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Framing Heatwave as a Disaster: A Content Analysis of Heatwave Coverage in Digital Broadsheets

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates how a heatwave is framed as a disaster among major digital broadsheets in the Philippines. Through a descriptive research design combining both qualitative and quantitative content analysis, this research systematically examined 312 news articles spanning from January to April during which heatwaves occurred in the research locale. Quantitative data was analyzed to identify frequency and patterns, while qualitative analysis provided deeper insights into the narratives and framing strategies. A purposive sampling, coding, and categorization of news articles were conducted to understand the portrayal of heatwave effects, the framing techniques employed by the journalists, the active forces involved in addressing the phenomenon, and the demographics of those most affected. The study revealed that major broadsheets highlighted the economic cost of the disaster with the heatwave events framed in terms of economic implications, including impacts on industries such as agriculture and energy sectors. Additionally, this study underscored the Department of Agriculture as the most active force and identified farmers and the fisherfolk as the groups most affected by the disaster, as the heatwaves directly threaten crop yields and livelihoods of those in the sector. Finally, this study provides insights into the media's role in shaping public perception of the heatwave, a phenomenon underrepresented in disaster communication research, thereby contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of its socio-economic implications and advocating for balanced media representation as a means to mitigate its impacts.

INTRODUCTION

Heatwaves are increasingly recognized as severe climatic events with profound impacts on public health, the economy, and the environment. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 2023 described the heatwave as a phenomenon characterized by the abnormality of the weather condition, sometimes described as "extreme heat," caused by periods of unusually hot and dry or hot and humid weather relative to the expected conditions of an area at a particular time of the year. Heatwaves pose different risks, including health-related situations and increased strain on water, energy, and transportation, resulting in power shortages (World Health Organization, 2020). In addition, food and livelihood security might also suffer, mainly when people affected lose their crops and livestock due to the extreme heat. To contextualize the issue in the agriculture sector, the Center for Climate and Energy Solutions (2023) underscored that heatwaves can increase the chances of extreme droughts and wildfires, which can lead to a negative impact as high temperatures can be damaging to the crops and livestock industry.

Heatwaves are increasingly being documented as an emerging phenomenon in the global news. To illustrate, WMO noted that over 90% of the ocean waters experienced heatwave conditions at least once, and that along with droughts, floods, wildfires, and tropical cyclones, heatwaves were "felt in the lives and livelihoods on every continent" (UN Weather agency, 2024). In 2022, United Kingdom was reported with the highest number of excess heat deaths during heatwave phenomenon which began in 2016 (Climate Change Committee, 2023); relatively, temperatures among Southeast Asian countries are also breaking heat records which threatened their agricultural outputs (Aris, 2024). Heatwaves can also have dramatic effects on various individuals, particularly the elderly and the vulnerable groups; to illustrate, Armstrong (2023) reported that Paris is the city with the highest risk of excess mortality among the elderly in the event of heatwaves.

In the Philippines, however, heatwaves are less frequently categorized as extreme weather events or full-fledged disasters compared to more widely recognized disasters. For instance, the discourse around severe weather conditions and disasters centers on more dramatic natural hazards such as typhoons, floods, landslides, volcanic eruptions, and earthquakes. Given the country's geographical region, these natural hazards understandably dominate the media coverage rather than heatwaves and are more prioritized among national broadsheets. Still, the need to explore how heatwaves are depicted in the media remains crucial as it can provide insights into the potential influence on disaster preparedness and policy responses of the agencies involved, the portrayed severity of the heatwaves, and the public's awareness of the various dimensions of a heatwave as an environmental phenomenon. With this, the need to explore heatwaves as a research topic is also necessary: to illustrate, a study assessing the extreme heat vulnerability in a region in Malaysia by Kamal *et al.* (2021) noted that understanding such a phenomenon enables the policymakers to "provide

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valuable inputs and decision-making support" that can, in turn, help the agencies "to prepare more targeted adaptation strategies in social and economic sectors." To cap it all, Bansal *et al.* (2023) highlighted that studying the environmental crises such as record-breaking high temperatures can enable changes to policies and practice to safeguard the health and wellbeing of current and future generations.

Anchored on Gregory Bateson's Framing Theory (1972, as cited in Arowolo (2017) which suggests that the way information is presented to the audience significantly affects how the latter interpret and respond to it, this research highlights the crucial role of the media in shaping public opinion as they present news on a targeted topic "within a specific and limited context." This study re-echoes Scheufele's (1999) understanding of frame as a central organizing idea for making sense of relevant phenomena and Essiene *et al.* 's (2022) contention that this theory will show how a topic or issue "can have influence on how it is understood by audiences. To elaborate, this study attempted to shed light on the framing of heatwaves as an emerging disaster brought about by climate change. Specifically, this research aims to answer the following research questions:

1. What disaster effects are featured in the heatwave news stories in the major broadsheets?
2. What news frames have these major broadsheets used to cover heatwave as a news topic?
3. Who or what are the active forces that have appeared in the disaster news stories?
4. Who or what are depicted as being affected in disaster news stories?

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design to explore how major broadsheets frame heatwave as a disaster media coverage. The researchers collected and gathered news stories covering heatwaves in the Philippine context using the PressReader as a news aggregator. Other related terms such as El Niño, dry spell, and drought are considered as long as they are related to heatwave coverage as a disaster. The chosen time of the data sources was from January 2024 to April 2024, during which heatwave events occurred within the research locale. With 312 articles gathered, the researchers have established data saturation, a term defined by Rhahimi & Khatooni (2024) as the point when no new data is obtained, wherein the sample size is deemed sufficient to capture the diversity of framing and themes generated in the study.

After the data-gathering process, the data pre-processing commenced, wherein the researchers manually filtered the news stories that were irrelevant and duplicates. This was followed by a data coding process, for which content analysis was employed as a tool. Content analysis is a research method employed to associate patterns in recorded communication. Its use is to discover the purpose, messages, and effects of communication content through the collected data from texts, which can be written, oral, or visual (Luo, 2023). Quantitative data was analyzed to identify frequency and patterns, while qualitative analysis provided deeper insights into the narratives and framing strategies. A purposive sampling, coding, and categorization of news articles were conducted to understand the portrayal of heatwave effects, the framing techniques employed by the journalists, the active forces involved in addressing the phenomenon, and the demographics of those most affected.

The news frames shown in Table 1 below were identified by the researchers beforehand after reviewing existing literature. They served as a coding guide for researchers to analyze news frames.

Table 1: Description of frames in the study as coding guide for analysis

Identified Frames	Description	Definition Sources
Attribution of Responsibility	Broadsheets may frame heatwave events by attributing responsibility to factors such as climate change, urbanization, government policies, or individual behaviors.	(Semetko *et al.* 2000)
Risk Frame	Heatwave events may be framed as significant risks to public health, infrastructure, and the environment, emphasizing extreme heat's potential dangers and consequences.	(Parida *et al.* 2021)
Conflict Frame	Heatwave events may be framed with a central focus on the conflict between two or more subjects: government and business or people versus nature.	(Dotson, *et al.* 2012)
Scientific/ Expert Frame	Some broadsheets may frame heatwave events by emphasizing scientific data, expert opinions, and research findings to provide context and analysis.	(Molder *et al.* 2022)
Economic Frame	Heatwave events could be framed in terms of their economic implications, including impacts on agriculture, tourism, energy, and healthcare.	(O'Neill *et al.* 2015)
Policy Frame	Coverage may highlight government responses, policies, and initiatives aimed at mitigating the impacts of heatwaves, as well as debates surrounding adaptation and preparedness measures.	(O'Neill *et al.* 2015)
Environmental Frame	Heatwave events may be framed within an environmental context, discussing their effects on ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources and implications for climate change adaptation.	(Mateu & Dominguez 2019)

In the data organization process, the researchers read each news article carefully and applied the coding categories to systematically analyze how heatwave events are framed and the predominant themes and narratives presented in the corpus of the study. The researchers used the web-based software Dedoose to facilitate coding, organization, and exploration of the filtered data. A qualitative analysis followed to explore the nuances and complexities of the framing and themes identified. Figure 1 below visually summarizes the process flow of this study.

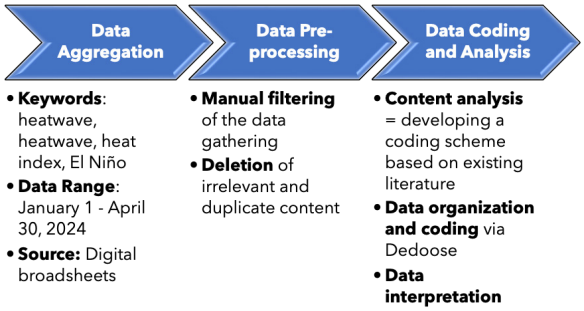

Figure 1: Process flow of the study from data collection to interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Featured Disaster Effects in Heatwave News Stories

Table 2 shows the featured disaster effects as depicted in the heatwave news stories in the major broadsheets. It highlights how news stories have chosen to represent the impacts of heatwaves, illustrating the different aspects that were emphasized or downplayed.

Table 2: Disaster Effects in Heatwave News Stories

	Number of times frame appeared in all stories (n)	Proportion of all stories that included frame (%)
Destruction or damage caused by disaster	35	16.28
Cost of disaster; business problems or closings	86	40
Water and power supply shortage	39	18.13
Political implications	2	0.93
Decline in product quality	6	2.79
Inflation and price changes	1	0.46
Panic, worry, distress, mental health issue	14	6.51
Closing of schools; problems in schools	7	3.25
Loss of livelihood	17	7.90
Physical health problems (but not related to death or major injuries)	7	3.25
Closing of government offices or services	1	0.46
Total	215	99.96

Table 2 shows the disaster effects as highlighted in the heatwave news stories with the cost of disaster/business problems or closings as the most frequent disaster effect (n=86, %=40), followed by water and power supply shortage (n=39, %=18.13), destruction or damage caused by disaster (n=35, %=16.28), loss of livelihood (n=17, %=7.90) and panic, worry, distress, and mental health-related issues (n=14, %=6.51). The remaining topics/subjects emphasized among news articles came with fewer frequencies: physical health problems (but not related to death or major injuries) (n=7, %=3.25), closing of schools and/or problems in schools (n=7, %=3.25); decline in product quality (n=6, %=2.79), political implications (n=2, %=0.93); inflation and price changes (n=1, %=0.46); and closing of government offices or services (n=1, %=0.46).

This study emphasizes that the cost of disaster/business problems or closings is highlighted the most among the featured disaster effects in heatwave news stories. Climate change, mainly centering on a heatwave event, poses an issue economically across multiple sectors in the society. Specifically, heatwave coverage focused on the economic implications of the heatwaves among various sectoral groups, which include the farmers, the fisherfolk, the education sector, and even the government itself.

The high frequency of this particular issue can be justified by the fact that the Philippines has always been struggling economically compared with other neighboring Asian countries, and the appearance of a disastrous event such as a heatwave can hamper economic activities, leading to reduced productivity and other agricultural losses. To further compound this issue, the country reported a significant decrease in its total disaster risk reduction expenditures (DRRE) compared to its previous year (PSA, 2023). According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), much of these expenditures were primarily spent on disaster mitigation, with disaster recovery expenditures being the lowest category. Notably, heatwaves despite their increasing frequency and impact as documented in various reports and studies (Estoque *et al.*, 2020; Guadalupe *et al.*, 2018; Bloomberg, 2024), have not been prioritized within the disaster risk reduction framework in the Philippines, a country that sits within the Pacific Ring of Fire and is historically more prone to typhoons, floods, and earthquakes.

Data analysis shows that media professionals use emotional language and images to express heatwave vulnerable groups, as these topics are revealed through the use of different media platforms – aiming to urge governments to take measures against them. In response, the audience who are the recipient of the message and mainly rely on the media for disaster-related topics will likely accept the information as is (Park & Lee, 2023). Also, it is clear that as disasters occur whether natural or not has always a profound effect in the social and economic dimensions, which has the potential to disrupt

the development of a certain community, especially if the appropriate measures are not adopted properly (Joseph, 2022).

As the effects of climate change intensify, heatwaves are putting significant strain on the health and social system and threatening ecological diversity worldwide. Studies show that heatwaves are becoming more frequent and severe through time in which the government and other sectors are making their efforts to address and mitigate the issue (Klingelhöfer *et al.*, 2023). By identifying and analyzing the most featured disaster effects in heatwave news stories, we gain insight into how the media highlighted effects in their news stories that consequently shape public perception, opinion, and discourse surrounding heatwave effects.

News Frames Used in Heatwave Coverage

Table 3 shows the news frames used in heatwave coverage among major broadsheets based on the identified frames as declared in the coding guide for analysis. It provides a comprehensive overview of the various framing techniques that were applied in reporting heatwave events and how the digital broadsheets structured their narratives.

Table 3: News Frames Used in Heatwave Coverage

	Number of times frame appeared in all stories (n)	**Proportion of all stories that included frame (%)**
Attribution of Responsibility	7	2.02
Risk Frame	35	10.14
Scientific/Expert Frame	35	10.14
Economic Frame	99	28.69
Policy Frame	143	41.44
Environmental Frame	24	6.95
Conflict Frame	2	0.57
Total	345	99.95

Table 3 shows the news frames used in the heatwave coverage among identified major broadsheets in the Philippines. The policy frame is the most common news frame for covering heatwaves during the analysis period (n=143, %=41.44). The economic frame (n=99, %=28.69) and scientific/expert frame ranked second (n=35, %=10.14), followed by the environmental frame (n=24, %=6.95). The remaining frames with fewer frequencies include attribution of responsibility (n=7, %=2.02) and conflict frame (n=2, %=0.57).

The policy frame in media framing refers to how news stories are structured to emphasize governmental or institutional policies, decisions, or actions. This includes responses and initiatives geared towards mitigating the impacts of heatwaves and adaptation and preparedness measures done concerning this disaster. In the study of Mondal *et al.* (2021), disasters, whether natural or man-made, are a pressing issue faced by a country or community, and minimizing their effect becomes the government's primary objective. The same study also noted that ensuring a steady flow of communication to the local communities impacted by the disaster can help alleviate the situation. An analysis of the news articles showed that much of the content focused on providing affected sectors with financial and other assistance, implementing poverty-reduction and employment programs such as food-for-work and food-for-training programs, regulating food prices affecting inflation, and constructing infrastructure and development projects. Additionally, many of these policies are directed toward those heavily affected by the heatwaves, such as the farmers and fisherfolks, and highlight the responsibilities of policymakers and government institutions.

This particular result emphasizes how policy frames help shape how the public understands and interprets governmental decisions and actions, especially in the context of disaster and risk communication. By studying how specific policies, regulations, and decisions are presented in the news stories, one can gain insights into what aspects of the disaster-related stories are being emphasized or downplayed and how such can influence public opinion and discourse. This proves what Parida *et al.* (2021) espoused that among key players, the media serves a crucial role by disseminating information and continually shaping public opinion regarding environmental issues.

In addition, disasters are considered a threat especially in the stability of public institutions as much as they create opportunities, since political leaders often leverage crises and disasters to initiate changes and policy reforms (Liu & Boin, 2020). Data analysis shows that most of the framed topics concerning policies undertaken during this period are structured to portray the government as active and in control with the situation in terms of disaster response and recovery efforts; however, these policies are short-term band-aid solutions and lack long-term sustainability impact. From a communication and media perspective, the media exercises its power to shape ideas in several ways by its ability to set agendas, frame issues, prime audiences, and influence cultural and policy perceptions. Thus, the media significantly impacts public discourse and societal attitudes toward how heatwaves can be seen as an emerging disaster in the context of the policies and responses to prepare and mitigate the disastrous effects. The media establishes a direct connection between the public and the disaster organizations, playing a crucial role in delivering the necessary information to the public before, during, and after the disasters. Practitioners in the field aids in disaster management by educating the public about potential disasters that may encourage discussions on disaster preparedness and response for ongoing improvement (Sarma, 2021).

Further analysis of the news frames revealed that

broadsheets frame heatwaves as a disaster through their economic implications, mainly focusing on how many billions of agricultural damages and reported increase of farmlands were lost during the heatwave duration; as such, this neglects other possible frames, such as scientific, environment, and health concerns. This also reflects a prioritization of issues communicated through these national broadsheets: the focus is more on the public, and policymakers focus on tangible and immediate agricultural losses and economic disruptions.

However, such framing may also overshadow the long-term consequences of heatwaves, which include environmental degradation, biodiversity loss, and scientific understanding of climate change drivers. By downplaying the underlying environmental and scientific causes of heatwaves as an emerging form of disaster, the media deemphasizes the opportunity to understand the issue scientifically, a likely prerequisite for honing sustainable, forward-looking solutions among its audience. The study of Liu & Mehta (2020) also reported that many journalists were not aware of the science behind extreme weather events, and suggested "to find ways to educate and inform" them.

With the dominant economic frame, the public engagement lies on how much financial assistance is given to those affected by the heatwave instead, and not more on fostering a long-term scientific thinking and solutions-based approach that could have engendered informed public discourse on sustainable policies.

Additionally, the findings of this study emphasize the significant role that media plays in shaping public perception of heatwaves, a disaster that remains underrepresented in disaster communication research. The predominant focus on the economic implications of heatwaves, particularly their impact on agriculture and energy sectors, suggests that media coverage tends to prioritize certain aspects while neglecting others, such as health and environmental concerns. This has broader implications for disaster management and policy-making, as public understanding of the multifaceted nature of heatwaves may be limited, leading to a narrowed scope of response strategies.

Active Forces in Heatwave Coverage

Table 4 shows the frequency of the active forces in this study's news coverage of heatwaves. It shows how often different entities were referenced in terms of their roles and actions during heatwave events.

Table 4: Active Forces in Heatwave Coverage

	Number of times frame appeared inall stories(n)	**Proportion of all stories that included frame (%)**
Department of Agriculture (DA)	65	25.79
Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR	7	2.77
Department of Enterior and Local Government (DILG)	5	1.98
Department of Energy (DOE)	9	3.57
Department of Health (DOH)	8	3.17
Department of Labor and Employment(DOLE)	5	1.98
Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD)	15	5.95
Department of Education (DepEd)	5	1.98
Local Government Unit (LGU)	43	17.06
National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC)	9	3.57
Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Services Administration (PAGASA)	39	15.47
National Government/ Office of the President	30	11.90
Research Institutions and Reports Copernicus Climate Change Service	6	2.38
United Nations/ World Health Organization	6	2.38
Total	252	99.95

Table 4 shows the active forces in the heatwave coverage among major broadsheets in the Philippines, where the Department of Agriculture tops among the agencies appearing in the heatwave coverage (n=65, %=25.79). The Local Government Unit ranked second (n=43, %=17.06), followed by the Philippine Atmospheric Geophysical and Astronomical Service Administration (PAGASA) (n=39, %=15.47). The National Government/ Office of the President ranked fourth (n=30, %=11.90), followed by the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) (n=15, %=5.95). The remaining frames include the following: Department of Energy (n=9, %=3.57), National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council (NDRRMC) (n=9, %=3.57), Department

of Health (DOH) (n=8, %=3.17), Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) (n=7, %=2.77), Research Institutions and Reports Copernicus Climate Change Service (n=6, %=2.38), United Nations/ World Health Organization (n=6, %=2.38), Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG) (n=5, %=1.98), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) (n=5, %=1.98), and Department of Education (DepEd) (n=5, %=1.98).

Table 4 showcases the Department of Agriculture (DA) as an agency that appeared frequently as an active force in the heatwave coverage among identified news articles. DA is a government agency mainly responsible for promoting agricultural and fisheries development in the country. Additionally, its goals are centered on issues such as the livelihoods of farmers and fisherfolks, rural and agricultural development, food security, and many more.

This agency emerged as the most active force in this study because heatwaves impact agricultural resources regarding crop yields, livestock production, and water resources. As an agency assigned to address the challenges of those involved in farming and fishing, the DA is responsible for understanding and mitigating the effects of heatwaves among those sectors on which such disasters can have a considerable impact. In addition, Chapagai *et al.* (2023) argued that it is the government's role to allocate resources and train farmers in integrating "climate-smart agriculture practices" that makes the agricultural sector more resilient to climate variations, ensuring consistent food production while minimizing environmental impact. Identifying active forces, whether government agencies, political actors, interest groups, or individuals, significantly shapes how issues are framed in public discourse. Matejova (2023) highlighted that the amount of space given to these political actors and the frames associated with them reveal "both the degree of access and the choice of political strategies in disaster communication." With the broadsheet media's crucial position in shaping perception among its target audience, its portrayal of the active forces in the context of their roles, action plans, and responses to climate change issues can drive the narrative in public discourse to whatever they see fit. Gesser-Edelsburg *et al.* (2022) validated the media's influence in the context of framing theory in the field of disaster communication and pointed out that "disaster is not entirely determined by the type or magnitude of the disaster" but rather by "how the public interprets the disaster," the latter of which is influenced by public relations and media framing.

Examining the active forces in heatwave coverage emphasizes the multifaceted role of digital broadsheets on climate-related disasters such as heatwaves. By identifying these forces, one can better comprehend the individuals, institutions, and agencies that emerge into the fore, may it be in the context of disaster mitigation and recovery and policy formulation.

Disaster Affected in Heatwave Coverage

Table 5 shows the frequency of stakeholders/groups affected by the disaster across all the news stories analyzed in this study.

Table 5: Disaster Affected in Heatwave Coverage

	Number of times frame appeared in all stories (n)	**Proportion of all stories that included frame (%)**
Animals	2	2.35
Business/Economy	2	2.35
Elderly	2	2.35
Families	4	4.70
Farmers and Fisherfolks	62	72.94
First Responders/ Traffic Enforcers /Firefighters	3	3.52
Students/Teacher /Schools	10	11.76
Total	85	99.97

Table 5 shows the disaster-affected sector in heatwave coverage, which is highlighted among major broadsheets in the Philippines. Farmers and fisherfolks ranked first among the sectors (n=62, %=72.94), followed by the students/ teachers/ schools (n=10, %=11.76). The remaining frames with fewer frequencies include Families (n=4, %=4.70), First Responders/ Traffic Enforcers/ Firefighters (n=4, %=3.52), Animals (n=2, %=2.35), Business/Economy (n=2, %=2.35), and Elderly (n=2, %=2.35).

By exploring the sector affected mainly by the heatwaves in the most popular broadsheets, one can better understand how the media frames the heatwave as a disaster and an issue for public discourse. As the broadsheet is a large-format newspaper known for its serious, in-depth journalism and its coverage and reach, it is considered a vital tool that can set the agenda on what to prioritize, what to focus on, and what the implications of the narrative surrounding the issue. Moncada *et al.* (2024) shared the same insight - the media frames, whether the active forces or the sector most heavily affected, have the potential to draw attention in terms of "the course of actions that should be taken, or even the grand narratives that can influence how issues and events are interpreted and acted upon."

The farmers and fisherfolks are depicted as the most affected sector in the content analysis of framing heatwaves in the identified digital broadsheets. Analysis shows that heatwaves are framed in the context of their compounded effects on the agricultural and fishing industry, which include crop damage, reduced yields, water shortages, poor livestock health, and other economic losses. The nature of this sector's work is directly tied to the varying environmental conditions, for which the heatwave exacerbates its overall vulnerability, the very environment from which it depends. In this

situation, farmers and fisherfolk are not only at risk from agricultural and economical threats. Experts believe that prolonged heat exposure may heighten their vulnerability to face 'climate-sensitive' illnesses, such as heat stress and heat stroke since they are frequently exposed to intense heat of the sun during the day (Limayo, 2020). In addition, the recent heatwave in the Philippines had a profound effect on various sectors including schools as the temperature and heat index rises each day, especially those classrooms that are suffering with poor ventilation and air conditioning systems, posing health risks to students and employees (Morales, 2024).

Since heatwaves are inherently a scientific phenomenon driven by complex interactions between atmospheric conditions, climate change, and environmental factors, a scientific and expert frame may be helpful and necessary. Additionally, a science communication perspective in journalism facilitates the reportage of scientific information and is crucial in public understanding of issues such as heatwaves and climate change. While it is true that communicating economic impacts may be significant, they are only one aspect of the issue in disaster and risk communication. As the media stands as a powerful shaper of ideas, sidelining other concerns, such as environmental and scientific factors, inadvertently limits public understanding of the broader consequences of the heatwaves. A more balanced media representation through communicating science-based information that includes the social, health, and environmental aspects of heatwaves may be needed for more informed decision-making in the areas of disaster preparedness and response among the active forces and opportunities for the stakeholders to engage in meaningful public discourse on climate change and sustainability challenges.

CONCLUSIONS

This study highlights the critical role of digital broadsheets in framing heatwaves as disasters in the Philippines. Employing both qualitative and quantitative content analysis, this research revealed that the dominant framing in news articles focused more on the economic impacts of heatwaves, especially in critical industries such as the agriculture and energy sectors. The prominence of economic impacts of heatwaves in the digital broadsheet coverage shape the public perception and policy priorities of the active forces identified in the study. The media mostly portrayed the economic costs of the heatwave and highlighted the farmers and the fisherfolks as the most vulnerable sectors. Additionally, the Department of Agriculture (DA) stood as a prominent active force in addressing the heatwave as a crisis and is portrayed as the leading agency in the government's agricultural recovery and mitigation efforts.

This study also highlights the media's powerful influence in framing public perception on heatwaves. As an often-overlooked topic in disaster communication and in the research culture, heatwaves present unique challenges that are exacerbated by inadequate media coverage due to the lack of scientific orientation on the subject. Such gaps in media coverage often lead to oversimplified narratives on heatwaves that fail to capture their complex impact on society, including the root causes and the surrounding environmental, social, and economic factors. The findings underscore the need for balanced media portrayals incorporating science-based information, which can play a critical role in mitigating the broader impacts of heatwaves.

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