



News Avoidance and Its Effects on Kompas Daily: A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This study examines how Kompas Daily newspaper perceives and responds to the growing phenomenon of news avoidance amid rapid technological developments and information overload. Using a qualitative case study approach, the research draws on interviews with seven newsroom members (Editor-in-Chief, Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Editor, Journalist, Social Media Manager, Social Media Analyst, Social Media Officer) of Kompas Daily and applies case study to identify the drivers and consequences of news avoidance. The findings show that news avoidance affecting Kompas arises from external factors, such as overwhelming information flows, declining reading interest, and audience fatigue, and internal factors, including insufficiently relevant content, excessive problem-oriented reporting, and limited content variety. These dynamics reduce page views on Kompas Daily and slow the growth of paid subscriptions, constraining digital monetization efforts. The study contributes to journalism research by clarifying how a legacy media organization diagnoses and addresses news avoidance within a digital transformation context and offers practical insights for audience strategies in Indonesian newsrooms.

Keywords

news avoidance; digital journalism; audience engagement; information overload; media monetization

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INTRODUCTION

Technological advancements have led Kompas Daily to establish a presence on social media platforms, including X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok, LinkedIn, and Threads. The first social media account owned by Kompas was on Twitter, created in 2011 under the handle @hariankompas. Kompas Daily's X account has the highest number of followers compared to its other social media accounts, with 1,050,050 followers as of March 1, 2024.

However, Kompas Daily's strategy in content distribution and reader engagement has not been fully optimized. The publication faces the challenge of news avoidance, which results in fewer social media users reading news from its original source, the news organization itself. This has led to low readership of articles on Kompas.id as one of the Kompas Daily products.

In this context, the shift in audience behavior on digital platforms aligns with discussions in digital journalism and media ecology, where platform algorithms and fragmented attention reshape how audiences encounter news.

News avoidance has become one of the critical challenges in digital journalism today. News avoidance refers to a phenomenon where individuals deliberately or unintentionally avoid news exposure. This avoidance occurs either due to a specific dislike for news content or because individuals prefer consuming other media, such as entertainment. News avoidance can be

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categorized into three types: consistent, occasional, and selective, each with distinct characteristics and impacts (Skovsgaard & Andersen, 2022).

Previous studies have examined social media communication strategies and news avoidance. Damstra et al.'s (2023) research found that intentional news avoidance arises from a lack of trust in news, adverse effects on mood, and a desire to escape overwhelming choices. By contrast, unintentional news avoidance results from a highly selective media environment and individual preferences for entertainment over news (Damstra et al., 2023).

Skovsgaard and Andersen (2022) explored the effects of news avoidance on news consumption. Their findings indicate that individuals who avoid news tend to be uninformed and disengaged from specific issues, such as politics. However, a positive aspect of news avoidance is that it shields readers from negative emotional effects, especially concerning political events (Skovsgaard & Andersen, 2022).

Broersma (2019) found that news avoidance negatively impacts audience engagement with news content. Audience engagement refers to the cognitive, emotional, or affective experiences readers have with media content. Engagement does not merely occur when someone is exposed to news content; it requires active and intentional orientation toward the news they read, watch, or listen to (Broersma, 2019).

These previous studies highlight how news avoidance affects media organizations by decreasing audience engagement. Lower readership can discourage subscriptions, impacting media revenue. As news increasingly circulates through social media excerpts rather than direct visits to news websites, many users consider platform-level summaries sufficient, reducing traffic to Kompas.id.

Hermida (2012) identified three key roles of social media in journalism: gathering news content, reporting news, and recommending news. However, news avoidance is most apparent on social media. Many social media users do not visit news websites but instead consume news through posts shared by friends or by following news media accounts (Haryanto, 2023).

The Reuters Institute *Digital News Report 2023* (Newman et al., 2023) also discusses news, social media, and incidental exposure to news. The report states that only about one-fifth (22%) of respondents prefer to start their news consumption through a news website or app, a 10% decline from 2018. This indicates that most audiences are not interested in exploring news content directly from journalistic sources; instead, they prefer accessing news via social media, search engines, or news aggregators.

This trend reinforces concerns from audience-behavior research that platform-based consumption reduces attention to full-length journalistic reporting.

This study aims to: (I) Understand the editorial perspective of Kompas Daily on news avoidance, (II) Identify the factors contributing to news avoidance at Kompas Daily, (III) examine the consequences of news avoidance for Kompas Daily.

To achieve these objectives, this study seeks to answer the following research questions: (I) What is the editorial perspective on news avoidance at Kompas Daily? (II) What are the contributing factors to news avoidance at Kompas Daily? (III) What are the consequences of news avoidance for Kompas Daily?

This research is expected to contribute to the field of mass communication by advancing discussions on news avoidance and journalism within the context of social media communication strategies to enhance news engagement. Furthermore, it aims to identify the causes and factors behind news avoidance within Indonesian media organizations.

Out of 13 academic journals reviewing news avoidance, 11 focus on its causes and consequences, while only two examine strategies to counter news avoidance, both of which emphasize the role of newsrooms rather than social media.

Existing studies on COVID-19-era news avoidance consistently link information overload, repetitive negative news, and emotional strain to reduced news consumption (de Bruin et al., 2021; Ohme et al., 2023; Andersen et al., 2024). These findings reinforce broader evidence that excessive or stressful information environments trigger both selective and temporary news avoidance.

Similarly, research conducted by Heiss et al. (2023) on a sample of 901 individuals leads to the same conclusion. They found that an abundance of information is strongly linked to news avoidance. The more information people receive, the more likely they are to avoid the news.

Karlsen et al. (2020) initially hypothesized that news avoidance has existed for a long time. To examine this, they conducted a study spanning a considerable period, from 1997 to 2016. The research concluded that individuals with lower levels of education are more likely to avoid news consumption.

Several studies have linked the phenomenon of news avoidance to the impact of social media. This is evident in research by Tian (2022), which examines how social media users avoid or reduce their exposure to news, both intentionally and unintentionally. The work finds that news avoidance is not only triggered by information overload but also by the stress and anxiety that news consumption can cause.

A similar finding by Zhang et al. (2022) concludes that the abundance of information leads individuals to curate news, and news avoidance emerges as a consequence of curating news based on its perceived quality.

Park (2019) explores the impact of social media on news avoidance, noting that news avoidance refers to an individual's tendency to avoid or reduce news consumption on social media due to feeling overwhelmed by excessive or difficult-to-process information.

A study by Toff & Kalogeropoulos (2020) found that the factors influencing news avoidance are not solely individual characteristics but also contextual factors at the national level. These include press freedom, political freedom, political stability, and cultural attitudes toward news consumption.

Meanwhile, research conducted by Edgerly (2022) also focuses on the causes of news avoidance. According to her, this phenomenon occurs due to a lack of interest in politics, the perception that news is irrelevant, and a lack of confidence and knowledge about news media.

Azari and Setianto (2021) examined the phenomenon of news avoidance in the Indonesian context. Their study focuses on the factors that lead individuals to avoid or reduce news exposure, either deliberately or unintentionally. Their findings indicate that news avoidance occurs due to information overload, repetitive coverage, or negative-toned news, which can cause individuals to feel fatigued or stressed, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Azari & Setianto, 2021).

A study conducted by Setianto and Praceka (2023) suggests that news fatigue can trigger news avoidance. When individuals feel exhausted or stressed from excessive news consumption, particularly when the news is repetitive and negative, they tend to avoid or reduce their exposure to it.

From previous studies, it is evident that information abundance drives individuals to avoid news (news avoidance). However, there has been limited research on the causes of news avoidance from the perspective of mainstream media organizations.

This study extends existing scholarship by examining news avoidance from the perspective of a legacy media organization, Kompas Daily rather than from the audience side. It also contributes methodologically by applying a constructivist paradigm through a qualitative case study approach to understand how newsrooms interpret and respond to news avoidance.

METHOD

This study adopts a constructivist paradigm, which views knowledge as socially constructed through subjective experiences (Wahyuni, 2023). Individuals interpret the world based on their interactions and contexts, forming meanings that guide their actions (Creswell & Poth, 2016).

The constructivist paradigm is applied to understand how the Kompas Daily editorial team interprets the phenomenon of news avoidance, including its perceived causes and consequences, and how these interpretations shape newsroom responses.

A qualitative approach with an inductive orientation is employed to explore how individuals and groups within the newsroom make sense of news avoidance (Wahyuni, 2023).

Qualitative inquiry emphasizes understanding meaning, context, and lived experience (Creswell, 2014), using a naturalistic and rigorous process (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The research uses an intrinsic case study design, focusing on developing an in-depth understanding of a bounded case: the Kompas Daily editorial organization and its experience with news avoidance (Cresswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2015). The case is bounded by context and

timeframe: newsroom practices and responses during 2023-2024, and centers on editorial and social media units as the principal units of analysis.

Informants were selected purposively based on their expertise and direct involvement with news avoidance (Stake, 1995). The criteria included:

1. Active staff members of Kompas Daily;
2. Editorial personnel who have encountered news avoidance in their work;
3. Social media team members involved in mitigation strategies.

Table 1. Selected informants

No	Name	Title
1.	Sutta Dharmasaputra	Chief Editor
2	Adi Prinantyo	Deputy Chief Editor
3	Mukhamad Kurniawan	Regional Desk Editor
4	Satrio Pangarso W	Investigation dan Data Journalism Journalist
5	Cecilia Gandes	Social Media Manager
6	Moch. Faizal Abdalla	Editorial Social Media Analyst
7	Ratna Suminar	Social Media Officer

Source: Research document

Following case study standards (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2015), data were collected through three triangulated techniques:

- 1) Semi-structured interviews, enabling participants to articulate their perceptions, experiences, and interpretations without restrictive questioning (Brenner, 2006; Yin, 2015).
- 2) Document analysis, including editorial guidelines, audience data, and social media analytics.
- 3) Non-participant observation of newsroom workflows and social media operations to understand how news avoidance manifests in daily routines (Yin, 2018).

Data were analyzed using Miles and Huberman's interactive model (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011):

- Data reduction: open coding of interview transcripts and documents to identify recurring concepts related to news avoidance.
- Data display: organizing codes into categories and visual matrices to compare insights across editorial and social media units.
- Conclusion drawing and verification: identifying cross-cutting themes (e.g., causes, impacts, coping strategies) and validating them through triangulation

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Finding 1: Perspectives on News Avoidance at Kompas Daily

The phenomenon of news avoidance is a global issue that also affects the media industry, including the daily newspaper Kompas Daily. Each media organization has its own perspective on news avoidance, and the same applies to Kompas Daily.

Within the editorial team of Kompas Daily, perspectives on news avoidance vary. The editorial staff do not share a uniform understanding of this phenomenon. However, they agree that news avoidance is a situation in which readers deliberately avoid news consumption. Based on interviews conducted by the researcher with key informants: Sutta, Adi Prinantyo, Mukhamad Kurniawan, and Satrio, it is evident that the concept of news avoidance is perceived differently within the editorial team. The following are statements from the informants:

It is a global media phenomenon that many people avoid news. News avoidance is not about whether the news is interesting or not. News avoidance happens because people just don't want to deal with too many problems! (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

This phenomenon is understood as a public tendency to avoid reading news (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

It is a phenomenon where individuals consciously avoid or reduce their exposure to news. (Mukhamad Kurniawan, interview, October 8, 2024).

News avoidance is a phenomenon where individuals, either consciously or unconsciously, avoid consuming news (Satrio, interview, October 10, 2024).

The phenomenon of news avoidance is not only experienced by the editorial team but also by the social media team at Kompas Daily. Through interviews with informants, it was found that their perspectives on news avoidance closely align with those of the editorial team. One evident aspect of news avoidance on social media is that users prefer to follow individuals rather than institutional or organizational news accounts. The following are statements from Gandes, Abdalla, and Ratna:

News avoidance is understood as the audience avoiding news. Another challenge is that people now prefer to follow personal accounts rather than institutional or organizational news accounts (Gandes, interview, October 3, 2024).

News avoidance means avoiding news consumption that is perceived as too negative, too repetitive, or emotionally distressing. People choose to avoid news that does not align with their preferences, possibly due to the emotional burden it places on them (Abdalla, interview, October 16, 2024).

In my understanding, news avoidance occurs when someone chooses not to read or actively avoids certain news stories (Ratna, interview, October 3, 2024).

At Kompas Daily, perspectives on news avoidance vary due to individual understandings and experiences. The research found that both the editorial team and the social media team at Kompas Daily rarely discuss news avoidance explicitly. Although they acknowledge experiencing this phenomenon, it has not been formally identified or addressed. The informants stated that they have not fully engaged in formal discussions regarding news avoidance.

There has been no special discussion or dedicated meeting to address news avoidance as a collective issue. However, there is awareness that news avoidance exists (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

We sense that people are avoiding news, but we never explicitly refer to it as news avoidance (Mukhamad Kurniawan, interview, October 8, 2024).

The discussion only goes as far as asking: 'Why is our news not getting traction?' or 'How can we make it more engaging?' It never goes deeper than that (Abdalla, interview, October 16, 2024).

There is concern about news avoidance among colleagues. Sometimes, when we publish a news article, it gets completely ignored by netizens. The reaction is usually just, 'This news didn't get any attention,' but we don't explicitly call it news avoidance (Ratna, interview, October 3, 2024).

Finding I1: Factors of News Avoidance at Kompas Daily

Research informants also stated that the type of news most frequently avoided by readers is problematic news. Problematic news refers to news containing issues that burden readers, making them choose to avoid it.

People perceive news as synonymous with problems. So, they avoid news because they already have too many problems of their own (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

The reason, in my opinion, is that people see news as being all about problems. In news, there are only problems. By reading the news, people are confronted with more problems, whereas in their daily lives, they already have plenty of issues to deal with. This is a barrier that needs to be addressed (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

People avoid news because they do not want additional stress or anxiety from consuming heavy or possibly negative news... Some individuals experience psychological distress due to overwhelming information. For instance, sharply polarized political issues, crime reports, and natural disasters (Mukhamad Kurniawan, interview, October 8, 2024).

The study also found that problematic news, according to several informants, can lead to news fatigue and a sense of discomfort. These conditions contribute to why people avoid news. This was conveyed by informants Gandes, Ratna, and Abdalla, as follows:

News avoidance and news fatigue are related. People avoid news because they are already exhausted from reading it. They are mentally drained and stressed, so they simply do not feel like reading the news (Gandes, interview, October 3, 2024).

Most people avoid certain news for their own well-being. They do not want to feel exhausted or overwhelmed by consuming news that negatively impacts them. Lately, there has been a surge of news about crimes such as murder, sexual violence, and bullying (Ratna, interview, October 3, 2024).

People tend to avoid news that does not align with their preferences, possibly because it emotionally burdens them. So, they avoid news that is either negative or repetitive (Abdalla, interview, October 16, 2024).

The statements from these informants align with article readership data from Kompas.id, as monitored through the Chartbeat application. Chartbeat is used by Kompas Daily editors to track the performance of the articles they produce.

Data from Chartbeat, as shown in Figure 1, indicates that over the past 12 months, the most-read article (measured by page views) was titled "48 Hours of Eko Yuli's Struggle," published on August 5, 2024. This article narrates the story of national weightlifter Eko Yuli as he prepared for the 2024 Paris Olympics.

This article was read more frequently than others, such as a report on the murder of a car rental owner in Sukolilo, Pati, Central Java, and an article on the Russia-Ukraine war. The article on Eko Yuli garnered 181,297 reads, while the article about the Sukolilo tragedy had 98,515 reads, and the Russia-Ukraine war article received 76,725 reads. This data is illustrated in this figure.

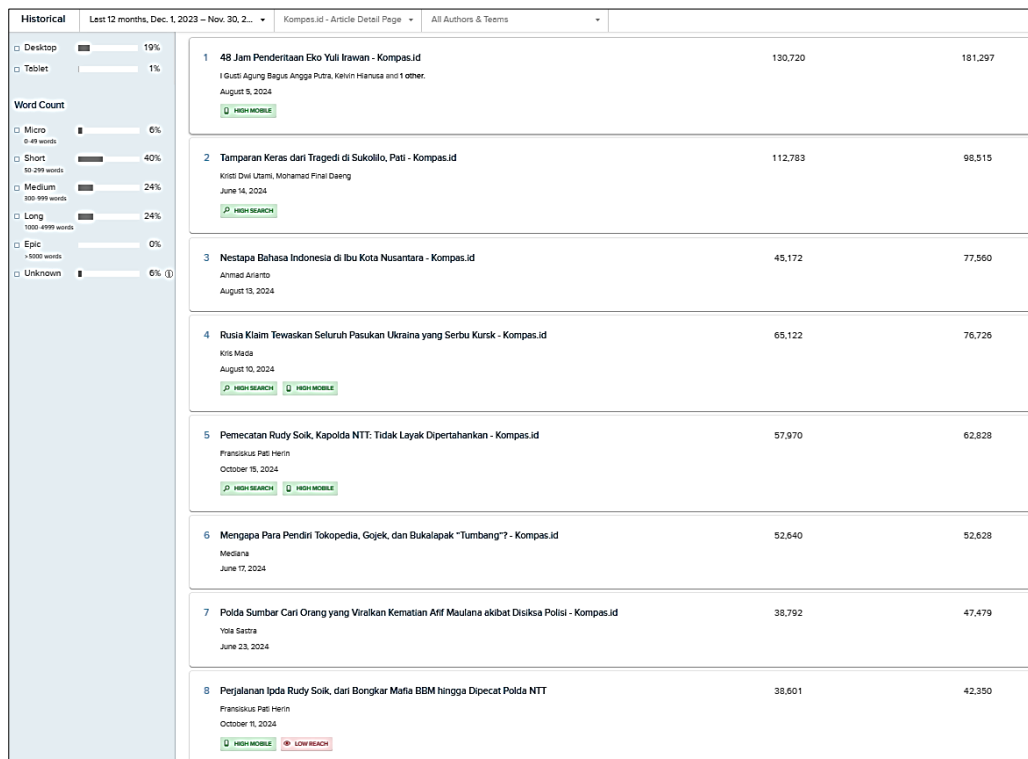


Figure 1. A screenshot from the Chartbeat application displaying article readability data for the period of December 1, 2023 – November 30, 2024, from Kompas.id. (Source: Kompas Daily)

If categorized broadly, the article about Eko Yuli falls into the category of light, non-problematic news, as it tells the story of Eko Yuli's preparation for the 2024 Paris Olympics. Meanwhile, reports about the tragedy in Pati and the Russia-Ukraine war are considered problematic news with a negative tone, as they contain information about crime and war.

Informants Sutta and Adi Prinantyo acknowledged that problematic news frequently appears in media coverage. They also recognized that the composition of news is often dominated by

problematic news. This dominance occurs because media organizations sometimes overlook the fundamental functions of the press, which include: to inform, to control, to entertain, and to educate. This concern was expressed by informants Sutta and Adi Prinantyo:

Media often forgets its other functions when producing information. The media is not just a tool for social control in times of crisis (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

Why do people associate news with problematic news? Perhaps because the media, including us [Kompas Daily], has not maintained a balance in producing problematic and non-problematic news. The press has four functions: to inform, to educate, to act as social control, and to entertain. If the news focuses only on social control and information, it gives the impression that news is inherently problematic, always discussing and informing about issues (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

Beyond problematic news, the research also identified other factors contributing to news avoidance. Informants mentioned issues such as information overload, misinformation (hoaxes), and the relevance of news to readers. Informants Sutta, Adi Prinantyo, and Wawan explained that news avoidance results from a combination of these factors:

News avoidance is caused by, first, information overload. Second, the spread of hoaxes. Third, the media sometimes fails to produce news that meets readers' needs. Readers ask: Does this information improve my life or well-being? If the information is merely informative without imparting knowledge or wisdom, people will avoid it (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

People avoid news for psychological reasons. If reading the news makes them more anxious or stressed, they will avoid it. Second, relevance. When news producers fail to remain relevant, people will disengage. They will rely on alternative sources, particularly social media, and stop accessing news publishers. Third, trust issues. In several countries, even mainstream media with gatekeepers and editorial oversight are losing public trust because they are perceived as having an agenda. Fourth, information overload. With technological advancements, information flows from everywhere. This also contributes to news avoidance, as people no longer feel the need to visit news sites (Mukhamad Kurniawan, interview, October 8, 2024).

Information overload has made people more distant from primary, trustworthy sources. Meanwhile, readers increasingly demand content that is relevant to their lives. Editorial teams need to analyze reader behavior carefully (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

The study also found that information overload is a significant cause of news avoidance. Informants Sutta and Mukhamad Kurniawan specifically discussed how the abundance of information, driven by technological advancements, makes people avoid news because they feel they have already received sufficient information from various sources.

In the past, people sought out news to understand what was happening around them because information was scarce. 'I want to know, let me check Kompas Daily to see what's going on.' But now, with technology advancing rapidly, information is everywhere, sometimes overwhelmingly so. It's no surprise that people don't feel like reading news anymore. They think, 'Why should I read the news? I already know about this' (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

Technological advancements have turned social media into new information channels. Over time, people have started avoiding news not only because it causes anxiety but also because alternative information sources exist. News is now available via TikTok, reels, and user-generated content. Everyone is a publisher. Information can come from anywhere. This has increased competition for mainstream media and news producers. Media companies worldwide, not just in Indonesia, are aware of this shift. The fact that information flows from multiple sources contributes to news avoidance, as people no longer rely on traditional news sites but instead get their updates from various platforms (Mukhamad Kurniawan, interview, October 8, 2024).

Finding III: The Impact of News Avoidance on Kompas Daily

The study found that news avoidance has had tangible effects on Kompas Daily. Understanding news avoidance at Kompas Daily cannot be separated from the experiences of individuals within the editorial team who have directly felt the impact of this phenomenon. Interviews with informants Sutta, Adi Prinantyo, Mukhamad Kurniawan, and Satrio revealed that news avoidance has significantly affected Kompas Daily. In general, they also assessed the consequences of news

avoidance on reading habits and the quality of information consumed by the public. According to the informants, the information that the public prefers to consume tends to be light and entertaining.

It is proven that humorous stories are more widely enjoyed. Nowadays, everyone seems to be just joking around. This is concerning for us as well. The effect is negative and counterproductive (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

People seem more willing to spend money on entertainment rather than news (Satrio, interview, October 10, 2024).

The research also found that news avoidance has had direct consequences for Kompas Daily. According to informant Adi Prinantyo, one major impact is the decline in the number of subscribers, a trend that began even before Kompas.id was established in 2018. He explained:

News avoidance had already occurred with the Kompas newspaper, possibly because the platform was no longer in line with modern times. Secondly, it could be due to the content, which was predominantly problematic news, often curated by editors who believed they knew best. Editors considered the content in print media to be important and necessary for readers. This one-sided approach might be a clear example of news avoidance that occurred during the print era (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

Meanwhile, Sutta, observed that news avoidance has affected Kompas.id's subscription-based business model. According to him, news avoidance has hindered subscription growth:

If news avoidance didn't exist, our subscription growth would be significantly higher (Sutta, interview, October 16, 2024).

The study found alignment between interview findings and document analysis. Social media users tend to prefer light and non-problematic content. This indicates that problematic content is often avoided by social media users, reflecting news avoidance in digital platforms.

This phenomenon was further explained by informants Ratna, Gandes, and Abdalla, who emphasized the role of content relevance in news avoidance. They stated:

People today seek content relevance—a shared need or concern between the media and the audience/public. Do the public and the media operate on the same frequency? Is the content relevant? Because when news becomes more relevant, audiences will be more engaged and motivated to consume it (Gandes, interview, October 3, 2024).

Why don't social media users continue reading the news? First, because their habit is to stay within social media itself; they just want to scroll. Second, they feel the news doesn't need to be read further, perhaps because it is not related or relevant to them. Third, they think, 'I just need to know the headline' (Abdalla, interview, October 16, 2024).

This insight aligns with the researcher's observations during the social media team meeting on October 24, 2024. Cecilia Gandes, reminded social media officers to curate news from Kompas.id based on follower demographics and account personas. She emphasized that content about campuses, students, and school children should be posted on @kompasmuda, while parenting and trivia-related content should be shared on @kompasklasika.

Discussions about content relevance extend beyond social media to the editorial team at Kompas Daily. Maintaining relevance is one of the key strategies employed by Kompas Daily to combat news avoidance. This effort also serves as a point of intersection between the editorial and social media teams in addressing the issue.

Informant Adi Prinantyo emphasized the importance of involving the social media team in editorial meetings to better understand reader needs and produce more relevant news. He explained:

As Kompas Daily transitions to digital journalism, we aim to prevent news avoidance as it occurred in print. In digital, we try to analyze readers' reading preferences... Including the social media team in editorial meetings to report on trending conversations helps the newsroom determine what content resonates with readers. This approach has proven effective. Previously, social media team reports were only occasionally considered by the newsroom. Now, most of the data provided by the social media team is being utilized for news production. This proves that when people discuss something, we are now part of the conversation. In the past, while netizens debated a topic, we

were often discussing something completely different (Adi Prinantyo, interview, September 28, 2024).

The informant's statement aligns with the Kompas Daily Social Media Annual Report 2022, which documented that the Kompas Daily social media team monitored trending issues, producing 4,368 reports throughout 2022. Some of these reports were recommended as news content, resulting in significant pageviews: 22,302 pageviews for news on website blocking by the Ministry of Information and Communication, 8,548 pageviews for news on the closure of the Eijkman Research Institute, 7,102 pageviews for news on the construction of the high-speed rail support pillars.

Informant Ratna stated that a pageview count exceeding 5,000 per content piece is considered high-performing: "This means the content 'resonated' or was liked by netizens." Gandes supported this by stating that the high pageviews came from social media users who read Kompas.id articles because they found them relevant.

Discussion

The newsroom of Kompas Daily lacks a shared understanding of what news avoidance is, what drives it, and what its consequences are. This shared clarity is essential for formulating an effective, coherent strategy to address the issue. Leaving the interpretation of news avoidance to individual divisions or staff members risks producing fragmented and potentially ineffective responses that fail to resolve the underlying problem.

However, this study indicates that news avoidance within Kompas Daily arises from a range of internal and external factors affecting the newsroom. Internal factors stem from the editorial room and the organizational structure of Kompas Daily, whereas external factors originate outside the editorial room or the organization itself.

The external factors contributing to news avoidance at Kompas Daily include the phenomenon of information overload, news fatigue, and reading culture. The information overload factor is closely linked to the development of information technology. In the digital era, everyone can become both content creators and distributors, resulting in an abundance of information. This overwhelming influx of information ultimately leads many individuals to avoid news altogether.

Another external factor impacting news avoidance at Kompas Daily is literacy culture or reading interest. Kompas Daily is a journalistic product that has developed within a society with a relatively low reading interest. Consequently, many Indonesians are content with reading social media posts without feeling the need to seek more comprehensive information from mainstream media.

This situation is exacerbated by the phenomenon of news fatigue, which became prevalent during the pandemic. Many pandemic-related news stories conveyed alarming situations, inducing fear among audiences. Currently, problematic news is also being avoided. Problematic news contributes to news fatigue, as many individuals prefer not to engage with news that revolves around issues, believing it will add to their own burdens.

As a result, people tend to seek lighter content, news that provides entertainment, solutions, and other engaging material. Beyond these external factors, news avoidance is also influenced by internal factors related to news production that does not align with public needs. The dominance of problematic news and the lack of relevant content contribute to news avoidance.

As mentioned earlier, people avoid problematic news because they already face numerous challenges in their daily lives. Consuming such news only adds to their psychological burden. News is often equated with problematic content because editorial teams, as journalistic content producers, overlook other journalistic functions. Apart from serving as watchdogs and information providers, the press also functions to entertain and educate.

By balancing problematic news with entertaining and educational content, journalistic products are expected to become more relevant and aligned with readers' needs. The irrelevance of news coverage themes within the editorial agenda-setting process is another internal factor contributing to news avoidance.

Historically, the assumption that "editors know best" has prevailed. However, what editors believe to be important may not necessarily align with what readers need. At this intersection, internal and external factors of news avoidance at Kompas Daily converge. Editorial teams that

predominantly produce problematic news without balancing it with entertainment and educational content will inevitably face readers who avoid consuming news.

While previous studies have attributed news avoidance to psychological aspects of audiences due to negative, problematic, and repetitive news, this study finds that content relevance also plays a significant role. News that is not relevant to readers is more likely to be avoided. Relevant news is defined as news that is needed by the audience.

News avoidance at Kompas Daily has financial and non-financial implications. In non-financial terms, news avoidance results in low pageview traffic on Kompas.id, with visitor numbers falling short of expectations. In financial terms, news avoidance leads to a decline in newspaper readership and a sluggish growth rate of Kompas.id subscribers. This occurs because individuals are reluctant to subscribe, especially to access news they deliberately avoid. News is not perceived as a necessity, making individuals hesitant to allocate financial resources for it.

Beyond financial and non-financial impacts, news avoidance has also led to changes in the working system at Kompas Daily. The editorial team has begun actively involving the social media team in the agenda-setting process to ensure that the news produced is more relevant. By incorporating social media teams to monitor public discourse trends, news production can better align with audience needs.

The findings of this study reinforce the concepts of social media and journalism proposed in previous studies (Picard, 2009; Hermida, 2012). Picard asserts that social media provides a broad platform for news organizations to interact with readers, gather feedback, and expand information dissemination. Additionally, Hermida also confirms that social media allows journalists to share news in real time, integrating observations, impressions, and commentary on social platforms.

Kompas Daily has leveraged social media to observe trends and issues being discussed by the public. Furthermore, Kompas Daily utilizes social media to engage with audiences and disseminate journalistic content. However, at the same time, the fact that social media also contributes to information overload, which drives news avoidance, cannot be ignored by Kompas Daily. This aligns with Tian's (2022) concept of social media and journalism, which posits that social media can be a primary source of information excess, leading to news avoidance .

The findings of this study also support research by Skovsgaard & Andersen (2022), who found that news avoidance occurs because individuals have a specific aversion to news or prefer consuming other media content, such as entertainment. This study finds that news avoidance at Kompas Daily is particularly associated with problematic news that focuses on issues. Consequently, Kompas Daily has begun balancing its journalistic content production with entertainment, solution-based news, and lighter daily-life articles.

For the successful growth of paid media subscribers, news organizations such as Kompas Daily must understand customer behavior and preferences. This includes recognizing that customers are more likely to pay for products that provide entertainment and solutions, rather than just information. Therefore, collaborations with entertainment companies to create additional services could be an effective strategy.

To attract and retain subscribers, news organizations must offer more than just news content. They should develop additional services that provide added value, such as personalized content, reader interaction, and entertainment or cultural offerings (Goyanes, 2014). Without the ability to attract and retain subscribers, news avoidance will negatively impact the financial aspects of a news organization. Addressing news avoidance requires balancing journalistic content with entertainment and solution-based news to encourage people to subscribe. Without such strategies, news avoidance will continue to hinder the growth of paid media subscribers.

Table 2. Mapping of factors and implications of news avoidance for Kompas Daily

Drives	External	Phenomenon of information overload Phenomenon of news fatigue Societal reading culture/interest in reading
	Internal	Dominance of problematic news Content relevance
Consequences	Financial	Decline in Kompas Daily subscribers Stagnation in the growth of Kompas.id subscribers

Non-Financial	Low pageview traffic on Kompas.id
Work System	Balancing non-problematic news content Involvement of social media teams in editorial agenda-setting

Source: Authors' analysis

CONCLUSION

News avoidance has become an increasingly common phenomenon in the digital era. Kompas Daily is no exception, as it has also experienced the impact of this phenomenon. This study has provided answers to the research questions.

First, individuals within the editorial organization of Kompas Daily do not share the same perspective on news avoidance. However, they unanimously agree that the phenomenon exists and affects Kompas Daily. News avoidance is real, and the types of news being avoided are problematic news and content that is not relevant to readers.

Second, news avoidance at Kompas Daily is caused by various internal and external factors. External factors include information overload, news fatigue, and low reading culture in society. Information overload occurs due to the ease of producing and disseminating information in the digital era, leading to an overwhelming influx of content that causes people to disengage from news. News fatigue refers to exhaustion from excessive exposure to news, particularly negative and problematic news. Meanwhile, the low reading culture poses an additional challenge for mainstream media such as Kompas Daily.

Internal factors contributing to news avoidance at Kompas Daily include the misalignment of news production with public needs. The overemphasis on problematic news, coupled with the lack of entertaining or solution-oriented content, discourages audiences from engaging with the news. Additionally, irrelevant news topics that do not align with readers' interests further contribute to news avoidance.

Third, news avoidance at Kompas Daily has both financial and non-financial implications. From a non-financial perspective, news avoidance leads to a decline in pageview traffic and website visits to Kompas.id. From a financial standpoint, news avoidance results in a decline in newspaper readership and stagnated growth in Kompas.id subscriptions, which fail to meet expectations.

To mitigate news avoidance, Kompas Daily has adopted several strategies. One of these strategies involves actively involving the social media team in the agenda-setting process, ensuring that the news produced aligns with public discussions on social media. Additionally, Kompas Daily seeks to balance news content with entertaining and solution-oriented material, rather than focusing solely on problematic news.

These findings underscore the importance of news organizations understanding audience behavior and preferences. In the competitive digital era, media outlets cannot rely solely on news content; they must offer additional value, such as content personalization, audience interaction, and entertainment or cultural content. By recognizing and addressing reader needs, media organizations can mitigate news avoidance and foster stronger engagement with their audience.

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