

## Blurring Context and One-Sided: *Kompas.com* in Framing the West Papua Crisis

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### Abstract

In September 2021, the conflict between Free West Papua Movement and the Indonesian National Army (TNI) heated up. *Kompas.com*, one of Indonesia's media with the most extensive readership, contributes significantly to public understanding and perception of the West Papua crisis. This study aims to examine how *Kompas.com* frames the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2021. Framing analysis examines three important aspects of news framing: crisis frames, thematic and episodic frames, and news sources. The news regarding the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2020 was only filled with three frames: conflict, attribution of responsibility, and human interest. *Kompas.com* has tried to provide space for parties with a moderate position in the conflict, such as the IDI (Indonesian Medical Association), Komnas HAM (National Commission on Human Rights), and KontraS (The Commission for Disappeared and Victims of Violence). However, in general, the news is still very much dominated by news sources from the Indonesian government and the military and not using enough thematic frames. *Kompas.com* needs to be more comprehensive to report on the crisis in West Papua during the reporting period of 7-30 September 2020. *Kompas.com* also does not elaborate that the Free West Papua Movement is plural and fragmentary, with a spectrum of violent movements to peace movements. The conclusion of this study, *Kompas.com* tends to blur the context of the West Papua crisis, which risks limiting and directing public understanding of the West Papua crisis to exist within the government's frame.

**Keywords:** quantitative framing; crisis frame; crisis; West Papua conflict; online media

### Abstrak

Pada September 2021, konflik antara Gerakan Papua Barat Merdeka dan Tentara Nasional Indonesia (TNI) memanaskan. *Kompas.com*, sebagai salah satu media dengan jumlah pembaca terbesar di Indonesia memberikan kontribusi signifikan pada pemahaman dan persepsi publik terhadap krisis Papua Barat. Studi ini bertujuan untuk memeriksa bagaimana *Kompas.com* membingkai krisis Papua Barat pada 7-30 September 2021. Studi ini dengan menggunakan analisis framing memeriksa tiga aspek penting dalam pembingkai berita, yaitu bingkai krisis, bingkai tematik dan episodik, dan sumber berita. Pemberitaan krisis Papua Barat pada 7-30 September 2020 hanya diisi dengan tiga bingkai: konflik, atribusi tanggung jawab, dan human interest. *Kompas.com* mencoba memberi ruang bagi pihak-pihak yang berposisi moderat dalam konflik, seperti IDI (Ikatan Dokter Indonesia), Komnas HAM (Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia) dan KontraS (Komisi Orang Hilang dan Korban Tindak Kekerasan). Namun secara umum, berita *Kompas.com* masih sangat didominasi oleh sumber berita dari pemerintah Indonesia dan militer serta kurang menggunakan bingkai tematik. *Kompas.com* tidak cukup komprehensif dalam melaporkan krisis di Papua Barat selama periode pelaporan 7-30 September 2020. *Kompas.com* juga tidak menjelaskan bahwa Gerakan Papua Barat Merdeka bersifat plural dan fragmentaris dengan spektrum gerakan yang mengandalkan kekerasan hingga gerakan damai. Simpulan studi ini *Kompas.com* cenderung mengaburkan konteks krisis Papua Barat, yang berisiko membatasi dan mengarahkan pemahaman publik tentang krisis Papua Barat untuk ada dalam bingkai pemerintah semata.

**Kata kunci:** framing kuantitatif; bingkai krisis; krisis; konflik Papua Barat; media online

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## INTRODUCTION

In September 2021, the conflict between Free West Papua Movement and the Indonesian National Army (TNI) heated up. The Indonesian media reported the crisis extensively with several episodes: the attack on the Trans Papua toll construction project in the Bintang Mountains, the burning of strategic locations and public facilities (such as health facilities, elementary schools, banks, markets, residents' houses, and bunkers), to attacks on health workers. It cannot be denied that the aggression against civilian facilities and entities is a heinous act. However, a larger context exists: the attack is part of the prolonged conflict between Free West Papua Movement and the Indonesian military and government. From the Indonesia media coverage during September 2021, it can be seen that most of the reporting did not result in the proper elaboration of the crisis, relying heavily on government sources without providing space for confirmation for separatist groups or representatives of West Papuan civil society. It is also exacerbated by news coverage that tends to simplify matters by not explaining that the Free West Papua Movement group is a group with a diverse spectrum. Reporting also tends to blur context by not explaining the history, origins, and the things that trigger conflicts and attacks from the Free West Papua Movement group. One of the media most dominant in reporting on the conflict in September 2021 was *Kompas.com*, even when compared to the four other online media that were top ranking in Indonesia, namely *Okezone.com*, *Tribunnews.com*, *Kumparan.com* and *Pikiran-rakyat.com*.

The coverage of the West Papua conflicts in Indonesian media has always been disproportionate. Indonesian media tend to report on the West Papua conflicts using the perspective of the Indonesian government and relying on the government's narrative (Adiprasetyo, 2020). In many cases where the West Papuan community has experienced persecution, the Indonesian media has yet to provide significant coverage to the West Papuan community, CSOs, or academics (Adiprasetyo, 2020). The Indonesian media, which uses government statements as the primary reference in their reporting, reinforces the government's message to confront efforts to find a way for independence for the West Papuan community. The Indonesian media participates and plays an active role in voicing a 'war on terror' against the Free West Papua Movement and tends to ignore the context and the long struggle of the West Papuan community. One of the most obvious things is how the terminology "Armed Criminal Group" and "Terrorists" were pinned on the Free West Papua Movement produced by the government and then reproduced repeatedly and excessively by Indonesian media (Robie, 2021). It is difficult to argue that the state's hegemony influences the Indonesian media.

Indonesian media cover the issue of the West Papua conflict (and struggle for independence) in a very mono-dimensional way. Ignoring that The West Papua movement is not a monolithic movement but diversified and involves many wing organizations, the paths taken by the West Papua movement spanned from armed movements to diplomacy (Ondawame & King, 2002; Pamungkas & Rusdiarti, 2017; Webb-Gannon, 2021). In the West Papuan activism that occurred several years ago, *#Papuanlivesmatter* is the resonance of the international *#Blacklivesmatter* movement and the result of the intersection of various issues. This complexity needs to be more widely captured by the Indonesian media and journalists (Webb-Gannon, 2022).

Although it cannot be denied that there have been acts of violence committed by Free West Papua Movement, the Indonesian media tends to be short-sighted by not providing proper coverage of militarism action and acts of violence committed by Indonesian military forces in West Papua for decades. The Indonesian media does not use a balanced frame to explain why and how acts of violence are the chosen path to fight for West Papua independence. A genealogical explanation of the crisis in West Papua is almost absent in most reports regarding

the West Papua conflicts (Adiprasetyo, 2020; Firman, 2019; Harsono, 2014).

Meanwhile, the international media cannot be relied upon to cover what is happening in West Papua. There have been incidents where foreign journalists have been forced out of West Papua by Indonesian security forces (Robie, 2017). Apart from journalists, staff from several international CSOs, academics, and foreign researchers were also rejected entry to Papua (Tapsell, 2015). Leadbeater (2008); Perrottet and Robie (2011) mention West Papua as a “blind spot” for foreign media and journalists.

The number of studies discussing the media and West Papua itself conducted by Indonesian scholars in Indonesian is minimal (Adiprasetyo, 2022a). West Papua is not an issue that receives proper attention from communication and journalism scholars in Indonesia (Adiprasetyo, 2022b). The majority of publications are written by foreign scholars. Studies that have been conducted show that the poor information and media ecosystem in West Papua is caused by practices of isolationism, violence, and subnational authoritarianism (Firman, 2019; Robie, 2013; Tapsell, 2015). It is difficult to argue that the problem of media coverage of West Papua is not related to the regional politics of West Papua, ethnic groupings, and Indonesia’s protracted colonialism, which was accompanied by a variety of Indonesia violent tactics (Elmslie & Webb-Gannon, 2013; King, 2004; Kirsch, 2010; Lawson, 2017). Some scholars argue that the administration wanted to prevent international or local media from disclosing the situation in West Papua, which began with a conflict of interest around the natural riches of West Papua owns copper and gold (Leith, 2003; Robie, 2008, 2012). It creates unfamiliarity for journalists and the public about issues and what happened to West Papua, even exacerbating segregative views and racist sentiments (Harsa & Rofil, 2021).

Tapsell (2015) describes security forces and local government are the main factors influencing mainstream news content in the region. Local independent journalists who work in West Papua or establish themselves as reporters often face threats from the political establishment (Blades, 2016). According to Supriatma (2013), the military is “secretly, and broadly, involved in domestic security operations” in West Papua, which includes watching the media thoroughly.

*Kompas.com* media, as one of the media with the most extensive readership in Indonesia, certainly contributes significantly to public understanding and perception of the issue of West Papua. Every frame, highlighting and selecting the facts of the West Papua incident can create logical consequences for public perception of the crisis in West Papua: history, causes, and escalation to the current situation.

This study analyzes how *Kompas.com* framed the crisis in West Papua on 7-30 September 2021. The research analyzed three essential aspects of news framing variables: the crisis frame based on Semetko and Valkenburg’s framework (2000), thematic and episodic frames (Iyengar, 1991), and *Kompas.com*’s use of news sources. The crisis frame framework was chosen to find out which frame was most used by *Kompas.com* in reporting the West Papua crisis sparked by attacks by separatist groups. The thematic and episodic frameworks were chosen to see how the two compare when *Kompas.com* reported on the crisis in West Papua, whether they provided comprehensive descriptions and considered the context (thematic) or focused on events. Then the element of the news source becomes an indicator of which party is utilized the most by *Kompas.com* in reporting on the crisis.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study relies on quantitative framing analysis. Framing is a process by the media to sort out which information will be displayed to the public and which information will be

eliminated (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). Framing can be seen from theories, approaches, perspectives, paradigms, parts of media effects, multiparadigm research programs, and analytical techniques (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). Framing is a popular concept used in mass media studies (Adiprasetyo & Larasati, 2021; Bock, 2020; D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). There are many studies related to news framing in the sub-fields of mass communication and political communication, such as government policies (Adiprasetyo et al., 2023; Famulari, 2020), disasters, racist issues, sexism, terrorism (Adiprasetyo & Larasati, 2021), political campaigns, legislation, policy formation, litigation and court decisions, international affairs (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010), issues of wealth and poverty (Kendall, 2011).

Within the scope of the West Papua crisis, Adiprasetyo's study (2020) shows that the government's narrative is very dominant in reporting even when West Papuan citizens and ethnic groups become victims. Very few news sources from West Papuan circles or who represent partiality towards West Papua appear in the news (Adiprasetyo, 2020). Framing generally works in two ways, namely through the selection and salience of an event.

Crisis framing can be used to examine how the media reports on a crisis event. Previous studies have shown that frames are proven to be able to influence public opinion on an issue and can encourage the formation of public attitudes toward responding to a crisis (Nijkraak et al., 2015). The five crisis frames used as categories in this study are conflict, human interest, economic consequences, morality, and attribution of responsibility. Semetko and Valkenburg's crisis frame is used in this study because it is an extension of Neuman et al. (1992) and has been used by previous studies examining the West Papua crisis (Adiprasetyo, 2020), so the findings of this study can be compared to previous studies. The crisis frame categories are as follows:

The conflict frame highlights conflicts between individuals, groups, and institutions. Several studies show that the media often uses conflict to attract the attention of audiences (Neuman et al., 1992), especially with polarized force where the media determines who 'wins' and who 'loses.' Conflict frames are often found in political news.

The economic consequences frame displays the consequences that will befall individuals, groups, institutions, regions, or countries due to the events. Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) added that the broad impact of an event is a vital news value, and the frame of economic consequences is one of them.

The morality frame highlights the existence of a moral message, religious teachings, or wisdom from the events that occurred. Sometimes journalists use the 'borrowing mouth' technique to be able to write moral messages by using quotes from sources in their stories. Journalists use this technique to avoid subjectivity (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

The human interest frame highlights the emotions of human figures in reporting issues, events, or problems. This frame aligns with Neuman's human impact frame (1992). Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) mentioned that the media and editors often rack their brains to make news that can capture audiences' attention, in which the human interest frame is one way out. By dramatizing or 'evoking feelings' (emotionalizing), the audience will be touched and interested in the reported events.

The attribution of responsibility frame conveys that the government, individual, or group must be responsible for the cause or solution of an issue or problem. For example, the media in the United States shapes public perceptions about who is responsible for overcoming social problems there (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000).

Thematic and episodic frames are the frames used by the media to describe social reality and issues. Episodic frames focus on reporting an event in a microlens or only focus on specific events or individuals. Meanwhile, the thematic frames report events by providing a more



general systemic context so that audiences understand the events' root causes better. Iyengar (1991) obtained these two frames from an experimental study, which aims to determine how framing affects audiences.

Using episodic and thematic frames that need to be balanced can influence the audience's judgment of an event. For example, an episodic frame that only focuses on seeing an event ignores the broader context, such as the government's and society's responsibilities (An & Gower, 2009). Context, the broad picture, and the government's responsibility for a crisis event are meaningful discussions that must be included in the news. Audiences tend to blame victims reported in an episodic frame without any thematic explanation of events (Iyengar, 1991). The government and politicians can also be 'freed' from their sense of responsibility because the big picture regarding the incident is not in the news (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). Research further supports that news is vital in shaping public opinion regarding who is responsible for social problems (Iyengar & Kinder, 2010; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000), so that the use of thematic and episodic frames needs to be balanced, especially the use of more episodic frames than thematic frames will obscure the government's responsibility in crisis events. Public understanding will differ from the context of the crisis incident and, simultaneously, need to remember the social sphere and government, which should have a significant role in overcoming crisis events.

News sources can be defined as the origins of where the news comes from, both from places and figures who are directly involved in an event. News sources are one of the elements that form a frame and have a strong influence within that frame (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). News sources then become one of the variables studied because they have a close relationship with framing, where all information obtained from news sources is, in fact, already a view of how news sources frame an issue which is then negotiated by journalists, editors, and news organizations involved in news production (Adiprasetyo, 2020). Most importantly, news sources can influence public opinion significantly (Nijkraake et al., 2015).

The population for this research is *Kompas.com* news which discusses the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2021. Data was retrieved using the keywords '*kkb*', '*kelompok kriminal bersenjata*', '*nakes*', '*tenaga kesehatan*', '*kiwirok*', '*puskesmas*', '*penyerangan nakes*' dan '*penyerangan tenaga kesehatan*', using the *Kompas.com* search column and Google News. The selection of these keywords is based on keywords by the theme of the reports so that they can cover all the news. If there is news in the form of a list of events compiled in one news story, the researcher will only analyze news related to the West Papua crisis.

The sampling technique that uses the entire population is called total sampling or saturated sample. The entire population of 93 News is used as the study unit (sample). The sampling technique that uses the entire population is called total sampling or saturated sample. The total sampling technique used in this study was chosen in order to be able to examine the frame in reporting on the attack on health workers in Kiwirok, West Papua, as a whole, without exception.

Coding is one of the procedures of content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004), which is the process of the researcher's interpretation of the data he finds based on the rules set by the researcher. Coding functions to translate the findings data so that it can be 'read' and used to answer research questions. Coding was carried out with the help of a coding sheet, which is a sheet that contains information related to the research variables and is used to assist the intercoder (the person doing the coding) in interpreting the research data. The coding sheet used in this study contains measuring instruments for variables that have been operationalized and will be variables.

Coding will be carried out by two intercoders. The intercoder must have cognitive abilities and background appropriate to the research theme, understand the rules the researcher sets, and apply them consistently during the coding process to ensure it runs well (Krippendorff, 2004).

The reliability test analysis will use Krippendorff alpha ( $\alpha$ ) because that is the most common measure of agreement and is suitable for testing data on content analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). In addition, Krippendorff alpha ( $\alpha$ ) can also be used for various types of data; a small or large number of samples, an unlimited number of intercoder, types of size scales, and up to incomplete data values (Krippendorff, 2004).

The reliability test was carried out using the SPSS version 26 application with the following results in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Reliability Test Krippendorff alpha ( $\alpha$ )

Variable	Indicator	$\alpha$
Crisis Frame	Conflict	0.9194
	Human Interest	0.7880
	Morality	1
	Economic Consequences	1
	Attribution of Responsibility	0.8241
News Source	Government	0.8572
	Police or Military	0.8544
	Academics	1
	West Papua Representation	1
	Activist	1
	Health Workers	0.9511
	Other News Sources	1
Thematic and Episodic Frame	Thematic and Episodic Frame	0.7294

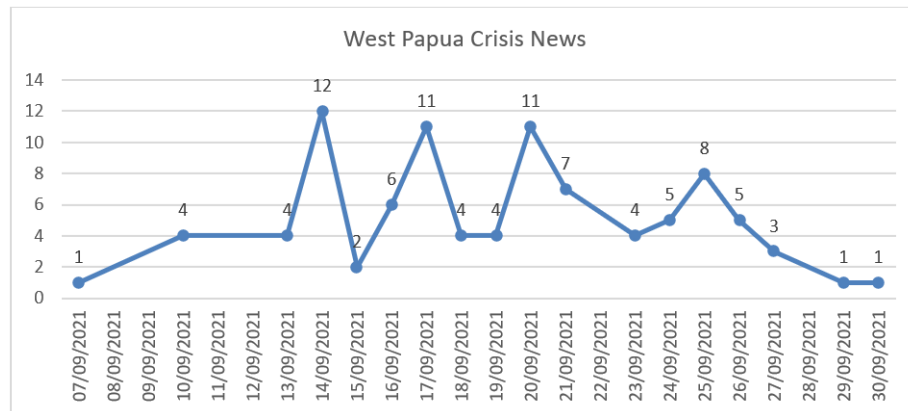
Source: Research Result (2023)

In Hayes and Krippendorff (2007), Krippendorff's minimum alpha limit to be said to be reliable is 0.7000 with a probability  $q = 0.0125$ . Based on these results, the coding process of this study is reliable because all results show numbers more significant than 0.7000. Any disagreements in the codification were then discussed between coders so that a unanimous decision was obtained.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the period 7-30 September 2021, 93 *Kompas.com* news related to the West Papua conflict occurred. 66 news, or 70.97% of the total news, in a straight news format, while 27 news, or 29.03%, is in a feature format. The dynamics of *Kompas.com* reporting on September 7-30, 2021, is illustrated in Figure 1.

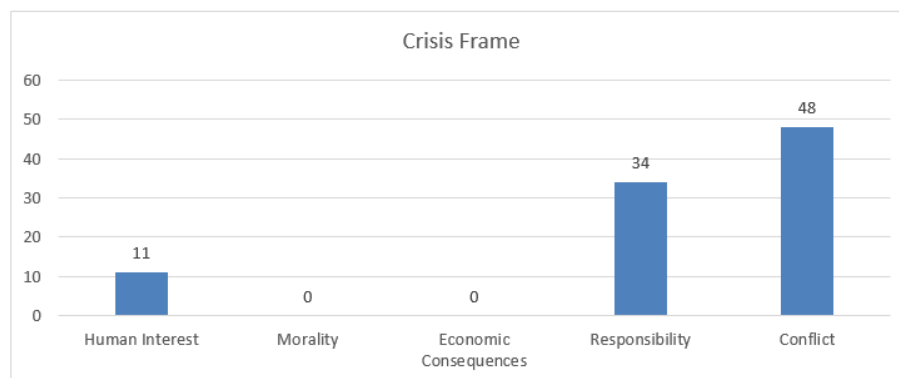
There was a significant increase in news coverage regarding the West Papua crisis on September 14th, 2021; this was related to reporting on the attack by a separatist group commanded by Lamek Taplon on health facilities in Kiwirok, West Papua. The high coverage on September 17th, 2021, contained news that focused on the evacuation of health workers who were victims of attacks, while on September 20th, 21, the news was dominated by discussions of responses from independent agencies and CSOs such as Komnas HAM (National Commission on Human Rights) and KontraS (The Commission for Disappeared and Victims of Violence).



**Figure 1.** The Dynamics of Reporting on the West Papua Conflict on *Kompas.com* (7-30 September 2021)  
Source: Research Result (2023)

### Crisis Frame in Reporting on West Papua Crisis, 7-30 September 2020

In reporting on the West Papua conflict that occurred on 7-30 September 2020, the configuration of the crisis frame can be seen in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** The Crisis Frame Configuration for Reporting on the West Papua Crisis in *Kompas.com* (7-30 September 2021)  
Source: Research Result (2023)

It can be seen that the distribution of the use of crisis frames in reporting attacks on Kiwirok health workers on *Kompas.com* is only filled with three frames, namely conflict, attribution of responsibility, and human interest. *Kompas.com* mainly emphasizes the conflict frame in its reporting and does not raise the economic and moral consequence frame. In the *Kompas.com* news, there were 48 news out of a total of 93 news that highlighted the conflict frame (51.61%), followed by the responsibility attribution frame with 34 news (36.56%), and the human interest frame with 11 news (11.85%).

Referring to Adiprasetyo (2020); Adiprasetyo and Larasati (2021); An and Gower (2009); Semetko and Valkenburg (2000), there are differences in the configuration of the crisis frame. If the four studies state that reporting on crises is dominated by attributions of responsibility, *Kompas.com* framed the West Papua crisis in September 2021 and put attributions of responsibility as the second most common frame in reporting. *Kompas.com* does not place the idea of responsibility on specific parties and highlights the actions taken by the West Papua separatist group fragment in Kiwirok, West Papua, compared to reporting on the responsibility certain parties should have.

Regarding other previous research, *Kompas.com* has utilized the theme of conflict in news coverage that discusses the West Papua conflict involving separatist groups with the Indonesian government and security officers. Aulia's study (2018) shows that news coverage of separatist groups more often exploits conflict, tends to dramatize events in West Papua, and ignores the larger context of the struggle for West Papua independence. The same symptom occurs in *Kompas.com*'s reporting on the West Papua crisis in September 2021; This study shows that *Kompas.com* tends to focus more on highlighting the actions of fragmented West Papuan separatist groups.

In its report, *Kompas.com* has explained that the attack on the separatist group, which had an impact on infrastructure and civilians, was carried out by Lamek Taplon, Commander of the West Papua National Liberation Army. However, *Kompas.com* must sufficiently explain how the West Papua independence movement is not mono-dimensional. The violence perpetrated by one of the fragments of the separatist movement cannot represent the entire group that demands a referendum and independence for West Papua.

*Kompas.com*'s focus on conflict is also disproportionate to the amount of news that contains efforts and potential for reconciliation and how resolutions between disputing parties can be unraveled. Instead of reporting this information, *Kompas.com* then tends to dramatize the sad story of the victims of the assault on health workers, which risks making the public associate as a whole that the West Papua liberation movement has always relied on violence.

Referring to Cho and Gower (2006), the human interest frame can affect the audience's emotional response, which can be the primary determining key in deciding which party is responsible and blamed in a crisis. Apart from that, the human interest framework is also often used by the media to capture public attention (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). Even though in the human interest frame news, *Kompas.com* is still quite dominant in using government and police news sources compared to other news sources, it seems that Kompas is trying to provide space for parties who have a moderate position in the conflict, such as the IDI (Indonesian Medical Association), Komnas HAM, and KontraS.

This study shows that no news coverage of the West Papua crisis in September 2021 is framed regarding morality and economic consequences. This finding is consistent with previous studies, which state that the framework of morality and economic consequences is not widely used in reporting on crises. The economic consequences frame occupies the bottom three positions as the frame with the minor frequency of appearances in crisis reporting (Adiprasetyo, 2020; An & Gower, 2009; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000); it is even the least used frame in crisis reporting (Adiprasetyo & Larasati, 2021; Famulari, 2020). Likewise, the morality frame has a minor frequency of occurrence compared to the other frames (Adiprasetyo, 2020; An & Gower, 2009; Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). However, slightly different from other studies, the frequency of morality frames was found to be higher in Famulari's study (2020), which highlights moral messages, religious teachings, or wisdom from the 'zero tolerance policy' and are closely related to the news of Mexican immigrants in America.

### **Thematic and Episodic Frames in Reporting on West Papua Crisis, 7-30 September 2020**

Reporting on September 7-30, 2021, regarding the West Papua crisis shows that *Kompas.com* uses more episodic frames than thematic frames. Of 93 news, only 5 (5.38%) used thematic frames, and 88 (94.62%) used episodic frames. It can be seen that *Kompas.com* uses episodic frames up to 17 times more than thematic frames. The thematic and episodic frame configuration graphs in the news are as follows:

Violence perpetrated by the Free West Papua Movement faction against infrastructure

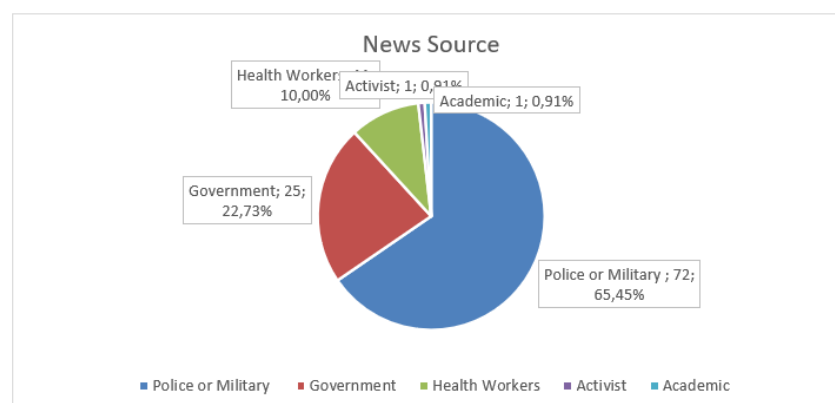


workers and civil society is undoubtedly a heinous act. *Kompas.com* should report on this incident along with its sequential chronology, focusing on events and impacts and the historical context behind all crises in West Papua. *Kompas.com* is also not enough to try to explain the big picture regarding the social, cultural, and economic context, the genealogy of violence in West Papua, and the configuration of the Free West Papua Movement, which has a diverse spectrum. In this context, *Kompas.com* only used a little thematic frame to report the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2021. *Kompas.com* did not explain the root causes more generally related to the conflict in West Papua. We can see how *Kompas.com* tends to use a microscopic lens and blur the contexts of the West Papua conflict and crisis.

Adiprasetyo and Larasati (2021) found that compared to thematic frames, news with episodic frames in news production in Indonesia tends to benefit the government. It is because news that only focuses on specific events (episodic frame) tends to have a positive tone toward the government compared to the news that explains the primary context of the event (thematic frame). This research shows that the top two news sources with the most episodic frames come from the stateside (the government and the military police). Reporting in the media in Indonesia needs to explain the significant context of an event and only focuses on reporting the event (Adiprasetyo & Larasati, 2021). It also happened in reporting on the West Papua crisis that occurred on September 7-30, 2021, which used more episodic rather than thematic frames, which then gave a positive tone to the government and tended not to explain the root of the problem to the public, which should be their job.

### News Sources in Reporting on West Papua Crisis, 7-30 September 2020

Based on *Kompas.com* reports on the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2021, there were 110 news sources related to the West Papua conflict in 93 news. The majority of the news, or 71 news (76.34%), have one news source; 18 news (19.35%) have two news sources, one news (1.07%) has three news sources, and three news (3.22%) have no news sources. *Kompas.com* coverage for 24 days has an average of 1.18 sources per news. Reporting that does not have a news source is only descriptive without showing testimony or opinions from specific figures. This finding shows that most of *Kompas.com*'s reporting is one-sided because it only relies on one news source. This finding aligns with previous studies, which state that Indonesian media coverage is shallow, with minimal sources, and rarely provides clear explanations of an issue in a single story (Adiprasetyo, 2019; Adiprasetyo & Wibowo, 2020). The description of an issue is often enumerated in many reports, which risks the reader losing the big picture of an event or issue (Adiprasetyo & Wibowo, 2020).



**Figure 3.** News Source at *Kompas.com* in Coverage of the West Papua Crisis (7-30 September 2021)  
Source: Research Result (2023)

*Kompas.com* mainly uses police or military as news sources, appearing on 72 reports (77.74%). Then elements of the government, such as ministers and representatives from the ministries, became news sources in 25 news reports (26.88%), news sources for health workers with appearances in 11 reports (11.82%), activist news sources that appeared in one news report (1.07%), and academic news sources and other news sources each appearing in one report (1.07%). *Kompas.com* does not use news sources from West Papuan civil society representatives (0 news, 0%).

As previously shown in previous studies, news sources are a critical element in crisis framing (Nijkraak et al., 2015), which influences public perception (D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010). In reporting on the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2021, it can be seen that the percentage of news sources from the government and security forces dominates compared to other news sources. News sources from the government and security forces emphasize the label 'terrorist' for the separatist group. This labeling has the potential to be digested as a generalization, bearing in mind that the description in the news is not sufficient to clearly explain that the fragments of the separatist group that rely on violence do not represent the entire Free West Papua Movement. Looking at the pattern that occurred, the government as the primary source of news, which previously tendentiously labeled "Armed Criminal Group" and "Terrorists" on unspecified subjects, clouding public understanding of the search for justice for West Papuan groups who want a referendum and even independence (Anakotta, 2021). News that uses the government as a news source to provide direct frames to the audience tends to campaign for the government's point of view that blames the West Papuan community who want a referendum and even independence.

Previously, Adiprasetyo (2020) examined how online media in Indonesia framed news of the attack on a West Papua student dormitory in Surabaya in 2019. In this incident, West Papuan students were victims, and it was reported that the security forces carried out 'controlling,' which led to an attack, but there was no labeling of the perpetrators of the attack because the media focused on using the government as the primary news source. However, if this position is reversed, as in the September 2021 crisis in West Papua, which was marked by the attack on Kiwirok (West Papua separatist groups are directly positioned as perpetrators of the 'attackers'), Indonesian online media labels the perpetrators as 'terrorists' because they only focus on the government point of view. It shows that the media in Indonesia still tends to follow the government's point of view and produce only one-sided news.

## CONCLUSION

This study explains how the Indonesian media frame the West Papua crisis. This study shows three major momentums where the news was divided into three major clusters. The three major news clusters, namely reporting on the attack by the separatist group commanded by Lamek Taplon on health facilities in Kiwirok, West Papua, news that focuses on the evacuation of health workers who are victims of attacks, and news that discusses the response from independent institutions. The news regarding the West Papua crisis on 7-30 September 2020 was only filled with three frames: conflict, attribution of responsibility, and human interest. *Kompas.com* greatly emphasizes conflict frames because more than half of its coverage for 7-30 September 2020 (51.61%) is filled with conflict frames. It is different compared to previous studies, where when fragments of the West Papuan community became victims of attacks by civilian groups, the most dominant frame was the frame of attribution of responsibility. *Kompas.com* has tried to provide space for parties with a moderate position in the conflict, such as the IDI, Komnas HAM, and KontraS. However, in general, the news is still very much dominated

by news sources from the government and the military and not using enough thematic frames. *Kompas.com* is not comprehensive enough to report on the crisis in West Papua during the reporting period of 7-30 September 2020. *Kompas.com* also does not mention in an elaborative manner that the Free West Papua Movement is a movement that is not mono-dimensional but fragmentary with a spectrum of violent movements to peace movements, with the aim of a referendum and the independence of West Papua. *Kompas.com* blurs the context of the West Papua crisis, which risks limiting and directing public understanding of the West Papua crisis to exist within the government's framework merely.

This study helps us to understand how the Indonesian media frames the West Papua crisis, especially those involving violent practices and events. Longitudinal studies and more frame comparisons between events are needed to obtain more solid findings and conclusions regarding the positionality of the Indonesian media in reporting on the West Papua crisis. Comprehensive studies are also needed to obtain a complete picture of the various layers that influence the Indonesian media's framing of the West Papua issue in the media.

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