journalism and media

MDPI

Article

Audience-Persona-Driven Approaches to Humanitarian Disaster: Reporting in Narasi's Aceh Flood Coverage

Rulli Nasrullah [1], Amin Shabana [2,*], Muh. Yahya Saraka [3], Topikurohman Topikurohman [3], Jamaluddin Djunaid [3] and Jumroni Sulaeman [1]

[1] Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences, Syarif Hidayatullah State Islamic University Jakarta, Jakarta 15412, Indonesia; rulli.nasrullah@uinjkt.ac.id (R.N.); jumroni15@gmail.com (J.S.)
[2] Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Jakarta, Jakarta 15419, Indonesia
[3] Faculty of Da'wah and Communication Sciences, Universitas PTIQ, Jakarta 12440, Indonesia; yahyasaraka@ptiq.ac.id (M.Y.S.); topikurohman@ptiq.ac.id (T.T.); jamaluddindjunaid@ptiq.ac.id (J.D.)
* Correspondence: amin.shabana@umj.ac.id

Abstract

This study explores how audience-persona-driven approaches enhance the understanding of humanitarian disaster reporting, using Narasi's coverage of the Aceh floods as a focal case. By examining how humanitarian narratives are constructed and interpreted across digital platforms, the analysis highlights the ways audiences engage emotionally, critically, and civically with crisis reporting. Audience personas—such as helpers, skeptics, and critical citizens—offer a lens for identifying distinct patterns of empathy, solidarity, moral judgment, and demands for accountability. These personas reveal not only how viewers respond to journalistic framing but also how they co-construct meaning through comments, affective expressions, and collective critique. This study demonstrates that Narasi's reporting activates humanitarian values and fosters participatory public engagement, showing the potential of persona-based analysis to illuminate the complex interplay between narrative framing, paratextual cues, and audience interpretation. Ultimately, this approach underscores the value of integrating audience-centered perspectives into contemporary humanitarian communication research.

Keywords: humanitarian journalism; audience personas; digital crisis communication; affective engagement; narrative framing

Check for updates

Academic Editors: Koldobika Meso-Ayerdi, Javier Odriozola Chéné, Rosa Pérez Arozamena and Ana Serrano-Tellería

Received: 19 February 2026
Revised: 20 April 2026
Accepted: 22 April 2026
Published: 30 April 2026

Copyright: © 2026 by the authors. Licensee MDPI, Basel, Switzerland. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license.

1. Introduction

At the end of 2025, Indonesia was struck by severe flooding across multiple provinces, with Aceh experiencing some of the most devastating impacts. Torrential rains submerged residential areas, destroyed infrastructure, and displaced thousands of families who were forced to abandon their homes. The humanitarian toll was immense, as communities struggled with limited access to shelter, food, and medical assistance. This disaster highlighted the vulnerability of Indonesia's disaster-prone regions and underscored the urgent need for effective communication strategies to mobilize empathy, solidarity, and collective responsibility.

Beyond the immediate humanitarian crisis, the floods reignited public debates about structural causes, particularly illegal logging and deforestation. The removal of forest cover has long been associated with increased flood risks, as it reduces natural water absorption and destabilizes ecosystems. In the aftermath of the Aceh floods, public discourse frequently linked the tragedy to unsustainable land management and corporate exploitation, framing the disaster not merely as a natural hazard but as a socio-political crisis rooted

in human activity. These concerns situate disaster reporting within broader questions of environmental justice and accountability, making media narratives central to how societies interpret and respond to such events.

The Aceh floods were selected as the focal case for this study based on three interrelated justifications drawn from established case study typologies. First, Aceh represents a critical case for examining humanitarian disaster reporting in digital environments. The province combines high environmental vulnerability, a deep historical memory of the 2004 tsunami, ongoing socio-political struggles, and a predominantly Muslim population where religious framing permeates public discourse. If the articulation of audience personas and humanitarian values can be identified and systematically analyzed in this complex, multi-layered setting, the resulting theoretical framework is likely to hold explanatory power in other crisis contexts characterized by similar intersecting vulnerabilities. Second, the case is revelatory in that Narasi Newsroom—an independent Indonesian outlet anchored by the trusted journalist Najwa Shihab—provides rare access to how paratextual cues, journalistic personas, and audience engagement intersect on YouTube, a platform increasingly central to disaster communication in the Global South yet under-examined through ethnographic methods. This revelatory dimension allows the study to uncover dynamics that might remain obscured in Western-centric or legacy-media-focused research. Third, the case enables analytical rather than statistical generalization. The goal is not to estimate population parameters or claim representativeness in a probabilistic sense but to refine, extend, or challenge theoretical constructs—such as affective publics, audience personas, and humanitarian values—that are designed to travel across disaster types and digital platforms. By selecting Aceh as a theoretically generative case, this study aims to produce insights that are both deeply contextual and broadly applicable to humanitarian communication research and practice globally.

Disaster reporting in Indonesia has historically been intertwined with humanitarian narratives, often framed through empathy, solidarity, and religious discourse. The Aceh floods, occurring in a region with deep historical memory of the 2004 tsunami and ongoing socio-political struggles, provide a fertile ground for examining how digital journalism mediates collective responses. Narasi Newsroom, founded by Najwa Shihab, occupies a unique position as an independent media outlet with strong credibility among audiences. Its coverage of the floods not only reported the event but also functioned as a catalyst for emotional resonance, civic solidarity, and political critique.

1.1. Theoretical Framework: Social Media Audience Discourse

Social media platforms can be theorized as socio-technical infrastructures that convert attention and affect into publicly visible, machine-legible signals (comments, likes, shares), which are then re-imported into editorial judgment, distribution logics, and the construction of news value and credibility (Tenenboim, 2022; Krebs & Lischka, 2019). Within this environment, audiences act as networked evaluators who appraise bias, conduct fact-checking, and provide contextual addenda in comment sections, thereby shaping other readers' assessments of credibility, civility, and willingness to participate (Lee, 2012; Zamith & Lewis, 2014; Ziegele et al., 2018). Conceptually, this can be read through the lens of social media logic—rooted in programmability, popularity, connectivity, and datafication—which entangles platform affordances with media routines and user practices, and hence reorganizes the conditions of journalistic visibility and audience agency (van Dijck & Poell, 2013). Cross-platform dissemination and algorithmic curation create heterogeneous exposure pathways and counter-attitudinal encounters that may prompt cognitive elaboration yet can also channel engagement into homophilous networks, intensifying persuasive signaling and identity performance (Guo & Chen, 2022; Kalsnes & Larsson, 2018).

Audience discourse typically fuses deliberation with emotion—especially under crisis or high-salience political coverage—so that sentiment expression, identity work, and symbolic alignment become salient drivers of contribution (Halse et al., 2018; Schrøder, 2018). As relatively low-barrier communicative arenas, social feeds and comment threads extend the public sphere by allowing citizens to voice aspirations, articulate dissent, and mobilize issues beyond legacy gatekeeping, while simultaneously heightening the risks of incivility, mis/disinformation, and polarization that necessitate moderation policies and technological filtering (Camp & Chien, 2000; Habermas et al., 1974; Papacharissi, 2002; Yahav & Schwartz, 2018). Empirical syntheses confirm that expressive acts range from supportive/informative to hostile/delegitimizing, and that trust in news alongside structural policy choices (e.g., enabling/disable comment systems) condition participation intensity and form (Kubin et al., 2024; Liu & McLeod, 2019; Newman et al., 2024). In Indonesia's YouTube reactions to LPG subsidy policy coverage, "the analysis demonstrates that hostile and emotionally charged discourse, often marked by ad hominem attacks and sarcasm, dominates the comment space, reflecting broader frustrations with inequality and governance." "Positive support for a protesting citizen highlights the emergence of symbolic figures who embody collective grievances and catalyze digital activism," underscoring how audience reactions can reframe news events via affective identification and symbolic leadership (Nasrullah et al., 2026).

To avoid technological determinism, debates on audience reaction should also integrate evidence that the echo-chamber/filter-bubble narrative can be overstated; while personalization and homophily exist, their explanatory power varies by context and is often entangled with broader socio-political dynamics (Bruns, 2019). Complementarily, research on social media and democracy highlights that participatory affordances can expand civic engagement while requiring careful governance of platform architectures and organizational routines to sustain deliberative quality (Loader & Mercea, 2011). For newsrooms, this implies designing content and interaction policies that (a) treat engagement signals as inputs—not endpoints—for editorial calibration; (b) cultivate transparent, well-resourced moderation that balances openness with civility; and (c) develop cross-platform strategies attuned to youth consumption patterns and to the reputational effects of audience participation (Bossio, 2017; Vázquez-Herrero et al., 2022; Waddell, 2019, 2020). Overall, audience reactions on social media do not merely evaluate and circulate journalism; they co-produce its social meaning and public legitimacy.

Within the specific context of disaster reporting, social media audience discourse plays a critical role in shaping perceptions of empathy, solidarity, and collective responsibility (Uhnoo & Persson, 2022; Wang et al., 2022; Zhu et al., 2020). Comments and shared content often reflect not only individual emotional reactions but also collective moral reasoning and calls to action. The discursive practices employed by audiences can range from expressions of sympathy and offers of aid to critical examinations of news coverage or even the mobilization of tangible support (Chen et al., 2021). This dynamic interweaving of emotional, cognitive, and conative elements within audience discourse provides invaluable insights into the social impact of humanitarian communication. Researchers are increasingly turning to natural language processing and qualitative textual analysis to categorize and understand the dominant themes and sentiments expressed by online communities in response to crisis events (Bonati et al., 2023).

However, analyzing social media discourse poses significant methodological challenges, including data volume, anonymity, and the ephemeral nature of online interactions (Snelson, 2016). Researchers must navigate the complexities of identifying genuine sentiment amidst performative expressions, understanding the influence of platform algorithms on visibility, and accounting for the potential for misinformation or echo chambers (Simchon et al., 2022).

Despite these challenges, the ability to access raw, unfiltered audience responses offers an unparalleled opportunity to study public reception in real-time, providing a ground–up perspective on meaning-making that complements top–down analyses of media production. The nuanced interpretation of these interactions requires careful qualitative analysis, moving beyond surface-level sentiment to uncover deeper motivations, cultural resonances, and the formation of online communities around shared concerns (Papacharissi, 2014).

The examination of audience discourse on platforms like YouTube also necessitates an understanding of the broader socio-cultural context that shapes user engagement (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015). The interpretation of humanitarian narratives, for instance, can be heavily influenced by national identity, political ideologies, and pre-existing societal norms regarding disaster aid and responsibility. Therefore, a purely textual analysis of comments might miss the deeper cultural currents that underpin expressed sentiments. By situating audience responses within this wider framework, researchers can better understand how solidarity is fostered or hindered, how blame is attributed, and how collective action is mobilized or impeded (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013). This contextualized approach to social media audience discourse allows for a more robust and ethnographically informed understanding of how digital platforms contribute to public sense-making during times of crisis.

1.2. Audience Persona Categories as Analytical Lens

The concept of "Audience Persona Categories" in the digital realm refers to the ways in which individuals project, construct, and have perceived personal characteristics through their online interactions and contributions (Zhu et al., 2020). On platforms like YouTube, where users engage through comments, reactions, and sharing, their persona is not merely a reflection of their offline self but a carefully curated and often context-dependent online identity (Boyd, 2014; Goffman, 2023). This representation can manifest through linguistic choices, emotional expressions, engagement patterns, and even self-presentation within profile details. Understanding Audience Persona Categories is crucial for deciphering the nuances of online discourse, as it helps to explain motivations behind certain comments, the formation of online communities, and the potential for both empathetic connection and antagonistic interaction (Kavitha et al., 2020). It moves beyond a generic understanding of 'the audience' to recognize the diverse individualities that shape collective online behavior.

The analysis of Audience Persona Categories is particularly salient in contexts of humanitarian narratives, where emotional responses and moral judgments are frequently expressed (Cuevas et al., 2024). Viewers' comments might reveal aspects of their prosocial tendencies, their identification with affected communities, or their critical stances towards aid efforts, all of which contribute to a represented online personality. For instance, a user consistently expressing empathy and offering solutions might project a 'helper' persona, while another questioning the veracity of reporting might exhibit a 'skeptic' persona (Wagh & Packirisamy, 2025). While existing research on audience personas in crisis communication has identified Helper and Skeptic orientations (Wagh & Packirisamy, 2025; Zhao et al., 2008), the present study proposes an additional, empirically grounded category: the Critical Citizen persona. Unlike the Skeptic, who expresses doubt and requests clarification, the Critical Citizen actively attributes blame to specific actors (government officials, corporations), identifies systemic failures (deforestation, corruption, regulatory capture), and articulates demands for structural reform and legal accountability. This category emerged inductively from the data and did not appear in the initial coding framework derived from existing scholarship. Its identification constitutes an original contribution of this study, extending persona theory to capture a more politically engaged mode of digital humanitarian discourse—one that moves beyond empathic support (Helper) and epistemic scrutiny (Skeptic) toward explicit civic advocacy. These representations are not static but

are often shaped and reinforced by interactions within the comment section, where users respond to, affirm, or challenge each other's expressed identities. Understanding these emergent personas provides a deeper interpretive layer to the quantitative data of audience engagement metrics, moving towards a qualitative appreciation of online social dynamics.

Ultimately, analyzing how audience personalities are represented provides a critical lens for understanding the mobilization of empathy, solidarity, and collective responsibility in response to humanitarian crises (Wojcieszak & Mutz, 2009). When individuals perceive their online contributions as reflecting consistent and recognizable personas, it can foster a sense of identity, belonging, and moral obligation to engage with the reported event (Shirky, 2009). This self-representation can, in turn, influence the perceived authenticity and impact of their expressions of support or concern. Furthermore, recognition of diverse audience personalities allows for a more nuanced understanding of how different segments of the public interact with, and are affected by, disaster narratives. By delving into these individual and collective manifestations of identity, this study aims to shed light on the complex psychological and social mechanisms through which digital interaction cultivates or hinders humanitarian values.

Building on this context, this study turns to the analyses of Social Media Audience Discourse and Audience Persona Categories. YouTube's interactive environment transforms audiences from passive consumers into active participants who co-construct meaning through comments, shares, and reactions. Examining these discursive practices provides insight into how humanitarian narratives are negotiated, how diverse online personas emerge, and how digital publics mobilize values of empathy, solidarity, and accountability in response to crisis events.

The present study investigates how humanitarian values are constructed, negotiated, and mobilized within digital disaster reporting, focusing on Narasi Newsroom's YouTube coverage of the Aceh floods. By employing Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA), this research systematically integrates video content, paratextual elements, and audience comments to uncover the dynamics of meaning-making in online publics. This methodological choice is particularly relevant in the Indonesian context, where digital platforms have become central to both news dissemination and civic engagement during crises.

The integration of paratextual analysis—titles, thumbnails, and journalistic personas—into the ethnographic framework allows for a nuanced understanding of how audiences interpret disaster narratives. Paratexts serve as entry points, shaping expectations and guiding emotional orientation. In this case, Najwa Shihab's persona as a trusted journalist operates as a powerful paratextual anchor, reinforcing authenticity and empathy. Audience comments repeatedly invoke her credibility, suggesting that her presence humanizes the coverage and fosters trust in the narrative.

At the same time, the study foregrounds humanitarian values as encoded in the reporting and decoded by audiences. Empathy and compassion emerge as dominant affective responses, often expressed through emotional language and visual markers such as crying emojis. Solidarity is articulated both nationally and transnationally, with comments from Malaysia highlighting shared cultural and religious identities. Religious framing permeates the discourse, situating humanitarian acts within Islamic duty and divine will. Importantly, calls for justice and accountability reveal a critical dimension, linking the disaster to systemic issues such as deforestation, corruption, and corporate exploitation.

To guide this investigation, the study addresses the following research questions:

RQ1: How do paratextual elements (titles, thumbnails, and journalistic persona) shape audience emotional orientation and interpretive framing in Narasi's Aceh flood coverage?
RQ2: What humanitarian values (empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability) are mobilized in audience discourse, and how are they articulated?

RQ3: What audience personas emerge from YouTube comments, and what are their distinguishing discursive characteristics?

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Materials

In Narasi Newsroom's coverage of the Aceh floods, disseminated through its official YouTube channel (Narasi Newsroom, 2025), on-the-ground documentation of the post-disaster situation was provided, highlighting the scale of destruction, the plight of displaced residents, and the urgent need for humanitarian assistance. Narasi's coverage combined factual reporting with empathetic framing, reinforcing its reputation as an independent media outlet committed to humanitarian values. Importantly, the presence of Najwa Shihab as a trusted journalist functioned as a paratextual element that shaped audience reception, fostering credibility and emotional resonance. This coverage not only informed viewers but also catalyzed audience engagement, as reflected in the extensive comment sections where the public expressed empathy, solidarity, and critique.

The dataset consists of Narasi Newsroom's YouTube videos on the Aceh floods, their paratexts, and 202 audience comments collected on 5 January 2026, selected through purposive and saturation-based sampling to ensure relevance and diversity (van Dijck & Poell, 2013; Loader & Mercea, 2011). Audience interactions were treated as ethnographic data to examine discursive practices, emotional expressions, and social dynamics (Happer & Philo, 2013; Punathambekar & Mohan, 2019). Coding involved iterative open and focused stages, identifying categories such as empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability, and audience personas, and adhered to ethical norms for public social media research (Townsend & Wallace, 2016). Codebook construction was grounded in established scholarship to ensure methodological rigor and theoretical validity (Chen et al., 2021; Gillespie, 2018; Herman & Chomsky, 2021; Papacharissi, 2014; Simchon et al., 2022) as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Codebook: Audience Persona Categories.

Category	Definition	Example Comment (Translated)	Supporting References
Empathy	Expressions of compassion and emotional resonance with victims of disaster	"My heart breaks seeing our brothers in Aceh suffer 😢"	(Simchon et al., 2022)—emotional polarization in social media; (Bailon et al., 2025)—ethnographic content analysis of disaster framing
Solidarity	Statements of collective support across regions or nations, emphasizing shared responsibility	"We in West Java are praying and helping Aceh, you are not alone"	(Papacharissi, 2014)—affective publics; (Bailon et al., 2025)—public engagement with disaster news
Religious Framing	Invocations of faith, divine will, or spiritual duty in interpreting disaster	"Ya Allah, give strength to the people of Aceh"	(Chen et al., 2021)—emotion in social media discourse; (Ardèvol-Abreu, 2015; Möller & Paulmann, 2025)—cultural factors in crisis communication
Accountability	Critiques of government, corporations, or systemic causes linked to disaster	"Stop the logging mafia, they caused this disaster"	(Herman & Chomsky, 2021)—media and political economy; (Gillespie, 2018)—platforms and visibility; (Bonati et al., 2023)—sentiment analysis in humanitarian crises
The Helper Persona	Consistent offers of aid, empathy, or solutions, projecting a supportive identity	"Stay strong, we will send help and prayers"	(Wagh & Packirisamy, 2025)—digital 'helper' personas in disaster discourse; (Cuevas et al., 2024)—emotional labor and authenticity online

Table 1. *Cont.*

Category	Definition	Example Comment (Translated)	Supporting References
The Skeptic Persona	Questioning credibility of reporting or causes, projecting critical or doubtful stance	"Is this really due to rain, or mismanagement?"	(Zhao et al., 2008)—personas construction in social networks; (Marshall et al., 2015) qualitative analysis of audience personas

Note: This table presents the a priori categories derived from existing studies prior to data analysis. Definitions and supporting references are drawn from the theoretical framework; example comments are illustrative placeholders, not data from this study.

The 202 comments were selected through a multi-stage purposive sampling strategy. First, all comments posted within the first 14 days following the video's publication (28 December 2025–10 January 2026) were extracted, yielding an initial corpus of 209 comments. Second, comments were sorted by YouTube's default top comments algorithm, which prioritizes engagement signals (likes, replies). From this sorted list, every comment was selected to ensure representativeness across the engagement spectrum while maintaining manageability. Third, saturation was assessed after coding 209 comments, at which point no new thematic categories emerged; additionally, every comment was coded to confirm saturation, resulting in a final sample of 202 comments. This approach balanced breadth (capturing diverse engagement levels) with depth (enabling thick description of each comment). Comments shorter than three words or consisting solely of a symbol/emoticon (e.g., '❤️') or of emojis without text were excluded, as they did not provide sufficient discursive material for thematic analysis.

2.2. Methods

This study adopts an interpretive qualitative approach using Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007) to examine the construction of humanitarian narratives in digital media and audience responses on YouTube. ECA blends systematic content analysis with ethnographic sensibility to uncover latent meanings, cultural nuances, and discursive patterns beyond surface-level frequency (Benevento, 2025; Fios et al., 2016; Simmons & Smith, 2017). Its analytical value aligns with scholarship on humanitarian communication, which emphasizes how narrative form, visual rhetoric, and linguistic framing structure empathy, solidarity, and moral responsibility within crisis reporting (Bailon et al., 2025; Couldry & Hepp, 2018; Pink et al., 2022). In disaster contexts, these narrative and paratextual elements are embedded within platform-specific socio-cultural dynamics that influence how publics interpret and emotionally negotiate mediated accounts of suffering (Brookey & Gray, 2017; Guo & Chen, 2022).

Grounded in interpretive ethnography, ECA enables the analysis of explicit messages alongside implicit cultural codes, emotional cues, and ideological framings embedded in humanitarian narratives (Couldry & Hepp, 2018). Unlike quantitative content analysis, which prioritizes manifest content, ECA captures deeper interpretive processes and the socio-cultural frameworks through which audiences understand crisis events (Herman & Chomsky, 2021; Pink et al., 2022). Its multimodal adaptability—across videos, imagery, paratexts, and user comments—supports analysis of how algorithmic visibility, semiotics, and platform affordances shape narrative reception in digital environments (Brookey & Gray, 2017; Gray, 2010; Thurlow, 2022). This aligns with the humanitarian communication lens, in which meaning making occurs across intertwined textual and affective layers.

Methodologically, uncovering Audience Persona Categories requires a meticulous approach that integrates linguistic analysis, sentiment analysis, and thematic coding of user-generated content (Karpf, 2012). Researchers often employ qualitative methods, such

as discourse analysis or thematic analysis, to identify recurring patterns in language use, emotional tone, and engagement strategies that collectively form distinct online personas (Barrett et al., 2021). The challenge lies in distinguishing between transient reactions and consistent personal attributes, especially given the often-brief nature of online comments. Furthermore, ethical considerations regarding user privacy and the potential for misinterpretation of online data are paramount (Sugiura et al., 2017; Zent et al., 2025). Despite these complexities, the endeavor to map Audience Persona Categories offers a rich qualitative layer to our understanding of digital participation, moving beyond aggregate statistics to appreciate individual contributions to collective meaning-making.

Categorizing audience comments is a methodological necessity in Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) because it enables researchers to systematically interpret large volumes of user-generated discourse while retaining sensitivity to cultural meaning, affective expression, and contextual nuance. In the context of digital disaster reporting, such as Narasi Newsroom's coverage of the Aceh floods, audience comments constitute a heterogeneous and densely layered corpus in which emotional reactions, moral judgments, political critique, and identity performances are interwoven. Without analytically constructed categories, these comments would remain fragmented expressions, difficult to interpret beyond anecdotal illustration. The use of categories—such as empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability, and audience personas—functions as an interpretive scaffolding that translates dispersed textual utterances into analytically comparable units while remaining open to inductive refinement. Within ECA, categorization is not merely a mechanical coding exercise but an iterative, reflexive process that connects micro-level expressions to macro-level cultural frames and humanitarian values. By organizing comments into theoretically informed yet empirically grounded categories, researchers can identify recurring patterns of sense-making, uncover latent meanings embedded in emotional language or symbolic references, and trace how humanitarian narratives are collectively negotiated within digital publics. This approach allows ECA to bridge thick description with analytical coherence, ensuring that audience discourse is examined not as isolated reactions but as culturally situated practices of meaning production.

Moreover, categorical coding in ECA is essential for revealing the differentiated nature of audience engagement and for moving beyond a monolithic understanding of "the audience" toward a nuanced mapping of audience personas and civic orientations. As demonstrated in this study, categorization makes it possible to distinguish between helpers who mobilize compassion and prosocial support, skeptics who interrogate credibility and causality, and critical citizens who articulate demands for accountability and structural reform. These distinctions would be analytically obscured without a clear categorical framework capable of capturing both affective tone and discursive intent. In ECA, categories thus function as analytical lenses through which audience comments can be interpreted simultaneously as emotional expressions, moral claims, and forms of civic participation. This is particularly important in humanitarian contexts, where empathy often coexists with critique and where religious or cultural framings shape interpretations of suffering and responsibility. By categorizing comments, ECA enables researchers to connect audience discourse to broader theoretical constructs such as affective publics, humanitarian values, and digital civic engagement, while also allowing for comparison across coders and enhancing methodological transparency and reliability. In this sense, categorical analysis does not constrain ethnographic interpretation but rather strengthens it, ensuring that qualitative insights are systematically derived, theoretically anchored, and robust enough to support broader claims about how digital audiences actively co-construct humanitarian meaning in times of crisis.

In this research, the coding procedure was conducted in two iterative stages to ensure methodological rigor and interpretive depth. In the first stage, open coding was applied to the corpus of YouTube comments, video transcripts, and paratextual elements, allowing emergent categories to surface inductively from the data. These categories included empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability, and audience persona indicators such as Helper and Skeptic. In the second stage, focused coding consolidated these initial categories into broader analytical themes that were theoretically grounded, such as humanitarian values—encompassing empathy, solidarity, and religious framing—and audience personas—capturing Helper and Skeptic orientations. To enhance reliability, coding was conducted collaboratively, with discrepancies resolved through discussion until consensus was reached. Reflexivity was maintained throughout the process by archiving researcher notes that documented positionality, interpretive decisions, and potential biases, thereby providing an audit trail that strengthened the transparency and trustworthiness of the analysis.

The study employed a hybrid approach to category development, integrating deductive (theory-driven) and inductive (data-driven) logic. Deductively, an initial codebook was constructed prior to data analysis based on existing scholarship; empathy, solidarity, and religious framing were derived from humanitarian communication studies (Papacharissi, 2014; Chen et al., 2021); accountability was drawn from political economy frameworks (Herman & Chomsky, 2021); and the Helper and Skeptic personas were informed by persona studies (Zhao et al., 2008; Wagh & Packirisamy, 2025). Inductively, open coding of the comment corpus revealed patterns not captured by these a priori categories. For instance, some comments attributed blame to specific actors (e.g., 'palm oil mafia') and demanded legal enforcement—a pattern that did not fit neatly within the Skeptic persona (which primarily requests clarification) or the accountability category (which critiques systems without naming specific actors). This inductive pattern was subsequently consolidated into a new category, the Critical Citizen persona, which emerged directly from the data and constitutes an original contribution of this study. Thus, while the initial coding framework was literature-driven, the final category set reflects iterative refinement through empirical engagement with the comment corpus.

After gathering 202 YouTube comments, the sentiment framework was applied independently by two coders. The diagram illustrates the workflow from data collection to reliability outcome.

Using Krippendorff's alpha to assess intercoder reliability between Coder 1 and Coder 2, the comparison indicates a high level of coding consistency across categories, even though the two coders produced slightly different frequency distributions. Intercoder reliability was assessed using Krippendorff's alpha, yielding a coefficient of $\alpha = 0.86$, which exceeds the conventional threshold of $\alpha \geq 0.80$ (Krippendorff, 2018, Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007), indicating high reliability. Therefore, the comparison between the Coders demonstrates that the categorization process is methodologically sound, reproducible, and suitable for further quantitative and qualitative analysis of audience discourse, particularly in journal-level communication and media studies research.

3. Results

The findings presented in this section are organized according to the principles of ECA, which guided the study's interpretive approach. ECA's value lies in its capacity to systematically integrate three analytical layers: paratextual analysis (titles, thumbnails, journalistic personas), value coding (empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability), and persona identification (Helper, Skeptic, Critical Citizen). Rather than treating these dimensions in isolation, ECA enables the researcher to trace how narrative cues embedded

in journalistic content shape audience interpretations, which in turn manifest as patterned discursive positions—or personas—within the comment space. The following subsections present each analytical layer sequentially, beginning with paratextual framing (Section 3.1), followed by the mobilization of humanitarian values (Section 3.2), and concluding with the emergence of audience personas (Section 3.3).

Beyond thematic values, the analysis identifies distinct audience personas that structure online discourse. The Helper persona embodies prosocial support, offering prayers, encouragement, and tangible aid. The Skeptic persona introduces doubt, questioning causes, relief effectiveness, or journalistic credibility. A newly emergent category, the Critical Citizen persona, actively attributes blame, critiques systemic failures, and demands accountability from government and corporations. These personas illustrate how digital publics are not monolithic but differentiated, negotiating humanitarian narratives through diverse interpretive lenses.

This integrative approach contributes to humanitarian media studies by demonstrating the interplay between paratextual framing, value mobilization, and persona emergence. It highlights the dual role of digital journalism in crises, as a catalyst for emotional connection and as a platform for civic critique. The findings also extend theoretical discussions on affective publics (Papacharissi, 2014) and paratexts in digital media. *This finding resonates with broader scholarship on media rituals and paratexts* (Brookey & Gray, 2017), and Audience Persona Categories (Zhao et al., 2008), situating the Indonesian case within global scholarship.

By analyzing 202 audience comments alongside video and paratextual elements, this study underscores the ethnographic richness of digital platforms as sites of humanitarian discourse. The comments are not merely reactions but active meaning-making practices, reflecting cultural, religious, and political dimensions of disaster interpretation. This methodological integration ensures that the findings capture both the textual encoding of humanitarian values and the audience's decoding processes, offering a holistic view of digital disaster ethnography.

3.1. Paratextual Framing and Narrative Anchoring

Paratextual elements—such as titles, thumbnails, descriptions, and the journalistic persona of Najwa Shihab—play a central role in shaping how audiences initially interpret and emotionally orient themselves toward disaster coverage. In digital journalism, these elements function as narrative gateways that frame meaning before viewers encounter the substantive content of the report. Rather than serving as peripheral add-ons, paratexts operate as primary meaning-making devices that guide expectations, signal emotional tone, and influence how audiences read humanitarian narratives. In the case of Narasi Newsroom's coverage of the Aceh floods, paratextual framing established the humanitarian orientation of the narrative and primed audiences for empathetic and solidaristic engagement.

The title "Hidupkan Aceh Tamiang | Mata Najwa" demonstrates how linguistic framing performs narrative anchoring by invoking both action and authority. The phrase "Hidupkan Aceh Tamiang" ("Revive Aceh Tamiang") operates performatively, calling viewers to recognize the urgency of the crisis and positioning the coverage as part of a broader narrative of resilience and restoration. Meanwhile, the presence of "Mata Najwa" in the title signals credibility and journalistic integrity, drawing on Najwa Shihab's established persona as a trusted media figure. Audience responses reinforce this anchoring function, with comments such as "Najwa hebat. Tolong suarakan untk rakyat kami di Aceh ❤️❤️❤️" (Najwa is great. Please continue to speak up for the people of Aceh ❤️❤️❤️) and "Kak Najwa sahabat Aceh. Beliau selalu hadir saat Aceh terkena musibah 🙏" (Sis Najwa is a true friend of Aceh. She has always been there whenever Aceh faced disaster) highlighting

the strong emotive and moral resonance elicited by the title's framing. Such reactions demonstrate how titles in digital disaster journalism frequently serve as affective cues that guide audiences toward prosocial interpretations and empathetic orientations.

Visual paratexts, particularly thumbnails, further condense narrative meaning by presenting symbolic imagery meant to cue emotional engagement. In humanitarian reporting, thumbnails often depict scenes of destruction, relief efforts, or the journalist's presence at the disaster site. Narasi Newsroom's thumbnails—likely featuring Najwa Shihab among flood-affected communities—reinforced the immediacy and severity of the crisis. Audience comments such as "tiba2 mata saya berkaca2" (My eyes suddenly filled with tears) and "Sedih bgt liat mereka . . ." (It is so sad to see them) illustrate how the images activated emotional resonance even when viewers did not explicitly describe the visuals. The absence of complaints about visual quality suggests that audiences perceived the imagery as appropriate, authentic, and aligned with the humanitarian tone of the narrative. These responses reflect the anchoring function of images, where visual cues orient viewers toward a particular emotional and interpretive frame.

Among all paratextual components, Najwa Shihab's persona stands out as the most powerful anchoring device. Her longstanding reputation for journalistic integrity, empathy, and consistent presence in Aceh during crises situates her as a symbolic mediator between affected communities and the wider public. Audience responses such as "Terima kasih bu Najwa," (Thank you Madame Najwa) "Kak Najwa Hebat!! Kami Bangga Denganmu," (Sis Najwa is great!! We are proud of you) and "sosok media yg selalu dihati Rakyat Aceh" (A media figure who has a special place in the hearts of the Acehnese people) confirm the extent to which her presence humanizes the narrative and reinforces trust. As a paratext, Shihab's persona operates not only as a marker of credibility but also as a catalyst for emotional mobilization, embodying the humanitarian ethos conveyed in the coverage and fostering a sense of relational proximity between viewers and victims.

The narrative style employed by Narasi Newsroom further contributes to paratextual framing by emphasizing factual accuracy, empathetic explanation, and humanitarian sensibility. Audience remarks such as "beritanya sesuai dilapangan" (The report reflects what is happening on the ground) and "berita ini aja bagus bangettt bantu org kena musibah" (This is truly good news—it brings real help to people affected by the disaster) reveal how viewers interpret the narrative style itself as a sign of authenticity. This perceived authenticity strengthens the moral and emotional legitimacy of the coverage, reinforcing viewer trust and supporting humanitarian engagement. By foregrounding on-the-ground accuracy and empathetic storytelling, the narrative style becomes a paratextual cue that stabilizes the audience's emotional orientation toward the story and promotes deeper involvement with the humanitarian themes conveyed.

Taken together, these paratextual elements—titles, thumbnails, personas, and narrative style—operate synergistically to anchor the humanitarian message and guide audience interpretations. They provide the multimodal scaffolding through which viewers initially engage with the content, shaping their expectations, emotional responses, and moral judgments. Audience comments consistently affirm the effectiveness of these cues, illustrating how textual, visual, and personal anchors converge to produce a coherent humanitarian frame. This analysis demonstrates the integral role of paratextual framing in digital disaster journalism and extends contemporary scholarship by emphasizing the importance of journalistic personas as a paratextual anchor—an often-overlooked dimension that proves essential in contexts where credibility, empathy, and trust profoundly shape public engagement.

To further consolidate the analytical insights discussed above, the multidimensional role of paratextual elements in shaping audience interpretation can be systematically ob-

served through the key components summarized in Table 2. The table organizes the core paratextual features—titles, thumbnails, journalistic personas, narrative style, and their integrative effects—into a coherent analytical framework that illustrates how each element anchors specific humanitarian cues and emotional orientations within the audience. By presenting these components side by side, Table 2 highlights the ways in which linguistic, visual, and persona-based signals operate synergistically to prime viewers for empathy, trust, and solidaristic engagement. In doing so, the table provides a structured representation of how Narasi's paratextual strategies guide meaning-making before and during the viewing experience, reinforcing the humanitarian narrative identified throughout the qualitative analysis.

Table 2. Paratextual framing and narrative anchoring in Narasi's Aceh flood coverage.

Paratextual Element	Framing/Anchoring Function	Indicators from Narasi's Coverage	Expected Audience Effect
Titles	Affective priming + credibility signaling	"Hidupkan Aceh Tamiang" + "Mata Najwa"	Empathy, solidarity, prosocial orientation
Thumbnails and Visuals	Condense narrative themes + foreground urgency	Najwa Shihab among flood-affected communities	Emotional resonance + heightened severity perception
Journalistic Persona	Humanizes narrative + reinforces trust	Audience comments citing Najwa's credibility and empathy	Increased trust, narrative acceptance, perceived authenticity
Narrative Style and Authenticity	Factual, empathetic, on-the-ground tone	Audience remark: "sesuai di lapangan" (aligned with real conditions)	Strengthened credibility + emotional alignment
Integrative Paratextual Insight	Interlinks all elements to stabilize meaning	Combined titles, visuals, persona, narration	Coherent meaning-making + enhanced humanitarian engagement

Note: This table synthesizes five key paratextual elements identified in Narasi Newsroom's Aceh flood coverage.

As synthesized in Table 3, titles activate empathy through linguistic cues, thumbnails condense urgency visually, and Najwa Shihab's persona operates as a symbolic mediator reinforcing trust and authenticity.

Table 3. Category distribution of audience comments between Coder 1 and Coder 2.

Category	Coder 1	Coder 2
Religious Framing	55	54
Accountability	52	52
Empathy	46	47
The Helper Persona	28	26
Solidarity	17	19
The Skeptic Persona	4	4

3.2. Mobilization of Humanitarian Values in Audience Discourse

Humanitarian values function in this context as the primary interpretive framework through which audiences make sense of the Aceh flood coverage, shaping their emotional, moral, and civic responses to what they witnessed. In Narasi Newsroom's reporting, these values emerged through a combination of narrative choices, visual cues, and paratextual elements that together invited viewers to engage not only with the factual dimensions of the disaster but also with its human impact. The YouTube comment space then became a site where audiences actively negotiated and rearticulated these humanitarian meanings, revealing how journalistic storytelling and public sentiment intersect in moments of crisis.

A first major pattern in this discourse is that empathy and compassion emerge as the audience's most immediate and widespread reactions to human suffering. Comments such as "'Inalillahi . . . 😢😢😢 . . . Miriiis2 . . . Lihatnya . . .!!' . . .!!" (Indeed, we belong to Allah. 😢😢😢 . . . very sad . . . Look at it) from @jayaSupi and "blm apa2 udh berlinang air mata ini menyaksikan penderitaan saudara2 kita di aceh tamiang 😭😭" (Before I could say anything, tears were already streaming down my face as I saw what our brothers and sisters in Aceh Tamiang were going through) from @marhamahrahma7796 demonstrate how viewers experienced direct emotional shock. Interpretively, this expression performs two functions: first, it invokes Islamic mourning discourse ('Inalillahi'—'Indeed, we belong to Allah'), which situates suffering within a framework of divine will and collective acceptance; second, the accumulation of crying emojis (😢😢😢) and elongated vowels ('Miriiis2') intensifies affective resonance, signaling that the viewer's emotional response is not merely cognitive but embodied. This pattern aligns with Papacharissi's (2014) concept of 'affective publics,' where emotional expression becomes a driver of collective identity formation rather than a private sentiment. Crying emojis and emotionally charged language serve as markers of affective resonance, allowing audiences to externalize their sorrow and co-create a communal emotional atmosphere. Importantly, this empathy did not remain passive; many users expressed spiritual and moral support, such as in "Yaa Allah berikan kekuatan, ketabahan kpd Saudara2ku di Aceh" (O Allah, give strength and fortitude to my brothers and sisters in Aceh) (@sutinahsumardiko55), showing that compassion often evolved into gestures of encouragement and care mediated through religious or moral sentiment.

This emotional proximity then expands into a broader expression of solidarity and collective responsibility, showing that viewers understood the crisis not only as the suffering of others but as a shared national and communal burden. Audience members repeatedly affirmed togetherness, as seen in "KAMU GAK SENDIRIAN ACEH AKU DARI JAWA BARAT MENDOAKAN KAMU DISANA DAN SEMAMPUNYA MEMBANTU" (Aceh, you are not alone. From West Java, I am praying for you and standing with you in every way I can) (@DewiRachaman) and "Kami selalu berdoa untuk saudara di Sumatra.dan aceh" (We always pray for our brothers and sisters in Sumatra and Aceh) (@faridafarida8984). Solidarity extended beyond national boundaries, illustrated by comments like "Salam takziah dari Malaysia 😳👋🏽" (Sending heartfelt strength and prayers from Malaysia) (@AyieChalanber), revealing how cultural and religious affinities facilitated transnational emotional bonds. Some viewers even expressed concrete intentions to provide help—"Saudara kita dari Sulawesi Selatan, akan kirimkan sembako dan selimut dan pakaian" (Our brothers and sisters in South Sulawesi will be sending basic supplies, including blankets and clothing) (@salehmk9559)—and others connected this solidarity to the responsibility of addressing deeper causes, as shown in "Kita harus kawal terus masalah banjir besar ini, agar permasalahan hutan yang digunduli tetap menjadi topik utama" (We need to keep paying close attention to this major flooding, so the issue of deforestation does not fade from the conversation) (@marissaagustin4439). This demonstrates that solidarity, for many viewers, implied both immediate care and long-term commitment to environmental and structural reform.

As another significant interpretive layer, religious framing appears as a moral and spiritual lens through which audiences articulate both empathy and responsibility. Many expressions of support were delivered through prayers and faith-driven language such as "Ya Allah semoga cepet bangkit dan pulihkan ya Alloh" (O Allah, may you recover quickly and recover, O Allah) (@sitikaromah-z1w) and "ASSALAMU'ALAIKUM SAUDARI & SAUDARAKU . . . DOA TERBAIK YANG BISA KAMI KIRIMKAN" (Assalamu'alaikum, my dear brothers and sisters. Sending you our sincerest prayers) (@irfanhariyono2995). Here, humanitarian care is constructed as a religious obligation, reinforcing the sense of

moral duty embedded within disaster response. At the same time, religious framing also introduced interpretive complexity. Some viewers evaluated the disaster in moral terms, linking it to human wrongdoing, as reflected in "Alam murka dari kelakuan oknum yg tamak" (Nature seems to be crying out in response to human greed) (@IraRahayu-g3x). This dual function—offering solace while also enabling critique—demonstrates how faith-based reasoning shapes public interpretations of crisis and responsibility.

These emotional and moral expressions ultimately interact with a fourth pattern in which calls for justice and accountability reveal how humanitarian concern evolves into political critique and civic engagement. Many commenters explicitly connected the floods to environmental exploitation and corruption, as seen in "Pejabattt yg serakahhh smoga scepatnyaaa ditngkappp yg sudah mnggunduLiii hutan kita disana" (We can only hope that those greedy officials who destroyed our forests will be caught soon) (@RofiatulFikriah-zj5ek) and "Tolong kawal kasus ini terutama mafia sawit dan Hutan tanaman industri yg menjadi penyebab bencana" (Please keep a close watch on this case, especially the palm oil interests and industrial forest plantations linked to the disaster) (@freakklick413). Others expressed frustration at perceived government inaction, such as "Apa gunanya helikopter yg ada, sampai2 rakyat kelaparan Krn TDK disentuh oleh pemerintah" (What is the point of having helicopters if people are still going hungry because NO ONE is reaching them?) (@IndriyadiNazarudin). These responses show that humanitarian values were not only expressed as care but also as demands for accountability, structural reform, and responsible governance. In this sense, audience engagement demonstrates that public responses to humanitarian journalism can extend far beyond emotional resonance, becoming catalysts for civic reasoning and political awareness.

Taken together, these value-driven responses illustrate how digital publics collectively construct humanitarian meaning in disaster coverage. Empathy generates emotional proximity, solidarity fosters collective commitment, religious frameworks infuse moral depth, and demands for justice transform humanitarian concern into civic critique. Through these intertwined processes, audiences do not simply consume disaster reporting; they participate in an interpretive and ethical negotiation that shapes how society understands suffering, responsibility, and the moral demands of crises.

To clarify how these humanitarian values manifest within audience discourse, the following table synthesizes the four primary value dimensions identified in the analysis. Table 4 outlines the core characteristics of each value, the common patterns of audience expression, and the interpretive functions these values serve within digital disaster communication. This structured overview provides a concise analytical bridge between qualitative observations and the broader conceptual implications of humanitarian engagement in online publics.

Table 4. Humanitarian values in audience discourse on Narasi's Aceh flood coverage.

Humanitarian Value	Core Features	Typical Audience Expressions	Interpretive Function in Disaster Discourse
Empathy and Compassion	Grief, shared affect, sorrow	Crying emojis, "Inalillahi 😢", "berlinang air mata"	Humanizes victims → Affective proximity → Emotional solidarity
Solidarity and Collective Responsibility	National + transnational unity, willingness to assist	"Kamu tidak sendirian", prayers from West Java, "Salam takziah dari Malaysia"	Builds shared identity → Mobilizes collective action → Reinforces communal bonds
Religious Framing	Spiritual meaning-making, moral obligation, faith-based interpretation	"Ya Allah berikan kekuatan", "ASSALAMU'ALAIKUM", prayers	Provides coping framework → Adds moral urgency → Situates humanitarianism within faith traditions

Table 4. *Cont.*

Humanitarian Value	Core Features	Typical Audience Expressions	Interpretive Function in Disaster Discourse
Justice and Accountability	Critique of structural causes, demand for systemic reform, political engagement	"Mafia sawit", "pejabat serakah", "kawal kasus ini"	Extends concern into civic activism → Links suffering to systemic failure → Demands legal enforcement

Note: This table provides a concise summary of the four humanitarian value categories expressed by audiences in response to Narasi's Aceh flood coverage, illustrated through representative YouTube comments. This table synthesizes empirical findings from the analysis of 202 YouTube comments. Core features, typical audience expressions, and interpretive functions were derived inductively from the comment corpus.

As synthesized in Table 4, empathy and compassion generate affective proximity between viewers and victims, solidarity extends this connection into collective commitment across regions and nations, religious framing infuses humanitarian acts with moral and spiritual urgency, and demands for justice transform passive concern into active civic critique.

3.3. Emergence of Audience Personas

Audience discourse in digital disaster reporting is not monolithic; it comprises diverse personas. The Skeptic persona signals a shift from sympathetic witnessing to evaluative scrutiny, functioning as a bridge between emotional reception and demands for clearer evidence and procedure.

Skeptics introduce doubt and probing questions into the comment space, querying causal explanations and relief governance with a tone that is investigative rather than hostile. Viewers ask, for example, "Kenapa tak ada orang bincang, apa punca banjir yang begitu besar, tak masuk akal" (Why is no one talking about what caused such a massive flood? It just doesn't make sense) (@shahriseman4724) and "Mbak Najwa . . . gimana itu bantuan bencana yg dijarah para pejabat2 nya?" (Ms. Najwa, how could disaster aid end up being taken by officials?) (@PawonCampursari), challenging official narratives, contesting the sufficiency of available information, and spotlighting suspected leakages in aid distribution. Their interventions mark a desire for transparency and corroboration, positioning the audience as an informal oversight public that requests explanations commensurate with the scale of harm and the visibility of media attention.

By insisting on evidence, clarifications, and corrective detail, Skeptics underscore that digital publics do not merely emote; they also audit. In questioning both causes and relief effectiveness, they test journalistic framing and governmental authority, insisting on procedural clarity and truth claims that can withstand public interrogation.

The Critical Citizen persona extends this interrogative stance into explicit civic address, converting suspicion into accountability claims aimed at specific actors and systems.

Distinct from the Skeptic's exploratory doubt, Critical Citizens attribute blame, specify mechanisms of harm, and demand redress. They link the floods to extractive practices and regulatory failures—"Tolong kawal kasus ini terutama mafia sawit dan Hutan tanaman industri yg menjadi penyebab bencana" (Please monitor this case, especially the palm oil mafia and industrial forest plantations which are the cause of the disaster) (@freakklick413)—and escalate critique toward targeted sanction—"Pejabattt yg serakahhh smoga scepatnyaaa ditngkappp yg sudah mnggunduLiii hutan kita disana" (Hopefully, the officials responsible for clearing the forests there will soon be held accountable) (@RofiatulFikriah-zj5ek). Their discourse is programmatic; it names implicated sectors, calls for investigation, and frames disaster as a symptom of structural misconduct rather than an isolated natural event.

As a result, humanitarian concern is refracted into a civic repertoire that includes monitoring, denunciation, and reformist demands. In placing responsibility on identifiable

institutions and officeholders, Critical Citizens reconstitute the comment thread as a venue for public reasoning, where care for victims coexists with pressure for policy change and legal accountability.

As summarized in Table 5, the Helper persona reinforces humanitarian values through prosocial support, the Skeptic tests credibility by requesting transparency and clarification, and the Critical Citizen—an emergent category not anticipated by existing literature—extends humanitarian concern into explicit demands for structural reform and legal accountability.

Table 5. Audience Persona Categories in Narasi's Aceh flood coverage.

Personas Category	Core Characteristics	Audience Discursive Patterns	Interpretive Function in Disaster Discourse
Helper	Empathy, encouragement, prosocial intentions	Supportive language, prayers, "kami akan kirim bantuan"	Reinforces values → Strengthens solidarity → Converts empathy to action
Skeptic	Doubt, causal questioning, scrutiny of inconsistencies	Requests clarification, "kenapa tak ada orang bincang punca banjir?", highlights information gaps	Tests credibility → Promotes transparency → Positions audience as informal oversight
Critical Citizen	Blame attribution, systemic critique, demands accountability	Names "mafia sawit", "pejabat serakah", calls for investigation and legal enforcement	Extends concern into civic engagement → Mobilizes structural change → Embeds political agency in audience discourse

Note: This table summarizes the three Audience Persona Categories identified in responses to Narasi's Aceh flood coverage, outlining their core characteristics, discursive patterns, and interpretive functions within digital humanitarian discourse. This table also presents the final empirical categories resulting from the hybrid coding process. Helper and Skeptic personas were anticipated by the literature; the Critical Citizen persona emerged inductively from the data as an unanticipated finding.

The Critical Citizen persona emerged as an inductive category not present in the initial codebook derived from existing studies. While the Helper and Skeptic personas were anticipated based on prior research (Wagh & Packirisamy, 2025; Zhao et al., 2008), the Critical Citizen represents an unanticipated finding specific to the Aceh flood case. This persona is analytically distinct from the Skeptic in three ways: (1) whereas Skeptics request clarification, Critical Citizens assert blame; (2) whereas Skeptics question causality, Critical Citizens name specific mechanisms (e.g., palm oil mafia, corrupt officials); and (3) whereas Skeptics seek transparency, Critical Citizens demand legal enforcement and structural reform. The emergence of this persona suggests that digital disaster publics in Indonesia are not merely reactive or doubtful but actively politicized, using humanitarian crises as opportunities to articulate systemic critique.

The interplay of personas in audience discourse demonstrates that digital engagement with disaster news is inherently dialogic and differentiated, with each persona performing a distinct social function in the circulation of humanitarian meaning. Rather than responding to crisis reporting in a uniform or monolithic fashion, viewers adopt different interpretive positions that allow them to express care, skepticism, or critique depending on how they understand the causes, consequences, and responsibilities embedded in the disaster narrative. This plurality highlights the complexity of meaning-making within digital publics and shows that humanitarian reporting serves as a catalyst for multiple modes of engagement that operate simultaneously within the same communicative environment.

Seen together, these personas form a layered deliberative ecology in which empathy, inquiry, and accountability coexist. Helpers sustain communal care by offering encouragement and articulating intentions to assist; Skeptics probe the narrative through questions that seek clarity, verification, or transparency; and Critical Citizens extend the conversation into systemic critique, calling attention to political, environmental, or institutional failures

that require redress. Their co-presence underscores that audiences do not merely consume humanitarian narratives but actively negotiate them, producing a composite public whose orientations and roles differ markedly. Through this interaction, humanitarian coverage becomes enriched, challenged, or redefined as affective support, epistemic scrutiny, and political contention intersect in the same discursive space.

This layered configuration reinforces the understanding that audience responses are not passive reflections of media exposure but negotiated positions shaped by values, experiences, knowledge claims, and perceived civic duty. Instead of converging into a single consensus, public engagement unfolds through adjacent modes of interpretation that contribute to a broader collective effort to make sense of crisis events. Recognizing these personas deepens analytical insight by showing how digital publics transform humanitarian sentiment into civic action, revealing pathways through which emotional identification can lead to investigatory questioning and, ultimately, demands for systemic reform. Through the combined actions of Helpers, Skeptics, and Critical Citizens, disaster reporting extends its influence beyond information delivery to foster sustained public involvement and accountability-oriented participation.

4. Discussion

The findings of this study underscore the multifaceted role of digital journalism in shaping humanitarian narratives during crises. Narasi Newsroom's coverage of the Aceh floods illustrates that disaster reporting in the digital age is not confined to the transmission of factual information but involves the active construction of meaning through paratextual framing, emotional mobilization, and audience participation. This participatory dynamic highlights the transformation of audiences from passive consumers into active co-constructors of humanitarian discourse.

One of the most striking aspects of the findings is the centrality of Najwa Shihab's persona as a paratextual anchor. Her presence in the coverage functioned as a guarantor of authenticity, reinforcing trust and empathy among viewers. In contexts where media credibility is often contested, the journalist's persona becomes a crucial interpretive cue. The repeated invocation of Najwa Shihab in audience comments demonstrates how trusted figures can humanize disaster narratives, bridging the gap between affected communities and distant publics. This finding resonates with broader scholarship on media rituals and paratexts (Couldry & Hepp, 2018; Brookey & Gray, 2017), suggesting that journalistic credibility is not only a matter of professional practice but also a symbolic resource that shapes audience reception.

The mobilization of humanitarian values within audience discourse further illustrates the participatory nature of digital platforms. Empathy was expressed through emotional language and visual markers, solidarity extended across national and transnational boundaries, and religious framing situated humanitarian acts within spiritual duty. Importantly, calls for accountability revealed a critical dimension, linking the disaster to systemic issues such as deforestation and corruption. These responses demonstrate that humanitarian narratives are not merely consumed but actively negotiated, with audiences re-articulating values in ways that reflect cultural, religious, and political contexts. This dynamic aligns with the concept of affective publics (Papacharissi, 2014), where emotional expressions catalyze collective identity and civic engagement.

The identification of audience personas—Helpers, Skeptics, and Critical Citizens—adds another layer of complexity to the analysis. Helpers embodied prosocial support, offering prayers and tangible aid. Skeptics introduced doubt, questioning causes and demanding transparency. Critical Citizens extended humanitarian discourse into systemic critique, actively attributing blame and demanding accountability. These personas illus-

trate the differentiated nature of digital publics, showing that audience engagement is not uniform but shaped by diverse interpretive positions and identity projections. The emergence of Critical Citizens is particularly significant, as it demonstrates how humanitarian narratives can catalyze political engagement (Bennett & Segerberg, 2013; Loader & Mercea, 2011), situating disaster reporting within broader debates about governance and accountability.

Methodologically, the application of Ethnographic Content Analysis (ECA) proved effective in capturing the nuanced interplay between media content, paratexts, and audience discourse. By treating comments as ethnographic data, the study moved beyond quantitative metrics to uncover latent meanings and cultural resonances. This approach highlights the value of integrating systematic coding with interpretive sensibility, offering a comprehensive understanding of how humanitarian values are constructed and negotiated in digital environments. The inclusion of paratextual elements further enriches the analysis, emphasizing their role as interpretive gatekeepers in shaping audience expectations and engagement.

Theoretically, the findings extend existing scholarship by emphasizing the centrality of journalistic personas as a paratextual anchor, integrating affective publics with personas categories, and highlighting the role of religious framing in humanitarian discourse. They also demonstrate how humanitarian narratives can catalyze civic critique, aligning with political economy frameworks that situate media within broader structures of power and accountability. These contributions situate the Indonesian case within global discussions on humanitarian communication (Möller & Paulmann, 2025; Bonati et al., 2023), offering insights that are both culturally specific and internationally relevant.

The findings also carry important implications for the practice of humanitarian communication in Indonesia. First, they highlight the need for journalists and media organizations to prioritize authenticity and credibility in disaster reporting. The presence of trusted figures such as Najwa Shihab demonstrates that journalistic personas can serve as a powerful paratextual anchor, fostering empathy and solidarity among audiences. Media practitioners should therefore cultivate credibility not only through factual accuracy but also through empathetic engagement and consistent presence in times of crisis.

Second, the mobilization of humanitarian values within audience discourse suggests that media organizations should actively engage with affective publics. Empathy and solidarity expressed in comments can be harnessed to mobilize collective support and advocacy. By framing disaster narratives in ways that resonate with cultural and religious contexts, media can foster a sense of shared responsibility and encourage tangible action. This requires sensitivity to local values and practices, ensuring that humanitarian communication is culturally grounded and ethically responsible.

Third, the emergence of Critical Citizens underscores the importance of addressing systemic issues in disaster reporting. Audiences are not only concerned with immediate humanitarian needs but also with structural causes such as deforestation and corruption. Media organizations should therefore integrate investigative reporting into humanitarian coverage, linking individual suffering to broader socio-political contexts. This approach can foster accountability and contribute to long-term solutions, aligning humanitarian communication with advocacy for systemic reform.

Furthermore, the participatory nature of digital platforms suggests that humanitarian actors should view audience discourse not as peripheral noise but as a valuable resource for understanding public sentiment, mobilizing support, and refining communication strategies in real time. Comments, shares, and reactions offer immediate insight into how publics interpret disaster narratives, revealing what resonates emotionally, what generates confusion, and what prompts civic action. When humanitarian organizations

engage meaningfully with digital publics, they strengthen their legitimacy, broaden their reach, and foster more durable forms of solidarity by acknowledging audience voices as part of the communicative ecosystem rather than treating them as passive recipients. This recognition—that publics actively co produce meaning through affective, moral, and critical engagement—creates an important conceptual bridge to understanding what makes the present study distinct within broader research on humanitarian communication.

Building on this evolving role of audiences as interpretive agents, the novelty and international relevance of this study lie in its integrative analytical approach, which brings together paratextual analysis, the mobilization of humanitarian values, and the identification of audience personas within a single ethnographic framework. Rather than treating these dimensions as discrete phenomena, the study demonstrates how narrative cues, platform architectures, and audience responses interlock to shape patterns of public engagement in digital disaster reporting. The Aceh floods serve as a particularly rich case, given their historical depth, socio political complexity, and cultural resonance in Indonesia. The intertwining of environmental concerns, religious interpretations, and civic critique in this context provides insights that extend beyond the local setting, showing how digital publics negotiate empathy, solidarity, and accountability in ways that echo global patterns while remaining deeply grounded in local cultural and political realities. In this sense, the Indonesian case enriches international scholarship by illustrating how culturally specific frameworks of meaning coexist with universal humanitarian impulses—demonstrating that digital publics across contexts draw on shared emotional and moral repertoires even as they articulate distinct critiques, expectations, and demands shaped by their sociocultural environments.

The analytical framework deliberately prioritized categories that were both theoretically grounded in humanitarian communication research and empirically salient within the comment corpus. However, the data also contained a minority of expressions—constituting less than 2% of the total corpus—that did not align with the final category set. These residual expressions fell into three broad types: neutral information-seeking (e.g., requests for death toll figures, logistical inquiries about aid distribution), disengaged statements (e.g., expressions of indifference or explicit disavowals of personal relevance), and antagonistic voices (e.g., personal attacks on the journalist, other commenters, or affected communities). These expressions were excluded from the final analysis on two grounds. First, their low frequency rendered them insufficient for reliable thematic analysis or saturation; any claims based on such a small subset would lack analytical robustness. Second, they did not directly address the study's core research questions, which focused on how audiences construct humanitarian meaning through empathy, solidarity, religious framing, accountability, and persona projection—not on why audiences reject, ignore, or actively oppose such narratives. Acknowledging this exclusion is methodologically important, as it clarifies the boundaries of the study's claims. Future research may usefully examine these marginal voices to understand the limits of digital humanitarian engagement; under what conditions do audiences disengage from disaster coverage? When does empathy give way to indifference or hostility? And how do antagonistic comments shape the broader deliberative climate of comment sections? Addressing these questions would complement the present study's focus on engaged humanitarian discourse

Methodologically, this study demonstrates the distinct strengths of ECA for examining digital humanitarian communication. By integrating video content, paratextual elements, and audience comments within one analytic frame, ECA captures both the encoding of humanitarian cues by journalists and the decoding of these cues by audiences, resulting in a comprehensive view of how disaster narratives are constructed, circulated, and contested. The holistic nature of ECA allows it to illuminate processes that would remain obscured

in either purely textual or purely quantitative approaches, particularly the layered ways in which digital publics interpret, reshape, or resist journalistic framings. These methodological insights carry practical implications for journalists, media organizations, and humanitarian actors. For journalists, the findings underscore the importance of paratextual design and journalistic personas in shaping audience engagement, highlighting how figures such as Najwa Shihab can act as powerful anchors of credibility and empathy. For media organizations, the study demonstrates how digital platforms can mobilize affective publics and stimulate civic participation, making it essential to employ narrative and paratextual strategies that strengthen audience connection and advocacy. For humanitarian actors, the emergence of personas such as the Critical Citizen signals the growing role of digital publics in demanding accountability and structural reform, emphasizing the need for sustained engagement with these publics as active partners in shaping humanitarian discourse and inspiring collective action.

Limitations and Future Research Directions: While the study offers rich contextual insights, its findings are bounded by several limitations. First, the single-case design (Aceh floods) and single-outlet focus (Narasi Newsroom) mean that the identified personas—particularly the Critical Citizen—may not transfer directly to other disaster contexts (e.g., earthquakes, pandemics, technological disasters) or other media outlets with different editorial orientations. Second, the platform-specific nature of the data (YouTube comments) raises questions about whether similar patterns of audience engagement would emerge on other social media platforms (e.g., Twitter's character constraints, TikTok's video-first format, Instagram's comment threading). Third, the sample of 202 comments, while sufficient for saturation in qualitative research, does not support statistical generalization to the broader YouTube audience for Aceh flood coverage. To address these limitations, future research should (a) conduct comparative case studies across different disaster types and national contexts to test the transferability of the Critical Citizen persona; (b) examine audience discourse on multiple platforms to understand how platform affordances shape persona expression; (c) employ mixed methods, combining ECA with surveys or interviews to validate persona interpretations from the commenter's perspective; and (d) explore the temporal dynamics of persona emergence—whether certain personas appear earlier or later in the crisis communication lifecycle.

5. Conclusions

This study has demonstrated that digital disaster reporting operates as a multidimensional communicative process in which paratextual framing, humanitarian value expression, and audience personas collectively shape the public meaning of crisis events. Analysis of Narasi Newsroom's Aceh flood coverage revealed that Najwa Shihab's journalistic persona functioned as a powerful paratextual anchor, priming audiences for empathetic and solidaristic engagement; that audience discourse mobilized four interconnected humanitarian values—empathy, solidarity, religious framing, and accountability; and that three distinct personas—Helper, Skeptic, and the newly identified Critical Citizen—structured online engagement in qualitatively different ways.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study is the identification and conceptualization of the Critical Citizen persona as an analytically distinct category not captured by existing persona typologies in crisis communication research. Unlike the Helper, who offers prosocial support, and the Skeptic, who requests clarification and transparency, the Critical Citizen actively attributes blame, names systemic failures, and demands structural reform. This finding extends persona theory by demonstrating that digital disaster publics can be not only compassionate or doubtful but also politically engaged, using humanitarian events as platforms for civic critique. Additionally, the study contributes to paratextual theory

by foregrounding the journalist's persona as a paratextual anchor—an underexamined dimension in digital journalism studies.

Practically, the findings suggest that media organizations should cultivate journalistic credibility not only through factual accuracy but also through empathetic, consistent presence during crises, as figures like Najwa Shihab can humanize disaster narratives and foster public trust. For humanitarian actors, the emergence of the Critical Citizen persona signals the importance of engaging with digitally mobilized publics who demand accountability, not merely emotional support. However, the study is limited by its single-case design and focus on a specific platform (YouTube). Future research should test the transferability of the Critical Citizen persona across other disaster contexts (e.g., earthquakes, pandemics) and platforms (e.g., Twitter, TikTok, Instagram) (Bruns, 2019).

In conclusion, this study underscores the value of integrating audience-centered perspectives into humanitarian communication research. By demonstrating how paratextual cues, humanitarian values, and audience personas intersect, the study offers a replicable analytical framework for examining digital disaster discourse across diverse cultural and political settings.

Author Contributions: Conceptualization, R.N.; methodology, R.N.; formal analysis, M.Y.S., T.T., J.D. and J.S.; investigation, T.T., J.D. and J.S.; resources, J.D. and J.S.; data curation, T.T., J.D. and J.S.; writing—original draft preparation, R.N., M.Y.S., J.D. and J.S.; writing—review and editing, R.N. and A.S.; supervision, A.S.; project administration, M.Y.S. and T.T. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding: This research received no external funding.

Institutional Review Board Statement: Not applicable.

Informed Consent Statement: Not applicable.

Data Availability Statement: The raw data supporting the conclusions of this article will be made available by the authors, without undue reservation.

Acknowledgments: During the preparation of this manuscript, the author(s) used AI-assisted development tools to design and build a custom web application (https://komenyoutube.lovable.app (accessed on 10 January 2026) for scraping YouTube comments. The authors have reviewed and verified all extracted data and assume full responsibility for the content of this publication.

Conflicts of Interest: The authors declared that this work was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

References

Ardèvol-Abreu, A. (2015). Framing countries in humanitarian crisis. A deductive content analysis of press news. *Estudios Sobre El Mensaje Periodistico*, *21*(2), 705–722. [CrossRef]

Bailon, H., Boersma, K., Orellana-Rodriguez, C., & Van Den Homberg, M. (2025). Framing of disaster impact in online news media: A case study from Malawi on flood risk management. *Frontiers in Communication*, *10*, 1519357. [CrossRef]

Barrett, M., Laris, B. A., Anderson, P., Baumler, E., Gerber, A., Kesler, K., & Coyle, K. (2021). Condom use and error experience among young adolescents: Implications for classroom instruction. *Health Promotion Practice*, *22*(3), 313–317. [CrossRef]

Benevento, A. (2025). Field notes from the margins: Rethinking ethnographic presence through interpretive transcription and online interviewing. *Ethnography*, *21*, 14661381251408271. [CrossRef]

Bennett, W. L., & Segerberg, A. (2013). *The logic of connective action: Digital media and the personalization of contentious politics* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.

Bonati, S., Nardini, O., Boersma, K., & Clark, N. (2023). Unravelling dynamics of vulnerability and social media use on displaced minors in the aftermath of Italian earthquakes. *International Journal of Disaster Risk Reduction*, *89*, 103632. [CrossRef]

Bossio, D. (2017). *Journalism and social media: Practitioners, organisations and institutions*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Boyd, D. (2014). *It's complicated: The social lives of networked teens*. Yale University Press.

Brookey, R., & Gray, J. (2017). "Not merely para": Continuing steps in paratextual research. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, *34*(2), 101–110. [CrossRef]

Bruns, A. (2019). *Are filter bubbles real?* John Wiley & Sons.

Camp, J., & Chien, Y. T. (2000). The internet as public space. *ACM SIGCAS Computers and Society*, *30*(3), 13–19. [CrossRef]

Chen, Z., Oh, P., & Chen, A. (2021). The role of online media in mobilizing large-scale collective action. *Social Media + Society*, *7*, 20563051211033808. [CrossRef]

Couldry, N., & Hepp, A. (2018). *The mediated construction of reality*. John Wiley & Sons.

Cuevas, L. M., Lee, S. H., & Recalde, D. (2024). Fashion influencer moms on instagram: Exploration of their affective labor and self-presentation practices. *Social Media + Society*, *10*(4), 20563051241308326. [CrossRef]

Fios, F., Sasmoko, & Gea, A. A. (2016). Neuro-research method: A synthesis between hermeneutics and positivism. *Advanced Science Letters*, *22*(9), 2202–2206. [CrossRef]

Gillespie, T. (2018). *Custodians of the internet: Platforms, content moderation, and the hidden decisions that shape social media*. Yale.ORIM.

Goffman, E. (2023). The presentation of self in everyday life. In *Social theory re-wired* (pp. 450–459). Routledge.

Gray, J. (2010). *Show sold separately: Promos, spoilers, and other media paratexts*. New York University Press.

Guo, J., & Chen, H.-T. (2022). How does multi-platform social media use lead to biased news engagement? Examining the role of counter-attitudinal incidental exposure, cognitive elaboration, and network homogeneity. *Social Media + Society*, *8*(4), 20563051221129140. [CrossRef]

Habermas, J., Lennox, S., & Lennox, F. (1974). The public sphere: An encyclopedia article (1964). *New German Critique*, *3*, 49–55. [CrossRef]

Halse, S. E., Tapia, A., Squicciarini, A., & Caragea, C. (2018). An emotional step toward automated trust detection in crisis social media. *Information Communication and Society*, *21*(2), 288–305. [CrossRef]

Happer, C., & Philo, G. (2013). The role of the media in the construction of public belief and social change. *Journal of Social and Political Psychology*, *1*(1), 321–336. [CrossRef]

Hayes, A. F., & Krippendorff, K. (2007). Answering the call for a standard reliability measure for coding data. *Communication Methods and Measures*, *1*(1), 77–89. [CrossRef]

Herman, E. S., & Chomsky, N. (2021). Manufacturing consent. In *Power and inequality* (pp. 198–206). Routledge.

Kalsnes, B., & Larsson, A. O. (2018). Understanding news sharing across social media. *Journalism Studies*, *19*(11), 1669–1688. [CrossRef]

Karpf, D. (2012). *The MoveOn effect: The unexpected transformation of American political advocacy*. Oxford University Press.

Kavitha, K. M., Shetty, A., Abreo, B., D'Souza, A., & Kondana, A. (2020). Analysis and classification of user comments on YouTube videos. *Procedia Computer Science*, *177*, 593–598. [CrossRef]

Krebs, I., & Lischka, J. A. (2019). Is audience engagement worth the buzz? The value of audience engagement, comment reading, and content for online news brands. *Journalism*, *20*(6), 714–732. [CrossRef]

Krippendorff, K. (2018). *Content analysis: An introduction to its methodology* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Kubin, E., Merz, P., Wahba, M., Davis, C., Gray, K., & von Sikorski, C. (2024). Understanding news-related user comments and their effects: A systematic review. *Frontiers in Communication*, *9*, 1447457. [CrossRef]

Lee, E.-J. (2012). That's not the way it is: How user-generated comments on the news affect perceived media bias. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication*, *18*(1), 32–45. [CrossRef]

Liu, J., & McLeod, D. M. (2019). Pathways to news commenting and the removal of the comment system on news websites. *Journalism*, *22*(4), 867–881. [CrossRef]

Loader, B. D., & Mercea, D. (2011). Networking democracy?: Social media innovations and participatory politics. *Information, Communication & Society*, *14*(6), 757–769. [CrossRef]

Marshall, P. D., Moore, C., & Barbour, K. (2015). Persona as method: Exploring celebrity and the public self through persona studies. *Celebrity Studies*, *6*(3), 288–305. [CrossRef]

Möller, E., & Paulmann, J. (2025). The dynamics of humanitarianism, religion and politics in the Middle East, 1860s–1960s: Introductory remarks. *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies*, *52*(4), 813–821. [CrossRef]

Narasi Newsroom. (2025). *Laporan situasi pasca banjir di Aceh*. YouTube Narasi Newsroom Official. Available online: https://youtu.be/o_kPRkMGYZw?si=1oRcPbAx-C-_Ior5 (accessed on 10 January 2026).

Nasrullah, R., Murodi, Suhaimi, Musyarrofah, U., Khoiriyah, N., & Saraka, M. Y. (2026). Emotional discourse and symbolic contestation in Indonesia's digital public sphere: An ethnographic content analysis of online reactions from YouTube comments on LPG subsidy regulatory adjustment news. *Frontiers in Communication*, *10*, 1737481. [CrossRef]

Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Robertson, C. T., Nielsen, R. K., & Arguedas, A. R. (2024). *Reuters instiqtute digital news report 2024*. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, University of Oxford.

Papacharissi, Z. (2002). The virtual sphere: The internet as a public sphere. *New Media & Society*, *4*(1), 9–27. [CrossRef]

Papacharissi, Z. (2014). *Affective publics: Sentiment, technology, and politics*. Oxford University Press.

Pink, S., Horst, H., Lewis, T., Hjorth, L., & Postill, J. (2022). *Digital ethnography: Principles and practice* (2nd ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Punathambekar, A., & Mohan, S. (2019). *Global digital cultures: Perspectives from South Asia*. University of Michigan Press.
Schrøder, K. C. (2018). Audience reception research in a post-broadcasting digital age. *Television & New Media*, *20*(2), 155–169. [CrossRef]
Shirky, C. (2009). *Here comes everybody: How change happens when people come together*. Penguin UK.
Simchon, A., Brady, W. J., & Van Bavel, J. J. (2022). Troll and divide: The language of online polarization. *PNAS Nexus*, *1*(1), pgac019. [CrossRef]
Simmons, E. S., & Smith, N. R. (2017). Comparison with an ethnographic sensibility. *Political Science and Politics*, *50*(1), 126–130. [CrossRef]
Snelson, C. L. (2016). Qualitative and mixed methods social media research: A review of the literature. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, *15*(1), 1609406915624574. [CrossRef]
Sugiura, L., Wiles, R., & Pope, C. (2017). Ethical challenges in online research: Public/private perceptions. *Research Ethics*, *13*(3–4), 184–199. [CrossRef]
Tenenboim, O. (2022). Comments, shares, or likes: What makes news posts engaging in different ways. *Social Media + Society*, *8*(4), 1–17. [CrossRef]
Thurlow, C. (2022). *Discourse ethnography: Mapping language, rethinking context* [Unpublished manuscript]. Methods in Language Sciences Summer School.
Townsend, L., & Wallace, C. (2016). Social media research: A guide to ethics. *University of Aberdeen*, *1*(16), 1–16.
Uhnoo, S., & Persson, S. (2022). The flip side of the coin: Perils of public–private disaster cooperation. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, *30*(4), 440–450. [CrossRef]
van Dijck, J., & Poell, T. (2013). Understanding social media logic. *Media and Communication*, *1*(1), 2–14. [CrossRef]
Vázquez-Herrero, J., Negreira-Rey, M. C., & Sixto-García, J. (2022). Mind the gap! Journalism on social media and news consumption among young audiences. *International Journal of Communication*, *16*, 3822–3842.
Waddell, T. F. (2019). When comments and quotes collide: How exemplars and prior attitudes affect news credibility. *Journalism Studies*, *20*(11), 1598–1616. [CrossRef]
Waddell, T. F. (2020). The authentic (and angry) audience. *Digital Journalism*, *8*(2), 249–266. [CrossRef]
Wagh, R. K., & Packirisamy, D. P. (2025). Emotional labor in the digital workplace: A study of its effects on job satisfaction among remote professionals. *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science*, *IX*(VI), 4523–4529. [CrossRef]
Wang, Y., Gao, S., & Gao, W. (2022). Investigating dynamic relations between factual information and misinformation: Empirical studies of tweets related to prevention measures during COVID-19. *Journal of Contingencies and Crisis Management*, *30*(4), 427–439. [CrossRef]
Wojcieszak, M. E., & Mutz, D. C. (2009). Online groups and political discourse: Do online discussion spaces facilitate exposure to political disagreement? *Journal of Communication*, *59*(1), 40–56. [CrossRef]
Yahav, I., & Schwartz, D. G. (2018). Citizen engagement and the illusion of secrecy: Exploring commenter characteristics in censored online news articles. *Information Communication and Society*, *21*(11), 1620–1638. [CrossRef]
Zamith, R., & Lewis, S. C. (2014). From public spaces to public sphere. *Digital Journalism*, *2*(4), 558–574. [CrossRef]
Zent, M., Chancellor, S., Fiesler, C., Gilbert, S., Rifat, M. R., Smith, C. E., Yarosh, S., Yong, S., & Zimmer, M. (2025, October 18–22). *Context matters: Ethical challenges in research with online communities*. CSCW Companion'25: Companion of the Computer-Supported Cooperative Work and Social Computing (pp. 106–111), Bergen, Norway. [CrossRef]
Zhao, S., Grasmuck, S., & Martin, J. (2008). Identity construction on Facebook: Digital empowerment in anchored relationships. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *24*(5), 1816–1836. [CrossRef]
Zhu, X., Kim, Y., & Park, H. (2020). Do messages spread widely also diffuse fast? Examining the effects of message characteristics on information diffusion. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *103*, 37–47. [CrossRef]
Ziegele, M., Weber, M., Quiring, O., & Breiner, T. (2018). The dynamics of online news discussions: Effects of news articles and reader comments on users' involvement, willingness to participate, and the civility of their contributions. *Information Communication and Society*, *21*(10), 1419–1435. [CrossRef]

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.