

Content Analysis of Flood Reporting in Online Media in Bandar Lampung February-May 2024 Period

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Abstract. The role of online media in shaping public perception is highly significant, as media platforms serve as the primary source for information production and news dissemination. In the context of disasters, this role becomes even more critical and is closely tied to the field of disaster journalism. Understanding the direction and framing of news coverage allows us to analyze how particular issues or events are presented to the public and how such portrayals may influence public opinion and behavior. This study employs a content analysis method within a disaster journalism framework to examine media tendencies in reporting on the flood disaster in Bandar Lampung City. The findings indicate that all three analyzed media outlets made efforts to fulfill their social responsibility by delivering essential information to the public. However, to enhance their role in disaster communication, the media are encouraged to take a more proactive stance—by engaging expert sources, amplifying the voices of affected communities, and offering long-term, solution-oriented perspectives. Such improvements would help ensure that media coverage not only informs but also supports more effective public understanding and response to disasters.

Keywords: Disaster journalism, Flood reporting, Cyber Media

1 Introduction

Indonesia is situated in a tropical climate zone characterized by two main seasons—dry (hot) and rainy—with extreme variations in weather, temperature, and wind direction. These climatic conditions, when combined with the country's diverse surface topography and varying rock compositions (both physically and chemically), contribute to the formation of fertile soil. However, they also increase the risk of adverse environmental impacts, particularly hydrometeorological disasters such as floods, landslides, forest fires, and droughts. As time progresses and human activities continue to intensify, environmental degradation becomes more severe, further escalating the frequency and intensity of hydrometeorological disasters that alternate across various regions of Indonesia. According to data from the National Disaster Management Agency (BNPB) as of April 16, 2024, Indonesia had experienced 624

natural disasters. Of these, hydrometeorological events accounted for 99.04%, while geological disasters made up only 0.96%. The most frequent types of disasters were floods, landslides, and earthquakes (BNPB, 2024).

The Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (CGA) predicted that the dry season in most parts of Lampung would end by late October 2023, with the rainy season expected to begin in November 2023. The peak of the rainy season was forecast to occur between January and February 2024. Since the beginning of 2024, Bandar Lampung City has experienced a series of floods, which have caused both social and economic disruptions within the affected communities. According to the Lampung Regional Disaster Management Agency (DMA), a total of 10 flood incidents occurred throughout February 2024 across several areas, including Bandar Lampung, South Lampung, Pesawaran, and Tulang Bawang (RRI.co.id, 2024).

These flood events received extensive coverage across various mass media platforms, including online, electronic, and print media. However, a recurring issue in disaster reporting is the lack of comprehensive coverage across all phases of a disaster. Media outlets often fail to report systematically during the pre-disaster, response, and post-disaster phases. This shortcoming is evident in the content of many online news articles, which frequently overlook the conditions of victims during the post-disaster and rehabilitation phases. In fact, coverage of reconstruction and recovery efforts is essential, as it provides crucial information to educate victims on survival strategies and preparedness for future disasters (Arif, 2010).

Based on Law Number 40 of 1999 concerning the Press, mass media serves multiple functions: to inform, educate, entertain, and carry out social control by monitoring the behavior of both the public and authorities. The effectiveness of the media as an agent of change is reflected in its ability to influence individuals and society at large (Marhaeni, 2004). Ideally, the press should deliver accurate and informative reporting while also offering educational insights on current global issues. The emergence of public polemics is among the phenomena that the press is responsible for addressing, enabling it to fulfill its role in providing social oversight and accountability (Samsuri, 2012).

Online media today encompasses various platforms such as news websites, portals, social media networks, and blogs (Romli, 2014). Each platform possesses distinct characteristics in the way it delivers content and engages with its audience. This study aims to examine how different forms of online media frame flood-related issues, including variations in reporting depth, content type, and audience engagement. The manner in which the media presents flood news can significantly shape how both the public and government respond to such disasters. Moreover, media coverage of government actions during flood emergencies can shape public perception regarding the government's competence and accountability. News related to floods often triggers social responses and mobilizes humanitarian aid from the broader community, including NGOs and philanthropic organizations. Through coverage that highlights urgent needs, emergency relief, and avenues for assistance, the media can play a crucial role in galvanizing support from various sectors to help those affected by the disaster.

The media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and perception across a wide range of issues. By examining trends in news framing and narrative direction,

it becomes possible to understand how specific topics or events are presented to the public and how such portrayals influence attitudes and responses. Through selective framing—via language choices, perspectives, and visual representations—media outlets possess the power to construct meaning and influence audience interpretation. Moreover, the extent and tone of media coverage can significantly affect public engagement, stimulate interest, and even drive social or political action.

This research focuses on three online news platforms: *Lampost.co*, *Radarlampung.co.id*, and *Tribunlampung.co.id*. Based on data collected in April 2024, these platforms were identified as the top online media sources reporting on flood events in Lampung Province. These outlets are affiliates of major national media groups: *Radarlampung.co.id* is connected to *Radar Lampung Daily*, part of the Jawa Pos Group; *Tribunlampung.co.id* is affiliated with *Tribun Lampung Daily*, under the Kompas Gramedia Group; and *Lampost.co* is linked to *Lampung Post Daily*, part of the Media Indonesia Group.

Previous research by Kumalasari (2023) revealed differing approaches to framing flood disasters among news portals. The study found that *Detik.com* framed flooding as a result of both natural and human-made factors, whereas *Tribunnews.com* primarily described it as a natural event. In terms of causal interpretation, *Detik.com* attributed flooding to human negligence, while *Tribunnews.com* interpreted the disaster as an act of divine will. Both platforms emphasized the importance of collective action in disaster response. However, detailed recommendations and calls to action were only observed on *Detik.com*, leading to the conclusion that *Detik.com* demonstrated a stronger application of disaster journalism practices in the case of the Blitar flood.

Another study by Harahap et al. (2023) examined the role of online mass media in shaping public opinion and encouraging both governmental and societal involvement in addressing environmental issues and tidal flooding (*rob*) in the Pasir Padi Beach area. Although the media's efforts in reporting were apparent, the study found that tangible results in disaster mitigation remained limited. The majority of the coverage focused on the role of the mayor and the media's function as an information provider. While the impact may not yet be fully optimal, the media has at least fulfilled its informational role in reporting tidal floods in Pangkalpinang (Harahap et al., 2023).

2 Method

This research adopts a qualitative approach using the content analysis method. Content analysis is a research technique used to objectively, systematically, and quantitatively describe the content of clear communication. In this study, qualitative content analysis is applied to understand media content and relate it to the social context in which the message was produced (Kriyantono, 2014). This method focuses on the in-depth interpretation of texts, enabling researchers to uncover how messages are constructed—including the presence of bias, underlying perspectives, and ideological narratives embedded within the news.

Qualitative content analysis is particularly well-suited for examining how crucial issues such as climate change, natural disasters, or political dynamics are framed

within specific social, cultural, and political settings, and how such representations influence public opinion. Unlike quantitative approaches, which tend to be more rigid, qualitative methods allow for dynamic exploration of emerging themes that may not initially appear structured. This flexibility facilitates a deeper investigation into the narratives constructed by the media, highlighting which voices are amplified or marginalized and how particular events are represented—whether from the standpoint of affected communities or expert perspectives.

Using this method, researchers can identify patterns in news delivery that may reflect overt or subtle bias in how certain issues or actors are portrayed. The content analysis process begins by identifying relevant articles and categorizing them based on predefined themes. In this study, the volume of coverage varied across platforms: *Lampost.co* published 55 flood-related articles, *Radarlampung.co.id* published 46, and *Tribunlampung.co.id* published 85 articles. These differences in article counts reflect varying levels of editorial attention and prioritization toward flood-related issues among the respective media outlets.

3 Results and Discussion

When a flood disaster occurs, online media tend to increase the frequency of their coverage due to heightened public interest—particularly in regions directly affected by the event. The intensity of this coverage plays a crucial role in shaping public perceptions regarding the severity of the disaster and the government’s capacity to respond effectively. The frequency of reporting not only reflects the level of media attention but also indicates the media's potential influence in directing public opinion during a crisis. Following the peak disaster phase, typically within the first one to two weeks, news coverage begins to decline as attention gradually shifts to the recovery period. During this phase, the media focus more on humanitarian aid, logistics, and community support efforts. Although the frequency of coverage decreases, it remains consistent—especially if subsequent but smaller-scale floods occur. Over time, the narrative evolves to include topics such as infrastructure reconstruction, evaluations of disaster response strategies, and policy revisions, before eventually being replaced by other emerging issues in the media cycle.

To assess the content of flood-related news, several indicators are used, including headlines, sources, focus, and visual elements. These indicators are essential in determining how news is framed and interpreted by the audience. Headlines should be engaging without being sensational, while news sources must be reliable—ideally involving official statements and expert analysis. The focus of the reporting should cover key aspects such as the chronology of events, underlying causes, impacts, and response measures. Meanwhile, visual elements like photos, infographics, or videos enhance clarity and strengthen the emotional and informational appeal of the news content.

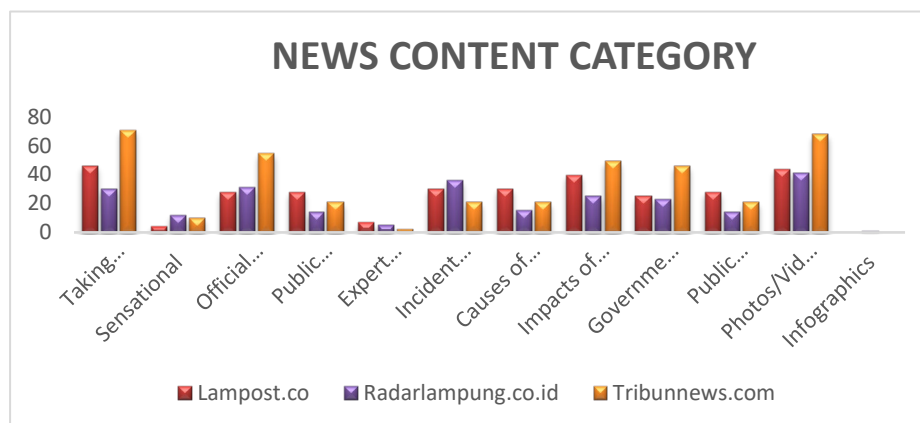


Figure. 1. Data analysis based on news content categories

The data indicate that all three media outlets frequently employ attention-grabbing headlines, with *Tribunnews.com* being the most dominant in this practice. However, variations are evident in the use of sensational titles, where *Radarlampung.co.id* exhibits a higher percentage compared to the other two platforms. These differences likely reflect the distinct journalistic strategies adopted by each media outlet in reporting disaster events, particularly floods. While sensational headlines can evoke stronger emotional reactions and potentially increase reader engagement, they often come at the expense of journalistic objectivity and factual accuracy.

Disaster reporting across media platforms typically utilizes varied approaches. Nonetheless, the presence of dramatized or sensationalized headlines remains noticeable, particularly in regional media such as *Radarlampung.co.id*, which tends to emphasize dramatic narratives in its disaster coverage. This pattern suggests a continued reliance on emotional appeal to attract public attention. Hovland, Janis, and Kelley introduced the Source Credibility Theory, which posits that an individual's susceptibility to persuasion is influenced by the perceived credibility of the communicator. The more credible the source, the greater its persuasive power (Rakhmat, 2012). Beyond technical aspects such as publication format, layout, and story selection, the choice of sources, writing style, and editorial stance can frame the audience's perception and response to the news. This reinforces the notion that mass media still holds significant influence in shaping public discourse (Arifin, 2010).

The selection of news sources greatly affects the depth, accuracy, and perspective of disaster reporting. In the context of natural disasters such as floods, reliable and diverse sourcing is crucial for delivering comprehensive information. Official sources—such as government agencies or disaster management authorities—provide

factual and authoritative data. In contrast, affected community members contribute emotional and human-interest perspectives, while expert sources offer analytical and contextual insights. The integration of these varied voices enhances the quality of reporting and helps the public grasp both the immediate impact and broader implications of disaster events.

The results of the content analysis on the three online media platforms indicate that all of them predominantly rely on official sources as their primary reference in disaster reporting. Public sources—especially from affected communities—are also used quite frequently to provide firsthand perspectives. However, the inclusion of expert sources, which is essential for delivering deeper and scientifically grounded analyses, remains limited—particularly in *Tribunnews.com* and *Radarlampung.co.id*. This lack of expert insight may hinder the public's ability to fully comprehend the underlying causes and broader impacts of disaster events such as floods. While all three platforms generally offer accurate and informative reports by drawing on official and community voices, there is a critical need to strengthen the involvement of expert sources to enrich the coverage with more analytical and evidence-based perspectives.

In addition to examining headlines and sources, content analysis must also consider the focus indicators of the news. This study adopts indicators such as incident chronology, causes of flooding, flood impacts, government actions, and public response to assess the depth and scope of media representation. The findings reveal distinct editorial strategies in how each outlet frames flood-related news. *Lampost.co* presents a more balanced approach, covering incidents, causes, and impacts in an integrated manner. *Radarlampung.co.id* focuses primarily on the events and governmental responses but tends to overlook the causal analysis and public perspectives. Meanwhile, *Tribunnews.com* emphasizes flood impacts and government actions but provides limited coverage on the origins and circumstances of the disasters.

A notable finding is the limited coverage of public responses across all three media, suggesting a dominant reliance on institutional narratives while underrepresenting the voices and lived experiences of affected communities. This narrative imbalance can lead to an incomplete understanding of how disasters affect daily life and community resilience. This study underscores the importance of achieving balanced reporting in disaster journalism—particularly by giving equal attention to key dimensions such as causes, impacts, responses, and community narratives. Based on the content analysis of *Lampost.co*, *Radarlampung.co.id*, and *Tribunnews.com*, significant variations are found in the use of headlines, source types, news focus, and visual elements. While *Lampost.co* and *Radarlampung.co.id* show relative balance in sourcing from both officials and the public, *Tribunnews.com* distinguishes itself by featuring more expert commentary. Overall, although the focus of coverage tends to revolve around the impact of flooding, each platform reflects unique journalistic orientations through its choice of sources, storytelling focus, and visual presentation strategies.

3.1 Social Responsibility Aspect of Media

Disaster journalism holds a vital role in disseminating essential information to the public, facilitating emergency coordination, and enhancing the public's understanding of the impacts and recovery processes related to disasters. Therefore, this study not only examines headlines, news sources, focus, and visual elements, but also evaluates the extent to which the media contributes to rescue efforts, disaster mitigation, and how it upholds its social responsibility function. The social responsibility of the media in disaster reporting goes beyond merely adhering to journalistic ethics. It involves ensuring a balanced dissemination of information that influences public awareness, safety, and decision-making. In this context, the media must be mindful of the potential consequences of the content it publishes. Beyond accuracy and timeliness, media coverage must also offer positive, relevant, and constructive impacts for the broader community. The information shared should be rooted in verified data and factual insights, helping the public fully grasp the context and consequences of a disaster.

UNESCO (2018) offers a framework to guide the media in reporting accurately and effectively on climate change and sustainable development. The guide is tailored to assist journalists and media professionals in the Asia-Pacific region in delivering content that not only raises public awareness but also encourages adaptation and mitigation actions. It emphasizes the importance of science-based reporting, public education, and the promotion of concrete solutions in response to environmental and climate-related challenges. In this regard, the media's responsibility is twofold: to report disasters with factual integrity and to participate actively in risk reduction efforts. Their narratives must educate, empower, and support community resilience, rather than merely recount events. To visualize the findings of this study, the following graph presents the comparative results of how *Lampost.co*, *Radarlampung.co.id*, and *Tribunnews.com* provided essential information and warnings during the flood disaster that affected Bandar Lampung. The graph highlights the degree to which each platform fulfilled its role in public safety communication and disaster literacy.

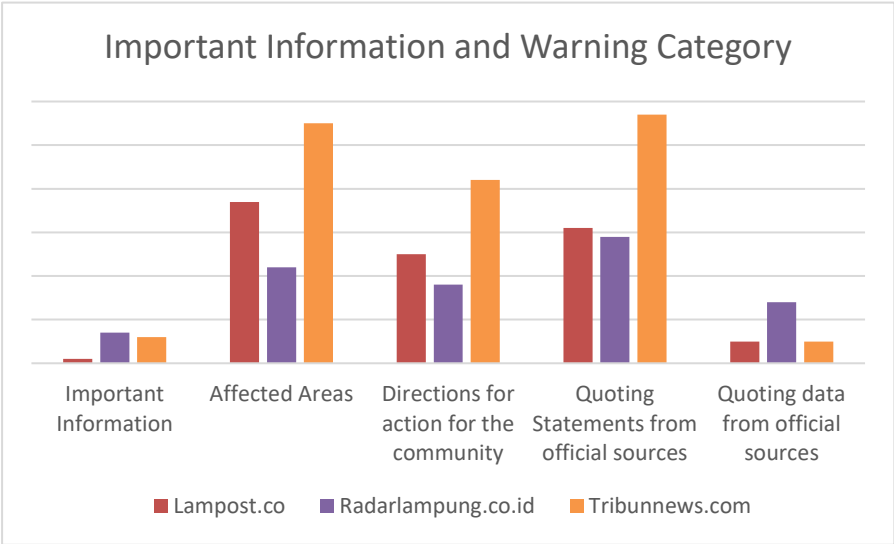


Figure. 2. Data Analysis of Important Information and Warning Categories

To analyze the content of news related to important information and early warnings, this study classifies news reports into several categories based on indicators derived from disaster journalism theory. These indicators include the provision of early warnings, identification of affected or at-risk areas, directives for public action, statements from disaster management institutions or local authorities, and the inclusion of official data or statistics. In the category of important information and early warnings, *Lampost.co* only published one article specifically addressing this indicator. In contrast, *Radarlampung.co.id* published seven such articles, while *Tribunnews.com* issued six. This difference suggests that *Lampost.co* is relatively less responsive in alerting the public compared to the other two platforms, with *Radarlampung.co.id* being the most proactive.

News that includes clear location details is essential to help the public and authorities identify affected areas and coordinate aid. The findings show that *Tribunnews.com* most frequently mentioned detailed affected locations in 55 articles, followed by *Lampost.co* with 37 articles, and *Radarlampung.co.id* with only 22 articles. Although *Radarlampung.co.id* actively reported on the floods, it rarely specified the affected locations in detail. In addition to warnings and geographic specifics, this study also highlights the importance of providing concrete instructions to residents, such as evacuation orders or safety measures. These actionable messages are crucial to minimizing risks and casualties during disasters. Among the three media, *Tribunnews.com* and *Lampost.co* were more proactive in delivering such directives compared to *Radarlampung.co.id*.

As part of their social responsibility, the media are also expected to help prevent the spread of misinformation or panic. Citing official statements from agencies such as BPBD (Regional Disaster Management Agency), BMKG, and local governments helps ensure news credibility and builds public trust. The data shows that *Tribunnews.com* quoted authorities in 57 articles, *Lampost.co* in 31 articles, and *Radarlampung.co.id* in 29 articles. This indicates that *Tribunnews.com* places greater emphasis on integrating authoritative voices in its reporting. While official statements help validate the news, the inclusion of statistical or factual data from trusted institutions further strengthens its accuracy and accountability. However, the analysis reveals that all three media outlets still lack comprehensive use of statistical data from agencies such as BPBD or BMKG. In conclusion, based on the analysis of the important information and warning categories, *Tribunnews.com* emerges as the most active media outlet in reporting flood-related news, offering comprehensive coverage that includes area-specific details and authoritative sources. *Radarlampung.co.id* follows with notable performance in citing official data. In contrast, *Lampost.co* demonstrates limited engagement in these aspects, indicating the need for improvement in both the quantity and quality of its disaster reporting.

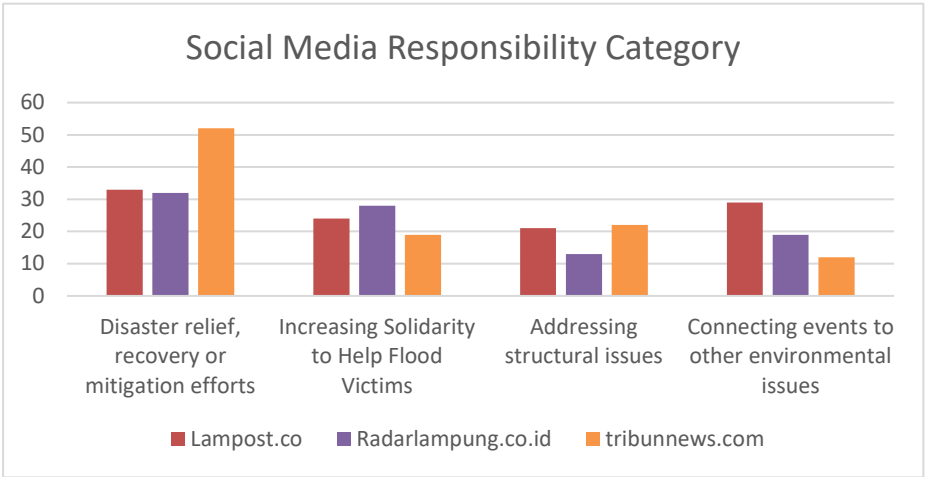


Figure. 3. Data Analysis of Social Media Responsibility Category

The study's findings revealed that the three online media outlets allocated a substantial portion of their reporting to disaster mitigation efforts and assistance from relevant stakeholders. The information presented frequently mentioned the involvement of key institutions such as the Regional Disaster Management Agency (RDMA) and the Meteorology, Climatology, and Geophysics Agency (MCGA) in delivering early warnings and implementing mitigation strategies. Additionally, the news highlighted the contributions of the police and military (PM), as well as other authorities including firefighters, electricity providers (EP), medical personnel attending to victims, and volunteer communities. Overall, the media coverage emphasized narratives of solidarity and collective community action in responding to the floods. Reports

illustrated the emotional and material toll of the disaster on victims, while also showcasing the collaboration between government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local residents in providing assistance, evacuations, and preventive measures. *Lampost.co* was particularly vocal in promoting community solidarity, whereas *Radarlampung.co.id* and *Tribunnews.com* placed slightly less emphasis on grassroots mobilization.

The reporting also touched upon structural causes of flooding, often linked to policy gaps, urban planning failures, and environmental degradation. Both *Lampost.co* and *Tribunnews.com* addressed these issues more frequently, while *Radarlampung.co.id* provided less in-depth coverage of governance-related causes, though it still acknowledged the importance of disaster management policies. *Lampost.co*, in particular, was proactive in associating flooding with broader environmental concerns such as climate change, whereas *Tribunnews.com* offered fewer stories with this angle. Poor drainage systems emerged as a common theme, with news reports citing them as significant contributors to flooding due to their inability to manage high volumes of rainfall. Inadequate maintenance and clogging of these systems often resulted in water overflowing into streets and residential areas. Another critical issue identified was the rapid conversion of green spaces and water catchment areas into commercial or residential developments, which reduced the land's capacity to absorb rainfall. Furthermore, informal settlements along riverbanks—frequently mentioned in the reports—were highlighted as flood-prone zones due to improper land use and planning.

Extreme weather patterns, especially above-average rainfall, were also noted as factors increasing the flood risk in Bandar Lampung City. This reflects the growing urgency to address environmental vulnerabilities through both policy and community-based solutions. Finally, the analysis underscores the importance of social responsibility in media reporting. Balanced coverage that includes diverse perspectives—from government institutions to affected residents—is essential to uphold journalistic integrity and prevent biased or incomplete narratives. Ensuring the representation of all relevant parties fosters public trust and promotes informed, inclusive discourse around disaster preparedness and response.

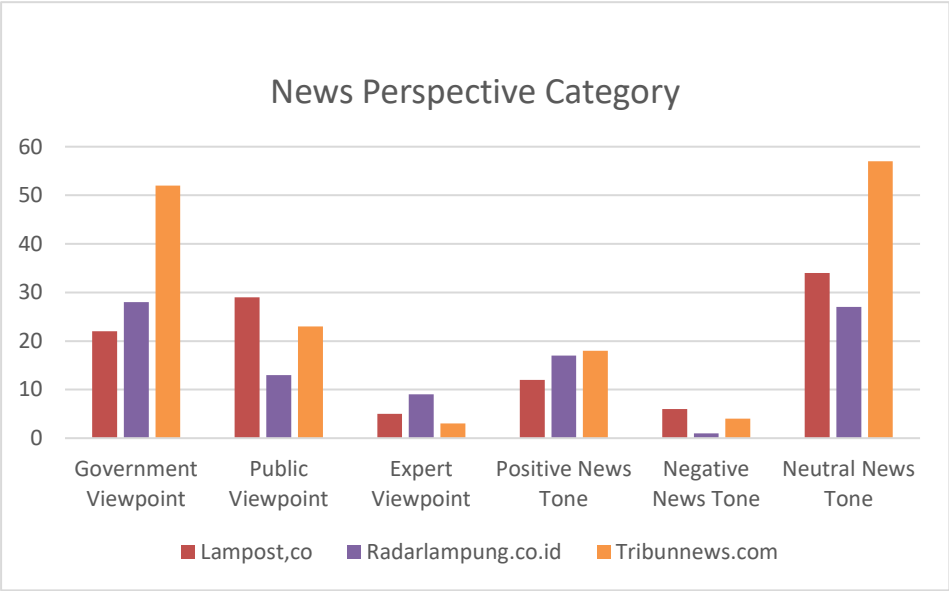


Figure. 4. Data Analysis of News Perspective Categories

The study revealed that the news coverage from the three online media platforms—*Lampost.co*, *Radarlampung.co.id*, and *Tribunnews.com*—generally attempted to fulfill their role in delivering accurate and relevant information to the public. However, the involvement of expert perspectives in the reporting remained limited across all platforms. This indicates that there is still significant room for improvement in fulfilling the media’s social responsibility, particularly in providing in-depth, data-driven analysis from credible sources. The presence of expert insight is essential to help the public and policymakers better understand the root causes of flooding and to formulate more effective, long-term mitigation strategies.

In contrast, the dominance of government viewpoints in news coverage reflects a common media tendency to prioritize official narratives over community voices or expert analyses. While public perspectives are important to ensure that the concerns of affected residents are adequately represented, expert contributions are equally crucial to enrich the narrative and enhance the overall quality of the information disseminated. Reporting on flood events by the three media outlets was generally delivered with a neutral tone, though it was evident that *Lampost.co* placed greater emphasis on community voices compared to the other two. Nonetheless, all three platforms still lack sufficient representation of expert opinions, which is necessary for fostering a more strategic, scientifically informed, and sustainable approach to disaster journalism.

Although the majority of reports focused on negative aspects—such as damage assessments and the causes of flooding—these were often balanced with information on government-led recovery efforts and planned assistance. This inclusion of respon-

sive measures contributed to a more constructive framing of the issue. As a result, much of the coverage can be categorized as neutral rather than sensational, as it not only addressed the consequences of the disaster but also highlighted efforts toward recovery and support. This framing creates a more hopeful and solution-oriented narrative, even when reporting on inherently negative events such as flooding.

4 Conclusion

Online media play a significant role in shaping public perception, as they serve as the primary source for information production and news dissemination. This role becomes especially critical in the context of disaster journalism, where the accuracy, relevance, and human depth of reporting can directly influence public understanding and response. In covering flood disasters in Bandar Lampung, the three analyzed media outlets have largely adhered to the principle of accuracy, as reflected in their thematic alignment with the community's informational needs. Most journalists relied heavily on official sources—such as government agencies and local authorities—which helped ensure the accuracy and credibility of the reports. However, the limited inclusion of expert sources restricted the depth of analysis, thereby hindering the public's ability to fully grasp the underlying causes and broader impacts of the disaster. Greater involvement of experts is essential to strengthen the scientific foundation of disaster coverage and to improve public awareness and preparedness.

From a humanitarian standpoint, *Lampost.co* stands out for its stronger emphasis on the voices of affected communities. This approach provides a clearer view of how disasters disrupt daily life and allows for a more empathetic narrative. Nonetheless, across all three media platforms, government perspectives continue to dominate coverage, with relatively little attention paid to the emotional and personal experiences of disaster victims. To enrich the human dimension of disaster journalism, the perspectives of experts and affected individuals must be better represented. Although the three media outlets have shown efforts to meet the four core principles of disaster journalism—accuracy, timeliness, relevance, and social responsibility—several improvements are still needed. Specifically, the inclusion of more expert sources and community-centered reporting must be strengthened to ensure a well-rounded and humane approach to disaster coverage.

Moreover, the media's social responsibility extends beyond reporting facts; it includes providing the public with solutions and preventive strategies to minimize future risks. However, the current reporting practices of the three media outlets fall short in delivering solution-oriented content. The minimal involvement of disaster specialists and researchers has led to limited coverage on mitigation efforts and disaster preparedness, leaving the public without sufficient guidance on how to effectively anticipate or respond to such events. In conclusion, while *Lampost.co*, *Radarlampung.co.id*, and *Tribunnews.com* have demonstrated a basic commitment to fulfilling their social role by disseminating important disaster-related information, further efforts are needed. The media must become more proactive in engaging expert voices, amplifying the experiences of affected communities, and producing coverage that

emphasizes sustainable and strategic disaster mitigation. Only through these improvements can online media fulfill their full potential as agents of information, education, and social mobilization during times of crisis.

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