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ANALYSIS OF RENEWABLE ENERGY NEWS IN REALIZING DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM ON THE KOMPAS.COM NEWS PORTAL

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Abstract:

In general, news renewable energy coverage in the mass media is still considered less interesting and not optimal as a means of development journalism to educate the public. This study aims to determine the extent to which the Kompas.com news portal applies the principles of development journalism in building public awareness of renewable energy in order to realize the SDGs. With a qualitative descriptive approach using the purposive sampling method and coding techniques, this study took 85 Kompas.com news articles regarding the use of renewable energy published from January to December 2024. The results of the study show that Kompas.com's reporting has focused on presenting government policies and renewable energy potential, with 34 news articles using sources from the government, researchers, and NGOs, thus supporting sustainable development strategies. However, coverage of community participation is still very limited, with only 8 news articles featuring community voices, indicating the dominance of a top-down perspective in reporting. In addition, although there is the use of data and expert analysis, the coverage is not balanced due to the lack of comparison with data from independent sources such as environmental organizations, independent academics, or NGOs. Thus, this study concludes that although Kompas.com has implemented several principles of development journalism, improvements are still needed in the representation of community voices and the presentation

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of more balanced and objective coverage to support the renewable energy transition and sustainable development in Indonesia.

Keywords:

SDGs, Development Journalism, Renewable Energy; News Portal, Kompas.com

Introduction

Indonesia's dependence on fossil fuels, such as oil, natural gas, and coal, is still very high, while new and renewable energy has not become the main source of energy. This condition poses several challenges, including depleting oil reserves, price instability due to an imbalance between demand and production, and increasing greenhouse gas emissions. In the national primary energy mix, oil and coal still dominate. Crude oil is the most imported energy commodity, growing by an average of 4.3% per year in line with the implementation of the Refinery Development Master Plan (RDMP) programs and Grass Root Refinery (GRR) programs. In addition, fuel imports have increased by around 4.2% per year because domestic refinery capacity has not been sufficient to meet demand, especially for gasoline. Although Indonesia still exports gas, imports of liquefied natural gas (LNG) and liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) have also increased in line with increasing demand from the household and commercial sectors and decreasing natural gas reserves and production (Badan Keahlian Dewan DPR RI, 2021).

Based on information from the government and national media, the energy transition in Indonesia is currently still in the early or experimental stages. This is due to the dominance of fossil fuel use as the main energy source. Meanwhile, the use of new and renewable energy is still limited to certain areas and has not been evenly distributed at the national level. Nevertheless, the government continues to encourage an increase in the renewable energy mix through various strategic programs. Indonesia itself has enormous renewable energy potential, including solar, hydro, wind, bioenergy, geothermal, and ocean energy (den.go.id). However, according to Erdiwansyah (2021), until 2019, the use of renewable energy had only reached around 2% of the total potential of 441.7 GW (Perry, 2022).

The characteristics of fossil energy that cannot be renewed and continues to decline, coupled with high dependence on fossil fuels, create vulnerability to national energy security. The increasing imbalance between energy supply and demand also worsens this condition. (Komisi VII DPR RI, 2018). As part of Indonesia's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in accordance with the Paris Agreement, the government is actively developing policies related to new and renewable energy to support sustainable development (Direktorat Jenderal Pengendalian Perubahan Iklim, 2016). Through Presidential Decree No. 22 of 2017 concerning the National Energy General Plan, the target contribution of new and renewable energy in the national primary energy mix is set at a minimum of 23% in 2025 and 31% in 2050 (PERPRES, 2017).

In addition, in the 2015–2019 National Medium-Term Development Plan also known as RPJMN, one of the development priorities is to realize energy sovereignty by increasing the contribution of renewable energy in the national energy mix. The potential for new and

renewable energy in Indonesia is still very large, so that opportunities for its development remain wide open (BPPN, 2014).

The commitment of the Indonesian House of Representatives to support the use of renewable energy in realizing national energy sovereignty is demonstrated through the inclusion of the Draft Law on New and Renewable Energy also known as RUU EBT into the 2021 Priority National Legislation Program (Prolegnas) as a proposal from Commission VII of the Indonesian House of Representatives. This regulation is expected to be able to overcome various challenges in the development of renewable energy, while accelerating the development and investment of renewable energy on a large scale to improve public welfare (Badan Keahlian Dewan DPR RI, 2021).

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are sustainable development programs formulated by UN member countries in 2015 and targeted to be achieved by 2030. In Indonesian, SDGs are called Sustainable Development Goals, consisting of 17 main points that serve as a shared blueprint for realizing peace and prosperity for humans and the Earth. Specifically for Indonesia, one of the keys to realizing the SDGs is the development of renewable energy—which also supports point 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy) and point 13 (Climate Action) (Puspita & Nursiwi, *Energi Bersih Terjangkau Dalam Mewujudkan Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs)*, 2024).

Not a few mass media and news portals in their reporting are biased and not independent, which is very much in conflict with the Journalistic Code of Ethics, including in article 1, namely "Indonesian journalists are independent, produce accurate, balanced news, and do not have bad intentions.", where the meaning of independent is reporting according to the existing facts and there is no interference or intervention from other parties, including press companies (Samsuri, 2013).

Media independence is a key pillar in ensuring press freedom and a healthy democracy. However, the reality in Indonesia shows that media independence still faces serious challenges that have the potential to threaten the integrity and objectivity of the media in conveying information to the public.

One of the main problems is the increasing concentration of media ownership. Rahmawati and Firman (2023) stated that the concentration of media ownership in Indonesia not only limits the diversity of perspectives in conveying information, but can also hinder a healthy democratic process. Media ownership dominated by certain groups often leads to bias in reporting and limits the space for alternative voices to appear in the public space (Firman & Rahmawati, 2023).

In addition, media owners' intervention in editorial policies is also a crucial issue. A study by Yoedjadi et al. (2023) ahead of the 2024 Election found that this kind of intervention not only threatens media independence but also raises ethical dilemmas for journalists. While some journalists consider this intervention to be normal, others view it as a violation of the principles of the journalistic code of ethics that should be upheld. These differences of opinion reflect the complexity of maintaining media neutrality amidst political and business pressures (Yoedjadi, Djunaidi, Setyanto, & Utami, 2024).

Another issue is the urgent need for policy changes to strengthen media independence. Darmanto (2022) emphasized that the weakness of existing regulations allows for political intervention in news reporting, especially ahead of important political moments such as elections. Therefore, concrete steps are needed in the form of policy updates that can accommodate the media's need to be independent and free from political and economic pressure (Darmanto, 2015).

In the context of development journalism, the challenges of media independence become increasingly complex. Development journalism should act as an agent of social change by voicing development issues objectively and critically. However, in reality, the media is often trapped in political and economic interests that hinder this role.

In addition, Wardani et al. (2024) in their research on reporting on mangrove forest park tourism in Bengkulu found that media framing of environmental and development issues is often influenced by economic and political interests, which can obscure the information conveyed to the public (Wardani, Adhrianti, & Perdana, 2024).

Masduki (2023) also highlighted the role of journalist organizations in maintaining press freedom in Yogyakarta. This study revealed that despite efforts to maintain media independence, pressure from various parties, including the government and media owners, is still a major challenge in the practice of development journalism in Indonesia (Masduki, 2023).

One example of a case that reflects the problems in journalistic practices in Indonesia is the news about the 2024 regional head elections (Pilkada) published by a number of digital media. Many of these news reports were reported to the Press Council because they were considered unbalanced, did not go through an adequate information verification process, and violated the Journalistic Code of Ethics, especially articles 1 and 3 (Antara News, 2024).

Another case occurred in South Kalimantan, where a journalist was found guilty of violating the Electronic Information and Transactions Law (ITE) due to the spread of hate speech and hostility towards individuals through an article published on the Banjarhits.id news portal. The article contained provocative elements that had the potential to trigger ethnic, religious, racial, and intergroup relations well commonly known as SARA conflicts in society (Liputan6, 2020).

According to Rocky Gerung (Indonesian political observer), the condition of the mass media in Indonesia is increasingly worrying due to the dominance of power and the interests of investors in the editorial space. He highlighted the closed meeting between President Prabowo and the editors-in-chief in Hambalang as an indication of the lack of transparency in the news reporting process and the media's tendency to submit to political and economic power (Indonesians.id, 2025).

On May 30, 2018, the Radar Bogor daily published an article titled "Ongkang-ongkang Kaki Dapat Rp112 Juta" which discussed Megawati Soekarnoputri's salary as Chair of the Pancasila Ideology Development Agency also known as BPIP. The Press Council considered that the news violated Articles 1 and 3 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics because it was unbalanced and contained judgmental opinions. As a follow-up, the Press Council recommended that Radar Bogor include Megawati's right of reply along with an apology to readers (Dewan Pers, 2018).

On February 13, 2019, the *Indopos* newspaper published a news story titled "Ahok Replaces Ma'ruf Amin?" which was based on rumors on social media without adequate verification. The Press Council stated that the news story violated the Journalistic Code of Ethics because it was not based on accurate information and could cause disinformation in the community. The Press Council emphasized the importance of verifying information before publication to maintain media credibility (CNN Indonesia, 2019).

In March 2023, the news portal *Kabaraktual.id* published two articles highlighting the resignation of the Head of SMKN Penerbangan Aceh. The Press Council found that the two articles violated Articles 1 and 3 of the Journalistic Code of Ethics because they did not confirm with the relevant parties and were not balanced. The Press Council requires *Kabaraktual.id* to include the right of reply from the injured party, improve editorial management, and submit a press company verification process within six months (Dialeksis.com, 2023).

This phenomenon shows that some mass media in Indonesia still face serious challenges in upholding the principles of journalistic independence and professionalism. When the media loses its independence and is subject to political and economic interests, its function as a pillar of democracy and conveyor of truth becomes distorted. Therefore, strengthening journalistic ethics, editorial transparency, and stricter public supervision are important steps to ensure that the media is able to carry out its strategic role objectively, fairly, and in the interests of the wider community.

Based on these problems, it is important to conduct a more in-depth study of the factors that influence media independence and development journalism in Indonesia. This is not only relevant to the development of communication and journalism theory, but also has significant practical implications for policy makers and the public in an effort to maintain the sustainability of a healthy democracy.

According to the Merriam Webster Dictionary, development means the state of developing or unfolding gradually (Merriam-Webster, Incorporated, 2025). Thus, development can be interpreted as a process of growth and becoming better and more advanced every day. While the definition of journalism or journalism is the process of making information or news (news processing) and its dissemination through mass media (Qorib, Saragih, I, & Suwandi, 2019). If the two terms are combined, development journalism can be interpreted as the process of collecting, organizing, and packaging useful information, then disseminating it to the public through various mass media platforms (Anjolaoluwa, 2024).

Development Journalism is a style of journalism in developing countries that emphasizes the role of the press in the framework of national development. Development journalism convinces society of the future, so that they can participate in development where the goals of development are (a) freedom, (b) justice, (c) morals and ethics, (d) happiness, and in order to achieve these goals, there needs to be active involvement from society (Duku, 2014). According to Agarwala, in covering news, development journalists must critically examine, evaluate and provide (a) the relevance of a development project to national needs, and most importantly to local needs, (b) the difference between the program according to plan and the one implemented, and (c) the difference between its impact on society as claimed by government officials and the actual one (Silviani, 2024).

In addition, to ensure that a media is independent, objective and free from distortion by certain interests, it is necessary to pay attention to several important factors, namely the background, media routine and organizational structure (Iskandar & Yusuf, 2024). McQuail also mentioned several important indicators for assessing media independence, namely (a) impartiality of opinion, (b) absence of personalization, (c) absence of sensationalism, (d) absence of stereotypes, and (e) accuracy (Octavia, Purwati, & Megantari, 2022).

Oleh karena itu, berdasarkan landasan teori tersebut, indikator jurnalisme pembangunan adalah sebagai berikut:

1. Focus on development issues and community welfare.
2. Representing the voice of the community and encouraging public participation.
3. Criticize government policies with in-depth evaluation.
4. Data-driven and involving expert perspectives.
5. Oriented towards solutions and long-term impact.
6. Independent, objective and provides balanced coverage.

So, when the media is able to present these points in its news coverage, it can be said that the media meets the criteria for development journalism.

Kompas.com is one of the pioneers of online media in Indonesia which first appeared on September 14, 1995 under the name Kompas Online. Initially, Kompas Online which can be accessed via kompas.co.id only presented news from the daily Kompas edition of that day. This service aims to reach readers in areas that are difficult to reach by print distribution, especially in eastern Indonesia and abroad. With the presence of Kompas Online, readers in remote areas and abroad can access daily news in real-time without having to wait several days.

To improve accessibility, in early 1996, the Kompas Online website address changed to www.kompas.com. This change further introduced Kompas Online to its loyal readers, especially those abroad. As internet penetration increased, Kompas Online began to become the main source of information for people who needed fast and reliable news.

Realizing the great potential of the digital world, Kompas Online was developed into an independent business unit under the auspices of PT Kompas Cyber Media (KCM) on August 6, 1998. At this stage, Kompas Online was better known as KCM. Not only displaying daily replicas of Kompas, KCM also began to provide the latest news updates throughout the day, making it one of the news portals that continues to adapt to the needs of the digital community.

The growth of internet users in Indonesia has also driven a significant increase in the number of KCM visitors. Access to information via the internet has become an important part of everyday life, so KCM continues to innovate to meet the needs of readers. With the growing digital world, KCM presents various new features and increases the speed and accuracy of presenting news.

On May 29, 2008, the news portal rebranded itself by returning to the name Kompas.com, referring to the Kompas brand that has been widely recognized for its meaningful journalism. This rebranding was accompanied by the addition of news channels, increased productivity, and the presentation of more up-to-date and relevant information. This step further confirms Kompas.com's commitment as a news portal that is a reference for quality journalism amidst the rapid flow of information that is often unverified (Kompas.com, 2025).

Kompas.com is an online news portal that strives to present factual information and in accordance with the reality that occurs. This commitment makes Kompas.com a media that is consistent in conveying events as they are. Based on data from Semrush.com, in May 2022, Kompas.com recorded around 127.7 million visits, placing it in 40th place as the site with the highest traffic in Indonesia. This number shows the high reach of Kompas.com as an influential online media. In line with data from Katadata.co.id, Kompas.com also ranks second as the news portal most accessed by the Indonesian people (Perry, 2022).

With Kompas.com, the public should increasingly understand the importance of using renewable fuels to realize the SDGs (Puspita & Nursiwi, Energi Bersih Terjangkau Dalam Mewujudkan Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs), 2024), because of the ongoing reporting by the media Kompas.com.

Therefore, by analyzing news from Kompas.com, the purpose of this study is to determine the extent of Kompas.com's attitude towards renewable energy reporting from the perspective of development journalism based on existing indicators for the realization of SDGs.

Literature Review

The literature review in this research is as follows:

No	Researcher Name / Year	Research Focus	Key Findings	Relevance to This Research
1	(Duku, 2014)	Basic concepts of development journalism	The media plays an active role in development, not just conveying information.	To be a theoretical basis for studying the practice of development journalism at Kompas.com.
2	(Silviani, 2024)	Criteria for coverage in development journalism according to Agarwala	Must be relevant to local needs and speak to the community.	To be a benchmark in assessing the quality of Kompas.com's coverage of renewable energy.
3	(Perry, 2022)	Framing of renewable energy news on Kompas.com and Tempo.co	The news is dominated by the government narrative.	Strengthening the findings about source bias in Kompas.com news.
4	(Puspita & Nugraheni, Energi Bersih Terjangkau dalam Mewujudkan Tujuan Pembangunan Berkelanjutan (SDGs), 2024)	SDGs and clean energy coverage by the media	Media must be educational, data-based, and in the public interest.	Justify the importance of critical and solutions-based coverage.
5	(Octavia, Purwati, & Megantari, 2022)	Media independence	Impartiality, accuracy and	To be a reference in evaluating the

		indicators based on McQuail	freedom from personalization.	objectivity of Kompas.com's reporting.
6	(Anjolaoluwa, 2024)	Challenges of development journalism in the digital era	The media tends to be biased due to pressure from power and capital owners.	Strengthening criticism of the lack of balance in energy reporting.

The novelty of this research is as follows:

Aspect	Research Novelty
Thematic Focus	Examining the extent to which the principles of development journalism are applied thematically in renewable energy issues by Kompas.com.
Current Data Period	Using comprehensive news data from 2024, which has not been the subject of much previous research.
Coding Methods and Content Analysis	Using coding techniques in content analysis to identify thematic patterns in depth.
Representation of Community Voice	Providing an evaluation focus on the lack of public participation in energy coverage by mainstream media.

Methodology

In this study, the researcher uses a qualitative approach in conducting the process of studying the research object. Research with a qualitative approach is based on beliefs, experiences, and meaning systems of society in the process of describing problems. This process is carried out by collecting scientific experiences, individual perceptions, and community behavior regarding what is the object of research (Ardyan, et al., 2023) (Hildawati, et al., 2024).

The method used in this research is a descriptive qualitative method, a type of case study research method that processes data by providing explanations that aim to analyze the messages contained in news articles and help identify themes, patterns, or framing used in the news (Hanyfah, Fernandes, & Budiarto, 2022). This descriptive qualitative method is applied by analyzing and providing descriptive explanations on the news on Kompas.com related to 'Renewable Energy'.

The data collection technique used by the researcher is Purposive Sampling, where the researcher selects data by determining specific characteristics that are in accordance with the research objectives (Sugiono, Noerdjanah, & Wahyu, 2020). Researchers also use coding techniques to obtain a picture of the facts as a whole qualitative data analysis and techniques for collecting and drawing conclusions from psychological analysis of the data obtained. Coding is intended as a way to obtain words or phrases that determine the existence of prominent psychological facts, capture the essence of facts, or mark psychological attributes that emerge strongly from a number of language collections or visual data. Researchers selected

Kompas news related to 'Renewable Energy' from early January 2024 to the end of December 2024 (Mahpur, 2017).

As for the news that researchers have collected in the form of coding, researchers analyze using content analysis techniques where researchers analyze news content presented in the form of coding based on the theory of development journalism, then researchers present the results based on this theory (Drisko & Maschi, 2016).

Findings And Discussion

After the researcher took news samples from Kompas.com, the researcher compiled and classified them in the form of a coding table. The following are some samples of news coding compiled by the researcher:

No	Date	Title	News Content	Link	Source person
1	2/5/2024	Supporting Energy Transition, PLN-Huawei Develops Joint Innovation Center	PT PLN (Persero) is carrying out a Joint Innovation Center (JIC) collaboration project with PT Huawei Tech Investment, which will be one of the foundations for developing new electrical technology in the ICT sector.	-	PLN President Director Darmawan Prasodjo, Vice President & CEO of Huawei's Electricity Digitalization David Sur
2	2/5/2024	Q1-2024 High Profitability, PGE Active in Carbon Trading Scheme	PT Pertamina Geothermal Energy Tbk (PGE) consistently continued its positive financial performance in Q1-2024. PGE posted revenue, profit, and electricity production in line with the Company's Work Budget Plan (RKAP) targets.	https://lifestyle.kompas.com/read/2024/05/02/170000886/quarter-i-2024-high-profitability-of-active-pge-in-carbon-trading-scheme	PGE President Director Juju Hadi, PGE Finance Director Yurizki Rid
3	5/5/2024	EBET Bill Continues to be Discussed, Nuclear and Ammonia Included in New Energy	The government and the Indonesian House of Representatives are still working on the Draft Law on New Energy and Renewable Energy (RUU EBET).	-	Director General of EBTKE Eniya Listiani Dewi
4	5/5/2024	EBTKE Develops New	The Directorate General of New, Renewable Energy and Energy	-	Director General of EBTKE Eniya Listiani Dewi

		Renewable Energy	Conservation (EBTKE) of the Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources is developing new technologies in the field of clean energy, including nuclear, hydrogen, and ammonia.		
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Source: Sample of Renewable Energy news coding from Kompas.com news portal from May-August 2024

Based on the coding above, the researcher found the following analysis results:

1. Based on the focus indicator on development issues and public welfare, Kompas.com's reporting in the Lestari column has focused on renewable energy which is part of sustainable development. However, the focus of the news is still dominant on government policies and energy potential without discussing much about the impact of renewable energy on public welfare where Kompas.com should be able to review more benefits of renewable energy for the community, be it economically, public welfare, or the environment.
2. Based on the indicators of representing the voice of the people and encouraging public participation, researchers only found 8 news items that involved the public as sources, while the rest were dominated by the government (34 news items), BUMN (20 news items) and researchers (22 news items), which shows its lack of suitability as a media that represents the voice of the people.
3. Based on data-based indicators and involving expert perspectives, Kompas.com's reporting has involved energy expert analysis and used data from the government, but is still lacking in comparing data from various independent sources, in this case what Kompas.com should do to enrich its point of view is to use data from environmental organizations, independent academics and NGOs, or compare data with other countries so that it has a global perspective.
4. In the context of being oriented towards long-term solutions and impacts, Kompas.com's reporting has highlighted the success of renewable energy implementation in several regions, but there is still little reporting on the obstacles and challenges faced in implementing renewable energy, so with the many reports on obstacles and challenges, reports on long-term strategies in the renewable energy transition can be made.
5. In relation to the independent, objective, and balanced coverage indicators, the news coverage by Kompas.com is dominated by the perspective of the government and BUMN, with little balance from other parties, so that news coverage related to criticism of the government is minimal. Therefore, Kompas.com should add perspectives from NGOs, independent academics and affected communities to provide balanced coverage. and the nature of the news is not only promoting government policies, but also criticizing the government from a critical perspective.

Conclusion

This study found that although Kompas.com has applied several principles of development journalism in reporting on renewable energy issues, the coverage is still dominated by narratives from the government, state-owned enterprises, and researchers. Representation of public voices is very limited, found in only 8 of the 85 news items analyzed, causing the

perspectives presented to tend to be top-down and less reflective of public participation. In addition, although expert data and analysis have been used, the reporting is still minimal in comparing data with independent sources such as environmental organizations, academics, and NGOs. Coverage that is oriented towards solutions and long-term impacts has also not been fully realized, because news that highlights challenges and obstacles in the energy transition is still limited.

These findings imply the need for improvements in the practice of development journalism in online media, especially in strategic issues such as renewable energy. The media needs to expand community involvement and enrich perspectives with more diverse data so that coverage becomes more balanced, objective, and encourages sustainable development. In addition, the results of this study provide input for policy makers, academics, and media practitioners to develop educational and critical reporting, in line with efforts to achieve the SDGs, especially points 7 and 13.

However, this study has limitations. First, the study only analyzed news from one online portal (Kompas.com) and within a certain period (January–December 2024), so the generalization of the results of this study to other media and different time periods is still limited. Second, the research method used is descriptive without measuring the direct impact of news on the audience, so the real influence of news on changes in reader behavior has not been fully described. Third, limited access to in-depth interviews with Kompas.com journalists and stakeholders also limits understanding of the news compilation process.

For further research, it is recommended to conduct a comparative analysis with other online media and expand the research method with a mixed methods approach to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the role of the media in supporting sustainable development through renewable energy reporting.

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