







Unveiling the Digital Narrative: Exploring the Public Perception of Police's Involvement in the Kanjuruhan Tragedy via Social Media Discourse

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Abstract

Objectives: The study explores how fantasy themes, fantasy chain messages, and rhetorical visions shape public perceptions of police in the context of Kanjuruhan tragedy by analyzing netizen comments on YouTube accounts @narasinews and @persebayaofficial

Method: The study used ethnographic and theoretical frameworks used in study were symbolic convergence theory, agenda theory, and spiral of silence theory.

Results: Analysis shows significant differences in narrative and attitude toward the police between the two accounts. @narasinews presented a negative narrative, emphasizing criticism of police, whereas @persebayaofficial presented a positive narrative, expressing support for police action. The fantasy theme that dominates @narasinews is criticism of police, while the theme that emerges in @persebayaofficial is appreciation of cops. They also highlighted importance of further investigation into Kanjuruhan tragedy. The discussion highlighted how social media, such as @persebayaofficial account, sought to break the dominance of reporting that was considered unbalanced, in line with spiral of silence theory. Both accounts also voiced the need for further investigation, showing a common desire to comprehend what was happening deeply. In conclusion, fantasy themes and chain messages are essential in shaping public perceptions of police on social media.

Conclusion: In a digital context, communication theories such as symbolic convergence and the spiral of silence help understand interaction dynamics and public opinion. Implications: A better understanding of social media's influence and underlying communication theories can assist in managing information and understanding the complex social dynamics in the digital age.

Keywords: Social media; fantasy themes; symbolic convergence; the spiral of silence

كشف السرد الرقمي: استكشاف التصور العام لتورط الشرطة في مأساة كانجوروهان عبر خطاب وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي

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ملخص

الأهداف: تستكشف الدراسة كيف تشكل موضوعات الخيال ورسائل الخيال المتسلسلة والرؤى الخطابية تصورات الجمهور للشرطة في سياق مأساة كانجوروهان من خلال تحليل تعليقات مستخدمي الإنترنت على حسابات اليوتيوب @narasinews و@persebayaofficial. وكانت الأطر النظرية المستخدمة في هذه الدراسة هي نظرية التقارب الرمزي، ونظرية الأجندة ونظرية دوامة الصمت.

النتائج: يُظهر التحليل اختلافات كثيرة في السرد والموقف تجاه الشرطة بين الحسابين. قدم @narasinews سردًا سلبيًا، مؤكدًا على انتقاد الشرطة، بينما قدم @persebayaofficial سردًا إيجابيًا، يعبر عن دعم عمل الشرطة. إن موضوع الخيال الذي يهيمن على @narasinews هو انتقاد الشرطة، في حين أن الموضوع الذي يظهر في @persebayaofficial هو تقدير رجال الشرطة. كما سلطوا الضوء على أهمية إجراء المزيد من التحقيقات في مأساة كانجوروهان. وقد سلط النقاش الضوء على كيفية سعي وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، مثل حساب @persebayaofficial، إلى كسر هيمنة التقارير التي اعتبرت غير متوازنة، بما يتماشى مع نظرية دوامة الصمت. كما أعرب كلا الحسابين عن الحاجة إلى مزيد من التحقيق، مما يدل على رغبة مشتركة في فهم ما كان يحدث بعمق. وفي الختام، تعد موضوعات الخيال والرسائل المتسلسلة ضرورية في تشكيل تصورات الجمهور للشرطة على وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي. الخلاصة: في سياق رقمي، تساعد نظريات الاتصال مثل التقارب الرمزي ودوامة الصمت في فهم ديناميكيات التفاعل والرأي العام. الآثار المترتبة: يمكن أن يساعد الفهم الأفضل لتأثير وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي ونظريات الاتصال الأساسية في إدارة المعلومات وفهم الديناميكيات الاجتماعية المعقدة في العصر الرقمي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: وسائل التواصل الاجتماعي، موضوعات الخيال، التقارب الرمزي، دوامة الصمت.

1. Introduction

The Kanjuruhan tragedy has become a deeply troubling event for the community. The match between Arema FC and Persebaya Surabaya on October 1, 2022, resulted in 132 individual deaths, severe injuries to 96 individuals, and injuries to 484 individuals (Waluyo & Kharisma, 2023). Out of the 40,000 spectators, the police reported that 3,000 anarchists entered the field area after the Arema Malang club's 2-3 defeat to Persebaya Surabaya in a Liga 1 match. The security guard then distributed four barracuda units to Persebaya's officials and players. The police also discharged tear gas, causing the spectators to panic and urgently seek to exit the stadium.

Another problem is that only one door opens. The door serves as both the entrance and exit for the audience. The Kanjuruhan football tragedy has attracted public attention as it is one of the football incidents that took many lives. Before the Kanjuruhan incident, ABC News listed 14 other football-related riots. A catastrophic incident occurred during the Olympic qualifying match between Peru and Argentina on May 1, 1964, in Peru, resulting in the deaths of 318 people and more than 500 injuries.

Information about the tragedy and the many parties responsible for handling the event's security, especially the police, have garnered significant attention. Along with news reports, YouTube content also disseminates information about this case. One account, @NarasiNewsroom, produced at least ten pieces of content about the Kanjuruhan disaster. @NarasiNewsroom released an exciting video, "The brutal moment before mass death: open your eyes," on October 14, 2022. The editorial team at @NarasiNewsroom created the film based on analyzing thousands of videos and eyewitness reports. They claimed that the police purposefully directed gas toward a station filled with uninvolved supporters, causing panic and chaos. Tear gas is the leading cause of this tragedy.

Other account contents generally contain information that is consistent with the @NarasiNewsroom. On the contrary, the YouTube video "Unknown Story: October 1: Matchday Sessions: Arema FC vs. Persebaya" by @OfficialPersebaya stands out for its unique information. This is the official account of the Persebaya Surabaya football team. This content examines Kanjuruhan's tragedy from the perspective of the players and Persebaya supporters, who see the events inside the stadium. The @NarasiNewsroom group, focusing primarily on journalism and mass media, has a follower count of 1.38 million and has produced 3.7 thousand videos. In contrast, @OfficialPersebaya has reached 955 thousand subscribers and produced 1.5 thousand videos.

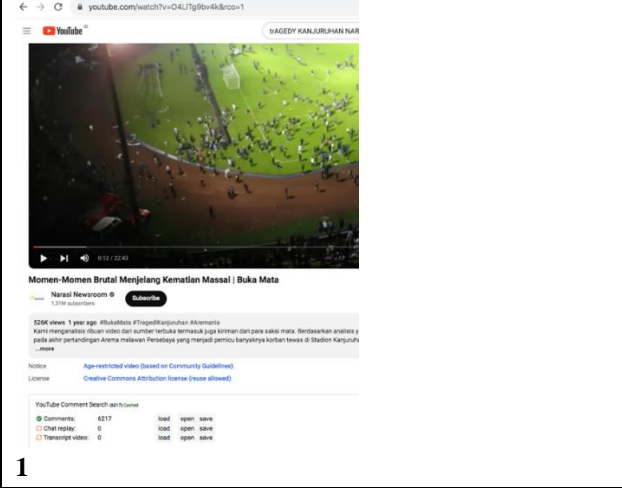
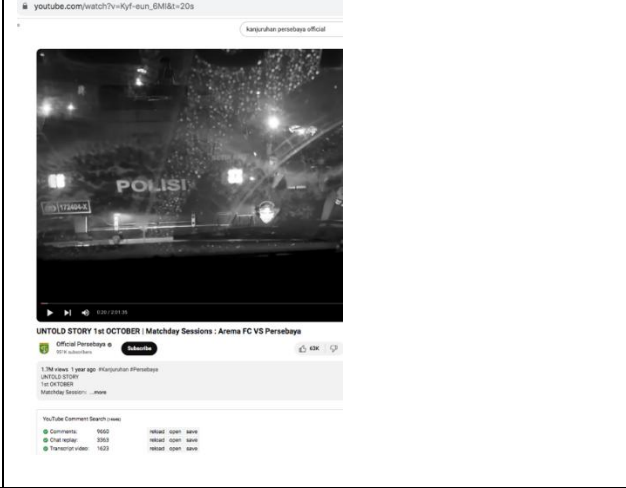
Brutal moments ahead of mass death: open your eyes.	UNTOLD STORY 1st OCTOBER Matchday Sessions: Arema FC vs. Persebaya
 <p>1</p>	
<p>A video was posted on October 14, 2022, and as of February 14, 2024, it has received 36,000 likes, 542,760 views, and 6,217 comments.</p>	<p>A video was posted on October 26, 2022, and as of February 14, 2024, it has received 64,000 likes, 1,800 views, and 9,661 comments.</p>

Figure 1 compares the likes, views, and comments that @NarasiNewsroom's video received versus @Persebaya's.

The many viewer likes and comments on these two YouTube accounts indicate engagement and discussion within the online community. An online community refers to a collective of individuals who share common interests and engage in virtual interactions (Mansur et al., 2021a). Online community members participate in diverse interactions that establish and sustain connections, linking them based on similar experiences, traits, and principles (Johnson, 2001; Mujahidin et al., 2021). Video viewers have actively shared knowledge by asking questions, providing answers, and participating in discussions about a tragic event in Kanjuruhan. We can employ ethnography to analyze online communities and identify the predominant topics of discussions related to Kanjuruhan. The Kanjuruhan disaster has the potential to shape a fresh narrative that aids supporters in comprehending the incident and reaching a shared understanding. Enthusiasts employ diverse forms of media to exchange their perspectives and utilize social media platforms to share experiences, foster unity, and advocate for justice. Football fans contribute to the formation and reinforcement of group identification, as well as the comprehension of their emotional experiences, by using shared language and symbols. This aligns with the ideas of symbolic convergence theory.

This paper examines the police's role in the catastrophe, as they are responsible for ensuring security during this football game. The multitude of incidents has consistently tarnished the police's reputation in public eyes. In 2022, Kadiv Propam Ferdi Sambo's murder of Brigadier Josua tarnished the police's reputation. The Sambo case is still unresolved, and the Kanjuruhan incident has once again tarnished the police's reputation. Therefore, the research question focuses on the police's role in the Kanjuruhan tragedy based on netizen comments on two YouTube videos: "Brutal Moments Before Mass Death" by @NarasiNewsroom and "Unknown History: October 1: Matchday Session: Arema FC vs. Perseba" from @persebayaOfficial.

The study focused on the comments made by netizens on YouTube and then employed ethnographic research methods to analyze the dynamics of conversations about pinholes. The Internet facilitates the formation of crowds, allowing its users to interact with many other users. When in a crowd, individuals examine the similarities and differences with other individuals, identifying and placing themselves as a particular social group. We used symbolic convergence to analyze the conversations of these digital communities and understand group cohesiveness. To understand this cohesiveness, we explore 1) fantasy themes, 2) fantasy chain messages, 3) recurring fantasy types and topics discussed in various contexts, and 4) rhetorical visions and fantasies emerging within a broader group. The research focuses on the topics that netizens are discussing, such as the role of the police in the tragedy.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Previous studies focused on football tragedy

Several past studies have concentrated on the Kanjuruhan tragedy. Ahsan et al. (2024) investigated stress recovery procedures in teens impacted by the Kanjuruhan tragedy with the goal of better comprehending the event's psychological impact and discovering efficient victim rehabilitation strategies. Erjavec (2004) applied the media analysis paradigm to the discourse analysis of news texts. They used coherence theory and oral ethnography to understand how audiences shape and perceive news texts. Meanwhile, Subagio et al. (2024) thoroughly examined the popular mood and reaction to the incident on social media. Other studies have also looked into the function of police in dealing with Kanjuruhan disasters. Solehuddin et al. (2023) did a study in 2023 on the legislative framework of fraud prevention measures in Malang municipal investments. The goal is to enhance governance by enlisting law enforcement organizations, such as the police, to avoid fraudulent actions related to the Kanjuruhan disaster.

Furthermore, Putri and Imanullah (2023) work in legal sociology sheds light on how local populations see the post-disaster police role. These studies contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the Kanjuruhan catastrophe, addressing not just media and psychological issues but also legal considerations and public trust in law enforcement. Furthermore, Adawiyah and Nugroho (2024) and Cahya Safitringati et al. (2023) employ media framing analysis to understand better how media coverage, particularly on online platforms, portrays the function of the police.

Perdana et al. (2023) investigated the public response to the Kanjuruhan disaster by analyzing the Twitter hashtag

#PrayForKere. Their findings revealed that social media conversations stressed empathy for victims rather than criticism of abusers. Meanwhile, Rofiki and Astriani (2023) found that public trust in Polri had declined significantly following the catastrophe of Kanjuruhan. They discussed Polri's efforts to boost its reputation and restore public trust using crisis communication methods. Furthermore, Althofurrahman and Wardana (2023) investigated the legitimacy of the police's use of tear gas during the Kanjuruhan tragedy, highlighting differences in the regulation of tear gas use between stadium security protocols and Polri's internal rules, as well as legal uncertainty in crowd control during football matches. Several prior studies have focused on the Kanjuruhan disaster. Archetti and Romero (2004) explore the relationship between aggressive football supporters in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and the police. The findings revealed that the police saw the fans as a rebel gang, which led to an increase in the use of violence.

On the other hand, Fans regard the police as an impediment to their objectives, prompting them to become more hostile. Segura et al. (2019) examined football-related violence cases in Argentina between 2006 and 2017. The goal is to update the conversation and discuss the many players involved, including their relationships with the police and other authorities.

The aggressive behavior of football fans has given important insights into the underlying causes and consequences of such behaviors. For example, Kabiri et al. (2021) used Akers' Social Learning Theory to investigate the impact of elements such as association, differential reinforcement, imitation, and the definition of aggression on football fans. Kabiri et al. (2023) showed the importance of situational action theory in predicting aggressive behavior among soccer spectators. Another study by Huddleston (2022) emphasized the socio-cultural context of Argentine football violence, while Grodecki and Kossakowski (2021) investigated the division between hooligan groups and other supporters in Poland. Amin et al. (2024) researched the police response to football fan riots in Indonesia. Cleland and Cashmore (2016) noted the movement in English football culture towards a more controlled and centralized culture. Knaption et al. (2018) and Mecrossed et al. (2021) stressed the need to investigate the individual and psychological factors that influence aggressive behavior among football fans. Mededović et al. (2020) and Tunct et al. (2016) studied the psychological and social factors that affect aggressive conduct among soccer fans in Serbia and Turkey. This research resume provides a better understanding of the elements that influence the aggressive behavior of football fans and its importance in developing practical solutions to address this problem.

2.2 The symbolic convergence theory

Ernest Bormann's thesis, Symbolic Convergence, posits that group members use the same language, facilitating their comprehension of a familiar world and fostering collective consciousness. Researchers formulate this theory while studying small groups, but it can also be extrapolated and applied to large groups. These groupings use it to examine the shared perspective, or 'rhetorical vision,' that they develop (O'Boyle, 2022). As Ernest Bormann proposed, the Convergence Theory of Symbols introduces four fundamental notions that enhance our comprehension of group communication (Braithwaite et al., 2006; Kartikawangi, 2017; Saragih et al., 2024). The four fundamental notions include (a) fantasy themes, (b) symbolic notes, (c) type fantasy, and (d) rhetorical visions.

1. A fantasy theme theatrically conveys a message. Group cohesiveness results from group members being able to understand and interpret the same reality accurately. These fantasies communicate and shape the community's collective identity and perception of reality (Zanin et al., 2016). When the bond between people transforms into a collective imagination, it indicates the emergence of a group's symbolic existence.

2. Symbolic cues include words, slogans, phrases, or non-verbal movements that evoke distinct feelings within individuals with common fantasy themes. This indicator is perceptible only to group members, and it may be perplexing for individuals outside the organization.

3. The fantasy type is a frequently recurring script throughout the community. This narrative repeatedly emphasizes the group members' sense of uniformity. Members of the group form the organization's rhetorical vision by drawing from their experiences in the community.

4. A community commonly holds a unified understanding of reality, the rhetorical vision. A group member's emotional perception of reality shapes the rhetorical vision, which assimilates the isolated individual into the community.

Shared language and symbols facilitate comprehension of group members' perceptions of reality and contribute to

forming group consciousness. Football fans utilize chanting, logos, team colors, and match customs as symbolic cues to establish collective identification and togetherness. Their singing establishes collective meaning, as the use of shared symbols can help to create a unified understanding of what it means to be a member of a football team's supporters.

2.3 Agenda Setting and the Spiral of Silence Theory

The role of the news media in defining the critical issues of the day, also known as the agenda-setting influence of mass communication (Protest & McCombs, 2016), is that the mass media determines the topic of discussion that captures the public's attention (Fatmawatie & Endri, 2022). The media describes the mass media's significant role in determining which topics are central to public attention (McCombs & Valenzuela, 2020). Therefore, people may perceive one piece of information as more significant. Consequently, the media brought attention to matters that resonated with the public, prompting individuals to develop viewpoints regarding the topic under discussion, whether in favor, against, or impartial. The media has assumed a dominant role in shaping the public agenda. The primary premise of this theory is that the media dictates the thoughts, emotions, and topics of discussion for the general public. As the media provides more coverage of an issue, it increases its importance to the public. The Agenda Setting Theory originally applied to traditional media analysis, can also examine significant public agendas in the realm of digital content (McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Arijeniwa & Precious Nwaoboli, 2023; Hao, 2022; Steinveg & Bjørnå, 2023; Lin, 2022; Feezell, 2018; Wang et al., 2023; Silitonga et al., 2020). As a result, this hypothesis serves as the foundation for understanding the influence of YouTube content on changing public opinion regarding significant societal matters.

The media exerts a potent sway over public sentiment (Simanjuntak et al., 2022). The media perpetually disseminates prevailing opinions on cultural and social matters, exerting a suppressive influence on minority viewpoints. Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann coined the term "spiral of silence" to describe a political concept. According to this concept, people who agree with the majority are more likely to be confident and inclined to vocalize their opinions. Conversely, those with viewpoints that oppose the majority sometimes feel apprehensive about expressing their views through other means of communication (Mansur et al., 2021a). Individuals who hold a minority perspective make efforts to comprehend the opinions of the majority. According to Hakobyan (2020), the quiet spiral theory is crucial to developing the Internet as a public domain. Therefore, the proliferation of online platforms due to advancements in communication technology will bolster democracy. The emergence of these digital venues enables individuals to articulate their perspectives, even if their viewpoints diverge from the prevailing consensus. Individuals belonging to a minority who dare to express their views may feel apprehensive about the potential for social ostracism within the intricate structure of tacit ideology. These folks exhibit a propensity to concur with the prevailing consensus. Individuals with minority viewpoints frequently refrain from articulating their opinions, reinforcing their image of being susceptible in the public domain.

3. Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach, precisely the ethnographic method. Netnography is an approach that enables researchers to understand the dynamics and patterns of behavior, as well as interactions within online communities. This study uses YouTube as its social media platform. This study examines the comments made by netizens on YouTube about the Kanjuruhan football tragedy. Qualitative-descriptive research entails the systematic, factual, and accurate depiction of data while trying to understand its meaning. Researchers strive to gather as much data as possible from the outset without formulating theories as the basis for data collection. Researchers employ symbolic convergence theory to formulate a preliminary assumption, proposition, or initial solution to a problem under study (Bulmer, 2017)

Technological advancements led to the evolution of ethnography, a branch of ethnographic research (Kozinets, 2020). As social media users' behavior changes, ethnographic research is an effective tool for understanding online behavioral trends and patterns (Del Vecchio, 2020; Samosir et al., 2023). Researchers use ethnography methods, which involve performing observations based on computer-mediated communication (CMC) as the primary data source, to gain an ethnographic understanding of the community. With ethnography, researchers explore the social world to gain insight into personal experiences that are authentic and relevant to the current context.

Ethnographic Research Procedures

(Kozinets, Lichtman dalam Eriyanto, 2021)

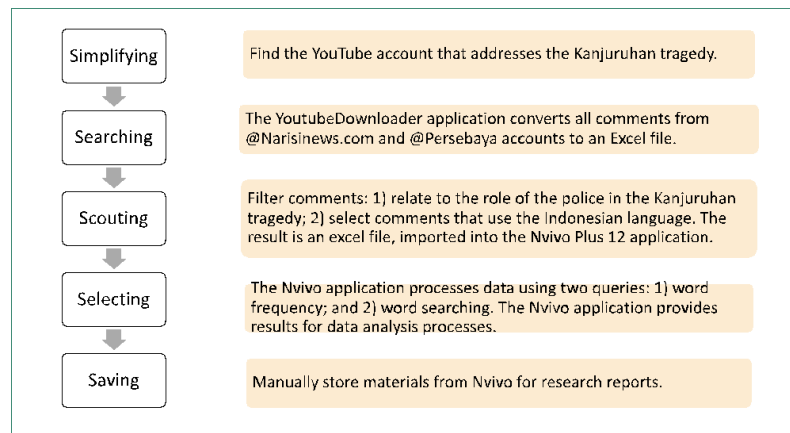


Figure 2: Ethnographic Research Procedure (Eriyanto, 2021)

The picture above is an ethnographic research procedure. Ethnography procedures describe the data collection techniques in neurography: 1) investigation, the stage of obtaining research data; 2) interaction; 3) immersion; and 4) integration. The complete research process encompasses data gathering, data interpretation, data visualization, and the creation of research reports. In the first step, we simplify the research by identifying YouTube Cash as our study's subject. In the search phase, we utilize the YouTube Downloader software to extract comments, resulting in an Excel file comprising names and their accompanying remarks. This study will only evaluate comments written in Indonesian. Among the 6217 comments on @Narasineewsroom's account, 684 referred to the police. The next step is to choose. We use NVivo 12 Plus, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis (CAQDA) tool, to investigate trends and thematic concepts based on the comment column about the Kanjuruhan tragedy.

The software can store ideas in rich document data, relate them to research, and explore them in a visual model. The next stage in this research is data analysis and conclusion. At this stage, we link the research results to the literature to elucidate their meaning and identify patterns and trends that surface in discussions about the tragedy within the @narasineews.com community and @persebayaofficial on YouTube. This interpretation can provide valuable insights into the public's perceptions, views, and attitudes towards the role of the police in humanity's tragedy, as well as the potential social implications and relevant policies. We then compile the research findings into comprehensive reports, including methodological descriptions, data analysis, result interpretation, and conclusions.

4. Results

Using Nvivo 12 Plus, we analyzed comments about the police to determine the frequency of the most frequently used words. We present the findings as a word cloud (see Figure 2 and Figure 3) and a hierarchical map that describes the sequence of the most commonly used words. A video from the @NarasiNewsroom account featured the phrase "police" along with the regularly recurring words "supporter," "tribune," and "apparatus." On the other hand, the @persebayaofficial accounts mostly use the words "Persebaya," "player," "supporter," and "official."

[illegible]

Subsequently, we employed a word search query for the term "police" in every account. Comments on @narasinews accounts often blame and express criticism for the police, but comments on @Persebayaofficial accounts prefer to support and show gratitude for police action during Kanjuruhan events. Although they have different points of view, there is a common thread to express regret and sorrow over the events, encourage a comprehensive investigation, and urge all parties to prevent similar tragedies from occurring in the future. Netizens most frequently discuss the following topics on the @NarasiNewsroom and @Persebayaofficial YouTube channels:

4.1 @narasinews account theme: Criticism of Police Professionalism in the Kanjuruhan Tragedy

Posting the video of Kanjuruhan's tragedy on @narasine news sparked a wave of comments expressing disappointment at the police's actions. Many comments highlight the brutality and lack of police coordination in dealing with uncontrolled situations. Generally, we can classify such comments into several main categories:

1. Negative Opinions about the Police: Some comments use harsh language and directly condemn the police, portraying them as criminals and lacking in intelligence. Some directly accuse the police of murder.

Here are some quotes from @Narasi's account:

Reference 6: The police can only be quiet. I hope the cops' children and wives experience the same incidents as the Kanjuruhan tragedy. Aamin.

Reference 8: The police could be more valuable and troublesome. The police have made the situation worse.

Reference 14: Police use tear gas while football supporters do not carry guns.

References 95–96: Police are murderers. I do not trust the cops anymore. I am very saddened by the situation in Indonesia.

The quotations reflect mistrust, dissatisfaction, and criticism of the police for carrying out their duties. There is a sense of mistrust of the decisions and actions taken by the police, combined with the desire for a change in handling their situation to improve their responsiveness and efficiency. As a result, the quotation emphasizes the importance of transparency, accountability, and improvements in police systems' actions to gain public confidence and support in performing their tasks effectively and efficiently.

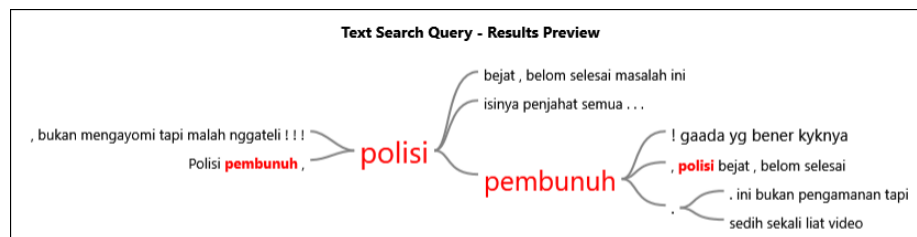


Figure 4 shows a text query using Nvivo Plus. The phrase "police as a killer" appears in the search results in the @Narasineewsroom account.

The police received negative comments, mainly emphasizing the importance of holding them accountable for the alleged abuse of tear gas, perceived as a violation of their authority. The majority of comments on the @narasinews account refer to the phrases "police as a murderer," "extremely rude police," and other keywords that convey contempt and distrust towards law enforcement. Some individuals criticize the police organization's personnel, alleging that they display arrogance, lack dedication to their duties, and even engage in substance abuse. In addition, there are remarks urging the police to exercise caution when handling protests and to refrain from employing violence. Critics deemed the police's utilization of tear gas excessive, considering the absence of weapons among the encountered supporters. Several remarks indicated that the police faced adverse repercussions for their actions in Kanjuruhan. This viewpoint demonstrates a dearth of trust in law enforcement institutions and underscores the necessity to revamp the country's police system.

2 Criticism of Police Actions: Several comments criticize police actions, including the use of tear gas, and call for the imprisonment of those officers.

Here are some quotes from @Narasi's account:

Reference 1: The cops who lit tear gas should go to jail.

References 11–12: Police are like little children. Having a weapon makes them feel fantastic, as if they were the greatest.

Reference 20: The police apparatus is responsible for the Kanjuruhan tragedy, which resulted in many deaths.

Reference 15: It is unfortunate. This video is evident and neutral. The riots started with tear gas shots. An Armenian supporter attacked the police and the Persebaya team. The video concluded with injuries to both the police and football fans. Arema supporters are guilty. Inexperienced police also resulted in a significant number of casualties. While the league organizer focuses only on reaching higher rankings in the competition, the stadium manager must also comply with the procedure.

Reference 50: The police are the main suspects!

This perspective emerges from deep disappointment with the apparatus's inability to maintain security and resolve conflicts without using disproportionate force. According to social media users, police aggression in the Kanjuruhan tragedy significantly undermined public trust and respect for law enforcement officers. Despite the police's persistent refusal to acknowledge their mistakes in the Kanjuruhan Stadium tragedy, netizens hold them responsible for their actions. It strengthens the public perception of police as a violation of human rights.

Most of the comments also criticized the police's highly disrespectful behavior and disregard for the public's well-being. The police apparatus has faced criticism for actions that contributed to a humanitarian tragedy that resulted in many deaths. Some comments contain language that humiliates the police, including the phrase "very unintelligent police." There is a common perception that police officers feel incapable of carrying out their responsibilities. Although the police often act arrogantly, assuming that having a weapon covers them with a sense of superiority, this video clearly shows stupid police behavior. The reaction to the Kanjuruhan disaster video demonstrates deep dissatisfaction with police performance and solid demands for law enforcement reform to increase police confidence. According to quotes from the @narasi account, there are strong doubts about the police apparatus's handling of the incident in Kanjuruhan. There are calls for the imprisonment of responsible police officers, coupled with the belief that the police are deemed irresponsible and should be the primary suspects. In conclusion, these quotations highlight the need for accountability and improvements in law enforcement.

4.2 The @persebayaofficial account emphasizes themes of defending, supporting, and praising the police.

On Kanjuruhan's YouTube video, we can categorize the comments from the official @persebaya account based on their support for the police, their criticism of Aremania fans, and their suggestion for further investigation of the tragedy. The official @persebaya account on YouTube shows the following comments:

1 Comments that support the police's use of tear gas in response to a worrying situation.

Reference 8: I commend all the police officers at the crime scene.

Reference 19: Some criticize the police for their rigid reaction, while others condemn them for not acting. "I thank all the law enforcement officers who have protected Persebaya."

Reference 30: According to Persebaya, police use forceful tear gas to quell violence, even when it is not warranted.

Reference 32: Police associations with anarchist followers explicitly justify their control over the crowd. If the police face accusations of using tear gas, is there any other way to destroy the crowd? Consider the difference between the police force, the number of anarchist sympathizers, and the estimated number of lives the police are responsible for saving.

Reference 74: The media holds the police responsible, even though the police are making efforts to resolve the crisis and ensure the safety of the football players and the management of the Persebaya team.

Reference 90: The police deployed tear gas, causing the supporters to retreat from the football pitch. If the police refrain from deploying tear gas, the consequence will be the loss of life for everyone there.

Based on the perspective of the Persebaya camera, it is clear that the police fired tear gas in response to hostile behavior from the Aremania supporters, who attempted to attack the police and the club's football players. Given the concept of a state of emergency, it is clear that Arema's supporters are guilty of their anarchist behavior. The police are in a challenging situation when dealing with an anarchist at the Kanjuruhan Stadium as they attempt to maintain security and order. The media often criticizes the police's behavior in the Kanjuruhan disaster without fully understanding the circumstances that caused the tragedy at the stadium. If the police do not use tear gas, the number of casualties will increase.

2. The comment applauds the police's efforts to protect the Persebaya team.

Reference 6: "Thanks to all the cops who have protected the players' team and the manager of the Persebaya football team."

References 11–12: "I applaud the police's video statement to the individual player, 'Follow me, it is safe.'" Although he states that the situation is crushing, his instinct is still to think about the Persebaya team's security. I am concerned that many media outlets continue to blame the police even though these officers provide the best security for the Persebaya team. This documentary taught me to understand the incident from more than one point of view. I have been less open to seeing different perspectives on this incident all this time.

Reference 15: Be proud of the police's success in securing the Persebaya team. Fuck the anarchist supporters!

Reference 94 says, "Salut makes police security capable of providing maximum security when securing Persebaya football players."

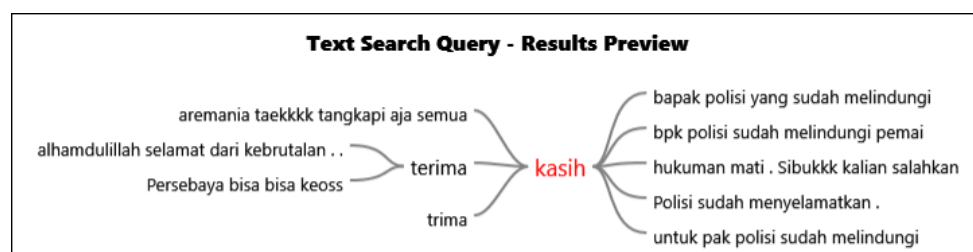


Figure 5 shows a text query using Nvivo Plus. The phrase "Thank you, cop" appears in the search results in the @persebayaofficial account.

Many commenters appreciated the police's role in securing the situation at the events at Kanjuruhan Stadium. The commentary acknowledges that police actions, including using tear gas, are necessary measures to guarantee security. They thanked the police for their hard work in protecting players and Persebaya officials from the potential dangers they faced during the riots. Comments on the @persebaya account also thank the survivors. However, they also believe that Arema's supporters, despite their anarchist behavior, are not subject to punishment. This leads to a sense of unfairness in the law enforcement system.

On the other hand, the police receive rewards for their bravery in handling challenging situations. Despite the significant threats and risks, the police still prioritize the Persebaya team's safety. The police's decision to use tear gas has saved many lives and prevented an enormous tragedy. The police acted as protectors and rescuers, even in hazardous situations for him. Some argue that the police should also be responsible for the tragedy because they cannot prevent the riots. Despite the disagreement, one thing is sure: it is a tribute to the police escort that has protected the Persebaya team from threatening danger. The courage and dedication of the police in carrying out their duty is worthy of appreciation, although it is sometimes controversial in public. The comments include apologizing to the police for their unfair criticism and full support for the measures taken to ensure security in the Kanjuruhan stadium. Overall, the award reflects a deeper understanding of the situation's complexity on the ground and a recognition that the police are acting according to their responsibility to maintain public order and security, as well as that of the Persebaya team.

4.3. @narasi and @persebayaOfficial share the same theme: advocating for further investigation.

Here are a few quotes from the @narasi account:

Reference 3: The police are the killers. It is not security; it is a massacre. The police should conduct a comprehensive investigation into the tear gas shooting incident.

Reference 5: Do not just blame Aremania or the police. When Persebaya lost to Rans, Bonek's supporters destroyed the stadium facilities. We do not need to blame each other, but we need to assess justice for the victims.

Reference 8: Investigate all the parties involved: Polri, TNI, PSSI, committee, and supporters.

Reference 9: This video is proof. To Mr. Kapolri: Take immediate action, investigate thoroughly, and imprison all involved.

Reference 14: It is hard to imagine the situation there. May God provide the best place for the victims. May the law in this country be fair in resolving this tragedy. The police have to take responsibility. Give justice to the victims who died and survived this tragedy!

The tragedy involving the police apparatus shooting tear gas has sparked a lot of anger and demands for justice. Many have condemned the act as a massacre, not security, and are demanding a thorough investigation of the perpetrators. We expect not only the police but also the supporters from different sides to honor themselves and refrain from blaming one another. Investigations into all parties involved, including Polri, TNI, PSSI, committees, and supporters, must be thorough. Kapolri must immediately use video evidence to act decisively, detain, and prosecute all involved. The victims of this tragedy have experienced a great deal of distress. Hopefully, the law can give justice to the dead victims and survivors.

Here are a few quotes from the @Persebaya account:

Reference 9: We must punish Arema for Anaski's behavior.

Reference 15: The police presence overseeing the Persebaya team is satisfactory.

Reference 108: The police were also victims. We must enforce the law, as Aremania has caused numerous casualties in this tragic incident. Do a thorough investigation.

Reference 136: We appreciate the police protection given to the Persebaya Squad. Please conduct a comprehensive investigation. We should not limit our investigation to security personnel. We should also look into Aremania, who threw a police car on fire.

Reference 142: Investigate in detail Aremania, an anarchist supporter of the cause of the Kanjuruhan tragedy.

On the @Persebaya account, many parties are calling for a thorough investigation and punishment of Arema's followers for their anarchist actions, which have caused tragedy in Kanjuruhan. Despite their best efforts, the police are also victims

of the tragedy. People are calling for fair law enforcement for the police and their supporters. Comments on Persebaya accounts: I appreciate the police monitoring of Persebayan teams. We also expect supporters who have burned and damaged property to face fair punishment. This tragedy highlights the importance of thorough law enforcement to prevent future incidents of this kind.

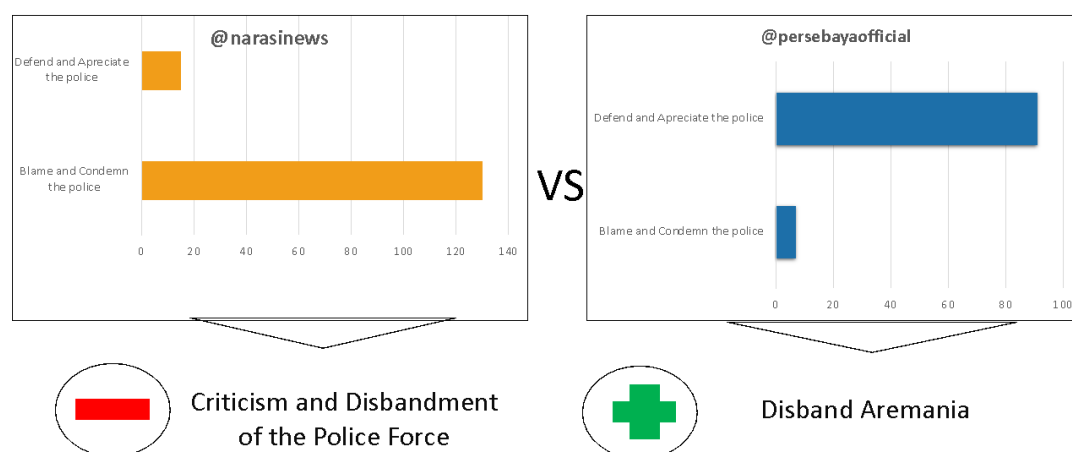


Figure 6: The themes of the conversation in the YouTube commentary revolve around the role of the police in the Kanjuruhan tragedy

5. Discussion

The terrible episode in Kanjuruhan drew public attention when the police used tear gas, resulting in the deaths and injuries of football supporters. These events have sparked outrage and prompted calls for justice. Some significant points were exposed in the comments on the @narasi and @persebaya accounts, among others. First, the accusation that security forces fired tear gas is considered exaggerated. When dealing with a possibly anarchist crowd, tear gas should be used by security policy. Second, the need for a thorough inquiry becomes vital. The hope is to develop an investigative process that includes all parties concerned, such as Polri, TNI, PSSI, the committee, and supporters, to secure justice for all. Third, another key theme is Arema supporters' anarchist actions and the desire for fair punishment.

The study employs fantasy elements to examine netizen comments against police in the Kanjuruhan disaster. A fantasy theme is a narrative or fiction that emerges on social media about an event. The @narasineews account primarily criticizes the police, characterizing them as perpetrators of violence. Comments here constantly express dismay and indignation toward the police, labeling them murderers and human rights violators and demanding accountability for the excessive use of tear gas (Braithwaite et al., 2006; Kartikawangi, 2017; Mansur et al., 2021b). When the Kanjuruhan tragedy occurred, Persebaya became more optimistic about the police's role in ensuring security.

A fantasy chain message arises when a specific subject or narrative spreads and is adopted by many people, enhancing and expanding the original story (Groensteen, 2013). On the @narasineews account, unfavorable remarks about the police spread quickly, with comments encouraging one another, such as the terms "police as a murderer" and "policies obscene." These comments contribute to a poor perception of the police. On the other hand, the @persebayaofficial account creates a positive messaging chain that endorses and legitimizes police action. Messages asserting that police activity is acceptable and necessary establish a message chain in which comments reinforce one another with the story that police act to defend security (Katzenstein, 2018). Comments such as "thank you, cop" and "proud of the performance of the police escort"

demonstrate how support for the police can become a dominant narrative in the Persebaya community, contributing to a messaging chain that maintains the police's favorable image.

Repeated topics on social media can affect the public view of an issue (Steinveg & Bjørnå, 2023). The problem of police unprofessionalism is repeatedly discussed on @narasinews, increasing the public demand for changes in police institutions. Meanwhile, on @persebayaofficial, praise for police action is constantly repeated, reinforcing public agendas that support police involvement in security. The @narasinews account presents a rhetorical view of the police as corrupt and vicious institutions in need of urgent change. The police response to this tragedy is viewed as a symptom of a more significant issue in the law enforcement system. Fear of social isolation negatively influenced public expression of self-censorship (Chan, 2018).

Instead, the @persebayaofficial account builds a rhetorical narrative depicting the police as guards working under pressure to maintain order. In a crisis, their actions are considered legitimate and necessary. This perspective is essential to explain the relationship between online emotional expression and journalism practices, participation, and public engagement in social media (Giaxoglou & Johansson, 2020). The comments on both accounts demonstrate how fantasy themes, fantasy chain messages, and rhetorical visions can vary greatly depending on the point of view. @narasinews accounts prefer to condemn police as violent and human rights violators, whereas @persebayaofficial is more supportive and sees police action as a protector in crises. The Symbolic Convergence Theory explains how groups of netizens on both accounts construct and spread alternative narratives regarding the participation of police in the Kanjuruhan incident (Kartikawangi, 2017; Umarella et al., 2022). Through fantasy themes, fantasy chain communications, repeating fantasy kinds and topics, and rhetorical visions, we observe how these groups create social realities representing their beliefs and ideals.

According to the agenda-setting idea, the media can affect topics that the public considers necessary. In the context of netizen comments on the Kanjuruhan disaster, the @narasinews account develops an agenda that emphasizes criticism and unfavorable criticism of the police, drawing the public's attention to police violence and violations of human rights. Repeated statements on social media support specific agendas and broaden their reach. Media consumption affects public attitudes toward the police (Graziano & Gauthier, 2018). Readers of intense network news are more likely to believe that police violations are frequent. Respondents who read online news are likelier to have a negative attitude towards police legitimacy (Intravia et al., 2018). Consumption of negative stories about police on the Internet is associated with the view that police are less legitimate (Intravia et al., 2020). Internet news consumption is linked to negative attitudes towards police, but only if coverage is considered fair (Gauthier & Graziano, 2018).

The echo chamber effect creates an environment where users of these accounts repeatedly affirm their positive or negative perceptions of the police. Social media promotes the formation of similar-minded user groups, strengthening shared narratives. Users with similar thinking tend to dominate online interactions (Cinelli et al., 2021). Individuals will choose media and content reinforcing their beliefs, leading to segregation based on interests and partisanship (Dubois & Blank, 2018). Two stories can form opposing public agendas by highlighting specific issues and repeating the same topics. The @narasinews account creates a critical agenda and demands police reform, while the @persebayaofficial account sets an agenda of support and praise for police activity. It shows how the media can shape the public's perspective and understanding of complex situations. The digital space has created a new public space: a "fake public" (Englezos, 2023). People avoid expressing their opinions using social media to avoid social sanctions, as suggested by the Spiral of Silence theory (Bäck et al., 2019).

The @persebayaofficial account aims to challenge the media's uneven dominance, which is tied to the Spiral of Silence Theory. According to this idea, people avoid voicing minority or unpopular opinions for fear of social isolation or rejection. In this context, the @persebayaofficial account claims that mainstream media coverage tends to blame the police response to the disaster. By creating video footage shot within Kanjuruhan Stadium, the @persebayaofficial account is attempting to challenge the dominance of media news by actively promoting its message via social media platforms. They foster an environment in which their supporters feel more at ease expressing their support for the police, even if their opinions are

regarded as trivial in conventional media reporting. Thus, the @persebayaofficial account's efforts to propagate a police-supporting narrative might be interpreted as a method for mitigating the repercussions of the spiral of silence theory. Giving their followers a place to speak out and feel supported can create the impression that their ideas are not a minority, shattering the dominance of sometimes slanted media reporting.

6. Conclusion

Fantasy themes, chain messages, repeating fantasy types, and rhetorical visions significantly impact society's interpretation of events, particularly in the context of Kanjuruhan tragedies. Social media accounts such as @narasinews and @persebayaofficial play a crucial role in reinforcing or undermining traditional media's dominance in reporting the Kanjuruhan disaster. Examining fantasy themes reveals that each social media account constructs a distinct narrative. The @narasinews accounts primarily focus on police criticism, whereas the @persebayaofficial accounts focus on police appreciation. Fantasy chain communications bolster each account's agenda by reinforcing preexisting viewpoints and amplifying their impact. Prior and theoretical research provides evidence for a more profound understanding of social media's impact on public perception and the application of theories such as agenda setting and spiral silence in this particular context. The primary objective of the @persebayaofficial account is to counteract biased media coverage, which is associated with the Spiral of Silence Theory, by providing a platform for followers to express their endorsement of law enforcement.

This study proves that fantasy themes, chain messages, and rhetorical visions influence the public's perception of an event. The results align with prior research that emphasized the influence of social media in molding public sentiment. Narratives disseminated through social media can influence public opinions and attitudes toward subjects. Furthermore, the study's theoretical analysis emphasizes incorporating the agenda-setting theory and the spiral of silence theory into social media. The study offers fresh perspectives on the impact of social media on public opinion and highlights the importance of including appropriate theoretical frameworks when examining communication in the digital era. By gaining a deeper comprehension of the significance of social media and the fundamental principles of communication theory, we may formulate more efficient approaches to information management and grasp the intricacies of social interactions within online communities.

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