

# Framing Human-Crocodile Conflict: A Quantitative Content Analysis on detik.com Online Media

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**Aldehead Marinda Merfonsina Uparatu\*<sup>1</sup>, Herlina Agustin<sup>2</sup>, Rinda Aunillah Sirait<sup>3</sup>**

Email: <sup>1</sup>marindauparatu@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>h.agustin@unpad.ac.id

<sup>3</sup>rinda.aunillah@unpad.ac.id

<sup>1,2,3</sup> Universitas Padjadjaran

(\* = Corresponding Author)

## ABSTRACT

*Human-crocodile conflict (HCC) is an important yet under-researched aspect of human-wildlife interactions in Indonesia with significant consequences for conservation efforts and public awareness. This study used a quantitative content analysis method based on 168 news articles published by detik.com in 2024 to examine how human-crocodile conflict was portrayed in this one of Indonesia's leading online media. Four variables were analyzed: news source, tone, frame type, and use of thematic versus episodic frames. The findings showed a strong reliance on government sources (79.16%), with insignificant representation of non-governmental perspectives. This resulted in narrow narrative coverage. News coverage was dominated by negative reporting, particularly in government-sourced stories (sentiment score: -0.50), perpetuating fear-based stereotypes about crocodiles. The most common frames were attribution of responsibility (34.0%) and human interest (30.1%), while thematic frames were rare (14.3%), indicating a preference for episodic and event-driven reporting over systemic analysis. These patterns suggest that detik.com online media often reinforces sensationalism at the expense of balanced conservation messages. This study underscores the need for more inclusive, science-based reporting to foster coexistence and support effective conflict mitigation.*

**Keyword:** content analysis; detik.com; human-crocodile conflict; online media; quantitative framing

## INTRODUCTION

Human-crocodile conflict (HCC) is a small niche within the macro scope of human-wildlife interactions. A worldwide crocodilian attack database reported about 611 cases of crocodile attacks from around the world in 2024 (CrocAttack, 2024). Crocodile attacks often relate to a variety of factors such as climate change, human activity and habitat loss (Ardiantiono et al., 2023). Specifically habitat loss which often occur with human residential development activities around water body that inhabited by crocodiles. In Indonesia a total of 179 crocodile attacks have occurred during 2024 (ABC News, 2025). Generally, human-crocodile attack often result in injury, death, and even hunt and retaliation killing by human (Agustin et al., 2022), threatening their populations in the wild.

These condition contradicts the fact that crocodiles are one of the wildlife protected by law. Specifically, Law No. 32 of 2024 concerning Conservation of Living Natural Resources and Ecosystems and Minister of Environment and Forestry Regulation (PermenLHK)

No.P.106/MENLHK/SETJEN/KUM.1/12/2018. When interactions between humans and crocodiles in the wild escalate into conflict, then mass media has important role to communicate this situation (Almiron et al., 2018). A pretest that applied to the top 10 online media outlets from the (Reuters Institute, 2024) survey, showed that detik.com has the highest number of human-crocodile conflict coverage. In total they have 168 news items coverage about this issue, far outperforming other media such as kompas.com (78 news items) and tribunnews.com (64 news items). In addition, Reuters also named detik.com as the top media brand in 2024 in the online media category based on the same ranking. Their popularity as online media is followed by high access from the public to this site. No less than 50% of the Indonesian public on average uses detik.com every week to access various kinds of information (Reuters Institute, 2024). These various compelling reasons that made researchers choose detik.com as the object of research for further analysis.

Media coverage of HCC is not a simple issues. How media frames this conflict shapes our understanding of crocodile existence as a wildlife. Agustin et al. (2022) argue that instead of gaining respect from humans, crocodiles in the wild are characterised by stereotypes of how brutal they are. Creating fear and horror bias in public instead of emphasising their conservation effort as part of the ecosystem balance. The experimental study by Ballejo et al. (2021) shows a content that framed vultures as livestock predators received more negative comments from public, compared to videos without negative narratives. While Ardiantiono (2022) found in the context of role frames, crocodiles in human-crocodile conflicts were also more often labelled as perpetrators in many reports.

In general, news coverage ranging from political news to entertainment news is always coloured with various tone whether positive, negative or neutral (Soroka & Krupnikov, 2021). The process of news production and consumption will be heavily influenced by these valences. The same thing applies to the context of environmental report such as human-wildlife conflict. The tone of reporting used by media not only contributes to the way the public perceives the issue, but also reflects the mindset of the media involved. Hence, the focus of this research also explores the tone of news related to HCC in online media detik.com.

Regarding media credibility, detik.com is leading online media models in Indonesia, which presents news online with a rapid news format or commonly called breaking news. They also occupies the second position as the most trusted media brand on the same survey. The fast news concept applied by detik.com makes the entire editorial crew demanded with two main things: speed and accuracy on their news coverage process (Parwati & Zain, 2020).

There are some flaws in the news coverage of HCC in Indonesia. Generally, current media coverage less emphasis on elements of curation and verification and instead relies on attributional statement (e.g., people inside governments) (Carlson, 2011; Remotivi, 2020). Specifically news about human and wildlife conflicts is also surrounded by various disinformation or hoaxes (Agustin et al., 2022). This is strengthened by the fact that many environmental issues coverage in the mass media is not carried out by specific environmental journalists (Van Witsen & Takahashi, 2018). As the result, Indonesian media have shown lack of commitment to the principles of environmental journalism, they just focus on presented a series of incidents about human wildlife interaction without special emphasis on conservation messages (Rahman et al., 2024).

The media's ability to organise people's perspective on an issue makes framing as a powerful agent of social control. It provides another dimension to the public process view of mass media influence (Iyengar, 1994). Framing is the process of magnifying elements of the reality, depicted that favour one side's position, making them prominent and at the same time shrinking elements that can be used to construct a counterframe (Entman, 2009). The effect of framing is to emphasize values differently, giving prominence to one or the other parties (Entman, 2009). There are at least five aspects that potentially influence how journalists frame an issue: larger societal norms and values, organisational pressures and constraints, external pressures from interest groups and other policymakers, professional routines, and the journalist's ideological or political orientation (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). The term 'framing' is summarised by Adiprasetyo as part of media effects, a perspective, a paradigm, an approach, an analytical

technique, and multi-paradigm research or multidisciplinary research (Adiprasetio & Larasati, 2021).

In Tewksbury & Scheufele (2009) it is explained that early research on framing has conceptualised framing in multiple dimensions, despite the same focus, which is to examine the effects of frames on audience reactions. This includes a collection of frames, such as gain vs. loss frames (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979); episodic vs. thematic frames (Iyengar, 1991); strategy vs. issue frames (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997); human interest, conflict, and economic consequences frames (Price et al., 1997); and attribution, conflict, moral, economic consequences, and human interest frames (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The dimensions formulated by Semetko & Valkenburg (2000) above then become the basis of reference in this study.

There are two types of news frames that are always present in media coverage: thematic and episodic frames (Iyengar, 1994). News coverage with episodic frames will give the impression of 'good pictures', while thematic frames show 'talking heads' (Iyengar, 1994). In broader context the use of episodic frame will tend to be salient to the government's position and turn the negative tone towards government more neutralize.

Based on the background of the problems that have been described, the main objective of this research is to see how is the quantitative framing carried out by detik.com, from the aspects of: news sources, news tone, frame type configuration, and thematic and episodic frame comparison on the news related to human-crocodile conflict (HCC) in 2024.

Framing analysis can be conducted through two approaches: qualitative and quantitative. While qualitative approaches is limited by the relatively small data samples to which they can be feasibly applied. In contrast, quantitative approaches can be applied to large data sets, but the resulting observations often have less interpretative value, particularly in terms of framing analysis (Tewksbury & Scheufele, 2009). A quantitative approach was used in this study to ensure that large amounts of data could be analysed systematically. This research uses a holistic technique, with media frame coding analysis referring to previous research conducted by (Adiprasetio & Larasati, 2021). This research refers to 5 generic frames previously described in Semetko & Valkenburg (2000). Framing studies used to analyse Human-wildlife conflict research in Indonesia was previously conducted with a qualitative approach (Ardiantiono, 2019; Agustin et al., 2022; Ardiantiono, 2022; Rahman et al., 2024). This research seeks to obtain analyses with a large population of data using quantitative approach. Thus the findings will contribute differently to how online media in Indonesia frame human-crocodile conflict at the macro level.

The urgency of this research stems from the escalating frequency and severity of human-crocodile conflicts (HCC) in Indonesia, reflecting a broader global trend influenced by factors such as habitat loss, climate change, and increased human encroachment into crocodile habitats. These conflicts not only result in injuries and fatalities but also provoke retaliatory killings, further threatening already vulnerable crocodile populations that are legally protected under Indonesian law. Compounding the situation is the critical role of mass media, particularly leading outlets like detik.com, in shaping public perceptions of crocodiles and conservation issues through their framing of HCC incidents. This research is therefore urgent in its aim to systematically analyze how detik.com frames HCC using a quantitative approach, filling a gap left by previous qualitative studies and providing a comprehensive understanding of media influence on public attitudes and policy regarding human-wildlife conflict and conservation in Indonesia.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This analysis adopted a quantitative content analysis method with holistic techniques, using the following operationalizing variables: 1) news source, 2) tone of news, 3) type of frame, and 4) thematic and episodic frames. Quantitative framing analysis, which is usually followed by quantitative content analysis method, is a systematic research method used to examine how information is presented, or 'framed' in various forms of media and communication (Riffe et al., 2006). It involves the categorisation and specific coding of textual, visual or audio material. The next step is statistical analysis to uncover patterns in how issues are portrayed. In the context of framing, this method seeks to identify the main ideas that are framed by the media and shape the way information is interpreted by audiences. The research subject in this study is online media detik.com as a media that will be researched further. While the object of the research is their

coverage of HCC issues in Indonesia during 2024.

The data collection process was done manually following the coverage time in media. The result of this data collection is 168 news articles, starts on 5 January 2024-18 December 2024. This number was obtained by searching for news that contained issues related to human-crocodile conflicts. This can be seen from the title or at least the first paragraph of the news article. A total 157 news articles (93.45%) were straight news and 11 other (6.54%) were features. All data that collected will be analysed in this study without sampling. detik.com is already known for its rapidly update news pattern (Nugroho et al., 2013). This also explains the significant comparison between the number of straight news and features that published.

The type of data analysis to measure validity in this research is face validity. Meanwhile to measure reliability, researchers used two intercoders who will determine the results of the reliability test. Each intercoder will code the news independently. Based on a sample size of 15% of the total units of analysis, there are 26 news stories that must be coded by both intercoders. The reliability test in this research was conducted using Krippendorff's alpha analysis. Krippendorff's alpha provides the highest flexibility of available reliability measures with respect to the number of raters and categories (Zapf et al., 2016). This can be used with multiple coders, accounts for different sample sizes and missing data, and can be used for ordinal, interval, and ratio level variables. Meanwhile, Krippendorff's alpha states that data is called reliable if the value reaches 0.7000 for  $q = 0.0125$  (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). The two variables to be tested for reliability in this study are Tone of News and Type of Frames.

Reliability calculations were conducted using SPSS statistical software version 26. The results of these calculations can be seen in Table 1 below:

**Table 1. Reability Test Results**

Variable	Sub-Variabel	Alpha Score
Tone of News	-	0,8374
Type of Frames	Human Interest	0,7560
	Conflict	0,7733
	Morality	0,8381
	Economic Consequences	1
	Attribution of Responsibility	0,833

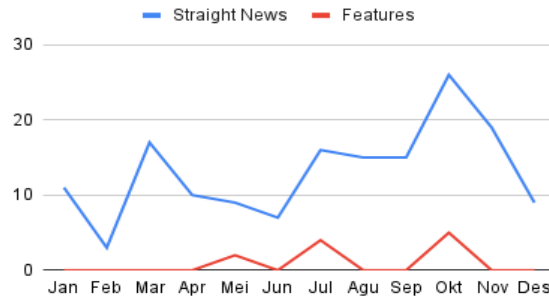
Source: Reliability Test results in SPSS

All Krippendorff's alpha values are above the minimum limit of 0.7000, which indicates that there is a fairly high level of consistency between the two intercoders in assessing the unit of analysis. Therefore, the coding data is considered reliable and can be used for the next stage of analysis.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### News Sources

This research has examines the comparison of detik.com online media in adopting governmental, non-governmental and society as quoted sources in the news coverage of human-crocodile conflicts. The codification process was conducted by identifying the most dominant news sources. The codification process was carried out by classifying news based on three categories: government agencies, non-government agencies, and society. As the result, news article that began on 5 January 2024-18 December 2024 was dominated by government agencies as sources in media coverage. A total of 133 news articles (79.16%) quoted government agencies as the main source. Meanwhile, 35 news articles (20.83%) used society as the news source. Unfortunately, none of the news articles used non-governmental organisation as sources in the news coverage of human-crocodile conflicts in 2024. Non-governmental organisation here can be NGO, wildlife experts, researchers, or academics who are contextual with HCC issues.



Graph 1. detik.com News Article Fluctuation from January - December 2024

The government agencies quoted in the news were dominated by several positions such as the Natural Resources Conservation Centre (BKSDA), the Regional Disaster Management Agency (BPBD), the National Search and Rescue Agency (BASARNAS), the Fire Department (Damkar), and representatives of the Police. This is relevant because in Indonesia, conservation, rescue and handling of wildlife protected by law is under the responsibility of BKSDA. Meanwhile, other agencies such as BPBD and Basarnas are also involved in the evacuation process in case of human-crocodile interaction or even attacks.

Observations show that if the police chief is the main source of news, then they will only explain about the chronology of reports they receive and the evacuation process of the tragedy. The narrative will always be contradictory when compared to news sources from other government agencies such as the BKSDA, which will emphasise the fact that people are unaware of the crocodile's natural habitat, possible causes of human-crocodile interactions, and their advice to society that involved in the interaction, which is the basis for crocodile attack cases. In addition, if the police chief is present as the main source of news, the conservation narrative reminding that crocodiles are wild animals protected by law is absent. On the other hand, society statements that were often quoted by the media revolved around the chronology of the case, the physical and psychological impacts they felt, and their hopes for the future after the cases. This shows that detik.com as a media tends to give space to parties that have stronger authoritative legitimacy in handling animals.

News sources in the journalistic 'manufacture' news-making process are an essential concentration that emphasised by many academic studies. Interestingly, this makes the distinction between 'official' and 'non-official' sources as one of the points developed in the research. Official sources are usually associated with the government. They are often considered important because of their role in constructing frames and news agendas through their interactions with media journalists (Gilboa, 2021). In the results section, it has been explained that government agencies are the dominant news source in reporting the issue of human-crocodile conflict on detik.com. The dominations of government elements as 'frame maker' in this discourse is also not accompanied by the presence of news sources from the opposite side, which non-governmental institutions.

When referring to the 5W+1H news elements, the presence of government agencies and communities as news sources in the context of human-crocodile conflict is not enough. This is because the 'Why' and 'How' questions underlying the recurrence of human-crocodile conflicts are still vague and almost non-existent. Meanwhile, the discussion about this aspect can be illustrated if detik.com journalists use news sources such as NGOs, wildlife experts, and academics as news sources to discuss more substantial reason about this conflict. Results shows from a total of 168 news articles on human-crocodile interactions, there are only 2 news articles from (Detik.com, 2024a; Detik.com, 2024b) that clearly mention the main factor of human-wildlife interactions, which is the loss of crocodile's original habitat due to land use by human economic activities (illegal tin mining).

The similarity of research results regarding the dominance of government agencies as a source of information quoted in the news related to human-wildlife conflict is also similar to research (Jacobson et al., 2012; Amiraslani & Dragovich, 2021; Gessa et al., 2023). This pattern actually does not only apply in the context of human-wildlife conflict news. This also applies to

other issues such as Covid-19 (Adiprasetyo & Larasati, 2021; Garcia-Agustin & Agustin, 2021; Ingkra & Manaf, 2021); sexual violence (Indainanto et al., 2022; Darmayulis, 2024) and even inter-group conflicts (Apuke & Omar, 2022).

The heavy reliance on government sources in detik.com's HCC coverage reflects the structural power dynamics inherent in environmental journalism in Indonesia. This is in line with Parahita's (2017) finding that journalists often use official sources because of the 'information subsidy' instituted by pre-packaged statements from authorities that require minimal verification efforts. This is again supported by the observation results which show the lack of involvement of journalists to conduct field investigations or physical coverage related to this issue.

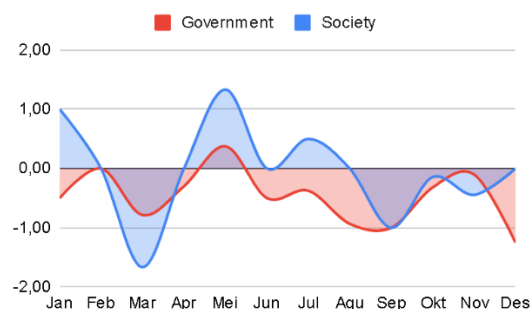
Amiraslani & Dragovich (2021) said that there is a tendency for media journalists to rely on information from government representatives because it is the most accessible and rapidly source to meet their media needs. Especially since the changes in journalistic work patterns that occurred after the Covid-19 Pandemic (Masduki & Prastya, 2022).

This result cannot be separated to power relations context between the government and media that finally affects the quality of journalists coverage in Indonesia (Hanitzsch, 2006). While this is efficient for the news format, it creates a narrative imbalance as the government's authoritative statements are ultimately assumed to be the main statements that are swallowed by the public. For example, when reporting on incidents of crocodile attacks in rivers, journalists focus more on quoting the local police rather than wildlife experts who can explain the territorial behaviour of crocodiles.

### Tone of News

The news tone analysed in this study is quoted from the sentences that used by the news sources of detik.com (government agencies and the public, because no sources from non-government agencies were found). Tone of news in this study was coded using a specific five-point Likert scale ranging from -2 (very negative) to 2 (very positive) (Mayer et al., 2023). The determination of this number is based on a conservation mindset that prioritises wildlife as a reference for determining news tone.

The coding results on a scale of -2 to 2 show that the tone of news with government agencies as the main source is -0.50. Meanwhile, the tone of news where the public is the main source is much higher at -0.11. The results show that news reports with both government agencies and public as the main source are still dominated by negative sentiments related to crocodile in HCC issues. Based on the Graph 3 below seen that the lowest point of the news tone with government authorities as the main source fell 4 times in a year (March, June, September, and December). With the lowest point of sentiment in September at -1. On the other hand, news with the public as the main source experienced a similar pattern of decline. But with the lowest point in March at -1.67.



Graph 3. Sentiment Dynamics from News Sources in Human-Crocodile Conflict Coverage

The fall in news sentiment by both the government and the public cannot be separated from the background of the situation. In March, which was the lowest point of public sentiment and the lowest point of government sentiment, there were several cases that were suspected to be the cause. These ranged from the appearance of crocodiles at economic activity points such as estuaries, fights between humans and crocodiles in rivers (near settlements), to hunting and cleavage of crocodile stomachs by humans. This crocodile hunting is suspected to be a revenge motive as the crocodile had previously eaten a woman. On the other hand, during this period,

sources from government agencies only talked about the chronology and each case. Observations also show that there is only one statement from the BKSDA that shows its stance on crocodiles in a positive way as protected animals. This statement stated that the evacuation of crocodiles from the estuary cannot be done because it is their natural habitat.

Meanwhile, news records in June showed no significant signs of conflict. In contrast to what happened in September and December, where the tone of the news again fell to its lowest point. In September, there were two incidents of crocodile deaths because of human. The first was a crocodile that was stabbed with a spear by a resident and the second was a crocodile that died after its stomach was cut open by a resident. While in December there was one case where a police officer kill this wildlife by shot a crocodile in the head.

Along with frames, media studies have also found that the tone used in news reports also influences public opinion (Ali & Gill, 2022). The tone used can be positive, negative, or neutral. The results showed that the news sentiment towards the human-crocodile conflict was on a neutral to negative scale. News sources from government institutions have a much more negative sentiment score than the sentiment presented by society. In rare case, there are some news stories that cover a positive tone coming from society. This includes the act of not wanting or hunt crocodiles and letting them stay in their habitat. Unfortunately, this positive tone is not realised by actual scientific and academic awareness, but rather comes from the myths and traditional beliefs of the local community.

This result are similar to (Ardiantiono, 2022) that said more than 50% of news coverage of human-crocodile interactions in online media (generally) is dominated by negative headlines such as 'struck', 'killed' and 'attacked'. Also the research from (Gessa et al., 2023) said that 45.5% of wildlife news had negative themes, although these included negative actions by both wildlife and humans (e.g. poaching and crop destruction) as well as others that mitigated the actions of both (risk management). This suggests that there is a large number of publications dedicated to themes that cause resentment towards wildlife due to the many conflicts their presence creates with society. Research from Hathaway et al. (2017) also seek that most newspaper articles blame wildlife rather than people for human-wildlife conflict, reflecting a misunderstanding of the drivers of wildlife interactions with people.

In the large context such as environmental, news often uses negative language, especially when reporting on crises such as climate change (Jabeen, 2024). Common frames used are destruction, threat, catastrophe and human suffering. This negative framing is psychologically effective. It attracts attention, evokes emotions, and is more memorable to audiences. For example, the media often describe the climate crisis with metaphors such as 'planet on fire', 'environmental disaster' or 'destroying marine life' for emphasising urgency and danger.

While some studies, such as a analysis of South African broadcast media found a more balanced distribution: 43% positive, 38% negative and 19% neutral coverage of environmental issues (Mokoena & Nkosi, 2024). While negative news focused on immediate threats such as climate change and disasters, positive news highlighted conservation successes and solutions. Also (Dayer et al., 2017), focusing human wildlife-conflict on the Atlantic coast of the USA showed that overall tone of the articles was positive (48%) and neutral (46%). Only a few articles were negative (6%). This positive sentiment are seen from headlines of the news and body of articles. This mix shows that while negative coverage is sizeable, it does not necessarily dominate.

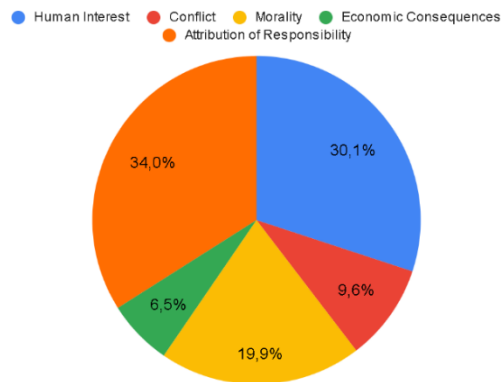
### **Type of Frames**

The analysis shows that the attribution of responsibility frame tops the list as the dominant frame in this conflict. It should be noted that each news story analysed has more than one frame for each news articles and the attribution frame still reach the highest. The observation of the data also shows that there is no significant dynamic in the movement of frame types during one year of news coverage. Overall, the attribution of responsibility frame amounted to 121 (34.0%); the human interest frame amounted to 107 (30.1%); the morality frame amounted to 71 (19.9%); the conflict frame amounted to 34 (9.6%); and finally the economic consequences frame amounted to 23 (6.5%) news articles.

The dominant attribution of responsibility frame in this news highlights the roles and responsibilities of various parties, such as the government, the community, and individuals, in preventing and overcoming crocodile problems. For example, news about the BKSDA's efforts to



evacuate crocodiles or the government's actions in providing socialization to the community shows an effort to attribute responsibility to related parties. Most of attribution in the news always refers to government agencies starting from the relevant ones such as the BKSDA, the more neutral ones such as the Fire Department and BPBD, or the less relevant ones such as the local police.



Graph 4. Percentage of Frame Usage on Detik.Com Media In Human-Crocodile Conflict Coverage

Another prominent frames, which human interest, in the news often emphasises the suffering of the victim or the victim's family due to the crocodile attack, which leads to the emotional side. For example, news about a child killed by a crocodile or a grandfather who lost a limb tends to emphasise this human interest aspect. It is common for journalists to even detail the victims's injuries, the total stitches received post-surgery, or other sadistic elements. Such as one of the news stories containing the sentence "Elizabeth's body was found in a torn state without both hands on the riverbank after being pounced by a crocodile" wrote one of the detik.com news stories. If a news story has this frame in it, then it must be a case chronology of human-crocodile interaction.

Morality frames were also found in some news stories, especially those that highlighted human actions that were considered unethical or violated social and religious norms. For example, news about the capture of a crocodile that was then dissected to search for the victim's body showed a strong morality dimension, where the action triggered a debate about the ethics of treating animals.

Then the conflict frame is in the fourth position when the issues raised clearly contain a strong conflict setting. Conflict frames are only present occasionally when speakers from government agencies or the public talk about the same case that has happened repeatedly. In this sense, they are well aware that this is a conflict that must be handled properly by the relevant parties. This is related to the selection of news sources in the news as well. If the sources referred to regional heads or police officers, then the conflict frame will be difficult to found. They do not emphasise that crocodile attacks on humans actually occur in the crocodile's natural habitat. Meanwhile, news reports that use relevant news sources such as BKSA are only able convey the element of conflict when there is interaction between humans and crocodiles.

Finally, the economic consequences frame also did not significantly appear in the case maps. The presence of this frame is commonly associated with victims of crocodile predation such as livestock, or the consequences of not being able to continue working if the attack occurs on humans.

Attribution of responsibility relates to the identification of problems or solutions that are imposed on individuals or organisations/groups (An & Gower, 2009). Attribution of responsibility relies heavily on government sources in the context of this issue. This is because the issue of wildlife protection in Indonesia is under the supervision of the central and provincial governments. From the discussion on the news sources section, it can be concluded that the news attribution related to this case is also dominated by the government.

This are in line with the previous research by (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). The same results also apply to other animal conflict studies such as (Valdez et al., 2019). Also when it compared to the other issues such as humanitarian conflict (Azqiya et al., 2023); environmental



conflict (Adiprasetyo et al., 2024); internal conflict (Adiprasetyo, 2020); and political conflict (Tagle, 2025), all of them show the same result that attribution frame is the most commonly seen in the news coverage. But the distinction can be seen in the second position of frame, in research by (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000) the conflict frame is in the second position while this research shows that the conflict frame is in the fourth position.

In the context of human-crocodile conflict, attribution is mostly emphasised on government agencies as responsible for addressing issues related to cases and incidents of attacks or interactions. By quoting mostly government agencies, the media implicitly positioning the state as the authoritative and, therefore, the responsible party for managing or failing to manage conflicts. However, the lack of critical engagement or alternative expert voices often results in a neutral or blaming tone towards government responsibility, as also noted in environmental reporting studies (Rahman et al., 2024; Van Witsen & Takahashi, 2018).

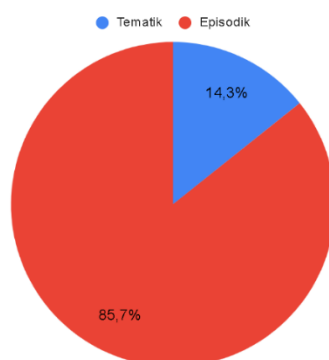
On the other hand, this research also criticises the lack of conflict frames in the HCC news on detik.com coverage. This frame highlights conflicts between individuals, groups, and institutions. In fact, the news about human-crocodile conflict has minimal emphasis on this aspect. News coverage about crocodile interactions and attacks, especially those involving humans, are covered as single cases with minimal conflict narratives. Explanations of problems involving humans, crocodiles and other relevant stakeholders in a circulating chain of life are presented in fragmented niches. When compared to similar research by (Valdez et al., 2019; Dar & Akhtar, 2023) the low emphasis on the conflict frame shows that human-crocodile conflict on media tends to be described as social problems rather than problems about nature.

### Thematic and Episodic Frame

The coding results show that the dominant frame used by detik.com in reporting the human-crocodile conflict is the episodic frame. In the first quarter of 2024 (January-March), 4 out of 31 news articles (12.90%) used thematic frames, while 27 other news articles (87.09%) used episodic frames. In this period, thematic frames involved coverage of crocodile attacks on humans in former tin mining areas and serialised news about the capture of crocodiles that had previously pounced on humans.

Then the number of news reports decreased in the second quarter (April-June) of 2024. A total of 3 out of 28 news items (10.71%) used thematic frames, while the other 25 (89.28%) were episodic frames. In this period, all news articles referred to the serialised news about the handover of crocodile named Milo to the BKSDA after it had become a society pet. The news also explained that these animals, which are protected by law, are often targeted for poaching and then traded illegally.

The use of thematic frames increased dramatically in the third quarter (July-September) of 2024. There were 9 out of 50 news articles (18.00%) using thematic frames. Meanwhile, 41 others (82.00%) used episodic frames. In this period, the thematic news was caused by the appearance of crocodiles in the riverbank area where residents worked for a long time. In addition, the illegal tin mining factor again became the background theme in other news.



Graph 5. Comparison of detik.com's use of thematic and episodic frames in covering the human-crocodile conflict

Then in the fourth quater (October-December) of 2024 there was a drastic increase in terms of the total number of news reports. In this phase, 8 out of 59 news articles (13.55%) used thematic frames, while 51 others (86.44%) used episodic frames. While in this period, especially in October, there was an incident about the release of crocodiles from captivity. This led to several consequences, ranging from the crocodiles entering people's rice fields to the evacuation of dozens of crocodiles to other conservation areas.

**Table 2. News Theme on Thematic Frames**

Period	Thematic Themes
First Quarter	Attacks in tin mining areas
	Series about crocodile hunting
Second Quarter	Handover of crocodile to BKSDA
	Crocodile become pet by local residents
	Crocodile targeted for poaching and illegal trade
Third Quater	Appearance of crocodile in riverbank for longtime
	Attacks in tin mining areas
Fourth Quarter	Crocodile breeding embankment collapse

Source: Research identification (2025)

In total, from January to December 2024, only 24 out of a total of 168 news articles (14.30%) were found to adopt thematic frames, while 144 others (85.70%) were published using episodic frames. The number of thematically framed stories does not even reach a quarter of the total number of stories. This suggests that very few publications on human-crocodile conflict include broader and deeper angles to the coverage of issue, focusing on trends over time, and highlighting contexts and environments.

Episodic frames reduces conflicts to isolated incidents such as assaults or revenge killings without addressing underlying causes such as habitat encroachment or climate change. This is in line with Iyengar (1994) observation that shows episodic framing often neutralises accountability by avoiding discussion of structural or institutional responsibility.

Thematic frames, though rare, has the power to connect HCC to broader ecological and policy issues, such as illegal mining in crocodile habitats or gaps in conservation governance. However, its rarity perpetuates the narrative of crocodiles as an inherent threat, rather than as a protected species affected by anthropogenic pressures. This imbalance reinforces the negative stereotypes observed in Agustin et al. (2022) study, where crocodiles are disproportionately labelled as 'perpetrators' in conflicts. Reliance on episodic framing also correlates with a predominantly negative tone (68.45% of articles), which according to Ballejo et al. (2021) reinforces public fears and undermines conservation messaging.

The predominance of episodic frames risks normalising retaliatory killing and habitat destruction by framing these actions as logical responses to 'random' attacks. In contrast, thematic framing discussions about law enforcement and the impact of interactions, biodiversity crisis, emphasising coexistence or habitat restoration strategies is not carried out by detik.com as a leading theme in this case.

A temporal analysis of detik.com's reporting further underlines this shortcoming. Despite a significant spike in coverage during March and October, particularly after the highlighted crocodile relocation in Cianjur, there was no increase in thematic framing. Even in these moments of crisis, when public interest and policy attention is heightened, coverage remains dominated by events and fails to provide context on long-term drivers or prevention strategies. This is a missed opportunity for the media to educate the public and policymakers about the underlying causes of conflict and the need for systemic interventions.

## CONCLUSION

This study recognized how the media uses framing and tone to provide a better understanding of how online media portrays the parties involved in human-wildlife conflict, specifically crocodiles. For a long time, the media have been interested in conflict and play a role

in covering and presenting conflict as news. The media's responsibilities include proving that they are unbiased participants who serve to defend or attack a particular status quo. In a conflict situation such as Human-Crocodile Conflict, detik.com tends to present information about the animal conflict by highlighting the parties deemed most responsible for the conflict.

The results of this study indicate that government agencies are considered the most influential news sources to convey information related to this issue, especially the local police. The exclusion of non-government elements as news sources results in an overall imbalance of news coverage. As a result, a simple competitive relationship between humans and wildlife has the potential to become a political conflict. detik.com fails to present a balanced counter-narrative that could neutralize the negative sentiment about crocodiles as wildlife. Especially in cases of attacks on humans, detik.com tends to use terms with negative labels such as 'attacked,' 'pounced,' or 'eaten,' which further exacerbates the stigma of wildlife in society.

News coverage is also dominated by attribution of responsibility frames that place the government as the responsible party. Additionally, episodic frames dominate with minimal thematic news that could promote crocodile conservation efforts. The use of episodic frames makes the news appear as isolated cases, detached from the broader context where the government has full responsibility for crocodiles, from prevention and handling to sustainable management practices. Furthermore, engaging journalists, editors, and media practitioners through interviews or surveys can provide valuable insights into the constraints and motivations shaping reporting on human-wildlife conflict. Finally, collaborative efforts between media organizations, conservation experts, and local communities are essential to develop guidelines and training programs that encourage responsible, accurate, and constructive coverage of environmental issues, ultimately contributing to more effective conflict mitigation and wildlife conservation in Indonesia.

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