

Representation Of Poverty In Kompas Daily's "Suara Tak Terdengar" Series On Social Media

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Keywords

Representation, Poverty
News, Social Media,
Kompas, "Suara Tak
Terdengar"

Abstract

Reporting on poverty has always been a compelling topic for the mass media. Beyond its news value, such reporting reflects the media's ideal role as an institution that exercises social control over those responsible for tackling poverty, particularly the government and the state. Kompas is one of Indonesia's major mass media outlets, which, to this day, continues to demonstrate a commitment to highlighting the issue of poverty as part of its social control function. Using the netnography research method, this study examines two issues: the narratives of poverty presented by Kompas and the ideology underpinning them, as well as the audience's response to such coverage. The subject of this study comprises Kompas's posts on X (Twitter), Instagram and Facebook regarding the "Suara Tak Terdengar" (Unheard Voices) reporting programme throughout 2024. The findings indicate that Kompas has successfully raised the issue of poverty on social media, attracting the audience's attention, although there are still limitations in engagement on certain issues. This article also demonstrates that the issue of poverty can still be addressed whilst upholding humanitarian principles and simultaneously serving as a tool for state control. These findings also distinguish this study from previous research, which suggested that coverage of poverty on social media tends to focus on individual cases and is prone to reinforcing negative stereotypes of the poor.

How to Cite (APA Style): Prinantyo, A., Hasfi, N., & Kristiyawanto. (2025). Representation of poverty in Kompas Daily's "Unheard Voices" series on social media. *Interaksi: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 15(1), 121–140. <https://doi.org/10.14710/interaksi.15.1.121-140>

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INTRODUCTION

Poverty is a multidimensional issue that has long been a matter of global concern. Thinkers and world leaders view it not merely as an economic condition, but as a violation of human dignity. Muhammad Yunus, winner of the 2006 Nobel Peace Prize, described poverty as "the absence of all human rights" (Ibrahim, 2020). A similar view was expressed by Mahatma Gandhi, who regarded it as "the worst form of violence", whilst Ali ibn Abi Talib called it "the greatest death". Pope Francis, in his Apostolic Exhortation (2013), also emphasised the importance of global attention to the eradication of poverty.

In Indonesia, the constitution explicitly guarantees citizens' right to a prosperous life. Article 28H(1) of the 1945 Constitution states that every person has the right to a prosperous life, both physically and mentally, to a place of residence, and to a good and healthy living environment, including healthcare services (Qamar, 2019). Nevertheless, the fulfilment of these rights still faces various obstacles, ranging from budgetary constraints and policies that do not yet fully favour people with low incomes, to development priorities that are largely directed towards the infrastructure, political and defence sectors.

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that, despite a decrease of 0.33 percentage points in March 2024 compared with March 2023, the number of people living in poverty in Indonesia still stands at 25.22 million. This situation is exacerbated by a surge in unemployment. Data from the BPS's National Labour Force Survey (Sakernas) recorded the number of unemployed at 7.28 million people in February 2025, an increase of 83,000 people compared with February 2024 (Mediana, 2025). This phenomenon reflects economic growth that has failed to create sufficient jobs, whilst simultaneously representing 'ruthless growth' or growth that actually generates massive poverty (Wirutomo, 2022).

In this context, the mass media plays a strategic role as an institution of social control. According to Dja'far Assegaf (1985), the press fulfils four main functions: informative, educational, recreational and social control. Through its reporting on poverty, the media not only conveys information but also promotes government accountability and sparks public concern.

The daily newspaper Kompas is one media outlet that consistently highlights the issue of poverty through its special reporting programme, *Suara Tak Terdengar* (Unheard Voices). This coverage is then orchestrated from print platforms to social media as part of a strategy to expand its audience reach. Among the platforms used are X (Twitter), Instagram and Facebook. Instagram was chosen as the primary focus of this study because it demonstrated the highest level of engagement.

Although there have been numerous studies on the representation of poverty in the mass media, research specifically examining the orchestration of poverty-related content from print media to social media—particularly Instagram—and analysing netizens' responses to it remains relatively limited. This study aims to fill this gap by exploring two main issues: (1) how the theme of poverty is represented in Suara Tak Terdengar's Instagram posts, and (2) how these narratives are responded to and discussed by netizens via the comments section.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Representation of Poverty in the Mass Media and on Social Media

Studies on the representation of poverty in the mass media show that the media often frame poverty through a particular lens that can influence public perception. Clawson and Trice (2000) found that the media tend to portray poor people solely through stereotypes and oversimplify the complexity of structural issues. Similar findings were put forward by Bullock, Wyche and Williams (2001), who showed that the portrayal of poverty in the mass media frequently emphasises individual aspects rather than systemic factors.

In the digital age, the representation of poverty has shifted as journalistic content migrates to social media platforms. This shift not only affects how information is conveyed, but also how the public understands and responds to narratives of poverty (Apagu et al., 2025; Zhu, 2024). Unlike traditional media, which tends to frame poverty through individual stereotypes or pity, the digital space is shaped by platform logic that influences how social issues are packaged and consumed (Chadwick, 2017). Social media opens up space for more participatory narratives, yet simultaneously risks reinforcing stigma if not managed carefully (Dobson, 2017; Lindtner & Ytre-Arne, 2024).

Nevertheless, studies specifically examining how mainstream media represent poverty on Instagram remain limited. Most previous research has focused primarily on print media or television. This limitation creates an opportunity for research examining the representation of poverty within the context of content orchestration from print media to social media, particularly Instagram as a platform with high engagement.

Media Content Orchestration and Audience Response on Digital Platforms

Content orchestration has become a key practice in contemporary journalism, whereby mainstream media adapt journalistic material for different digital platforms. Chadwick (2017) explains that today's media system is hybrid in nature, with the logics of old and new media interacting to shape how news is distributed and consumed. This process has intensified with the 'platformisation' of journalism, whereby media organisations must adapt their editorial practices to the logic of algorithms and the characteristics of each platform (Nieborg & Poell, 2018; Sehl et al., 2023). In this context, Instagram demands narratives that are more concise, visual, and interactive to compete within a high-engagement ecosystem. Strategies to tailor content to be engaging and relevant have been shown to significantly increase user interaction (Maulana & Hafiz, 2024).

Beyond representation, it is important to understand how audiences respond to narratives of poverty on social media. Kozinets (2015, 2020) developed netnography as an approach to examine culture and interactions in digital spaces in depth. Meanwhile, Papacharissi (2015) emphasised the role of ‘affective publics’—that is, publics connected through the expression of sentiments and emotions on social media. This approach is relevant for understanding how netizens respond to the issue of poverty through comments expressing empathy, criticism or calls for justice. Recent studies also indicate that engagement on social media is determined not only by the quality of content, but also by the narrative’s ability to spark emotional engagement and public conversation (Hastuti et al., 2025).

Although research on the representation of poverty and audience responses on social media is growing, studies combining an analysis of representations in mainstream media Instagram posts with netnography of audience responses—particularly in the context of poverty coverage programmes such as *Suara Tak Terdengar*—remain relatively rare, and this study aims to fill that gap.

METHODS

This study employs a qualitative approach using the netnography method (Kozinets, 2015, 2020) and qualitative content analysis techniques. Netnography is used primarily to understand the dynamics of audience comments on Kompas’s social media platforms, whilst qualitative content analysis is used to analyse news posts on poverty as well as audience comments.

The research subjects comprised posts from the ‘Suara Tak Terdengar’ programme on Kompas’s official accounts on X (Twitter), Instagram and Facebook throughout 2024, along with comments on these posts. Although data was collected from all three platforms, the analysis focused on Instagram as this platform demonstrated the highest level of engagement. The posts analysed were based on nine themes of poverty covered in the 2024 “Suara Tak Terdengar” series, namely:

1. Factory workers, first published on 6 February 2024
2. Rice farmers (4 March 2024)
3. Mosque caretakers (28 March 2024)
4. Disaster response volunteers (13 May 2024)
5. Performing arts workers (18 June 2024)
6. Pro bono legal advisers (5 August 2024)

7. People with Alzheimer's (9 September 2024)
8. Musicians and songwriters (13 October 2024)
9. Victims of sexual violence (11 November 2024)

Thus, the subject of this study is the social media representation (specifically on Instagram) of these nine themes. This study analyses these nine themes, each represented by the most popular post or the one with the highest number of impressions, as presented in the results.

The analysis was conducted in two stages. Firstly, a qualitative text analysis of the posts was conducted to identify several elements, including the groups represented, the causes of poverty, the parties responsible, the solutions offered, and the tendency towards transcendental humanism, which forms the ideology of Kompas. Secondly, a netnographic analysis to group audience comments based on the narratives raised and the sentiments expressed.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Engagement: Unheard Voices

The 'Unheard Voices' series is part of Harian Kompas's commitment to highlighting issues of poverty and marginalised communities. Throughout 2024, this coverage addressed nine main themes, published periodically at intervals of approximately one month. All of this coverage was subsequently disseminated via Kompas's official social media accounts on X (Twitter), Instagram and Facebook.

In this study, the quantitative analysis focused on Instagram as this platform demonstrated the highest level of engagement. The primary metric used was the number of impressions. Audience responses were categorised into two groups based on a threshold of 50,000 impressions: enthusiastic responses (above 50,000) and minimal responses (below 50,000).

Table 1. Instagram Engagement for the Nine Themes of 'Suara Tak Terdengar' in 2024

No.	Theme	Publication Date	Instagram Impressions	Response Category
1	Factory Workers	6 February 2024	33,498	Minimal
2	Rice Farmers	4 March 2024	112,125	Enthusiastic
3	Mosque Caretakers	28 March 2024	10,786	Minimal
4	Disaster Response Volunteers	13 May 2024	27,303	Minimal
5	Performing Arts Workers	18 June 2024	62,254	Enthusiastic

No.	Theme	Publication Date	Instagram Impressions	Response Category
6	Pro-Bono Legal Advisors	5 August 2024	23,289	Minimal
7	Alzheimer's Patients	9 September 2024	35,330	Minimal
8	Musicians and Songwriters	13 October 2024	292,309	Enthusiastic
9	Sexual Violence Victims	11 November 2024	52,205	Enthusiastic

Table 1 shows significant variation in engagement levels. Four themes received an enthusiastic response: Rice Farmers (112,125), Performing Arts Workers (62,254), Musicians and Songwriters (292,309), and Victims of Sexual Violence (52,205). The other five themes fell into the ‘minimal’ category, with impression ranges of 10,786–35,330. This disparity indicates that, although all themes focus on the issue of poverty, the appeal and acceptance of these narratives by the digital audience are not uniform. These quantitative findings form the basis for the subsequent qualitative analysis.

Narratives of Poverty and Public Comments

1. The Welfare of Factory Workers Amidst a Downward Trend in the Provincial Minimum Wage (UMP)



Figure 1. News post “Wage Increase for Workers”

An Instagram post by @hariankompas highlighted the issue of factory workers’ welfare, which remains a major ‘unresolved issue’, receiving 309 likes and 56 comments. By presenting data from Kompas’s Research and Development department and statements from trade unions, the post emphasised the sharp downward trend in provincial minimum wage

(UMP) increases over the past decade, which has not kept pace with the rise in the cost of living.

The report portrays factory workers (particularly in the garment, textile and leather sectors) as formal-sector workers experiencing structural poverty. The main cause identified was the change in the wage calculation formula from the Decent Living Standard (KHL) to one based solely on inflation and economic growth, resulting in an average wage increase of just 6.6 per cent per year since 2015. Source: Trisnur Priyanto (Secretary-General of Garteks KSBSI) stated that workers are now viewed purely as “commodities”.

This narrative reflects Kompas’s transcendental humanism by positioning workers as dignified human beings whose voices need to be heard, whilst subtly criticising a system that is not on their side.

Netnographic analysis reveals responses dominated by negative and critical sentiments towards government policy. The main narrative consists of criticism of the decline in wage increases and structural injustice. Electoral political narratives are also very strong, with many comments linking this issue to the 2024 presidential election campaign and support for the Ganjar–Mahfud ticket. Overall, empathy towards workers is high, but it is directed more towards systemic criticism and political polarisation than towards concrete solutions.

2. *The Paradox of ‘Starving Farmers in the Rice Granary’*



Figure 2. News post “Rice Farmers”

This post received 5.4K likes and 294 comments on Instagram and highlights the paradox that the surge in rice prices has not yet fully benefited farmers. Many farmers are in

fact at risk of running out of stock due to dwindling paddy reserves, irrigation difficulties, and being forced to queue for cheap rice.

The report portrays rice farmers as the primary food producers who remain vulnerable to structural poverty. The causes highlighted include ecological factors (insufficient irrigation water), structural factors (the sale of all paddy and the closure of small mills), and institutional factors. The government is portrayed as the party bearing the greatest responsibility, particularly regarding irrigation management and food security policy.

By featuring concrete cases such as that of farmer Rumsi, who was forced to grow cassava and queue for rice, the powerful coverage highlights the human aspect in line with Jakob Oetama's philosophy. An analysis of 294 comments revealed a highly emotional response. The dominant narrative consisted of empathy and sharp irony ("starving farmers in the rice granary"), accompanied by criticism of government policy and irrigation management, as well as a strong emergence of electoral political narratives. Very few comments offered technical solutions. Netizens' responses reinforced the impression that farmers' voices remain "unheard", with public empathy manifesting more in the form of political criticism.

3. *Mosque Attendants Behind the Scenes of Worship Services: Neglected Well-being*



Figure 3. News post "Mosque attendants or caretakers"

This Instagram post by @hariankompas received 282 likes and 15 comments highlighting the living conditions of mosque caretakers. The caption emphasised that their

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welfare remains generally inadequate: many receive wages below the regional minimum wage, whilst some do not even receive a fixed salary. Attention from the government and stakeholders is deemed necessary, even though this work is voluntary.

The report portrays marbots as informal workers within a religious context who face economic vulnerability. Through the cases of Sanadi (70) in Central Lombok, Sauzi (55) in Denpasar, and Muhammad Syafiq Ismail (23) in Banda Aceh, the narrative highlights working conditions characterised by a lack of contracts, no fixed wages, and no social security. The identified causes are structural and cultural in nature: the work is viewed as voluntary service, resulting in minimal formal protection, compounded by a lack of systematic attention from both the government and mosque administrators.

By portraying mosque caretakers as human beings with dignity and a right to welfare—rather than merely ‘servants’ who may be disregarded—the report reflects Kompas’s transcendental humanism.

The netnographic analysis reveals a relatively more balanced and constructive response compared to the two previous themes. The narratives fall into three groups: empathy for the marbot’s low standard of living; an emphasis on the responsibilities of the congregation and mosque administrators (rather than solely the government); and religious narratives emphasising sincerity and divine reward. Sentiment tended to be empathetic and solution-oriented, with little political polarisation. These responses reinforced the message that mosque caretakers constitute a group of “unheard voices”, thereby opening up a discussion on collective responsibility in ensuring their welfare.

4. *Tagana Volunteers: Sacrifice Without Guarantees Amidst a Disaster*



Figure 4. News post “Disaster Response Volunteers”

This post received 213 likes and featured the story of Hendri Riangkamang (29), a member of the Disaster Response Corps (Tagana), who was cooking in the communal kitchen at the Mount Ruang eruption evacuation centre when the volcano erupted again. He was forced to run barefoot for 4–5 kilometres whilst carrying a 20-kilogram bag amidst a shower of volcanic rocks and ash.

The report portrays Tagana volunteers as facing high physical and psychological risks. The narrative highlights trauma, limited equipment, and working conditions that demand great sacrifice without adequate formal safeguards. The causes of this vulnerability are both situational and structural: the nature of voluntary work in disaster zones places them in a risky position, whilst systemic support is not always optimal.

By portraying Hendri’s fear, trauma and resilience, this powerful piece highlights the humanity of volunteers who often work behind the scenes. Based on available data, this post received no comments from the Instagram audience. The lack of response aligns with the ‘minimal response’ category in the quantitative data. The absence of comments actually reinforces the position of this theme as a ‘marginal’ issue that fails to spark public discussion, even though the narrative raised touches upon aspects of human sacrifice and vulnerability.

5. *Traditional Performing Arts: Struggling Alone Amidst Changing Times*



Figure 5. News post “Performing arts workers”

This post received 1.8K likes and 97 comments emphasising that traditional performing arts are struggling amidst changing times. Whilst the state is deemed to lack an adequate cultural strategy, performing artists must make their own efforts to ensure cultural sustainability whilst also meeting their families’ needs.

The coverage portrays traditional performing artists as a group facing both economic vulnerability and threats to their cultural identity. The identified causes are structural in nature: the absence of a national cultural strategy, a lack of attention from the government and the business sector, and shifts in the public’s cultural consumption patterns.

The narrative positions performing artists not merely as cultural practitioners, but as individuals struggling to survive whilst safeguarding the nation’s heritage—in keeping with the spirit of transcendental humanism.

Analysis of the comments reveals a predominance of empathy and concern. Many netizens criticised the lack of government attention (including from the relevant ministries), proposed that traditional arts be included in the school curriculum, and emphasised the importance of innovation and marketing. There is also a narrative of collective responsibility involving the public, academics and the business sector. Sentiment tends to be critical of existing cultural policies, yet is accompanied by a drive to find practical solutions.

6. *Pro-Bono Legal Aid Providers: A Lonely Path Amid Budget Constraints*



Figure 6. News post “Pro-bono legal advisers”

This post received 410 likes and 6 comments highlighting the irony that, whilst the state guarantees legal aid for the underprivileged through Law No. 16 of 2011, in practice legal aid providers must cover case costs themselves due to limited budgets and cumbersome procedures.

The report portrays lawyers and staff at legal aid organisations as a group facing economic vulnerability whilst carrying out their public service. The example of the Bandar Lampung Legal Aid Foundation (LBH) shows that an annual budget of around Rp 80 million is almost entirely consumed by operational costs, forcing many to seek secondary employment. The causes of this vulnerability are structural: minimal funding, complex procedures, and a restrictive accreditation system. The report portrays defenders of the underprivileged as individuals struggling on a “quiet path”, whilst simultaneously affirming access to justice as a fundamental right of the poor.

Netnographic analysis reveals a relatively limited response. Narratives are divided between criticism of the state of justice in Indonesia and appreciation for the choice of the “quiet path”. Engagement in the comments section is low, consistent with the category of minimal response. The absence of widespread discussion reinforces the position of this theme as an issue that fails to capture public attention, despite concerning access to justice for people with low incomes.

7. *The Struggle of Alzheimer's Caregivers: Sacrifices That Are Never Recognised*



Figure 7. News post “Alzheimer’s patient”

This post received 344 likes and 7 comments, featuring the story of DY Suharya, who chose to abandon her doctoral studies in Australia to return home to care for her mother, who was suffering from dementia. This decision was described as the best choice she had ever made.

The coverage portrayed people with Alzheimer’s and their carers as a group facing a double burden: the suffering caused by the degenerative disease and the emotional and economic burden borne by the family. The causes of this vulnerability are structural and social: limited access to specialised healthcare services and a lack of state support for carers. By highlighting DY Suharya’s sacrifice, compassion and resilience, the report elevates the dignity of carers as an expression of humanitarian responsibility.

Analysis of the comments reveals overwhelmingly positive, empathetic and appreciative responses. The main themes include admiration for DY Suharya, the sharing of personal experiences as a carer, and a sense of solidarity (“you are not alone”). The sentiments expressed were very warm and supportive, in contrast to previous themes which were more often characterised by political or systemic criticism.

8. *Andi Mapajalos and His Songs: A Marginalised Senior Songwriter*



Figure 8. News post “Musician and songwriter”

This post received 13.2K likes and 1.6K comments, featuring the story of Andi Mapajalos (66), a songwriter who has composed over 125 songs performed by renowned singers. Although his work was successful in the past, he now lives in a cramped rented flat because the ‘one-off sale’ system of the 1980s left him without royalty rights.

The report portrays senior songwriters as a group facing economic vulnerability in old age due to a legal system and music industry that fail to protect intellectual property rights adequately. The causes are structural in nature: the ‘one-off sale’ practice, a lack of transparency, and lax intellectual property protection. The narrative positions songwriters as individuals who have made significant contributions to the nation’s culture, yet now live in hardship.

An analysis of the comments reveals a diverse and fairly active response. The narrative is divided between empathy for Andi Mapajalos, criticism of the ‘one-off sale’ system and the lax protection of intellectual property rights, and a critical view of the songwriter’s personal choices in the past. Sentiment is mixed: empathetic towards the individual, critical of the system, and reflective on past choices. These responses align with the ‘enthusiastic’ response category in the quantitative data.

9. *Victims of Sexual Violence: Between Trauma and Justice That Remains Elusive*



Figure 9. News post “Victims of sexual violence”

This post received 868 likes and 30 comments, highlighting that cases of sexual violence are becoming increasingly alarming, with women and children continuing to be victimised both offline and online. Although several victims are beginning to find the courage to report incidents, access to justice remains extremely difficult, particularly when the perpetrator is a public figure.

The coverage portrays victims (particularly women and children) as a group facing both violations of human dignity and structural barriers to obtaining justice. Data from the 2024 SPHPN (prevalence of 5.1 per cent) was used to reinforce the narrative. The causes are structural and cultural in nature: poor access to justice, a convoluted legal process, and a culture that still frequently blames the victim. By portraying victims as dignified human beings whose voices need to be heard and protected, the coverage reflects Kompas’s transcendental humanism.

An analysis of the comments reveals varied and emotional responses. Dominant narratives include concern over moral conditions, demands for harsher punishments for perpetrators (including the death penalty), and calls for public figures to help educate the public. There is also fairly detailed discussion regarding the accuracy of the prevalence data. Sentiment tends to be critical of the law enforcement system, whilst remaining empathetic towards victims, in line with the ‘enthusiastic’ response category.

Representations of Nine Narratives of Poverty in the ‘Suara Tak Terdengar’ Coverage

A qualitative analysis of nine posts on the @hariankompas Instagram account shows that narratives of poverty in ‘Suara Tak Terdengar’ are no longer merely based on pity, but combine individual representations with clear structural analysis. Each post consistently includes data from Kompas’s Research and Development department, statements from formal sources, and clearly identified causes such as ecological, institutional, and policy-related factors.

In terms of netizens’ sentiment, responses vary according to the significance of the issue and the timing of the coverage. Themes that received an enthusiastic response—such as rice farmers, performing arts workers, musicians and songwriters, and victims of sexual violence—tend to elicit a high degree of empathy, accompanied by criticism of government policy or calls for collective justice; whilst themes that received minimal response tend to be more passive, with many comments offering only emotional support without political intervention or concrete solutions. Overall, Kompas’s well-thought-out content orchestration strategy has succeeded in creating a meaningful interactive space, even though the issue of poverty remains a ‘marginal’ theme on social media.

DISCUSSION

The research shows that the social media accounts of Harian Kompas have addressed the issue of poverty in a different way from the findings of previous studies, in which the theme of poverty tended to exploit poverty through the stereotypes identified by Clawson and Trice (2000), which tend to oversimplify the complexity of the structural problems associated with poverty. These findings also indicate that the social media platform under study does not merely address poverty by focusing on the individual aspects of poverty, as found by Bullock, Wyche and Williams (2001). Kompas has successfully set the media agenda on poverty through a concept of emancipation, combined with systemic factors, to criticise the state and urge it to pay attention to this minority group.

Meanwhile, from the perspective of interactive audience engagement, both quantitative and qualitative findings reveal disparities in engagement with the nine coverage themes of *Suara Tak Terdengar* in 2024. Four themes received an enthusiastic response (Rice Farmers, Performing Arts Workers, Musicians and Songwriters, and Victims of Sexual Violence), whilst the other five themes fell into the ‘minimal’ category. This disparity suggests that there are challenges in reporting on poverty on social media, as highlighted by Hastuti et al. (2025), who note that engagement on social media is determined not only by the quality of

the content but also by the narrative's ability to spark emotional engagement and public conversation (Hastuti et al., 2025).

Questions regarding the differences in engagement with the content studied do raise the question: why do issues that both highlight the lives of marginalised groups receive uneven reception in the digital sphere? An interview with Angger Putranto, Deputy Manager of the Kompas Social Media Team, revealed that two main factors influence differences in response. Firstly, promotional strategies through ad boosts. The Social Media Team tends to amplify content that is already showing signs of trending on social media, with a view to optimising advertising efficiency. Secondly, the relevance and timing of the issue. Topics that intersect with ongoing public discourse tend to elicit a higher response. For example, the 'Musicians and Songwriters' theme, published in October 2024, coincided with public discussions on music copyright and the appointment of Yovie Widiyanto as a special adviser. Meanwhile, themes such as 'Rice Farmers' and 'Victims of Sexual Violence' possess relatively independent issue-driven momentum, meaning they are still capable of sparking interest even without relying on specific current events.

A qualitative analysis of the nine themes reinforces this understanding. Generally, the coverage in *Suara Tak Terdengar* portrays marginalised groups as subjects experiencing structural vulnerability. The causes of poverty highlighted are systemic in nature, whilst netizens' responses vary: from criticism of policies, empathy and appreciation for dedication, to calls for justice. This variation indicates that digital audiences respond to narratives of poverty contextually, depending on the characteristics of the issue and the manner of its presentation.

From an ideological perspective, all themes reflect the philosophy of transcendental humanism that forms the foundation of Kompas's journalism. Jakob Oetama emphasised that humanism is about humanity, and Kompas's journalism is directed towards *nguwongke*—addressing people as human beings, regardless of their social standing (Leksono, 2016; Kuncahyono, 2020).

The 'Unheard Voices' coverage embodies this principle by giving voice to the aspirations of groups that have long been 'unheard', highlighting their humanity, and treating them as subjects of dignity. Amidst digital disruption and the pressures of media industrialisation, this approach remains relevant, as a section of the Indonesian audience still demonstrates altruistic concern for humanitarian issues.

Consequently, the success of humanitarian advocacy-based coverage on social media is determined not only by journalistic depth, but also by the ability to gauge the momentum of an issue, devise distribution strategies, and maintain consistency in editorial philosophy.

CONCLUSION

This study yielded the following key conclusions: firstly, the four coverage themes of ‘Unheard Voices’—namely, rice farmers, performing arts workers, musicians and songwriters, and victims of sexual violence—received an enthusiastic response from netizens. This high level of engagement was influenced by two main factors: the power of the issues themselves (such as the issues of rice farmers and sexual violence, which already carry significant social resonance) and the timely nature of the reporting. The ‘Musicians and Songwriters’ theme, for example, was published in October 2024, coinciding with public discussions regarding music copyright and the appointment of Yovie Widianto as a special adviser.

Secondly, the other five themes—Factory Workers, Mosque Caretakers, Disaster Response Volunteers, Pro-Bono Legal Advisers and People with Alzheimer’s—received minimal response. This was primarily due to the nature of the issues, which lacked momentum in the public sphere, as well as unfavourable timing of the coverage. Another contributing factor was the sub-optimal social media promotion strategy for themes predicted to attract little attention.

Thirdly, there remains ample scope to raise the issue of poverty in the mainstream media. Reporting that does not rely solely on statistical data, does not adopt an elite perspective, and does not perpetuate the hegemony of dominant groups has proven capable of sparking public interest. Four out of the nine themes that received an enthusiastic response demonstrate that marginalised issues remain relevant in the digital sphere.

Fourthly, the philosophy of transcendental humanism that underpins Kompas’s journalism can still be realised amidst digital disruption and the ‘information tsunami’. A section of the Indonesian audience still displays an altruistic attitude, meaning that poverty-related issues which appeal to humanitarian concerns still have a place.

Fifthly, the success of the ‘Unheard Voices’ coverage depended heavily on the quality of planning within the newsroom. Discussions between reporters, editors and the Managing Editor before determining the themes, coupled with monitoring of issues currently developing in the public sphere, were crucial factors in ensuring that the coverage was not only journalistically robust but also capable of reaching audiences on social media.

Overall, this study confirms that journalism based on transcendental humanism remains relevant and effective in the age of social media. Provided it is supported by thorough planning, an understanding of the dynamics of digital audiences, and consistency in giving a voice to marginalised groups, mainstream media outlets such as *Kompas* can continue to fulfil their role in advocating for humanity amidst the challenges of industrialisation and technological disruption.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Acknowledgments: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The data analysed in this study are publicly available on Kompas's official Instagram account.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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