

MEDIA FRAMING OF JAWA POS RADAR KUDUS IN REPORTING THE FOOD POISONING INCIDENT OF THE FREE NUTRITIOUS MEAL PROGRAM AT SMAN 2 KUDUS

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Abstract : *Media coverage of government programs is rarely a neutral act; it is always shaped by the editorial values, institutional interests, and sociopolitical environment of the outlet producing it. This study examines how Jawa Pos Radar Kudus framed its coverage of the food poisoning incident linked to the Free Nutritious Meal (Makan Bergizi Gratis/MBG) program at SMAN 2 Kudus in January 2026, an event that placed both a national food security initiative and local governance under public scrutiny. Adopting a qualitative approach grounded in the constructivist paradigm, this research applies Robert N. Entman's four-element framing model define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgement, and treatment recommendation to five news articles published between January 29 and February 7, 2026. The analysis reveals that Radar Kudus constructed a critical-constructive frame, acknowledging the failures of technical implementation while consistently protecting the MBG program itself from systemic policy criticism. The local government was persistently portrayed as a responsive authority, while recommended solutions pointed exclusively toward internal system improvements rather than program discontinuation.*

Keywords: *Media Framing; Jawa Pos Radar Kudus; Free Nutritious Meal Program; Robert N. Entman; Food Poisoning*

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Introduction

Mass media occupies a central and consequential position in the architecture of modern democratic societies. Beyond its foundational role as a conduit of information, the media actively participates in the social construction of reality by determining which events are deemed newsworthy, which voices are amplified, and how particular issues are contextualised for public consumption. This process, commonly referred to as framing, is not a passive or incidental feature of journalism but rather an inherent and constitutive dimension of news production. Every editorial decision, from the choice of headline to the selection of sources and the arrangement of facts, shapes the lens through which audiences interpret social reality (Eriyanto, 2018). The implications of this framing power become particularly acute when the subject of coverage intersects with matters of public policy, government accountability, and citizen welfare.

The Free Nutritious Meal (Makan Bergizi Gratis/MBG) program represents one of the most ambitious and politically significant social policies launched under the administration of President Prabowo Subianto. Officially inaugurated on January 6, 2025, the program is managed by the National Nutrition Agency (Badan Gizi Nasional/BGN) and aims to provide free nutritious meals to school-age children, toddlers, pregnant women, and breastfeeding mothers as part of Indonesia's broader strategic vision toward achieving its Indonesia Emas (Golden Indonesia) 2045 development target. In its inaugural year, the program targeted 17.9 million beneficiaries, consisting of 15.5 million school students and approximately 2.4 million pregnant women, breastfeeding mothers, and toddlers, supported by a substantial state budget allocation of Rp71 trillion (Saptati, 2025). Despite its socially laudable objectives, the program's field implementation was plagued from the outset by serious operational challenges, the most alarming of which was a series of mass food poisoning incidents affecting students at schools across multiple regions of Indonesia.

One of the most prominent of these incidents unfolded at SMA Negeri 2 Kudus (SMAN 2 Kudus) in Central Java. On January 29, 2026, hundreds of students experienced severe symptoms including nausea, vomiting, dizziness, and diarrhea after consuming an MBG meal consisting primarily of chicken soup (soto ayam). Many students required emergency medical attention and were evacuated to various healthcare facilities across the Kudus regency. The incident rapidly attracted national attention and triggered an immediate wave of news coverage from both local and national media outlets. This convergence of public health concern and political sensitivity created a particularly charged discursive space in which competing narratives about government competence, program management, and institutional accountability were actively contested.

Local media played a distinctly significant role in mediating this event for the communities most directly affected. As argued by Sudiby (2020), local media outlets possess a geographic and cultural proximity to their readership that fundamentally shapes their framing choices, often producing news narratives that diverge

meaningfully from those of national media. Jawa Pos Radar Kudus, as the dominant local print and digital news outlet serving the Kudus regency, occupied a strategically influential position in shaping the local public's understanding of the MBG poisoning incident. Its editorial decisions regarding which aspects of the event to foreground, which actors to highlight or marginalise, and what solutions to recommend would inevitably influence how the affected community interpreted the crisis and evaluated the institutions responsible for it.

Within the field of communication studies, framing analysis has established itself as one of the most productive methodological frameworks for critically examining how media constructs reality. The seminal work of Robert N. Entman (1993) provides a particularly powerful and systematic model for this purpose. Entman defines framing as a process that involves selecting and making salient certain aspects of a perceived reality in a communicative text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and treatment recommendation. His four-element analytical framework define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgement, and treatment recommendation enables researchers to systematically deconstruct the layers of meaning embedded in news texts and to reveal the ideological and political dimensions of media representation (Entman, 1993; Eriyanto, 2011).

Research on media framing of the MBG program is a nascent but rapidly growing area of inquiry in Indonesian communication studies. A study focusing on Tempo.co found that the outlet employed a critical problematisation frame, consistently highlighting the implementation challenges of the MBG program and thereby constructing a public perception of MBG as an ambitious but deeply problematic policy (I Gusti et al., 2025). A separate investigation of MetroTVNews.com revealed an evolving framing trajectory, wherein initial positive coverage gradually gave way to a technical incident frame as field problems mounted (Luthfia et al., 2026). Analysis of Kompas.com and Kumparan.com similarly demonstrated how different outlet framings can coexist around the same policy issue (Pranandana et al., 2025). However, scholarship that specifically examines how local media outlets frame MBG-related food poisoning incidents particularly within the specific social and political context of Kudus regency remains conspicuously absent from the literature.

This research gap carries significant intellectual and practical implications. Content analyses of major news portals have consistently shown that MBG coverage skews critical, with food poisoning incidents among the most frequently recurring themes in media reports on the program (Pranandana et al., 2025). In this context, the framing choices made by Jawa Pos Radar Kudus in covering the SMAN 2 Kudus incident are not merely journalistic decisions; they are socially consequential acts that shape community trust, inform public debate, and potentially influence local political dynamics. Understanding how a local media outlet navigates the complex terrain

between watchdog journalism and institutional deference thus offers valuable insights into the broader political economy of local media in Indonesia.

This study therefore aims to conduct a systematic and in-depth analysis of the framing of Jawa Pos Radar Kudus in its reporting of the mass food poisoning incident connected to the Free Nutritious Meal (MBG) program at SMA Negeri 2 Kudus, using Robert N. Entman's framing analysis model as the primary analytical tool. The overarching research question guiding this inquiry is: How did Jawa Pos Radar Kudus frame the food poisoning incident at SMAN 2 Kudus across its five-article news series, and what do these framing choices reveal about the ideological and institutional positioning of the media outlet? It is hoped that this study will make a meaningful contribution to the growing body of scholarship on local journalism in Indonesia, particularly in advancing scholarly understanding of how regional media outlets construct narratives at the intersection of public health crises and national government policy.

Research Methodology

This study employs a qualitative research approach underpinned by the constructivist paradigm, which holds that social reality is not an objective given but is actively constructed by social actors, including media institutions, through discursive practices and narrative production (Berger & Luckmann, 1991; Hadiwijaya, 2023). Within this epistemological framework, framing analysis serves as the primary methodological instrument. As a descriptive analytical method focused on media texts, framing analysis is ideally suited to exploring how events are understood, selected, and narratively organised by news media (Creswell, 2023; Sugiyono, 2020). The research object comprises all news articles published by Jawa Pos Radar Kudus on its digital platform (radarkudus.jawapos.com) that directly addressed the MBG food poisoning incident at SMAN 2 Kudus. Data collection was bounded to the period between January 29 and February 7, 2026 spanning the initial reporting of the incident through the ten-day window during which media coverage was most intensive and varied. News articles were selected through purposive sampling based on three inclusion criteria: direct relevance to the SMAN 2 Kudus MBG incident, publication within the designated time frame, and the presence of at least two of Entman's four framing elements to ensure adequate analytical depth. Data were analysed using the four-element framing model developed by Entman (1993): define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgement, and treatment recommendation. The analytical process followed the interactive three-stage model of Miles and Huberman (1994): data reduction (selecting and focusing relevant textual material), data display (organising data into an Entman framing matrix), and conclusion drawing (identifying framing patterns across the full sample of articles).

Results and Discussion

The following five news articles published by Jawa Pos Radar Kudus constitute the primary data for this study:

Table 1. Research Objects

No.	Article Title	Publication Date
1.	Puluhan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Keracunan Usai Makan MBG	January 29, 2026
2.	Keracunan Massal di SMAN 2 Kudus Diduga dari MBG, Bupati Sam'ani Intakoris Ambil Langkah Cepat	January 29, 2026
3.	Ratusan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Diduga Keracunan MBG, SPPG Purwosari Minta Maaf	January 29, 2026
4.	Cegah Keracunan Terulang, Pemkab Evaluasi Total Program MBG Usai Dugaan Keracunan Siswa di SMAN 2 Kudus	January 31, 2026
5.	Terungkap! Ratusan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Keracunan, DKK Pastikan Menu MBG Tercemar Bakteri E. Coli	February 7, 2026

Framing Analysis of Each News Article

The framing analysis was conducted systematically across all five articles using Entman's four-element model. The findings for each article are presented in a tabular matrix followed by a narrative analytical commentary that contextualises the framing choices within the broader trajectory of the news series.

Article 1: Puluhan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Keracunan Usai Makan MBG (January 29, 2026, 11:56 WIB)

Table 2. Framing Analysis of Article 1

Framing Element	Textual Construction
Define Problems	Alleged mass poisoning of dozens of SMAN 2 Kudus students following consumption of an MBG meal, constituting an acute public health emergency linked to a national welfare program.
Diagnose Causes	The MBG meal consumed on the preceding day is implicitly identified as the probable source of poisoning, though causation remains unconfirmed at this stage of reporting.
Make Moral Judgement	The repeated use of the qualifier 'suspected' (diduga) signals journalistic caution and avoids direct attribution of blame, while simultaneously keeping the MBG program in the foreground of public attention.
Treatment Recommendation	The Kudus Regency Health Office (Dinas Kesehatan Kabupaten Kudus) is presented as the responsible authority, tasked with conducting ongoing data collection, medical

Framing Element	Textual Construction
	response, and investigation into the root cause.

Published at 11:56 WIB on January 29, 2026, this initial breaking news report constitutes the foundational framing act for the entire subsequent news series. In its problem definition, Radar Kudus immediately constructed a causal association between MBG consumption and the poisoning symptoms experienced by students an association that was embedded directly in the article's title. The use of the epistemic qualifier 'suspected' (diduga) is analytically significant: while it reflects a normative commitment to journalistic accuracy at a stage when facts were still emerging, it simultaneously functions as a framing device that directs reader attention toward MBG as the most plausible culprit. The scale of victims described at this point as 'dozens' reflects the incomplete information available in the immediate aftermath of the incident. The diagnosis of causes is tentative and directed toward the previous day's MBG meal, with the Kudus Regency Health Office positioned as the primary institutional actor responsible for investigation and medical management. This framing establishes a template that subsequent articles will either reinforce or complicate.

Article 2: Keracunan Massal di SMAN 2 Kudus Diduga dari MBG, Bupati Sam'ani Intakorisi Ambil Langkah Cepat (January 29, 2026, 14:45 WIB)

Table 3. Framing Analysis of Article 2

Framing Element	Textual Construction
Define Problems	The incident is redefined as a 'mass poisoning' (keracunan massal), elevating it simultaneously as a public health crisis and a governance accountability issue requiring leadership response.
Diagnose Causes	Physical symptoms nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, shortness of breath, and fainting are foregrounded as evidence of a serious health emergency, with MBG remaining the implicit causal agent.
Make Moral Judgement	The regent's rapid response is prominently praised, framing local government leadership as competent, compassionate, and accountable in the face of crisis.
Treatment Recommendation	Swift governmental intervention and a comprehensive evaluation of all SPPG (food service units) operating within Kudus regency are presented as the appropriate institutional responses.

Published just three hours after Article 1, this second report represents a pivotal moment of narrative escalation and political reframing. The most consequential linguistic shift is the replacement of 'dozens of students' with 'mass poisoning' in the headline, a rhetorical move that dramatically amplifies the perceived scale and severity

of the crisis. Equally significant is the introduction of Regent Sam'ani Intakorisi as the article's central protagonist, described with the action phrase 'taking swift action' (ambil langkah cepat). This framing choice transforms the narrative from a health emergency into a governance story, positioning the local government as a responsive and responsible authority. The catalogue of physical symptoms fainting, ambulances, stomach cramps, diarrhea functions to build emotional urgency and public sympathy for victims, while simultaneously reinforcing the implicit assumption that MBG is the cause. Scheufele (2000) has observed that media routinely assign causal agency to specific, identifiable actors in order to provide narrative clarity, and this article exemplifies that tendency by placing the regent at the moral centre of the story, contrasted against the still-unnamed vendors and service operators who remain in the shadows.

Article 3: Ratusan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Diduga Keracunan MBG, SPPG Purwosari Minta Maaf (January 29, 2026)

Table 4. Framing Analysis of Article 3

Framing Element	Textual Construction
Define Problems	MBG is now more explicitly identified as the source of the mass poisoning, with the incident reframed as a crisis of program governance and food safety management.
Diagnose Causes	SPPG Purwosari, the local food service unit responsible for producing and distributing the MBG meal, emerges as the first named institutional actor responsible for the incident.
Make Moral Judgement	The public apology issued by SPPG Purwosari functions as a moral acknowledgement of institutional culpability and a form of accountability to the victims and their families.
Treatment Recommendation	Full accountability from SPPG Purwosari and transparent communication with the affected community are implicitly recommended as the minimum expected response from the responsible operator.

Article 3 constitutes the most consequential framing intervention in the entire series with respect to the attribution of responsibility. By placing 'SPPG Purwosari Minta Maaf' (SPPG Purwosari Apologises) directly in the headline, Radar Kudus performs a decisive act of institutional identification naming, for the first time, a specific organisational entity as the party bearing moral and operational responsibility for the poisoning. The escalation from 'dozens' to 'hundreds' of victims within a single day of reporting is particularly striking. This numerical amplification, achieved without corresponding clarification of the counting methodology, reflects what Eriyanto (2018) describes as the media's capacity to manufacture urgency through narrative escalation. The apology reported in the article is not accompanied by any technical explanation or remediation plan from SPPG Purwosari, which strengthens

the reader's impression of negligence on the operator's part. The inclusion of soto ayam (chicken soup) in the article's metadata tags further narrows the causal narrative to a specific food item, creating a concrete and memorable focal point for public concern. Importantly, this framing shifts moral culpability to the technical operator while leaving the broader MBG policy untouched by criticism.

Article 4: Cegah Keracunan Terulang, Pemkab Evaluasi Total Program MBG (January 31, 2026)

Table 5. Framing Analysis of Article 4

Framing Element	Textual Construction
Define Problems	The focus shifts from the immediate crisis to preventing recurrence, reframing the incident not as a singular failure but as a symptom of systemic oversight weaknesses requiring structural remediation.
Diagnose Causes	The causal diagnosis broadens to encompass the entire governance architecture of the MBG program, including inadequate supervision mechanisms, lack of standardisation, and absence of monitoring tools.
Make Moral Judgement	Kudus regency government (Pemkab Kudus) is portrayed as a proactive, responsible institution that is neither paralysed by crisis nor indifferent to its recurrence.
Treatment Recommendation	A comprehensive total evaluation (evaluasi total) of the MBG program at the regency level is recommended, including menu standardisation, mandatory CCTV installation at all SPPG facilities, and public menu transparency.

Two days after the initial incident, Radar Kudus's framing undergoes a significant strategic shift from crisis reporting toward recovery and reform narratives. The headline's opening word 'Prevent' (Cegah) is a deliberate rhetorical choice that reorients the reader's gaze from the past toward the future, transforming the framing from one of blame and accountability to one of institutional learning and corrective action. The problem is no longer defined as a discrete and bounded incident; it is now constructed as a symptom of systemic fragility that demands comprehensive institutional reform. The Pemkab Kudus is portrayed with unambiguous positivity through the linguistic markers 'tidak menunggu waktu lama' (did not wait long) and the announcement of concrete, multi-pronged remediation measures: menu standardisation across all SPPG operators, mandatory installation of CCTV in food preparation facilities, and the public disclosure of MBG menus as a transparency mechanism. These measures collectively constitute the most substantive treatment recommendation in the entire article series, and they signal a clear ideological preference for systemic reform over program discontinuation. The framing here is entirely consistent with what Pan and Kosicki (1993) have termed the 'institutional

maintenance' tendency of media, wherein outlets covering programs with broad public support and political legitimacy tend to advocate for internal improvements rather than challenging the fundamental legitimacy of the program.

Article 5: Terungkap! Ratusan Siswa SMAN 2 Kudus Keracunan, DKK Pastikan Menu MBG Tercemar Bakteri E. Coli (February 7, 2026)

Table 6. Framing Analysis of Article 5

Framing Element	Textual Construction
Define Problems	The definitive scientific revelation of the poisoning's cause transforms the framing from a contested political issue to a resolved technical problem, effectively closing the investigative narrative.
Diagnose Causes	E. coli bacterial contamination in the MBG menu specifically in the chicken soup and sambal is confirmed by the Kudus Regency Health Office as the medically verified cause of the mass poisoning.
Make Moral Judgement	The Kudus Regency Health Office is framed as a credible, authoritative, and transparent institution that has fulfilled its investigative obligations to the community.
Treatment Recommendation	Comprehensive evaluation and improvement of MBG program implementation are recommended not only at the local regency level but also by the National Nutrition Agency (Badan Gizi Nasional/BGN) as the program's principal national authority.

Published nine days after the initial incident, Article 5 serves as the investigative climax of the entire news series and represents the most consequential framing moment in terms of its long-term implications for public discourse. The exclamation mark in the headline 'Terungkap!' (Revealed!) is a powerful rhetorical device that positions Radar Kudus as the expositor of truth, lending the article an aura of journalistic triumph. The transition from the epistemic qualifier 'suspected' (diduga) in earlier articles to the definitive 'confirmed' (pastikan) represents the completion of the causal narrative arc that began on January 29. The scientific confirmation of E. coli contamination in the soto ayam and sambal performs a crucial ideological function: it relocates the incident from the domain of political controversy to the domain of technical food safety management. By identifying a specific pathogen as the definitive cause, the framing effectively depoliticises the incident, separating the poisoning from any implied critique of MBG as a policy decision and situating it instead within the discourse of food hygiene and quality control. This framing strategy, which Scheufele (2000) would categorise as technical issue framing, serves to protect the broader program from structural criticism while simultaneously reinforcing the credibility of the institutions Dinas Kesehatan and Pemkab Kudus that managed the investigation. The escalation of the treatment recommendation to include the BGN reflects an

acknowledgement that the systemic issues exposed by the incident exceed what can be addressed at the local level alone.

Cross-Article Framing Patterns

Taken collectively, the five articles of Jawa Pos Radar Kudus reveal a coherent and internally consistent framing strategy that evolves across three distinct phases: crisis construction (Articles 1–3), institutional recovery (Article 4), and scientific resolution (Article 5). The most structurally significant feature of this framing trajectory is the systematic narrative escalation in the definition of problems: from ‘dozens of students’ to ‘mass poisoning’ to ‘hundreds of students’ to ‘recurring threat’ to ‘scientifically proven contamination.’ This escalatory pattern exemplifies what Entman (1993) identifies as the media’s power to select certain aspects of perceived reality and make them more salient in communicative texts, progressively amplifying the scope and gravity of the incident from a localised school event to a systemic food safety issue of national concern.

In terms of the diagnosis of causes, Radar Kudus demonstrates a movement from ambiguity toward specificity and definitiveness. Early articles deployed the language of ‘suspicion’ and implicitly directed culpability toward the MBG meal as a category, while Article 3 introduced SPPG Purwosari as the first named institutional actor. Article 4 broadened the causal diagnosis to encompass structural deficiencies in the program’s oversight architecture, and Article 5 anchored the entire causal chain to the scientifically verified presence of *E. coli*. Crucially, throughout this entire diagnostic progression, the MBG program as a matter of national policy was never placed in the position of defendant. The diagnosis consistently targeted the technical operator (SPPG Purwosari) and the broader supervisory system rather than the policy’s foundational premises. This pattern is consistent with Scheufele’s (2000) observation that media tend to identify specific, bounded actors as causes of problems in ways that provide narrative clarity for audiences while simultaneously avoiding the institutional confrontations that would arise from targeting politically protected policies.

The moral dimension of the framing operates through two parallel and complementary currents that run throughout the series. The first current constructs SPPG Purwosari as a negligent operator whose public apology acknowledges but does not fully atone for its institutional failure. The second current constructs local government particularly Regent Sam’ani Intakor and Pemkab Kudus as a responsive, competent, and responsible authority that managed the crisis effectively and acted decisively to prevent its recurrence. This dual-track moral framing is achieved not through explicit editorial commentary but through the careful selection and arrangement of linguistic markers: ‘ambil langkah cepat’ (took swift action) in Article 2 and ‘tidak menunggu waktu lama’ (did not wait long) in Article 4 function as powerful rhetorical instruments of legitimation. As Hadiwijaya (2023) notes, the social construction of institutional credibility in media discourse is often accomplished

through precisely these kinds of incremental, low-visibility linguistic choices rather than through overt declarations.

Perhaps the most ideologically revealing dimension of Radar Kudus's framing is its consistent approach to treatment recommendations. Across all five articles, not a single recommendation was made for the suspension, restructuring, or termination of the MBG program. Instead, the remediation narrative progressed from symbolic accountability (SPPG's apology) through administrative reform (Pemkab's total evaluation and CCTV mandate) to national-level policy improvement (BGN's involvement). This 'fix the system, not the program' orientation is analytically significant because it effectively forecloses a potentially legitimate conclusion that the poisoning incident might represent evidence of a fundamental flaw in the MBG program's design or feasibility. Pan and Kosicki (1993) have theorised that media outlets tend to recommend solutions that do not disrupt the stability of existing institutions, particularly when those institutions enjoy broad public support and political legitimacy. The MBG program, as a flagship presidential initiative with widespread public approval, appears to have benefited from precisely this kind of institutional protection in Radar Kudus's coverage.

These overall findings suggest that Radar Kudus's coverage of the SMAN 2 Kudus MBG poisoning incident reflects the characteristic ideological positioning of local media in Indonesia: a dual commitment to watchdog journalism at the local level, which involves exposing specific failures and holding local operators accountable, and a simultaneous tendency toward institutional deference at the national level, which involves avoiding critical commentary on policies that carry the weight of central government authority and popular legitimacy. This positioning is not necessarily the product of deliberate editorial censorship; it may instead reflect the structural constraints and incentive systems within which local media operate in a political environment where direct criticism of nationally popular programs carries significant professional and institutional risks (Sudibyo, 2020). The MBG incident thus did not become, in Radar Kudus's framing, an occasion for questioning national food policy; it became instead an opportunity to call for improved local implementation standards, enhanced institutional transparency, and strengthened technical oversight all reforms that strengthen rather than challenge the program's continuation.

Conclusion

This study has demonstrated that Jawa Pos Radar Kudus constructed a dominant critical-constructive frame in its coverage of the MBG food poisoning incident at SMAN 2 Kudus. The four elements of Entman's (1993) framing model operated in a coherent and mutually reinforcing manner throughout the five-article series, collectively producing a narrative that positioned the incident as a technical food safety failure rather than evidence of a systemic flaw in national government policy.

With respect to problem definition, the media applied a systematic narrative escalation strategy, progressively expanding the scope of the incident from a localised

school emergency to a broader systemic food safety challenge. This escalatory framing maintained the salience of the issue across the entire reporting period and served to build cumulative public concern. Regarding the diagnosis of causes, Radar Kudus followed a trajectory from ambiguous implication to specific institutional attribution and finally to scientific verification, consistently directing responsibility toward the technical operator (SPPG Purwosari) and the oversight system rather than toward the MBG program itself as a matter of national policy. This pattern aligns with Scheufele's (2000) theoretical account of how media use specific causal attribution to achieve narrative clarity while avoiding politically sensitive confrontations with powerful institutions.

In terms of moral judgement, the framing maintained two parallel evaluative currents: one that assigned institutional culpability to SPPG Purwosari through the narrative of its public apology, and another that consistently constructed a positive image of local government as a responsive and accountable crisis manager. The linguistic markers employed to achieve this positive portrayal phrases such as 'took swift action' and 'did not wait long' functioned as subtle but effective instruments of political legitimation (Hadiwijaya, 2023). With respect to treatment recommendations, Radar Kudus offered exclusively corrective and reformative solutions, escalating from symbolic accountability through administrative reform to national-level policy improvement, without ever recommending program discontinuation. This orientation toward 'system improvement rather than program rejection' implicitly reinforces the legitimacy and social value of the MBG program, consistent with Pan and Kosicki's (1993) theoretical argument about media's tendency to recommend solutions that preserve institutional stability.

Taken as a whole, these findings illuminate the ideological positioning of Radar Kudus as a local media outlet that navigates the tension between two competing roles: the watchdog function of exposing local failures and amplifying community concerns, and the institutional deference function of protecting nationally significant policies from structural critique. The MBG poisoning incident was thus framed not as a moment of policy reckoning but as a catalyst for technical improvement and systemic strengthening a framing that served both journalistic and political purposes simultaneously. This study contributes to the growing body of literature on local media framing in Indonesia and offers a model for systematic framing analysis in the context of policy-related public health crises. Future research might productively extend this analysis by comparing the framing strategies of multiple local media outlets across different regions affected by similar MBG incidents, or by examining how framing evolves over a longer temporal horizon as programs mature and public narratives consolidate.

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