Discourse analysis of online media on the haze disaster due to forest fires in Jambi, Indonesia

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Abstract

Forest fire–induced haze remains a recurring ecological crisis in Indonesia, yet limited attention has been given to how online media frame local government responses and shape public understanding of such disasters. This study aims to analyze the portrayal of the Jambi local government in online media coverage of the haze crisis, with a particular focus on crisis management narratives and the representation of key actors involved. Using a qualitative descriptive approach, this research employs NVivo 12 Plus to conduct a discourse-oriented analysis of news articles published by four major Indonesian online media outlets— Detiknews.com, Kompas.com, CNNIndonesia.com, and Liputan6.com. The findings reveal that the haze disaster in Jambi was predominantly framed through five key sectors: education, transportation, economy, environment, and health. Liputan6.com emphasized environmental and economic impacts, Kompas.com focused primarily on health-related issues, Detiknews.com highlighted educational disruptions, and CNNIndonesia.com concentrated on public health concerns. Across all platforms, the haze crisis was consistently framed as a provincial emergency caused by forest and land fires, with frequent emphasis on deteriorating air quality and the involvement of cross-sector actors in disaster response policies. This study contributes to media discourse analysis by demonstrating how sector-specific framing creates fragmented narratives that may influence public perception and policy prioritization in local disaster governance.

Keywords: *discourse analysis, forest fire, disaster mitigation, local governance*

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Introduction

Forest and land fires remain a recurring environmental crisis in Indonesia, particularly during the dry season between August and October. Fire-prone regions are concentrated in Sumatra and Kalimantan, including provinces such as Riau, Jambi, South Sumatra, and Central Kalimantan (Awaluddin 2022). Previous studies consistently identify two dominant causes of these fires: human negligence and, more critically, intentional burning for land clearing in agricultural and plantation expansion (Riviwanto et al. 2022; Ruswandi et al. 2021). Although land burning is often perceived as a low-cost method, it generates severe ecological damage and substantial social and economic losses (Aboualola et al. 2023; Khan et al. 2023).

The consequences of forest fires extend beyond environmental degradation and directly threaten human health and social stability. Haze generated by forest and land fires significantly increases respiratory illnesses, disrupts transportation systems, and reduces overall quality of life due to poor visibility and prolonged air pollution exposure (Fachrie 2020; Purnomo et al. 2019). At a broader scale, large fire events frequently produce transboundary haze, affecting neighboring countries and shaping

international perceptions of Indonesia's environmental governance capacity (Al Kautsar and Mulyono 2021). According to the World Health Organization, approximately 20 million Indonesians have been exposed to forest fire haze, with more than 25 million people in Sumatra and Kalimantan affected during major haze episodes (Budiningsih et al. 2022).

Within this national context, the haze crisis in Jambi Province during 2023 emerged as a critical public issue. Declining air quality was reported across the province, partly driven by local fires and haze transported from neighboring regions such as South Sumatra (Almunanda 2023a;BBCIndonesia 2023). Official health records indicate a sharp increase in acute respiratory infection (ARI) cases in Jambi City, rising from 42,400 cases in 2022 to 48,740 cases by September 2023 (Akhyar et al. 2024). In response to worsening conditions, local authorities issued public health advisories, restricted outdoor activities, and mandated the use of protective masks (CNNIndonesia.com 2023).

Policy responses also extended to the education sector. The Jambi City Government temporarily suspended face-to-face learning from early childhood education to junior high schools, following a mayoral directive issued on October 1, 2023 (Fachrie 2020; Purnomo et al. 2019; Ruswandi et al. 2021; Suwandi 2023). While such measures reflect the government's emergency response capacity, existing studies largely treat these actions as administrative or health-related interventions, without examining how they are represented, interpreted, or evaluated in public discourse particularly through online media.

Previous research on forest fire haze in Indonesia has primarily focused on environmental impacts, air quality degradation, disaster mitigation strategies, and human security dimensions (Fachrie 2020; Tan-Soo and Pattanayak 2019). Studies have also explored economic losses, transboundary effects, and the valuation of mitigation efforts, including regional willingness to pay for haze reduction (Lin, Wijedasa, and Chisholm 2017). However, despite the growing influence of online media as a key source of public information during environmental crises, limited attention has been paid to how media discourse frames haze disasters, assigns responsibility, and constructs narratives about local government performance.

This gap is particularly important from a governance perspective. Media discourse not only disseminates information but also shapes public perception, legitimizes policy responses, and influences policy prioritization during crises. Analyzing how online media frame haze disasters therefore provides critical insight into the interaction between media narratives and local disaster governance.

Accordingly, this study aims to analyze the haze disaster caused by forest fires in Jambi Province through discourse analysis of online media coverage in 2024. By examining sectoral framing, dominant narratives, and the representation of key actors, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of how media discourse may shape public interpretation and policy responses to recurring environmental disasters at the local level.

Research Methods

This study employs a qualitative descriptive approach to examine how online media construct narratives surrounding the haze disaster caused by forest and land fires in Jambi Province. A qualitative approach is appropriate for exploring meanings, representations, and framing practices embedded in media texts, particularly when the objective is to understand how issues and actors are discursively portrayed rather than

to measure causal relationships (Khairunnisa et al. 2023)(Malawani et al. 2020; Purnomo, Anand, and Choi 2018). Through this approach, the study seeks to capture patterns of media emphasis, narrative focus, and issue salience in reporting on environmental disasters.

A case study design is applied, with Jambi Province selected as a bounded case due to the severity and public prominence of the haze crisis during the 2023–2024 dry season. The temporal scope of this study covers the period from June to December 2024, corresponding to the peak season of forest and land fires in Indonesia. This timeframe allows the analysis to focus on the most intensive phase of online media coverage, when public attention, policy responses, and media narratives were most actively produced and circulated (Aboualola et al. 2023; Khan et al. 2023). The case study approach is suitable for capturing context-specific dynamics and provides a holistic understanding of complex social phenomena such as disaster communication and local governance responses.

Data were collected through document analysis of online news articles published by four major national media outlets: Detiknews.com, Kompas.com, CNNIndonesia.com, and Liputan6.com. These media outlets were selected based on three key considerations: their national reach, their credibility as mainstream news sources, and their high rankings on SimilarWeb, which indicate substantial audience engagement and influence in public information dissemination. Each outlet represents a distinct editorial orientation, ranging from real-time reporting to in-depth policy and health coverage, thereby enabling comparative analysis across different media perspectives.

A total of 120 news articles were analyzed in this study, consisting of 30 articles from each media outlet. The distribution of data sources, including website addresses, media rankings, number of articles, and general characteristics of each outlet, is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Matrix of Online Media Sources

Online Portal	Website Address	Rank (SimilarWeb)	Number of Articles	Description
Detiknews.com	https://news.detik.com	9	30	Real-time reporting, high-frequency news updates, strong in public affairs
Kompas.com	https://www.kompas.com	12	30	Reputable, in-depth news analysis, long-established
CNNIndonesia.com	https://www.cnnindonesia.com	27	30	Strong coverage on policy, health, and disaster issues
Liputan6.com	https://www.liputan6.com	32	30	Balanced coverage on environmental, economic, and societal impact

Source: processed by author

The unit of analysis in this study consists of full online news articles, with particular attention given to headlines and the main textual content. Headlines were analyzed as they often reflect editorial priorities and framing strategies, while the body text was examined to identify dominant narratives, sectoral emphasis, and representations of actors involved in haze disaster management. This approach ensures

that both surface-level framing and deeper narrative construction are systematically captured (Woolf and Silver 2018).

For data analysis, this study applies a discourse-oriented framing analysis to examine how issues related to the haze disaster are constructed and communicated in online media. Rather than conducting a full critical discourse analysis, the study focuses on identifying patterns of issue emphasis, narrative orientation, and actor representation across media outlets. This analytical orientation is consistent with the study's aim to explore how media discourse may shape public perception and policy prioritization in the context of local disaster governance.

NVivo 12 Plus was used as a qualitative data analysis software to support systematic coding and cross-media comparison. The use of NVivo facilitated the organization of large volumes of textual data and enabled transparent and consistent analytical procedures (Edwards-Jones 2019). The analysis involved several key steps. First, all selected news articles were imported into NVivo and organized by media outlet. Second, open coding was conducted to identify initial themes related to sectoral impacts (such as health, education, environment, economy, and transportation), disaster narratives, and actor involvement. Third, thematic nodes were refined through iterative coding to ensure conceptual clarity and consistency.

In addition to manual coding, NVivo query functions were employed to enhance analytical depth. Word frequency queries were used to identify dominant terms and recurring issue-related keywords, while crosstab queries enabled comparison of thematic emphasis across different media outlets. These procedures allowed the study to systematically examine variations in framing and narrative focus between media platforms.

The overall analytical process followed four main stages: (1) data collection and organization, (2) open coding and theme categorization, (3) query-based analysis to examine patterns and variations across media sources, and (4) interpretation of findings in relation to existing literature and research objectives (Edwards-Jones 2019; Khairunnisa, Ziar, and Rahmawati 2022). This workflow is illustrated in figure 1.
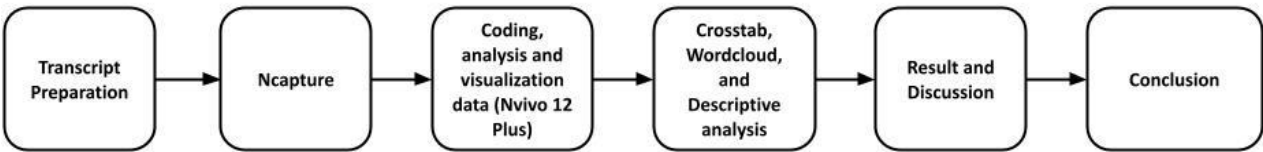

Figure 1. The analytical process
Source: processed by author

To enhance analytical consistency and credibility, the study adopted an iterative coding process accompanied by regular discussion among the researchers. This process allowed for continuous refinement of coding categories and interpretations, reducing the risk of arbitrary classification and ensuring that analytical decisions were grounded in the data. Although the study relies on a single qualitative dataset, these procedures contribute to the trustworthiness of the findings by promoting transparency and methodological rigor.

Results and Discussion
Intensity Of Reporting on The Impact of Haze in Jambi Province

The haze disaster resulting from forest and land fires in the Sumatra region, particularly in Jambi Province and its surrounding areas, has generated extensive social, environmental, and economic consequences. Previous studies consistently identify five primary sectors affected by haze disasters: health, environment, economy, education,

and transportation (Ramakreshnan et al. 2018). However, beyond the material impacts of haze, the way these impacts are selectively emphasized, framed, and narrated by online media plays a critical role in shaping public understanding and policy attention. Online media are not merely channels of information dissemination; they actively construct meanings, prioritize issues, and influence how disasters are interpreted by the public and policymakers.

Online news platforms possess structural advantages that intensify their agenda-setting capacity during environmental crises. Their real-time accessibility, continuous updates, and hyperlink-based information architecture allow news related to haze disasters to circulate rapidly and repeatedly, often elevating such events to headline status (Lin 2019; Tan-Soo and Pattanayak 2019). This characteristic positions online media as key actors in framing disasters, determining which sectors are portrayed as most urgent, and shaping the hierarchy of perceived impacts. As a result, the intensity of reporting across different sectors does not merely reflect objective damage but also editorial priorities, audience expectations, and institutional orientations of media organizations.

The immediacy of online reporting enables audiences to receive updates almost simultaneously with the occurrence of events, reducing temporal and spatial barriers to information access (Khan et al. 2023; Riviwanto et al. 2022). In disaster contexts, this immediacy amplifies certain narratives such as emergency declarations, school closures, or transportation disruptions while potentially marginalizing longer-term environmental or economic consequences. Furthermore, online media integrate multiple layers of information through hyperlinks, images, and embedded references, which may reinforce specific frames while sidelining others (Aboualola et al. 2023; McManus 2025; Taufek et al. 2022).

To systematically examine these patterns, this study analyzes the intensity of haze-related reporting across five key sectors using NVivo-based crosstab analysis (Figure 2). The results reveal how different online media outlets emphasize distinct sectors, thereby constructing varied discursive representations of the haze disaster in Jambi Province.
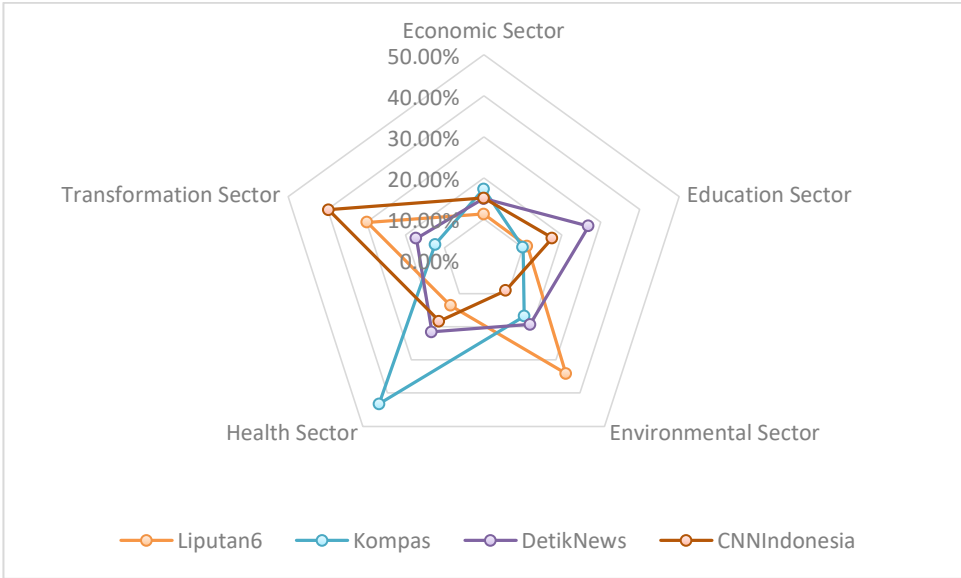

Figure 2. The Impact of Haze in Jambi Province in Online media (Crosstab Alaysis)
Source: processed by author

Figure 2 is positioned here to visually summarize the comparative intensity of sectoral coverage across the four selected online media outlets. The figure serves as an analytical reference point for the discussion that follows, illustrating how sectoral emphasis varies across platforms rather than functioning as a standalone descriptive output.

The NVivo crosstab results presented in Figure 2 demonstrate significant variation in the intensity and focus of haze-related reporting among Liputan6.com, Kompas.com, Detiknews.com, and CNNIndonesia.com. These variations indicate not only differences in editorial focus but also divergent framing strategies through which the haze disaster is constructed and communicated to the public. Rather than presenting a uniform narrative, each media outlet foregrounds particular sectors, thereby shaping distinct interpretations of the crisis.

Liputan6.com allocated the largest proportion of its reporting to the environmental sector (34.12%) and the transportation sector (29.83%). This dual emphasis suggests a framing strategy that combines ecological degradation with immediate functional disruptions, particularly mobility and visibility constraints. Such framing aligns with disaster narratives that prioritize tangible and observable impacts, such as environmental damage and transportation paralysis, which are easily recognized by audiences. Prior research notes that environmental crises are often framed through visible hazards smoke, burning land, and reduced visibility which reinforces public perception of urgency and risk (Cheong et al., 2019). However, the relatively lower emphasis on health (13.64%) in Liputan6.com's coverage indicates a framing choice that places environmental and infrastructural disruption above public health concerns, potentially influencing how audiences assess the severity and nature of the crisis.

Kompas.com, in contrast, exhibited a strong emphasis on health-related impacts, accounting for 43.27% of its haze-related reporting the highest among all media outlets analyzed. This focus was followed by economic (17.35%) and environmental (16.88%) sectors. Kompas.com's health-centered framing reflects its editorial positioning as a civic-oriented media outlet that prioritizes human well-being, social vulnerability, and policy relevance. Previous studies on media coverage of transboundary haze disasters similarly observe that health narratives such as respiratory illness, hospital admissions, and vulnerable populations are often used to personalize disaster impacts and evoke public concern (2023) (2024). By foregrounding health impacts, Kompas.com constructs the haze disaster primarily as a public health crisis, implicitly framing government responsibility in terms of health protection and service provision rather than environmental prevention.

Detiknews.com demonstrated the most evenly distributed sectoral framing, with education emerging as the most prominent sector (37.48%), followed by health (21.55%) and environment (19.32%). The dominance of education-related reporting particularly school closures and disruptions to learning activities reflects Detiknews.com's emphasis on issues that directly affect daily routines and family life. This pattern aligns with Mosneaga (2023), who argues that localized disaster reporting often prioritizes social service interruptions that have immediate and relatable consequences for communities. From a discourse perspective, the emphasis on education positions the haze disaster as a disruption to social order and normalcy, rather than solely an environmental or health emergency. Such framing may shift public attention toward short-term administrative responses, such as temporary school closures, rather than long-term mitigation strategies.

CNNIndonesia.com displayed a distinct framing pattern by allocating the largest share of its coverage to the transportation sector (39.74%). Health (18.39%) and education (17.56%) received secondary attention, while environmental and economic narratives were comparatively less prominent. This framing highlights logistical and infrastructural challenges, portraying the haze disaster as a disruption to mobility, connectivity, and operational systems. Prior studies suggest that media outlets with a strong policy and infrastructure orientation tend to frame disasters in terms of system performance and functional breakdowns (Ramakreshnan et al. 2018). By foregrounding transportation issues, CNNIndonesia.com constructs the haze disaster as a governance and operational challenge, implicitly emphasizing coordination, emergency management, and institutional capacity.

The comparative analysis of sectoral framing across the four media outlets demonstrates a pattern of discursive diversity rather than narrative uniformity. Each outlet emphasizes different sectors based on editorial priorities, audience segmentation, and institutional orientation, resulting in what can be described as "sectoral polyphony" in disaster reporting. This finding supports the concept of disaster polyphony, wherein multiple voices and emphases coexist within the media landscape, enriching but also fragmenting public understanding of complex crises (Fachrie 2020; Lin 2019; Tan-Soo and Pattanayak 2019).

However, this diversity of framing also introduces significant challenges. Disparities in sectoral emphasis may lead to asymmetric public awareness, where certain dimensions of the disaster such as long-term environmental degradation or structural economic losses receive limited attention depending on the media platform consumed (Acikara et al. 2023; Young 2020). When media narratives disproportionately highlight immediate disruptions over structural causes, public pressure may favor short-term responses rather than preventive or transformative policies.

From a governance perspective, the findings reinforce Fachrie (2020) argument that haze disasters constitute a multidimensional human security crisis. The haze affects not only environmental integrity but also public health, education continuity, livelihoods, and mobility. Media framing plays a crucial role in determining which of these dimensions are perceived as most urgent and deserving of policy intervention. As agenda-setting actors, online media influence how risks are prioritized and how government responses are evaluated by the public (Dootson et al. 2021; Mosurska et al. 2023; Priya 2024).

Importantly, the analysis shows that no single media outlet provides a comprehensive representation of the haze disaster across all sectors. Instead, each outlet contributes a partial narrative shaped by its editorial logic. While Kompas.com frames the disaster as a health emergency, Liputan6.com emphasizes environmental and infrastructural disruption, Detiknews.com foregrounds educational impacts, and CNNIndonesia.com highlights logistical challenges. This fragmented representation underscores the necessity of cross-platform analysis to avoid biased interpretations of disaster impacts and policy needs.

Ultimately, the intensity of haze-related reporting in online media reflects more than differences in coverage volume; it reveals underlying discursive strategies that shape public meaning-making. The haze disaster in Jambi Province emerges not as a singular narrative but as a contested discursive space in which multiple sectoral priorities compete for attention. Understanding these patterns is essential for assessing how media discourse may influence public perception, political accountability, and policy prioritization in the context of recurring environmental disasters.

Narrative of online media coverage of haze caused by forest fires

The haze disaster caused by forest and land fires has become a recurrent and deeply embedded issue in Indonesian public discourse, particularly in fire-prone regions such as Jambi Province. Online media play a central role in shaping how this disaster is understood, narrated, and evaluated by the public. Beyond reporting factual developments, media narratives construct meanings about responsibility, urgency, and appropriate responses, thereby influencing public perception and policy orientation (Mosurska et al. 2023; Priya 2024). In this context, analyzing dominant narratives in online media coverage provides critical insight into how haze disasters are discursively framed and normalized within Indonesian society.

To explore these narratives, this study employs a word frequency analysis as an entry point to identify recurring themes and discursive patterns in online media reporting. Importantly, the word cloud is not treated as a final analytical output, but as an initial mapping tool that guides deeper interpretation of media framing and narrative construction. The visualization highlights which issues, actors, and impacts are repeatedly foregrounded, thereby revealing dominant storylines and silences within the media discourse.

Figure 3. Narrative of online media coverage of haze caused by forest fires
Source: processed by author

Figure 3 is positioned at this stage to provide a visual overview of dominant keywords that structure the narrative field of haze-related reporting. The figure functions as an analytical reference that supports the interpretive discussion that follows, rather than serving as a descriptive summary on its own.

The most prominent terms in the word cloud such as "haze," "forest fire," "respiratory disease," "health crisis," and "economic loss" indicate that online media consistently frame the haze disaster as a multidimensional crisis with severe human and economic consequences. The repeated emphasis on health-related terms, including "respiratory disease" and "ISPA," suggests that media narratives strongly foreground bodily vulnerability and public health risks. This framing positions the haze not merely

as an environmental problem, but as a direct threat to human security, thereby heightening the perceived urgency of the crisis. Such emphasis aligns with prior research showing that health-oriented framing is often used by media to personalize disasters and mobilize public concern (Priya 2024).

At the same time, the prominence of terms such as "government response," "BPBD," "BMKG," and "BNPB" reveals a narrative structure in which state institutions occupy a central position. The repeated visibility of government agencies indicates that online media predominantly frame disaster management as a state-led process, emphasizing official actions, announcements, and coordination efforts. This pattern reflects a form of institutional dominance in media discourse, where government actors are positioned as primary problem-solvers rather than as subjects of critical scrutiny. While this framing may enhance public trust in formal institutions, it may also limit space for questioning structural causes or alternative forms of accountability (Fachrie 2020).

Notably, the frequent appearance of the term "Karhutla" underscores the normalization of forest and land fires within Indonesian media discourse. Rather than being framed as exceptional events, haze disasters are often narrated as recurring seasonal phenomena, implicitly reinforcing a sense of inevitability. This normalization can contribute to a discursive shift in which attention is directed toward emergency response and mitigation, rather than prevention or structural reform. Previous studies on environmental discourse suggest that such routinization of disasters may reduce pressure for long-term policy change (Young 2020).

In addition to health and governance narratives, the word cloud reveals strong attention to societal and logistical disruptions, indicated by terms such as "education disruption," "transport disruption," and "community impact." These narratives highlight the everyday consequences of haze, including school closures, flight cancellations, and reduced mobility. By foregrounding disruptions to daily routines, online media construct the haze disaster as a lived crisis that interferes with social order and normalcy. This framing resonates with audiences by linking abstract environmental problems to concrete experiences, thereby reinforcing the salience of the issue.

However, while these narratives effectively communicate immediate impacts, they also reveal notable absences. Terms related to corporate actors, land ownership, or plantation interests are largely absent from the dominant narrative field. This absence suggests a discursive pattern in which responsibility for forest fires is implicitly depoliticized and individualized, often attributed to environmental conditions or generic "fires" rather than to specific economic or institutional actors. Such silences are significant, as critical discourse studies emphasize that what is omitted from media narratives can be as influential as what is included (van Dijk 2015).

The presence of terms like "early warning," "monitoring," and "satellite" indicates that online media also emphasize technological and managerial solutions to haze disasters. This techno-managerial framing positions the crisis as a problem that can be addressed through better monitoring systems and early detection, reinforcing a governance narrative centered on control and surveillance. While these tools are undoubtedly important, their prominence may further marginalize discussions about underlying drivers such as land-use change, enforcement failures, or political economic interests (Al Kautsar and Mulyono 2021; Young 2020; Zaman 2021).

A closer examination of less prominent terms in the word cloud such as "policy," "emergency," "evacuation," and "rainfall" adds further nuance to the narrative landscape. These terms reflect operational and situational dimensions of disaster

management, including emergency declarations and evacuation measures. Their relatively smaller size suggests that while such issues are present in media discourse, they are secondary to dominant health and government-centered narratives. This hierarchy of themes illustrates how media prioritize certain aspects of the disaster while relegating others to the periphery.

Comparing media narratives with official government reports and existing scholarly literature reveals a complex relationship between alignment and reinforcement. On one hand, the strong media emphasis on health impacts corresponds with government health data showing increased cases of acute respiratory infections during haze periods (Fachrie 2020). On the other hand, media narratives tend to reproduce official frames rather than critically interrogate them, particularly in relation to institutional performance and coordination challenges. Scholarly studies on disaster governance in Indonesia highlight persistent issues related to inter-agency coordination and enforcement capacity, which are often underexplored in mainstream media coverage (Fachrie 2020; Purwanto et al. 2021; Tan-Soo and Pattanayak 2019).

From a discourse perspective, the findings suggest that online media coverage of haze disasters in Jambi is characterized by a combination of amplification and limitation. Media narratives effectively amplify the visibility of impacts and official responses, but they also constrain public debate by narrowing the range of actors and causal explanations presented. This dual role reinforces the media's agenda-setting function, shaping not only what the public thinks about, but also how they think about haze disasters and governance responses (2023).

In summary, the word cloud analysis reveals that online media narratives of haze caused by forest fires are structured around health emergencies, government action, and social disruption. These narratives construct the haze disaster as an urgent, recurring crisis that demands immediate response, while simultaneously normalizing its occurrence and limiting critical engagement with structural causes. Understanding these discursive patterns is essential for assessing how media coverage influences public perception, accountability, and policy prioritization in the context of recurring environmental disasters such as haze in Jambi Province.

The Role of Actors Involved in Haze Disaster Management from Online Media

In the context of environmental disasters such as haze caused by forest and land fires, online media play a critical role in constructing public understanding of who is responsible, who acts, and whose voices are prioritized in disaster management. Media narratives do not merely report events; they actively frame policy problems, elevate certain actors as legitimate authorities, and marginalize others, thereby shaping perceptions of accountability and urgency (Acikara et al. 2023; Young 2020; Zaman 2021). Through repeated coverage and selective emphasis, online media contribute to defining haze disasters as specific types of policy problems that call for particular solutions and institutional responses.

From a policy process perspective, media narratives create opportunities for policy actors to promote preferred solutions by framing disasters in ways that resonate with public concerns. Influential actors often use compelling narratives to highlight policy failures, emphasize victimhood, or legitimize emergency measures, thereby increasing the likelihood of public support for their agendas (Soomro et al. 2025; Zaman 2021). However, this process is inherently political, as not all actors receive equal visibility or authority within media discourse.

To examine how online media frame the roles of actors involved in haze disaster management in Jambi Province, this study analyzes actor representation using NVivo-based coding and relational mapping. The analysis focuses not only on which actors appear in media coverage, but also on how they are positioned whether as decision-makers, implementers, victims, or supporting entities. This approach allows for a more nuanced understanding of governance dynamics as reflected in media discourse.
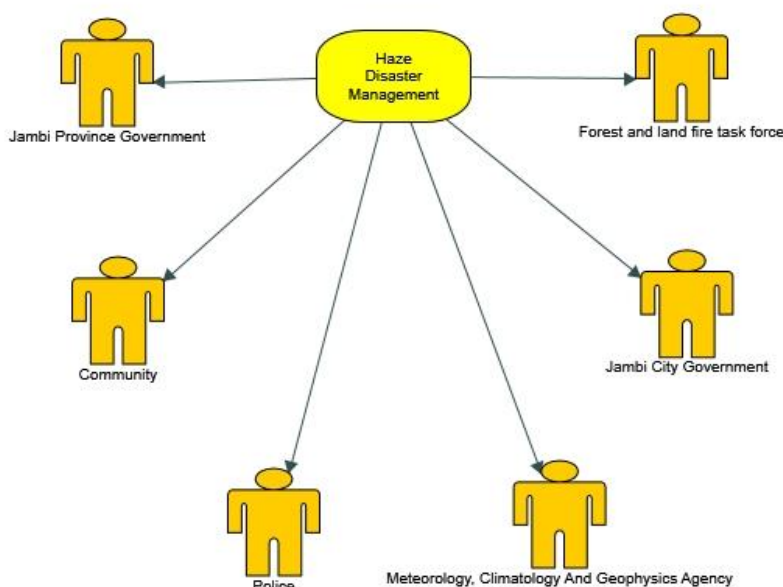

Figure 4. Actors Involved in Haze Disaster Management from Online Media
Source: processed by author

Figure 4 is placed at this stage to visualize the relational positioning of key actors within online media narratives. Rather than representing formal institutional hierarchies, the figure illustrates discursive centrality showing which actors are most prominently connected to haze disaster management in media coverage.

Based on Figure 4, online media coverage consistently highlights six primary actors in haze disaster management in Jambi Province: the Jambi Provincial Government, the Jambi City Government, the Forest and Land Fire Task Force (Satgas Karhutla), the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (BMKG), the police, and the community. Among these actors, local governments emerge as the most dominant and authoritative figures in media narratives. They are frequently framed as decision-makers responsible for issuing emergency regulations, coordinating responses, and managing sectoral disruptions, particularly in health and education.

The Jambi Provincial and City Governments are predominantly portrayed through an administrative and managerial lens. Media reports emphasize their role in declaring emergency status, closing schools, and issuing public health advisories. This framing constructs local governments as proactive responders, reinforcing their legitimacy as central governance actors during the haze crisis. While such narratives underscore institutional responsibility, they rarely interrogate policy effectiveness or long-term prevention strategies. As a result, governance is framed primarily in terms of crisis management rather than structural accountability (Fachrie 2020; Purnomo et al. 2019).

BMKG occupies a distinct position in media discourse as a technical authority. News coverage frequently references BMKG in relation to air quality monitoring,

weather forecasts, and early warning systems. This techno-scientific framing positions BMKG as an objective and neutral actor, whose data legitimizes emergency responses and policy decisions. By relying heavily on BMKG reports, online media reinforce a narrative in which scientific indicators, such as PM2.5 levels, become key justifications for government action (Acikara et al. 2023; Almunanda 2023b). However, this focus on monitoring and forecasting may also shift attention away from deeper political and economic drivers of forest fires.

The Forest and Land Fire Task Force and the police are framed primarily as enforcement and mitigation actors. Media narratives emphasize their operational roles in extinguishing fires, conducting patrols, and investigating illegal land clearing. This framing highlights state capacity and coercive authority, portraying law enforcement as active guardians against environmental crime. Nevertheless, coverage tends to focus on isolated incidents and arrests rather than systemic enforcement challenges, such as weak regulation or conflicting land-use interests. As a result, responsibility is individualized rather than structural, aligning with media tendencies to simplify complex governance problems (Young 2020).

In contrast to state and enforcement actors, the community is framed in a more ambivalent manner. Online media often depict communities as victims of haze exposure, emphasizing health impacts, school disruptions, and reduced mobility. At the same time, communities are occasionally portrayed as active participants in disaster response, such as through mask distribution, reporting fire hotspots, or complying with government advisories (Sari, Kumorotomo, and Kurnia 2022). This dual framing positions communities as both passive recipients of policy and supportive actors, but rarely as agents with decision-making power. Such representation limits the visibility of community-based knowledge and grassroots initiatives in shaping disaster governance (Almunanda 2023a; Mosneaga 2023; Suwandi 2023).

Notably, corporate actors and plantation interests are largely absent from dominant media narratives. This omission is significant, as it reflects a discursive pattern in which responsibility for haze disasters is displaced from economic structures to administrative responses. By focusing on government actions, monitoring agencies, and enforcement bodies, media discourse narrows the range of actors deemed accountable, thereby constraining public debate about the root causes of forest and land fires (van Dijk 2015). The absence of corporate accountability in media narratives reinforces a governance frame centered on response rather than prevention.

From a governance perspective, the media framing of actors reveals a hierarchical structure of legitimacy. Government institutions and technical agencies are consistently prioritized, while non-state actors particularly communities and civil society are positioned at the periphery (Mosurska et al. 2023). This hierarchy shapes public perceptions of who has authority and responsibility in haze disaster management, potentially influencing policy expectations and public trust. As agenda-setting actors, online media thus play a crucial role in legitimizing certain governance arrangements while marginalizing alternative approaches (Mosneaga 2023; Zaman 2021).

Overall, the analysis demonstrates that online media coverage of haze disaster management in Jambi constructs a state-centric narrative of governance. While this narrative emphasizes coordination and responsiveness, it also limits critical engagement with structural causes and power relations. Understanding how actors are framed in media discourse is therefore essential for assessing not only public perception, but also the broader dynamics of accountability and policy prioritization in environmental disaster governance.

Conclusion

The study shows that the haze disaster in Jambi Province is discursively framed in online media as a multidimensional crisis affecting five key sectors: education, transportation, economy, environment, and health. Clear differences in sectoral emphasis were identified across media outlets, with Liputan6.com highlighting environmental and economic impacts, Kompas.com prioritizing health issues, Detiknews.com focusing on educational disruption, and CNNIndonesia.com emphasizing health-related concerns. Despite these variations, all outlets consistently framed the haze as a provincial-level emergency caused by forest and land fires, with deteriorating air quality as the dominant narrative. Theoretically, this study contributes to media discourse and disaster governance literature by demonstrating how sector-specific framing generates fragmented yet complementary narratives that shape public perception and the interpretation of local government responsibility.

From a policy perspective, the findings indicate that uneven sectoral framing may influence public awareness and policy prioritization, depending on dominant media narratives. This underscores the need for more coordinated communication strategies among government institutions, technical agencies, and media organizations to ensure comprehensive and balanced public information during haze crises. Strengthening cross-sectoral collaboration and engaging online media as strategic governance partners are crucial for improving both short-term response and long-term prevention. This study is limited to four national online media outlets and a specific time period; future research could extend the analysis to local and social media platforms or examine audience reception to further understand the effects of media framing on environmental governance.

Acknowledgement

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