



Original Article

Framing Analysis of Volunteer Stories on the Instagram Account @gembiraseharian

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Abstract:

This study stems from the phenomenon of social media utilization by social communities to build public awareness and youth participation through the personal narratives of volunteers. The purpose of this study is to analyze how the Instagram account @gembiraseharian frames the stories of volunteers in shaping perceptions about volunteering and the joy of sharing. The method used is qualitative with Robert N. Entman's framing analysis, which includes four dimensions: defining the problem, diagnosing the causes, providing moral judgments, and offering solutions. Primary data was obtained from three recent volunteer story posts, while secondary data came from literature related to digital communication, framing, and social media. The results show that @gembiraseharian consistently frames social problems as a lack of concern for simple happiness, with the causes linked to individualistic and materialistic mindsets. The moral values highlighted include empathy, gratitude, solidarity, and togetherness, while the solutions offered are calls to take small actions that have a big impact. These findings conclude that the volunteers' personal narratives not only serve as documentation of activities but also as an effective digital communication strategy in building community identity, strengthening the emotional engagement of the audience, and encouraging social participation among the younger generation.

Keywords: Framing, Youth Community, Volunteering, Instagram

Introduction

The development of digital communication technology in the information society era has fundamentally changed the way humans interact, disseminate information, and build social identities through digital platforms such as social media (Rantona et al., 2024). Social media has grown rapidly since it first appeared in the early 2000s. In Indonesia alone, the number of active users reached more than 170 million in 2023,



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and this number will continue to grow (Qadir & M. Ramli, 2024). As a product of developments in communication technology, social media has not only become a means of communication but also a strategic space for building social movements and empowering communities (Anzani et al., 2024). This phenomenon shows that social media has a significant role in shaping public perception of social issues and in mobilizing community participation (Atfianti, 2024).

One of the social challenges faced by modern society is the decline in social awareness amid an individualistic lifestyle (Tig et al., 2024). As a result, the empathy and spirit of mutual cooperation that characterize Indonesian society are often marginalized. This is where social communities and volunteer organizations play an important role in presenting a more constructive alternative narrative, namely a narrative of caring, the joy of sharing, and a spirit of togetherness.

Instagram has become one of the social media platforms with strong visual characteristics and narrative features such as stories, reels, and captions. It is currently widely used by social communities to convey social messages (Nugroho et al., 2024). One effective form of content is the personal stories of volunteers. These stories have high narrative power because they present real experiences, evoke empathy, and show that every individual can make an impact, even through small things.

One interesting phenomenon that has emerged in this context is the presence of a community of young people who are active in social and educational fields through social media. This community not only promotes volunteer work, but also utilizes digital space to foster collective awareness, expand participation, and build solidarity within the community. Gembira Seharian, a community of young volunteers, is one representative example of this phenomenon. Based on a search of its official Instagram account, this community actively shares social activities, such as learning and playing with children, visiting nursing homes, and even visiting friends with disabilities at orphanages for the visually impaired. As the name suggests, they emphasize the values of joy, empathy, and togetherness. Through visual narratives and text, they build an identity that small actions by one person can have a big impact on others.

The stories shared are not only documentation, but also a communication strategy to build a certain framing about the meaning of joy, caring, and the positive impact of volunteers. For example, in one post, a volunteer named Monique shared her experience that volunteering, which she initially did “just for fun,” became an important part of her life because it gave her new meaning and happiness.

Framing in communication plays a key role in shaping how audiences understand an issue. (Entman, 1993) explains that framing serves to define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and recommend solutions. In other words, framing is not just about conveying information, but also how messages are constructed to emphasize certain aspects and guide audience interpretation.

In the context of volunteer stories on the @gembiraseharian account, the framing that is constructed has the potential to influence public perception of volunteering. The stories that are published can define volunteering not only as an additional activity, but as a meaningful and enjoyable activity. Furthermore, this framing can encourage the younger generation to see social action as part of a positive lifestyle.

Research on framing in social media has been conducted extensively, but most of it focuses on political issues, marketing campaigns, or the dissemination of information in the news media. Studies on framing in social community accounts, especially those focusing on volunteer narratives, are still relatively limited. This analysis is important

for understanding how personal narrative-based communication strategies can build social awareness in the digital age.

A number of previous studies using Robert N. Entman's theory, such as ([Sukmawati, 2023](#)), analyzed the communication strategies used by the Malang Regency Government Public Relations Office in socializing and increasing community participation in the Kampung KB (Family Planning) program. The media used included mass media, social media, and face-to-face outreach activities. This communication strategy was considered quite effective because it was able to increase public understanding, awareness, and participation in the Kampung KB program. Then ([Khoerunisa, 2024](#)) examined how online media such as Detik News, CNN Indonesia, and Tempo.co framed the news coverage of the National Data Center (PDN) leak using Robert N. Entman's framing model analysis. The results show that the three media outlets framed the issue from different perspectives that influenced public perception, but overall, the news coverage emphasized the importance of cybersecurity and the government's handling of data leaks.

More specifically, several studies discussing NGOs and social movements, such as ([Watkins, 2019](#)), state that both government and non-government aid organizations highlight the role of volunteers as the core narrative on Instagram. Then ([Jia et al., 2024](#)) states that mental health organizations use more educational visuals and motivational messages rather than just promotion. This visual strategy helps create an emotional connection with the audience and strengthens public awareness of the importance of mental health. Meanwhile, ([López-Rabadán, 2022](#)) states that non-profit organizations tend to use social media as a one-way communication channel, rather than as a space for interactive participation that can actually strengthen relationships with the public.

Through Robert N. Entman's framing analysis, this study attempts to answer the question: how are volunteer stories constructed by the @gembiraseharian account to shape perceptions about volunteering and sharing joy. This focus is relevant because by understanding the framing used, we can see how social communities utilize digital media to spread values of caring, strengthen public engagement, and create a sustainable volunteer ecosystem.

Thus, this study not only contributes theoretically to the development of framing studies in digital communication, but also provides practical contributions to social communities in designing more effective communication strategies. Moreover, this study serves as an important reflection for the younger generation that amid the massive flow of entertainment content and digital consumption, there is still room for narratives of happiness born out of caring and social action.

Methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with Robert N. Entman's framing analysis method. A qualitative approach is used because this study focuses on understanding the meaning, message construction, and communication strategies used in the narratives of volunteers on the Instagram account @gembiraseharian. As stated ([John W. Creswell, 2018](#)), qualitative research allows researchers to explore social phenomena based on the perspectives of participants and the texts produced, making it relevant for examining the construction of framing in social media content.

Data was collected from Instagram feed content containing volunteer stories published on the Instagram account @gembiraseharian. The research data sources

were divided into two categories: primary data and secondary data. Primary data was obtained from the three most recent posts featuring brief stories of volunteers' experiences in Gembira Seharian activities. The selection of the three most recent posts was done to maintain the relevance of the data with the current communication dynamics conveyed through the account. Meanwhile, secondary data consisted of literature from books, journals, scientific articles, and previous studies relevant to framing analysis, social media, and volunteer movements.

The data collection process was carried out using two techniques. First, documentation, which involved downloading and saving the captions from three recent volunteer stories posted on the @gembiraseharian Instagram account. Second, a literature review, which involved compiling literature relevant to Robert N. Entman's framing theory, digital communication, social media, and similar research that supported the analysis. After the data was collected, the analysis was carried out using Robert N. Entman's framing model, which consists of four dimensions, namely defining problems, diagnosing causes, making moral judgments, and suggesting remedies. These four dimensions were used to unravel the meaning structure in the volunteer story captions, so that it could be understood how joy was constructed, what was considered a social problem, who the actors were, what moral values were highlighted, and what appeals or solutions were offered to the public.

This study uses source triangulation and theory triangulation techniques. Source triangulation is carried out by comparing data from several different volunteer story posts, while theory triangulation is carried out by reviewing the analysis results using the perspective of digital communication theory and literature related to social media and volunteer movements. This research was conducted by publicly accessing the Instagram account @gembiraseharian in July-August 2025, focusing on three recent volunteer story posts.

Results

The Instagram account @gembiraseharian is a social media account belonging to a community of young people based in Greater Jakarta and Bandung. This community focuses on social, educational, and volunteer activities. True to its name, the community emphasizes the values of joy, empathy, and togetherness through various activities, such as reading classes, learning through play, and traveling with children. With over 15,900 followers and hundreds of posts, this account serves as a digital communication medium to document activities, share volunteer stories, and encourage the public to participate in social movements. The content published is generally in the form of photos, videos, and narrative captions that highlight inspirational stories, volunteer testimonials, and invitations to join. In general, this account is not only a means of documenting activities, but also a strategy for building the community's identity as a space for young people who spread happiness through social action.

This study focuses on three posts on the Instagram account @gembiraseharian that contain inspiring stories from Gembira Seharian volunteers. Among them are Dini Amalia Prameswari, Jihad Jundulloh, and Monique Handa Shafira. The focus on these volunteers' stories is important because personal narratives have a different communicative power than mere documentation of activities. Stories told from an individual perspective are able to convey emotional experiences, moral values, and personal reflections that more easily build rapport with the audience (Lestari, 2025). In the context of digital communication, this strategy can be seen as an attempt at framing

to emphasize certain aspects of the volunteers' experiences, such as the feeling of happiness when sharing, the meaning of empathy, or the importance of small actions that have a big impact.

The story of Dini Amalia Prameswari



Figure 1. The Story of Dini Amalia Prameswari

a. Define Problems

The social problem highlighted in this post is the lack of space for children to dream, learn, and experience simple happiness. In addition, there is also a lack of attention and concern from the community towards the emotional and educational needs of children, especially those from underprivileged families. This post highlights the reality that there are still children who need support, love, and attention so that they can grow up with a positive spirit.

b. Diagnose Causes

The implied cause is the lack of active involvement from the community and the surrounding environment in providing attention and space for children from underprivileged families to grow. This is also related to the busyness of modern life, which often makes adults forget that simple pleasures such as playing and learning together can have a big impact on a child's development.

c. Make Moral Judgment

The moral values highlighted are caring, gratitude, togetherness, and sincerity in sharing. This post emphasizes that happiness does not always come from big things, but can come from children's laughter, simple moments of play, and togetherness with others. Volunteers are described as individuals who not only give, but also learn life lessons from the children and their team.

d. Suggest Remedies

This post encourages the public to care and get involved in small actions that can bring about change, such as taking the time to share, play, learn, or simply be there for children. There is an implicit call for more people to join the volunteer movement, to become a "superteam" that can create a real impact, even if it is simple.

Overall, the framing constructed through the story of Dini Amalia Prameswari presents a discourse that children's happiness and human values can be maintained through social awareness. The issue raised is not only about the limited facilities available to children, but also about the community's lack of social sensitivity to their needs. The cause is linked to low public participation, while the solution offered is to build a collective movement based on volunteerism. Thus, this post successfully presents volunteers as social actors who play an important role in inspiring change,

The Story of Jihad Jundulloh



a. Define Problems

b. Diagnose Causes

c. Make Moral Judgment

d. Suggest Remedies

Page 5680 of 5685

Overall, the story shared contains the message that volunteer activities are not only about sharing, but also a space for reflection on the values of life, togetherness, and the broader meaning of sustenance. Through this narrative framework, @gembiraseharian not only presents the personal experiences of a volunteer, but also builds an alternative discourse to the dominance of materialistic views in society. Such narratives have great potential in shaping public awareness of the importance of living life more fully, by placing human values and spirituality as an integral part of happiness.

The Story of Monique Handa Shafira



Figure 3. The Story of Monique Handa Shafira

a. Define Problems

The problem emphasized is the lack of awareness among the public, especially young people, of the importance of involvement in social action. Many individuals view volunteerism as merely an additional activity, when in fact it can bring happiness and meaning to life, as well as have a real impact on communities in need. Thus, the social problem highlighted is the lack of active participation in social activities that can actually make a significant contribution to the surrounding environment.

b. Diagnose Causes

The cause of this problem is the individualistic and materialistic mindset that still dominates, so that many people only focus on personal achievements or momentary pleasures. This makes volunteering less of a necessity and more of an optional choice. Through Monique's story, it is clear that her involvement in Gembira Seharihan successfully changed her perspective from simply doing it for fun to seeing it as an important part of her life. This shows that the cause of the problem is not only a lack of opportunity, but also a lack of awareness of the meaningfulness that can be gained through volunteering.

c. Make Moral Judgment

There is an emphasis on moral values such as caring, gratitude, and commitment to sharing. Monique's story shows that true happiness is not only gained from individual achievements, but also from the smiles of children, inspiring stories from fellow volunteers, and togetherness in the community. The moral raised is the importance of fostering empathy, realizing the meaning of life from social interactions, and appreciating small contributions that have a broad impact. These moral values are also a criticism of lifestyles that are too self-oriented, emphasizing that social benefit is an important measure in life.

d. Suggest Remedies The solution offered is an invitation to start change with small steps through active involvement in social activities. Monique emphasizes that

volunteering is not just an additional activity, but a part of life that can foster new meaning. This post explicitly invites the audience to join Gembira Seharian and carry out simple actions that can bring happiness to many people. Thus, the remedies offered are not only practical invitations to participate, but also encouragement to change perspectives so that the younger generation makes volunteering an integral part of their lifestyle.

Overall, Monique Handa Shafira's narrative successfully frames volunteerism as a meaningful activity that goes beyond simply filling spare time. Through the framework of problem, cause, moral, and remedies, this post emphasizes that small actions have great potential in creating collective happiness. By sharing the personal experiences of volunteers, @gembiraseharian not only shares inspiring stories, but also builds public awareness of the importance of social participation as a form of self-actualization that has a broad impact on society.

Based on an analysis of three volunteer stories, there is consistency in the framing used by the @gembiraseharian account in constructing its social narrative. First, in terms of defining problems, although each volunteer highlights different issues, such as the limited space for children to dream (Dini), the narrow interpretation of sustenance (Jihad), and the lack of awareness among young people regarding social action (Monique). However, the goal remains the same, namely the gap between the potential for simple happiness and the social reality that is still marked by limitations, individualism, and a lack of public concern. In other words, Gembira Seharian's framing consistently defines the problem as a lack of attention to the non-material dimensions of happiness, especially those related to children and social relations.

Second, in terms of diagnosing causes, this account tends to associate the problem with the individualistic mindset of modern society. As a result, warm social relationships, children's play spaces, and involvement in social action are often neglected. This reinforces the framing pattern that the main cause of the problem is not only a lack of facilities or material support, but also a low level of collective awareness of the importance of small actions that have a big impact.

Third, in the dimension of making moral judgments, the dominant moral values in the three narratives are empathy, gratitude, solidarity, and togetherness. Volunteers are portrayed not only as givers, but also as recipients of new values and experiences that shape their character. Children's laughter, sincere prayers, and community togetherness are positioned as moral values that need to be upheld. Thus, the morality that is built emphasizes that true happiness comes from social relationships and caring, not just personal or material achievements.

Fourth, in terms of suggested remedies, the pattern that emerges is quite consistent. All narratives encourage the audience to initiate change through small actions. Whether it is playing with children, interpreting sustenance in a broader sense, or making volunteering a part of life, Gembira Seharian emphasizes that simple contributions can have a big impact. This invitation also strengthens the image of the community as a space for collaboration, where young people can channel their social concerns in a tangible way.

Overall, the framing pattern of Gembira Seharian can be summarized as follows: (1) social problems are defined as a lack of attention to simple pleasures, especially in children and social relationships; (2) the causes of these problems are linked to the dominance of individualistic and materialistic mindsets; (3) the moral values

emphasized are empathy, gratitude, togetherness, and solidarity, especially among young people; and (4) the solution offered is a call to take small actions that have a big impact. This pattern shows consistency in the narrative, which emphasizes the importance of volunteerism as a means of strengthening community identity, building collective happiness, and fostering social awareness among the younger generation. Thus, the framing is not merely documenting the experiences of volunteers, but also constructing the identity of @gembiraseharian as a community of young people who bring optimism and positive energy through social action. This is in line with the framework (Entman, 1993) which emphasizes four functions of framing in message construction.

A number of previous studies reinforce the relevance of these findings. For example, (Watkins, 2019) shows that aid organizations on Instagram highlight volunteer stories to build legitimacy and emotional bonds with their audience, in line with the practices of @gembiraseharian. Similarly, research by (Jia et al., 2024) emphasizes the importance of combining visuals and educational narratives in creating emotional connections, which is clearly evident in the posts by Gembira Seharian volunteers. Meanwhile, (López-Rabadán, 2022) reminds us that social media framing tends to be one-sided. This is also seen in the @gembiraseharian account, which emphasizes meaning production over public dialogue.

From a digital communication perspective, personal narratives have proven effective in building affective engagement through storytelling that triggers empathy and intent to act. The combination of visuals and text serves to reinforce the meaning of photos/videos by presenting concrete evidence, while captions provide moral and reflective context. With consistency in the idea of “small actions have a big impact,” this account has succeeded in forming a collective community identity while strengthening its appeal to young volunteers.

Framing joy also has a significant impact on young audiences. Volunteering is presented as an activity that is both fun and meaningful, making it more acceptable to a generation that prioritizes authentic experiences. This narrative not only builds a positive image of the community but also strengthens digital solidarity through interactions between followers. However, this potential does not always translate into real participation, so interactive strategies are needed to transform emotional resonance into concrete action.

Conclusion

This study found that the Instagram account @gembiraseharian consistently frames volunteer narratives through Robert N. Entman's four dimensions of framing, namely defining the problem, diagnosing the cause, providing moral judgments, and offering solutions. The social issues raised are mainly related to the lack of public attention to the simple happiness of children, the narrow, materialistic interpretation of sustenance, and the lack of awareness among the younger generation to get involved in social action. The causes of these problems are positioned in the dominance of individualistic and materialistic mindsets, which often lead to the neglect of non-material aspects of happiness.

The moral values highlighted include empathy, gratitude, solidarity, and togetherness. Volunteers are positioned not only as benefactors but also as individuals who gain life lessons through social involvement. The solutions offered emphasize the importance of small actions that have a big impact, both through direct participation in

volunteer activities and a change in perspective in interpreting happiness and fortune. This framing pattern shows that the Instagram account @gembiraseharian not only documents social activities but also constructs the identity of a community of young people who spread optimism and positive energy through personal narratives.

Theoretically, these findings enrich the literature on framing in social media by emphasizing the role of personal narratives and the combination of visuals and text as effective digital communication strategies. Practically, this study shows that volunteer stories can be a strategic medium for building emotional connections with audiences, strengthening community image, and encouraging youth participation in social activities.

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