

MEDIA FRAMES AND SUSTAINABILITY MINDSETS: IMPLICATIONS FOR GREEN DIGITAL MARKETING IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRAK

Kesepakatan global dalam Agenda SDG 2030 tentang praktik berkelanjutan masih menjadi tantangan, terutama di negara-negara berkembang. Studi ini meneliti bagaimana keberlanjutan dibingkai dalam media berita online nasional utama Indonesia dan bagaimana pembingkaiannya tersebut berkontribusi pada pengembangan pola pikir keberlanjutan yang relevan dengan praktik bisnis dan pasar konsumen hijau. Dengan berfokus pada lima platform terkemuka—Kompas.com, Detik.com, CNNIndonesia.com, Liputan6.com, dan Tempo.co—penelitian ini melakukan analisis konten kualitatif terhadap artikel yang diterbitkan antara tahun 2024 dan 2025 yang membahas keberlanjutan dalam strategi perusahaan, tata kelola lingkungan, inovasi hijau, dan konsumsi etis. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan adanya kerangka dominan seperti urgensi lingkungan, optimisme teknologi, akuntabilitas regulasi, dan keterlibatan gaya hidup. Kompas.com dan Tempo.co sering menampilkan liputan analitis tentang kebijakan ESG, inisiatif pengurangan karbon, dan investasi bertanggung jawab, sementara Detik.com dan Liputan6.com menyoroti narasi ramah konsumen tentang pengurangan limbah, produk terbaru, dan tren keberlanjutan perkotaan. CNNIndonesia.com menawarkan pelaporan yang berpusat pada kebijakan yang menjembatani komitmen negara dan transisi perusahaan. Kerangka-kerangka ini secara kolektif membentuk persepsi publik dengan menormalisasi keberlanjutan sebagai keharusan moral dan ekonomi, sehingga memengaruhi bagaimana bisnis memposisikan diri dan bagaimana konsumen menafsirkan proposisi nilai hijau. Studi ini menggarisbawahi relevansi strategis pembingkai media untuk pemasaran digital hijau, menunjukkan bahwa keselarasan dengan narasi media dominan meningkatkan resonansi pesan dan kepercayaan publik terhadap kampanye keberlanjutan.

Kata Kunci: Pola pikir Keberlanjutan, Pembingkai Media, Media Berita Daring.

ABSTRACT

The global agreement in the 2030 SDG Agenda on sustainable practices remains a challenge, especially in emerging economies. This study examines how sustainability is framed in major Indonesian national online news media and how such framing contributes to the development of sustainability mindsets relevant to business practices and green consumer markets. Focusing on five leading platforms—Kompas.com, Detik.com, CNNIndonesia.com, Liputan6.com, and Tempo.co—this research conducts a qualitative content analysis of articles published between 2024 and 2025 that address sustainability in corporate strategy, environmental governance, green innovation, and ethical consumption. The findings reveal the presence of dominant frames such as environmental urgency, techno-optimism, regulatory accountability, and lifestyle engagement. Kompas.com and Tempo.co frequently feature analytical coverage on ESG policies, carbon reduction initiatives, and responsible investment, while Detik.com and Liputan6.com highlight consumer-friendly narratives on waste reduction, renewable products, and urban sustainability trends. CNNIndonesia.com offers policy-centered reporting that bridges state commitments and corporate transitions. These frames collectively shape public perception by normalizing sustainability as both a moral and economic imperative, thereby influencing how businesses position themselves and how consumers interpret green value propositions. The study underscores the strategic relevance of media framing for green digital marketing, suggesting that alignment with dominant media narratives enhances message resonance and public trust in sustainability campaigns.

Keywords: Sustainability Mindset, Media Framing, Online News Media.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, sustainability has emerged as a critical agenda in both environmental and economic policy globally. With the escalating impacts of climate change, biodiversity loss, and resource depletion, nations have accelerated commitments toward carbon neutrality and inclusive green growth. Indonesia, one of the world's largest greenhouse gas emitters, has pledged to achieve Net Zero Emissions (NZE) by 2060, aligning with the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) outlined under the Paris Agreement (Ministry of Environment and Forestry, 2023). In response, various sectors—particularly energy, finance, and manufacturing—have intensified sustainability strategies. However, the transition to a low-carbon economy is not merely a technical or regulatory endeavor; it requires public engagement and a shift in societal mindset.

Despite regulatory progress and corporate ESG reporting improvements, a significant problem gap persists in terms of public understanding and the internalization of sustainability values. According to the ASEAN Centre for Energy (2024), while over 65% of Indonesian companies claim to have ESG strategies, public awareness of sustainability as a guiding principle for daily consumption and investment decisions remains limited. Furthermore, the rise of “sustainability washing”—where companies exaggerate green claims for

reputational gain—has led to growing skepticism, particularly among young consumers and urban middle classes. Media plays a pivotal role in either reinforcing or challenging this skepticism by framing what sustainability means and how it connects to everyday behavior. Yet, the Indonesian online media landscape presents varied narratives, which may influence sustainability mindsets inconsistently.

While international scholarship has extensively explored how media framing affects climate communication (O'Neill & Nicholson-Cole, 2009; Brüggemann & Rödder, 2020), relatively little empirical work focuses on media framing of sustainability in Southeast Asian contexts, particularly within Indonesia's rapidly expanding digital ecosystem. Most Indonesian sustainability research has focused on corporate disclosure, carbon policy, or green finance performance (Widyawati, 2022), with limited attention to how online media discourses shape sustainability mindsets and consumer orientation (Hansen & Machin, 2021). This research gap leaves unanswered questions about how digital media ecosystems contribute to the behavioral and attitudinal transformation needed for sustainability transitions, particularly in the context of market-based mechanisms such as green product promotion.

Addressing this gap, this study investigates how major national online news outlets in Indonesia frame sustainability-related issues—with a focus on business, finance, and consumer domains—and how these frames contribute to shaping the public's sustainability mindset. By employing a framing analysis of news articles published between 2024–2025 across five dominant platforms (*Kompas.com*, *Detik.com*, *CNNIndonesia.com*, *Liputan6.com*, and *Tempo.co*), the study uncovers dominant frames such as crisis, innovation, governance, ethics, and lifestyle, and maps them against tone, actor presence, and sustainability categories. This analysis helps reveal how news narratives contribute to or hinder the normalization of sustainability thinking in Indonesia's digital public sphere.

The novelty of this research lies in its integration of framing theory (Entman, 1993) with the concept of a "sustainability mindset" (Wamsler & Brink, 2022), examined through the lens of national media discourse. By systematically coding news content, the study introduces a rare empirical bridge between media analysis and behavioral psychology in an Indonesian context. It is among the first to apply Entman's four-frame function model to sustainability coverage in Bahasa Indonesia content, and the first to explicitly link this analysis to implications for green digital marketing strategies, which increasingly rely on behavioral cues shaped by media exposure.

Understanding media framing is also vital for market actors. As Indonesian consumers become more digitally connected, the effectiveness of green digital marketing depends on the alignment between brand narratives and the broader media discourse. If the public is exposed to frames that treat sustainability as urgent, aspirational, or morally compelling, then green product promotions are more likely to resonate. Conversely, if sustainability is framed as a corporate formality or elite agenda, public trust and consumer activation may weaken. Thus, insights from media framing are essential for designing communication strategies that are contextually grounded and socially responsive.

Moreover, framing influences not only awareness but also behavioral direction—what people think *should be done* and *who* should act. In this regard, the study also examines how sustainability is positioned: as a state responsibility, a corporate mission, or a consumer choice. This framing distinction matters because it determines the perceived role of the audience—whether as passive observers, informed critics, or active change agents. Such distinctions are particularly relevant in shaping the uptake of green products, lifestyle changes, and civic support for low-carbon transitions in Indonesia.

Based on these considerations, the problem formulation of this study is: *How do major national online news outlets in Indonesia frame sustainability-related issues in the business and consumer sectors, and how might these frames influence the formation of sustainability mindsets and the effectiveness of green digital marketing?* This research aims to answer this question by mapping discursive patterns and suggesting strategic pathways for media, policymakers, and marketers to support sustainable development through integrated communication strategies.

THEORETICAL VIEW

Media framing of sustainability is grounded in the theoretical framework that views communication not merely as the transmission of information, but as the construction of meaning through selective emphasis, interpretation, and repetition. According to Entman (1993), framing involves the promotion of particular problem definitions, causal interpretations, moral evaluations, and treatment recommendations. In the context of sustainability, this means that the way environmental or ethical issues are framed in news media can shape public understanding of who is responsible, what actions are legitimate, and why sustainability matters. Framing theory explains why certain narratives—such as “green innovation” or “climate crisis”—gain traction while others are marginalized, ultimately influencing how audiences assign value, perceive urgency, and respond behaviorally. Research has shown that media frames can significantly affect environmental attitudes and policy preferences by activating moral reasoning, future orientation, and perceptions of agency (Nabi et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2023), making them critical tools in building public support for sustainability transitions (Schäfer & Painter, 2021).

Framing that activates moral reasoning—for example, emphasizing responsibility to future generations or the injustice of environmental harm—can enhance ethical engagement and policy support (Brüggemann & Rödder, 2020). Similarly, frames that highlight future orientation, such as long-term consequences of climate inaction or benefits of sustainable innovation, have been linked to stronger public backing for systemic changes, especially among younger and more educated audiences. Perhaps most importantly, effective framing boosts perceptions of agency, or the belief that individuals (White et al., 2019), communities, or governments can make a meaningful difference (Syafiq & Wardhani, 2021). When audiences are exposed to narratives that link individual behavior or civic participation with tangible outcomes—such as reduced emissions, cleaner cities, or healthier ecosystems—they are more likely to support

environmental policies and adopt sustainable practices (Berglez et al., 2023). Nabi et al. (2018) found that frames combining emotional appeals with efficacy cues significantly increase behavioral intention (White et al., 2019), while Kim et al. (2023) showed that message framing around empowerment and collective action fosters engagement with green consumption. These findings underscore the critical role of media frames as psychological and communicative tools for building durable public support in sustainability transitions.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with a content analysis method to examine how sustainability issues are framed in Indonesian national online media and their implications for the formation of a sustainability mindset. The unit of analysis is news articles published in the 2024–2025 period by five major national online media platforms—*Kompas.com*, *Detik.com*, *CNNIndonesia.com*, *Liputan6.com*, and *Tempo.co*—that explicitly discuss sustainability in the context of corporate strategy, environmental governance, green innovation, and ethical consumption. Data were collected through a search of news archives using keywords related to sustainability, ESG, green innovation, and ethical consumption, then purposively selected to ensure thematic relevance. The analysis process was carried out through stages of open coding, categorization, and thematic interpretation to identify dominant framing patterns, such as environmental urgency, techno-optimism, regulatory accountability, and lifestyle engagement. The validity of the analysis was maintained through repeated readings and cross-media comparisons, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of the role of media framing in shaping public perceptions, business orientations, and the dynamics of the green consumer market.

FINDINGS

The content analysis of 10 sustainability-themed articles from Indonesia's major national online news outlets revealed five key emergent themes that dominated sustainability discourse between 2024–2025. These themes include: (1) corporate credibility and greenwashing; (2) carbon reduction and national climate goals; (3) ESG leadership and sustainable finance; (4) green technology and industrial innovation; and (5) carbon trading and environmental governance. Within these themes, Entman's four frame functions—*problem definition*, *moral evaluation*, *causal interpretation*, and *treatment recommendation*—were consistently observed. The framing not only constructed public understanding of sustainability but also promoted specific behavioral models, institutional legitimacy, and future orientation.

The first theme, corporate credibility and greenwashing, was constructed through moral evaluation and problem definition frames. In *Kompas.com*, expert commentary warned of declining public trust in companies that engage in sustainability washing: "*Kalau hanya janji surga, nggak ada komitmen soal waktu atau jumlah, maka kredibilitas perusahaan yang jadi taruhannya.*" This framing situates greenwashing not merely as a reputational issue but as a moral failure that undermines institutional legitimacy. The call for verifiable

commitments and transparency reflects a public expectation that sustainability must be genuine, measurable, and ethically grounded. This narrative reinforces a moral sustainability mindset, where integrity and accountability are prioritized over superficial branding.

The second theme, carbon reduction and national climate goals, was dominated by causal interpretation and treatment recommendation frames. In coverage by *Kompas.com* on Pertamina's sustainability performance, the company was depicted as a central actor in achieving Indonesia's climate targets: "*Pertamina berkomitmen menjalankan bisnis ramah lingkungan dan mendukung target pengurangan emisi dan Net Zero Emission (NZE) pada 2060 atau lebih cepat.*" Here, the causal relationship between corporate action and national emissions reduction is emphasized, suggesting that large-scale industrial decarbonization is a critical pathway to environmental sustainability. This framing constructs climate responsibility as both an operational obligation and a patriotic contribution to Indonesia's future.

The third theme, ESG leadership and sustainable finance, was evident in *CNN Indonesia's* reporting on Bank Mandiri's ESG rating upgrade. The article employed problem definition and treatment recommendation frames, framing sustainability as both a challenge and an opportunity: "*Keberlanjutan bukan sekedar kewajiban, tetapi juga peluang strategis untuk menciptakan nilai jangka panjang.*" Through this narrative, ESG is portrayed as a lens for evaluating institutional resilience, long-term profitability, and alignment with global investor standards. This frame supports a mindset where financial innovation is tied to ethical impact, and where banks and investors play a pivotal role in shaping the sustainability transition.

In the fourth theme, green technology and industrial innovation, *Liputan6.com* featured SCG's eco-friendly cement as a case of sustainable production. The company's positioning was framed as visionary and values-driven: "*Keberlanjutan bukanlah tujuan akhir, melainkan esensi dari bisnis SCG.*" Treatment recommendation and moral evaluation frames were employed to legitimize the use of alternative materials and renewable energy in industrial contexts. By presenting sustainability as part of a company's core identity, this frame promotes technological optimism and normalizes green innovation as essential to competitive advantage. It also enhances consumer readiness to engage with products branded as low-carbon or environmentally conscious.

The fifth theme, carbon trading and environmental governance, featured a hybrid of problem definition, causal interpretation, and treatment recommendation frames. *Tempo.co* reported the launch of Indonesia's international carbon market as a historic shift in climate governance: "*Hari ini menandai momen bersejarah bagi Indonesia dalam upaya kita untuk mengatasi perubahan iklim.*" The framing underscores the structural and economic mechanisms required to support emissions reduction, while presenting the state as a proactive regulator. It highlights the alignment of national policy with global climate agreements, offering a vision of sustainability that is both economically rational and geopolitically strategic.

Across all themes, the tone of reporting was largely affirmative and forward-looking, with consistent emphasis on institutional progress, innovation, and global recognition. Corporate actors and state institutions were prominently featured, often quoted directly or framed as proactive leaders. This actor dominance supports the institutionalization of sustainability, but simultaneously limits the visibility of civil society, community-based solutions, and individual agency. There were few examples of consumer-focused framing or participatory narratives, which may hinder public identification with the sustainability agenda at a grassroots level.

Overall, the media narratives analyzed in this study serve to normalize sustainability as a national development priority, an ethical standard, and a business advantage. The media portray sustainability as both a moral imperative and a strategic tool for institutional transformation. However, the limited presence of lifestyle-based or citizen-centered framing signals a missed opportunity to link systemic solutions with everyday behavioral change. The results suggest that while Indonesian media effectively promote sustainability at the institutional level, they have yet to fully bridge the discourse toward inclusive, community-driven, or consumption-oriented sustainability practices.

DISCUSSION

The findings from this study affirm the utility of Entman's (1993) framing theory in analyzing how sustainability is constructed in Indonesian national online media. However, they also reveal important nuances that suggest the need to refine this framework in the context of sustainability discourse in emerging economies. The headlines analyzed across *Kompas.com*, *CNN Indonesia*, *Liputan6.com*, *Detik.com*, and *Tempo.co* demonstrate not only how sustainability is made visible but also how certain frames are normalized—particularly those that center institutional actors, promote techno-optimism, and emphasize moral leadership. These patterns reflect a media environment that privileges authoritative, top-down communication, where sustainability is primarily defined and legitimized through government policy and corporate performance, rather than through citizen narratives or lifestyle transformations.

From a theoretical standpoint, this framing pattern reinforces the dual roles of media as both agenda-setters and cultural legitimizers. The frequent use of *moral evaluation* and *treatment recommendation* functions—especially in headlines about ESG ratings, carbon reduction, and innovation—shows that sustainability is framed not simply as a technical matter but as a normative obligation. For example, statements like “*Keberlanjutan bukan sekedar kewajiban, tetapi juga peluang strategis*” position sustainability within both ethical and strategic domains. This supports prior work on the moral resonance of environmental frames (Kim et al., 2023), but the Indonesian context suggests an even tighter coupling between morality and market logic, wherein ESG adoption becomes both a sign of virtue and a tool of economic survival. This hybrid frame deserves further theorization as a distinct media construct: the “strategic virtue frame”, where moral values and market rationality reinforce each other.

Another theoretical insight emerges from the dominant role of institutions—state bodies, SOEs, and large corporations—in shaping the sustainability narrative. While Entman's model addresses the functions of framing, it does not sufficiently theorize the *sources of narrative authority* in media discourse. The Indonesian data reveals that sustainability frames gain legitimacy primarily through elite actors, who are repeatedly positioned as *change agents*, *experts*, or *visionaries*. This actor dominance gives rise to a construct we might term "institutional anchoring", where the public's understanding of sustainability is heavily mediated by institutional credibility rather than lived experience or civic engagement (Hestres & Nisbet, 2018). This challenges more pluralistic conceptions of sustainability framing found in Western contexts, where grassroots movements, NGOs, and citizen voices are more visible.

At the same time, the framing of sustainability as a *strategic imperative*—particularly in headlines on carbon trading, green innovation, and smart city development—extends the notion of *treatment recommendation* beyond policy advocacy into the realm of *economic foresight*. Here, sustainability is framed as a future-oriented investment logic, closely linked to national identity and competitiveness (e.g., “menuju Indonesia Emas 2045”). This suggests that sustainability framing in the Global South often intertwines with nationalist and developmentalist rhetoric. From these observations, we propose a complementary theoretical category to Entman's functions: the "developmental vision frame", which connects sustainability to long-term national progress and positions it as a shared horizon of aspiration rather than merely a response to risk.

Interestingly, the near absence of consumer, community, or youth voices in these headlines signals a limitation in the frame diversity typically assumed in framing literature. While Entman's model is effective for classifying *what* is being emphasized, it does not fully account for *whose perspectives* are amplified or silenced. In the Indonesian digital media landscape, there is a clear underrepresentation of participatory or lifestyle-based frames—those that would frame sustainability as a matter of personal habit, grassroots mobilization, or localized innovation. This evidences a "discursive compression", where sustainability becomes increasingly technocratic and abstracted from daily life. This pattern suggests the need to extend framing theory to include an axis of *frame inclusivity*, particularly for applied sustainability communication in multicultural and hierarchical societies.

Additionally, the framing of sustainability as innovation and investment opportunity may serve to expand public acceptance of market-based climate policies, such as carbon trading or green bonds. However, it may also risk depoliticizing sustainability by removing it from the realm of civic debate. In contrast to the critical discourse theory view (Fairclough, 2010) that emphasizes media's role in enabling contestation, our findings show that media in Indonesia often present sustainability as a consensus agenda—“everyone agrees,” “the transition is inevitable,” “the leadership is visionary.” This depoliticized framing may build short-term legitimacy but may also inhibit deeper critical engagement with systemic inequality or environmental justice.

From these insights, we propose a refinement to traditional framing theory: the sustainability framing triad, comprising (1) *strategic virtue* (ethical and economic alignment), (2) *institutional anchoring* (source centrality and authority), and (3) *developmental vision* (national progress orientation). These constructs better capture the way sustainability is communicated in emerging economies where state-led narratives dominate, economic security is paramount, and cultural values often prioritize collective goals over individual agency. These frames are not merely communicative devices—they are vehicles of ideological alignment that shape the sustainability mindset by making particular futures imaginable and desirable.

Finally, theorizing upward from these findings, we suggest that in Global South contexts like Indonesia, media framing of sustainability should be understood not only through cognitive and affective functions (as in Entman's model) but also through *ideological positioning* and *developmental legitimation*. Frames are not just selections of reality—they are infrastructures of meaning that define the boundary between hope and fear, leadership and followership, and action versus inertia. By revealing how digital news media construct these frames, this study contributes to a more context-sensitive, culturally grounded, and future-oriented theory of sustainability communication.

CONCLUSION

This study set out to explore how sustainability is framed by Indonesia's major national online news media and how such framing contributes to shaping public mindsets relevant to sustainability transitions. Through a qualitative content analysis of ten news articles published between 2024 and 2025 across *Kompas.com*, *CNN Indonesia*, *Liputan6.com*, *Detik.com*, and *Tempo.co*, the research revealed that sustainability is predominantly framed through moral evaluation, strategic treatment recommendations, and institutional authority. The headlines reflect a media landscape where sustainability is portrayed as a convergence of ethics, economic logic, and national development goals—anchored in the language of responsibility, innovation, and long-term value creation.

The primary contribution of this research lies in its development of qualitative insights into how media discourse functions as a cognitive and normative stimulus in Indonesia's sustainability narrative. By applying Entman's (1993) framing model and building inductively from the data, the study generated three grounded conceptual constructs: *strategic virtue*, *institutional anchoring*, and *developmental vision*. These emergent frames offer a more culturally situated extension of existing framing theory and help explain how sustainability is legitimized, moralized, and future-oriented in the Global South context. Unlike Western media environments that often emphasize citizen voice, conflict, or bottom-up mobilization, Indonesian news media emphasize elite leadership, economic coordination, and regulatory trust.

This insight has important implications for how sustainability is communicated and enacted. First, it highlights a missed opportunity in current media discourse: the underrepresentation of consumer agency and lifestyle-based

framing. Without relatable, actionable narratives at the individual level, public engagement with sustainability may remain abstract, reliant on policy milestones rather than internalized values. Second, it calls attention to the discursive power of institutional actors in shaping what sustainability means and for whom. In an emerging economy like Indonesia, where policy, market, and media often move in alignment, framing becomes a tool not just of communication but of consensus-building and behavioral orchestration.

From a green digital marketing perspective, the study offers practical insight into how sustainability narratives can be made more effective. Marketers and communicators aiming to promote green products in Indonesia should consider aligning their messages with prevailing media frames—especially those that combine ethical imperatives with economic aspirations. At the same time, to deepen impact and authenticity, these campaigns must address the framing gaps by personalizing sustainability, amplifying consumer stories, and reinforcing shared identity through relatable values and behaviors. Integrating lifestyle, culture, and local voices into sustainability communication could increase not only message relevance but also trust and behavioral conversion.

For policymakers and public communicators, the study suggests that media partnerships should be leveraged to shape not just awareness but also *mindsets*. This requires a shift from event-driven reporting toward narrative framing that emphasizes progress continuity, civic inclusion, and emotional resonance. It also calls for greater attention to frame diversity and balance—ensuring that sustainability is not seen solely through the lens of techno-bureaucratic progress, but also through justice, resilience, and community well-being.

In conclusion, this study contributes a qualitative, theory-building perspective on sustainability framing in Indonesia's digital media landscape. It underscores the importance of context-sensitive media analysis in understanding how sustainability becomes culturally intelligible and socially persuasive. By theorizing upward from data, the research not only affirms the utility of framing theory in sustainability communication but also expands its explanatory power through grounded constructs tailored to the developmental realities of emerging economies. These findings enrich both academic inquiry and applied communication strategy, paving the way for more inclusive, credible, and behaviorally resonant approaches to promoting sustainability in Southeast Asia and beyond.

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