies. This concept fundamentally refers to how the media selects and highlights certain aspects of a social reality to create a specific meaning (Entman, 1993). In a journalistic context, framing is a selective practice—what is shown and what is omitted, as well as how it is structured and presented, will significantly affect public perception. Therefore, framing does not only concern the content of the news, but also the narrative structure and language choices used by the media to form certain discourses (Eriyanto, 2022).

The framing theory used in this study is derived from a model developed by Robert N. Entman, which divides the framing process into four elements: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and treatment recommendations (Entman, 1993). These four elements shape the social construction of an issue. In this study, these four aspects are analyzed in the context of news reports on damaged roads by *the Cirebon People's* media.

The concept of framing is rooted in the theory of social constructivism, which emphasizes that social reality is not objective and fixed but is shaped through the processes of symbolic interaction and media representation (Goffman, 1974). In the media world, reality is framed by ideological, political, and market interests. Therefore, framing analysis is not just about "what is reported," but also "how the news is told"—which ultimately shapes public perception of an issue.

In addition to the leading framing theory, this study is also supported by McCombs and Shaw's (1972) agenda-setting theory, which holds that the media can influence public attention to specific issues. By choosing issues that are reported intensively, the media indirectly sets the public agenda. In the case of damaged roads in East Cirebon, local media such as *Cirebon People* played an important role in raising the issue as a community concern.

Furthermore, the theory of reality construction by Berger and Luckmann (1966) became the philosophical foundation of how the media not only reflect reality but also shape it. The process of selection and representation in the news is a social process that shapes the collective meaning and understanding of society. In this case, the media is not neutral, because every editorial choice—including viewpoints, sources, and diction—is a form of symbolic power that has social consequences.

The critical media theories of figures such as Todd Gitlin (1980) also make important contributions to understanding that framing is not only a technical editorial process but also a means of reproducing dominant ideologies. In situations of damaged roads involving local governments, media reporting can be interpreted as a tool of resistance or of legitimacy against authority. The media can portray the DPRD as a rescue actor or, conversely, show the government's failure to fulfill the community's fundamental rights. To understand the context of the medium used, the theory of online media characteristics is also crucial. According to McQuail (2010), online media has a fast, real-time, interactive, and flexible nature. This allows news to develop dynamically and quickly respond to hot issues. Media such as *Rakyat Cirebon* leverage the advantages of online media to respond to mass actions and public complaints, as well as to frame who is responsible for infrastructure damage.

The advantages of online media should also be carefully considered, as they can lead to bias, disinformation, or the dominance of a single narrative. Therefore, the theory of media literacy (Potter, 2004) supports the importance of people having critical awareness in analyzing news. Media literacy allows readers to recognize framing, identify biases, and evaluate the interests that may be hidden behind the presentation of information. This is especially relevant when issues such as damaged roads involve conflicts of interest between the people and the government.

From a journalistic technical perspective, news structure is an important part of how information is framed. The components of titles, leads, news content, and closures are not only mechanical but also have a rhetorical function in building meaning (Eriyanto, 2022). The use of language, diction, metaphors, and visualizations such as photos or videos plays a role in conveying emotions and media attitudes towards issues. In this context, framing is often reinforced by visual strategies, including the placement of photos of protesting citizens, potholes, or officials' expressions.

Finally, this literature review confirms that media reporting is a field of discourse, not just a mirror of reality. With a framing theory approach, this study reveals how *the people of Cirebon* not only report road damage but also shape public opinion about who is worthy of trust, who should be responsible, and how this problem should be solved. The combination of framing theory, agenda-setting, online media, and social construction provides a robust framework for analyzing the representation of public issues in the local digital media space.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a framing analysis method to understand in depth how the mass media, in this case the Cirebon People's news portal, frames public issues related to road damage in East Cirebon Regency. The qualitative approach was chosen because it is interpretive and exploratory, allowing researchers to explore the meaning, representation, and construction of social reality shaped by the media (Moleong, 2018). This approach is also relevant in analyzing how the media constructs narratives symbolically and ideologically through the language and structure of news (Creswell, 2014).

In its analysis, this study adopts Robert N. Entman's (1993) framing model, which emphasizes four main elements: defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and making treatment recommendations. This model not only helps understand how an issue is constructed but also uncovers biases, ideological preferences, and narrative effects that shape the public's perception of an event. Framing is understood here not as information manipulation but as an inevitable process of selection and prominence in journalistic practice (Eriyanto, 2022).

The subject of this research is the online media Rakyat Cirebon, a local news portal that actively reports on public issues in the Cirebon area and its surroundings. The object of the research is news about damaged roads in East Cirebon Regency during the April 2025 period, which is the focus of public debate because it concerns citizens' fundamental rights to government infrastructure and services. The selection of the Cirebon People as a subject is based on their significant role in shaping local public opinion, as well as on their media characteristics, which combine fast digital content with distinctive local narratives (Ceasariani, 2018).

Data collection was carried out through documentation studies and indirect observations, namely by browsing and downloading five main news articles relevant to the issue of damaged roads in the April 2025 period from the official website of *the Cirebon People* (rakcer.id and rakyatcirebon.disway.id). The stories are then analyzed textually to identify structure, language choices, sources, issue placement, and visual elements such as titles and accompanying images. This process is also complemented by searching the literature, including books, scientific journals, and online articles, to support the theoretical framework and the discussion of the data (Sugiyono, 2018).

The data analysis technique in this study follows the steps outlined in Miles and Huberman (1994): data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions drawn. In the data reduction stage, the

researcher screens and summarizes information from the five news articles to find the main patterns and meanings relevant to the research objectives. The presentation of data is in the form of narrative descriptions and categorization tables of framing elements, in the style of Entman, so readers can systematically see how framing is formed. Meanwhile, conclusions are drawn based on the interpretation of narrative patterns, diction choices, and media perspectives.

The framing analysis process in this study also involves interpreting symbolic and ideological meanings in news texts, including word selection (diction), quotes from sources, and visual elements that accompany the news. As Fairclough (1995) argues, media language is not merely a means of communication but also an instrument of power that can shape social opinion and legitimacy. Thus, this analysis is not only descriptive but also critical of the media's role in reproducing public discourse on infrastructure issues.

With this structured method, the research is expected to provide a comprehensive picture of how people in *Cirebon* frame the issue of damaged roads in the East Cirebon area, as well as the extent to which the construction of the media reflects public interests, political pressures, or certain hegemonic narratives. The results of this research are also expected to contribute to the development of local political communication studies and to more balanced and accountable digital journalism practices.

DISCUSSION

This study analyzes five main news stories published by *Cirebon People's Media* during April 2025 related to the issue of road damage in the East Cirebon Regency area. Using Robert N. Entman's model of framing, each news story is analyzed to examine how the media constructs reality, shapes public opinion, and places certain actors in key positions. The results show that the media narrative is consistent in highlighting the DPRD as a defender of the people and the local government as slow to respond.

The five news studies showed a pattern of repeated news. News headlines, quotes from sources, and photos generally place road damage as an acute problem that must be addressed immediately. At the same time, *the people of Cirebon* actively cited statements by members of the House of Representatives, especially M. Luthfi, who became a central figure in defending the community's aspirations. This strategy clearly defines the problem, namely that road damage is a real problem for the neglected village community (Entman, 1993; Eriyanto, 2022).

In the Diagnose Causes element, the news explicitly states that the leading cause of road damage is poor planning and a lack of development priorities by local governments. The DPRD, in this case, is not only referred to as a party that knows the situation on the ground, but also as an actor who voices the public's anxiety. This suggests that the media selectively frames the cause as the responsibility of one particular party, namely the regional executive, and tends to negate the government's voice in the narrative.

Table 1 Results of Framing Analysis of the Five News According to the Entman Model

| Yes | News Headlines | Define Problems | Diagnosis Causes | Moral Judgement | Treatment Recommendation |
|-----|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Luthfi Highlights Damaged Roads | Severely damaged roads in Karangwareng District | No significant improvement | The government is considered slow | Urging local governments to intervene |
| 2 | Damaged Roads Highlighted by DPRD | Road access endangers users | Lack of priority budget | People are the victims. | The government must be responsive |
| 3 | DPRD Encourages Rapid Action | The infrastructure was damaged during the rain | Local governments are not agile | The government's performance is questionable | Need for an immediate field inspection |
| 4 | Luthfi: Do not be silent! | Public complaints are increasing | No road surveillance | Passive bureaucratic elite | There must be sanctions |
| 5 | Local Governments Must Act | Threats to the safety of citizens | Uneven development budget | Inequality in the eastern region | Development must be prioritized |

(Source: Dede Fiqri Research, 2025)

From the table, it can be seen that all news contains moral judgments that lead to criticism of the government. The media consistently uses terms such as "slow," "passive," and "ignored" to describe the government's unpreparedness in addressing the problem of broken roads. On the contrary, the DPRD—especially PKB faction member Luthfi—is described as an active, vocal voice of the people and urges change. This forms a binary representation: the government as the negligent party and the DPRD as the rescue party.

Visual strategies also play an important role in framing issues. In the news, a photo of residents walking on muddy, waterlogged streets reinforces the narrative of people's suffering. The image is not neutral; It serves as an opinion amplifier and a symbol of development injustice. This

photo was published in a news story titled "Damaged Roads Highlighted by DPRD," which accompanied a harsh quote from Luthfi about the government's slow response.



The language used in these news stories is also fascinating to study. The media uses an emotional, populist style, such as "citizens forced to risk their lives," "potholes like puddles," and "battlefield-like access." This diction is not just a description, but part of a framing strategy that builds the reader's tension and emotions. As Fairclough (1995) notes, media language has an ideological dimension that can create a particular meaning effect in the minds of the audience.

The analysis also shows that *the people of Cirebon* do not give much space to resource persons from the executive branch, including public works offices and regional officials. This

absence of government voices creates an unequal narrative—a form of framing through exclusion that indirectly directs readers' opinions toward a single point of view. This aligns with Gitlin's (1980) findings on framing as a means of reproducing the dominance of certain discourses in the mass media.

It is important to note that although these local media appear to be on the side of the people, the representation shown remains dependent on a particular political elite—in this case, members of the House of Representatives. Thus, news that seems to be pro-people in fact remains dependent on the logic of power and local political interests, as affirmed in the theory of the construction of social reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1966).

In this context, the media function is not only as a conveyor of information but also as a discourse actor that shapes perceptions and influences social action. *The people of Cirebon* play an active role in framing infrastructure issues into political public discourse. Thus, the media serves as a mediator between public grievances, legislative interests, and pressure on the local executive (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; McQuail, 2010).

The results of this study show that framing analysis is not only an academic tool but also a mirror of local political dynamics that unfold symbolically in the public space of the media. It helps us understand that behind every story lies a complex social construct—containing messages, ideologies, and power that are not always visible. Therefore, media literacy is important so that people are not only news consumers, but also critical readers of the narrative presented.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that *the people of Cirebon* consistently frame the issue of damaged roads as a form of local government negligence and position the DPRD, especially legislator M. Luthfi, as an actor who actively defends the community. This framing is evident in the four elements developed by Entman: problems are explicitly defined, causes are directed at the government, moral values are reinforced through emotional diction, and solutions are recommended by urging the government to act quickly.

The findings of this study also reveal that local media have strategic power in shaping public opinion at the regional level. *Cirebon People*, a local media with significant influence in the Ciayumajakuning area, plays an important role in raising issues close to the community's interests. However, framing that is too biased towards one party—without giving space to the local

government's narrative—can create biases in public information that could lead public perception in a specific direction without a balanced basis.

Advice and Recommendations

Based on these results, the first suggestion was addressed to local media, such as the Cirebon People, to be more

1. Prioritizing the principle of balanced reporting. When conveying public issues that affect the wider community, the media needs to present perspectives from all parties involved, including local government and technical agencies responsible for infrastructure. That way, the media can function as a fair and educational information channel for its readers.
2. Addressed to the Cirebon Regency government to be more responsive to public complaints and establish active communication relationships with the media. The government needs to be present in the newsrooms, not only as an object of criticism, but also as a source of clarification and follow-up plans. The government's presence in the media narrative can balance the evolving framing and strengthen transparency and public accountability.
3. For researchers or students of Communication Sciences, this research can be a reference to develop further studies related to framing local media on other public issues, such as education, health, or the environment. Framing studies are not only valuable for media content analysis. However, they can also broaden understanding of the dynamics of symbolic power in mass communication, particularly in local contexts that are often overlooked in the academic literature.

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