Representation of Vegan in Indonesian Online Media: A Corpus Based Discourse Study

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini meneroka perwakilan vegan dalam media dalam talian Indonesia menggunakan pendekatan analisis wacana berbantukan korpus (CADS). Penyelidikan menganalisis 200 artikel daripada Detik.com yang diterbitkan antara 2022 dan 2024, memfokuskan pada kolokasi dan prosodi semantik istilah "vegan." Penemuan mendedahkan bahawa veganisme digambarkan bukan sahaja sebagai pilihan diet tetapi juga sebagai gaya hidup mampan yang sejajar dengan prinsip etika dan alam sekitar. Wacana itu menekankan manfaat kesihatan, kelestarian alam sekitar dan prinsip tanpa kekerasan. Unsur budaya tempatan, seperti tempe, ditonjolkan sebagai representasi praktikal dan simbolik vegan di Indonesia. Kajian ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman tentang bagaimana media membentuk persepsi masyarakat terhadap vegan di Indonesia.

Kata kekunci: Analisis wacana, linguistik korpus, media dalam talian Indonesia, vegan

ABSTRACT

This study investigates the representation of veganism in Indonesian online media using a Corpus-Assisted Discourse Analysis (CADS) approach. By analyzing 200 news articles from Detik.com published between 2022 and 2024, this research examines the collocations and semantic prosody of the term "vegan" to explore how the media constructs narratives around veganism. The findings suggest that veganism is portrayed as more than just a dietary choice; it is framed as an ethical and environmentally sustainable lifestyle. The discourse highlights the health benefits of a vegan diet, its role in reducing environmental impact, and its alignment with the principles of non-violence. Additionally, Indonesian cultural elements, such as tempeh, are frequently referenced as both practical and symbolic representations of veganism in the local context. Unlike Western media, which often depicts veganism as extreme or militant, Indonesian media tends to emphasize its positive contributions to health, sustainability, and cultural adaptability. The study underscores the media's role in shaping public perception and contributing to the normalization of vegan practices in Indonesia. By employing corpus-based discourse analysis, this research provides insights into the language patterns and ideological positioning of veganism within Indonesian online media. The findings contribute to broader discussions on the intersection of media, culture, and dietary practices in shaping public discourse.

Keywords: Corpus linguistics, discourse analysis, Indonesian online media, vegan

INTRODUCTION

Vegan, as defined by Vegan Society Indonesia (2020), is not just a habit of eating vegetables, but also a lifestyle that teaches a balanced diet. In recent years, vegan diets have gained greater attention in public discussions (Wreen, 2019). In Indonesia alone, a Snapcart survey (2023) showed that 11% of Indonesians are vegan. This shows that although the number of vegan lifestyle adherents is still relatively small, the concept of veganism is gaining attention and

becoming an attractive life choice. With the growing interest in adopting a vegan lifestyle, many people are now starting to change their diets by consuming less meat and dairy and more fruits and vegetables (Willett et al., 2019), with the benefit of reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease (Saras, 2022), type 2 diabetes (Ilfada et al., 2024), and cancer (Mishra et al., 2024). In addition to the health aspect, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (2024) wrote down the points of a press release by the Deputy Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy regarding the vegan lifestyle. First, studies in the application of vegan or plant-based diets can reduce greenhouse gas emissions and water pollution by 75%, and reduce the use of clean water by 54%. Second, about 1-3% of the world's population has adopted a vegan lifestyle, and this number is expected to increase by about 6.2 percent annually over the next 10 years. Third, there is economic potential in veganism for Indonesia.

Known as influential entities in the social, political, and economic spheres, news media platforms hold the power to highlight and raise awareness about health-related issues (Kanchan, S., & Gaidhane, A., 2023). In the vegan context, the media can play an important role in educating the public, shaping perceptions about plant-based diets, and countering stigma and misconceptions about vegan lifestyles (Kley, S., et al., 2024). As Kley, S., et al (2024) state, the language used by the media when discussing vegans has a significant impact on people's views and attitudes towards plant-based lifestyles. This influence extends not only to individuals living a vegan lifestyle, but can also have a good or bad influence on the perception of society as a whole.

There is much research on how news media portray vegans. Pera and Aiello (2024) used YouTube online media promoting plant-based diets as an effort to protect the environment. Research by Righetti & Bertuzzi (2024) analyzed 200,000 vegan-related messages on Facebook in ten years (2010-2020), while this study focuses on online media in Indonesia with data in the last three years (2022-2024), a period where vegan representation in Indonesian online media has the potential to increase. Research with corpus linguistic analysis has also been applied by Brookes & Chałupnik (2022) on how veganism is represented in the UK, as well as research by Santallusia Lloan (2023) on the representation of veganism in four UK newspapers in the period 2010 to 2015. However, this approach with corpus linguistic analysis has not been applied to analyze vegan representation in Indonesian online media.

This research seeks to address the gap by analyzing the word 'vegan' using corpus-based discourse analysis (CADS) (Baker et al., 2008; Partington et al., 2013) with data from 200 online articles from one of the online media Detik.com, the largest and most popular digital online media (Hidayat, R., & Ridwan, F. K., 2024). The data was collected from 2022 to 2024. The main focus of this research is to identify the collocation pattern of the word "vegan", as well as to analyze the representation of the collocation pattern of "vegan". With the aim of uncovering how Indonesian online media portrays vegans, as well as exploring the popularity of vegans in Indonesia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies have explored the portrayal of vegans in online media. Pera & Aiello's (2024) research analyzed how narratives delivered on YouTube influenced people's responses, focusing on vegans as an effort to protect the environment. Righetti & Bertuzzi's (2024) research analyzed how people express veganism on Facebook. These studies show that the media plays an important role in shaping public perceptions of vegans.

CADS has also been used to examine news media representations of vegans. In the context of vegans in the UK, Brookes & Chałupnik (2022) examined how vegans and veganism are portrayed in tabloids and newspapers, and the impact of media coverage on people's views of veganism. This research is in line with Santallusia Lloan's (2023) research, which compared how the word "vegan" was used in newspapers between 2010 and 2015 with a focus on differences and

similarities in word usage, as well as looking at whether each newspaper's political views influenced the way they discussed veganism. This research differs from previous studies that used data from the English media, with a focus on analyzing how the word 'vegan' is discussed in Indonesian news texts. This focus introduces a new angle that can enrich understanding in existing research.

METHODOLOGY

This research uses a combination of corpus linguistics and discourse analysis techniques to identify how online media in Indonesia represent vegans (Baker, 2023). By using a corpus linguistics approach, researchers can analyze large amounts of data. As stated by Baker (2006), this method can minimize researcher bias and holistic analysis of the text. By focusing on each word, phrase, and sentence structure, this approach can provide an in-depth understanding of the discourse. The use of corpus linguistics allows researchers to identify common sentence patterns in discourse about vegans. As explained by Biber et al. (2006), CADS is based on empirical evidence and involves analyzing language patterns found in natural texts. Moreover, this method can provide insights into changes and perspectives that may emerge in society regarding vegans. As such, CADS analysis can help reveal the dynamics and development of vegan issues in the media sphere, thus enriching our understanding of how this lifestyle is represented and discussed in society.

This research uses a data set consisting of online news articles in Indonesia that discuss vegans. The articles were collected from online media Detik.com, in the span of 2022 to 2024. The decision to focus on the Detik.com platform is because it is still the largest and most popular online media (Lisnawati, 2024). This selection aims to ensure the representation of a comprehensive perspective from a single platform on vegan information in the Indonesian online media landscape.

Articles were collected by searching for the term 'vegan' on Detik.com. Articles that contained at least one mention of the word vegan were included in this study. However, we imposed a restriction on the year of publication of the articles, i.e. only articles published within the desired timeframe were included in the study. Of all the articles collected; 95 articles from 2022, 46 articles from 2023, and 59 articles from 2024, it is expected that these 200 articles can ensure representativeness in the selection of articles to be analyzed. Thus, these steps lead to a more targeted and representative data collection for the purpose of the research regarding vegan coverage on Detik.com online media.

For analysis, researcher used a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2014), blending both approaches to analyze the portrayal of the term 'vegan' in online media. The quantitative approach involved the use of corpus linguistic techniques to examine the statistics and frequency of the word 'vegan' in the context of discourse. On the other hand, a qualitative approach was applied when interpreting the findings of the corpus analysis, examining collocation and concordance. Researcher used AntConc 4.2.4 software (Anthony, 2023) to process the data. The results showed that the news corpus data had a total of 95,538 words. The software was also used to perform collocation and concordance analysis.

The qualitative analysis in this study involved two main stages. First, an exploration of the collocation of the term 'vegan' within the corpus. Collocation, as defined by Stubbs (2001) refers to the repeated and meaningful co-occurrence of words. Baker (2023) highlights the advantages of using collocation analysis in discourse analysis, as it can reveal salient and distinctive lexical patterns associated with a particular subject. These patterns serve as a valuable resource for gaining insight into the discourse associated with the subject 'vegan'. Furthermore, researcher analyzed concordances based on collocations of words categorized as content words, as they

provide a more specific or special meaning in a given context (Pennebaker et al., 2014). According to Baker (2010), concordance is essentially a compilation of all instances of a word, phrase, or search term, along with contextual information on each occurrence.

Concordance analysis plays a key role in discourse analysis for two main reasons. First, it allows researchers to identify evidence of semantic prosody or preference patterns in language use. Secondly, without concordance analysis, the researcher may be trapped in false assumptions regarding the content of the corpus under study. In this study, the focus of analysis lies on the collocation relationship between nouns and verbs, as well as the accompanying semantic prosody. Semantic prosody, as described by Stubbs (2001), is a characteristic of discourse that goes beyond the boundaries of linear language units. Furthermore, Baker (2010) explains that semantic prosody can be identified through examining a list of strong collocations associated with a particular word.

This study used a range of five words on either side of the keyword to explore the relationship between words. In addition, the log-likelihood statistical method (Dunning, 1993) was applied to evaluate the statistical significance of collocation. This method not only helps to identify relationships that do not occur randomly but also avoids high judgment on words with low frequency. This approach provides more accurate and reliable results in understanding the language patterns in the corpus.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this section, the discourses identified through collocation analysis will be presented. To clarify the analysis, researcher categorized these discourses based on relevant themes or aspects of representation.

Table 1 Modifier of Vegan

Collocation	Frequency	Log-likelihood
Pola	254	175.639
Gaya	72	65.325
Hidup	96	61.064
Lifestyle	20	29.878
Kaum	20	28.230
Kelompok	26	26.550
Ramah	30	25.411
Menu	72	22.546
Konsep	24	20.473

Table 2 Vegan Verb as Subject

Collocation	Frequency	Log-likelihood
Menjalani	88	83.909
Mengaku	34	24.529
Mengonsumsi	86	24.262
Mengikuti	28	20.843

Table 3 Vegan Verb as Object

Collocation	Frequency	Log-likelihood
Makan	252	70.835
Menjadi	148	37.432
Mereka	102	20.921
Mengandung	8	20.089

Table 4 Adjective Description of Vegan

Collocation	Frequency	Log-likelihood
Istilah	18	26.717
Ramah	30	25.411

Table 5 Vegan is

Collocation	Frequency	Log-likelihood
Hidup	8	16.751
Pola	10	14.605
Gaya	6	14.489
Bermanfaat	4	11.691

Definition of Vegan

Veganism is a lifestyle that is gaining increasing attention at the global level as it is believed to provide significant benefits, both in terms of individual health, ethics, and environmental sustainability. This lifestyle consistently avoids the consumption of animal products such as meat, dairy, and eggs, as part of a commitment to ethical principles that respect the rights of other living beings and an effort to minimize negative impacts on the ecosystem.

> ***Vegan*** *adalah pola hidup di mana seseorang menghindari konsumsi susu, telur, dan bahan.*
>
> (Detik.com, 07 Juli 2023)

Ecologically, vegans are seen as one of the strategic solutions to global challenges, such as climate change and the environment. By lowering the carbon footprint and reducing the exploitation of natural resources, this lifestyle makes a real contribution to creating a sustainable planet. More than just a dietary choice, veganism is a philosophy of life that reflects the values of sustainability, empathy, and social responsibility. Despite debates over its impact on individual needs or certain aspects of the ecology, veganism remains a symbol of social change that aims to establish a balance between humans, animals, and the environment.

> *Aku tidak lagi merasa bahwa gaya hidup **vegan** adalah solusi yang tepat untuk planet dan tanah.*
>
> (Detik.com, 2022)

> *Gaya hidup **vegan** adalah hal bermanfaat baik untuk kesehatan juga dalam lingkungan.*
>
> (Detik.com, 2024)

Vegan Lifestyle Pattern

The discourse that observe in the article is that veganism is a pattern or lifestyle with the most explicit realization of this discourse being the use of the word 'pattern'. Vegan patterns tend to be portrayed as healthy lifestyles, disease prevention, dieting, and interestingly can increase sex drive in women.

> ***Pola*** *makan vegan memang baik untuk kesehatan, apalagi jika dijalani oleh orang-orang yang selama ini mengonsumsi makanan hewani dan berkalori tinggi.*
> (Detik.com, 04 Januari 2023)

> *Banyak program diet yang dilakukan orang demi mendapatkan tubuh ideal. Salah satunya dengan mengubah **pola** makan menjadi vegan. Cara ini terbukti efektif dan berhasil menurunkan berat badan hingga puluhan kilogram.*
> (Detik.com, 21 Januari 2022)

This vegan diet is known for its various health benefits. One of them is its ability to maintain an ideal body. By eating more plant-based foods that are low in calories and high in fiber, the body can reduce the absorption of saturated fat, which contributes to healthy weight loss and keeping the body fit. Additionally, a vegan diet helps reduce cravings for snacks, as the high fiber in plant-based foods keeps the stomach feeling fuller for longer.

> *Penelitian menyebutkan banyak manfaat kesehatan dari **pola** makan vegan dan vegetarian ini, di antaranya Mencegah penyakit kronis sehingga bisa memperpanjang umur dan Menurunkan kadar gula darah.*
> (Detik.com, 24 Februari 2023)

> ***Pola*** *makan vegan juga dapat memberikan manfaat untuk diabetes tipe 2 dan menjaga fungsi ginjal.*
> (Detik.com, 10 Februari 2022)

> ***Pola*** *makan vegan yang mengasup banyak buah dan sayuran ternyata tak hanya bagus untuk kesehatan. Asupan ini juga meningkatkan gairah seks pada wanita. Asupan ini meningkatkan sirkulasi darah ke alat kelamin sehingga lebih sensitif pada rangsangan.*
> (Detik.com, 9 Januari 2024)

Vegan and vegetarian diets are known to have many significant health benefits. Apart from preventing chronic diseases and prolonging life, these plant-based diets have also been shown to be effective in lowering blood sugar levels, which is especially beneficial for people with type 2 diabetes. Furthermore, a vegan diet rich in fruits and vegetables can support kidney health. Not only that, this diet also has a positive impact on women's sexual health. More than just nourishing the body, a vegan diet can also provide other benefits, such as increasing sex drive in women. Several studies have shown that a plant-based diet can influence hormones and increase overall body energy, which contributes to increased sexual arousal. An abundant intake of fruits and vegetables increases blood circulation to the genitals, making them more sensitive to stimulation and potentially increasing sex drive.

Became to Vegan

Next, the focus of the research will turn to the discourse of individuals' decisions to transition to veganism. This transition includes not only those who voluntarily choose to stop consuming animal products, but also those who experience positive impacts on physical and mental health.

*Tidak hanya memperbaiki fisik tetapi juga mental. **Menjadi** vegan tidak hanya mengubah tubuh saya tetapi juga kulit dan energi saya. Saya meningkatkan asupan buah dan sayuran.*

(Detik.com, 21 Januari 2022)

As Danielle, an individual who lost 45 kilograms after going vegan, reveals, the change in diet not only improves physical but also mental health. This shows that veganism is now seen not just as a diet trend, but also as a lifestyle that brings significant changes in health.

*Berbagai artis papan atas kemudian juga mengabdikan dirinya **menjadi** vegan seperti Zac Efron. Pola diet vegan benar-benar mengubah bagaimana tubuh saya bekerja, dan cara saya memetabolisme makanan, mengubahnya jadi energi, dan cara saya tidur.*

(Detik.com, 15 Maret 2022)

Furthermore, various celebrities and famous figures have also adopted a vegan diet, one of which is Zac Efron. In his confession, Efron revealed that going vegan has had a positive impact on his body, with significant improvements in energy and sleep patterns. This discourse shows that veganism is becoming more widely accepted, both as a sustainable lifestyle choice and as a long-term health solution.

*Miskonsepsi terbesar adalah orang-orang **menjadi** vegan untuk menurunkan berat badan. Tidak. Gue jadi vegan, gue bertambah gendut. Tapi apakah itu berarti gue tidak sesehat sebelumnya? Nggak juga. Masalahnya, kita kebanyakan pikir 'lo makan sayur-sayuran berarti lo ingin menurunkan berat badan berarti lo sehat' (padahal) nggak juga.*

(Detik.com, 07 September 2022)

However, despite many adopting a vegan diet, there are still growing misconceptions. For example, Andovi da Lopez responded to the notion that vegans are only used for weight loss purposes, emphasizing that the reasons for going vegan are not just limited to weight loss, but more broadly encompass a more sustainable and mindful lifestyle change.

Saat itu Kak Seto menjelaskan, dirinya sudah menjadi vegan selama 10 tahun terakhir. Ia hanya memakan buah dan sayur-sayuran, serta berhenti mengonsumsi daging, susu, dan telur.

(Detik.com, 26 Januari 2022)

Kak Seto, who has been following a vegan diet for more than ten years, reveals that avoiding meat, dairy and egg consumption and replacing them with fruits and vegetables is one of the keys to maintaining fitness in old age. According to her, this diet not only supports physical health, but also has a positive impact on mental and emotional health. By adopting a vegan lifestyle, Kak Seto feels more energetic and fit, which can be seen in his ability to stay active in sports, such as running and doing push-ups, despite being 70 years old.

Besides turning vegan, tempeh in the discourse on vegan diets in Indonesia, often takes center stage. As one of the most nutrient-rich and easily accessible traditional foods, tempeh not only reflects local wisdom, but is also a practical solution for vegans to fulfill their protein needs.

*Tempe **menjadi** makanan nabati yang kaya vitamin B12.*

(Detik.com, 27 Mei 2022)

*Tempe juga **menjadi** sumber protein pilihan para pelaku vegan dan vegetarian.*

(Detik.com, 29 Maret 2022)

Tempeh's diverse health benefits have further strengthened its position as a popular food among vegans. Known as an Indonesian specialty, tempeh has gained widespread recognition thanks to its incredible health benefits. Tempeh is not only delicious, but it also makes a healthy food choice for many people, including vegans and vegetarians. Coupled with the fact that tempeh is rich in vitamin B12, an essential nutrient usually only found in animal products, it makes for a very useful alternative protein source, especially for those on a vegan diet.

Vegan the Friendly Choice

The next discourse is that vegans are often associated with the principles of sustainability and friendliness towards the environment, health, and lifestyle. The word friendly is key to show how vegans contribute to the solution of various global challenges.

> *Vegan atau vegetarian untuk membuat perubahan pada lingkungan.* ***Daging tidak ramah lingkungan*** *karena prosesnya yang membutuhkan lahan besar sehingga akan berdampak pada lingkungan global.*
>
> (Detik.com, 25 Juli 2023)

Veganism is consistently represented as a lifestyle choice that supports the environment through the consumption of more sustainable products. veganism is perceived as a solution to reduce the environmental damage caused by meat production. The media also highlights alternative products such as potato milk, which is said to be more environmentally friendly than other dairy products.

> *Proses pembuatannya dinilai lebih* ***ramah lingkungan***. *Menanam kentang tidak memerlukan banyak lahan dan lebih efisien dalam penggunaan sumber daya.*
>
> (Detik.com, 25 Juli 2023)

In addition to its positive impact on the environment, veganism is also portrayed as an economical choice. In the discourse, it is mentioned that people

> *Semakin tertarik pada kuliner yang punya arti dan harganya masih* ***ramah di kantong***.
>
> (Detik.com, 06 Januari 2024)

> *Pakaian olahraga* ***ramah lingkungan*** *juga akan booming.*
>
> (Detik.com, 03 Januari 2024)

This reinforces the image that vegans are accessible to a wide range of people without being a huge financial burden. The media also promotes vegan clothing as part of a more environmentally conscious lifestyle trend, this discourse shows how veganism extends to aspects of life beyond food.

The Principle of Non-violence

Vegan discourse in the UK tends to highlight vegans' extreme actions against non-vegan humans by storming a farmer's property, protests at restaurants serving animal-based products, vegans being accused of using verbal violence against butchers, restaurant owners, or meat consumers by equating violence against animals with violence against humans (Brookes & Chałupnik, 2022). In contrast to images in the UK media that tend to highlight vegans' extreme actions against non-vegan humans, Indonesian media emphasize the ethical aspects of veganism that avoid violence against animals. In certain teachings, such as those in the Mahabharata, non-violence is seen as the highest duty and teaching that reflects universal moral values. This principle aligns with the essence of veganism that avoids all forms of exploitation and cruelty to animals.

*Dalam konteks agama, beberapa tradisi menghormati semua bentuk kehidupan dan mempraktikkan ajaran **non-kekerasan**.*

(Detik.com, 2023)

*Vegan memiliki tujuan untuk menghindari eksploitasi dan kekejaman terhadap hewan atau sikap tegas **tanpa kekerasan**.*

(Detik.com, 2023)

Moreover, vegans align with several religious traditions practicing nonviolence that place respect for living beings at the core of their lifestyle. This firm stance on nonviolence translates into efforts to avoid the consumption and use of animal products, while encouraging people to consider the impact of their lifestyle choices. Veganism is not only a symbol of respect for animal rights, but also reflects an effort to create a more empathetic world, where cruelty and exploitation of other living beings can be minimized.

CONCLUSION

The representation of veganism in Indonesian media highlights it not merely as a dietary choice, but as a holistic lifestyle rooted in sustainability, ethics, and health. It aligns with local cultural values, such as non-violence and harmony with nature, and is often supported by figures like Kak Seto and Zac Efron who exemplify its health benefits. Tempeh, a traditional plant-based protein rich in B12, emerges as a symbol of local wisdom with global relevance. Overall, veganism is portrayed as a thoughtful and future-oriented lifestyle that contributes to individual well-being and addresses global environmental challenges.

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