

Construction of the Women's Discourse in the 2024 Elections on the Alternative Media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*

Izza Nadia Hikma^{1*}, Riris Tiani¹

¹Faculty of Humanities, Diponegoro University, Semarang 50275, Indonesia

izzanadiyahikma@students.undip.ac.id
riristiani@lecturer.undip.ac.id

***Abstract.** The 2024 election is an important moment for women's participation in Indonesia. *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* as alternative media play an important role in shaping the discourse around women and politics. This research aims to analyze how the two online media construct or shape the discourse of women in the 2024 elections. Furthermore, this research seeks to reveal the position of women politicians in the alternative media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*. Using a qualitative methodology, this study focuses on a descriptive analysis of the news article texts from *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*. The research data taken are words, phrases, or sentences in the news discourse of the two alternative media that support research problems. The data analysis technique uses Sara Mills' theory of critical discourse analysis. The results show that *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* actively voice disapproval of gender discrimination and break down societal stereotypes by promoting gender equality for men and women. *Magdalene.co* tends to focus on empowering women and encouraging women's political participation. Meanwhile, *Konde.co* is more critical of gender issues in politics and gives voice to marginalized women. This research contributes to understanding how alternative media influences public opinion and shapes the narrative of women's participation in the 2024 election.*

Keywords: alternative media, media construction, women politicians, election 2024, Sara Mills

1. Introduction

Women essentially play a very important role in shaping and creating an inclusive and equitable society. This role is not only limited to the domestic sphere, but also extends to various sectors of life, including politics [1]. In the political context, women play a role in making policies that favor gender justice, promoting equality, and fighting for the rights of women and other minority groups. The presence of women in politics also encourages the creation of a government that is more responsive and representative of the needs of all levels of society so that the presence of women in parliament provides variety in politics [2].

In reality, Indonesia as a country that is still dominated by a patriarchal system provides far greater opportunities for men in the political sphere compared to women. Although there have been progressive policies such as the fulfillment of quota

requirements written in the regulation of Law Number 8/2012 Article 55 that women's representation must reach 30 percent [3]. However, the participation of women in Indonesia in participating in political contestation still faces various obstacles [4]. These barriers include gender stereotypes, lack of access to political resources, traditional roles in household duties, discrimination, and lack of representation in political leadership structures [5].

In the era of scientific and technological advances (IPTEK), mass media plays a key role in shaping the image of female politicians and increasing women's political participation in the 2024 elections. Women tend to be presented in the text as marginalized and marginalized compared to men [6]. News about female politicians, especially female presidential candidates, is rarely reported compared to male presidential candidates. Whereas through massive and continuous coverage, the votes of female candidates will be taken into account [7].

Magdalene.co and *Konde.co* as alternative media provide space for groups that are marginalized from the mainstream media. As media that voice the aspirations of opposition groups, *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* actively voice women's issues, such as in the realm of the 2024 elections [8]. Critical discourse analysis developed by Sara Mills (1995) seeks to explore how the position of women is presented in a certain way in news discourse, which then affects the meaning when received by the public [9]. There are two core concepts in Sara Mills' analysis, namely the position of subjects and the position of writers and readers. This approach highlights that the media not only conveys information, but also shapes perceptions and social reality regarding the role and position of women in politics [10]. Thus, this analysis is important to understand the dynamics of power and the construction of gender representation in the mass media, as well as its impact on women's political participation in Indonesia.

Another study related to the focus of this research is Iskandar (2022) in his study on the news construction of the 2024 female presidential candidate survey results in the news media with the title "Construction of Reporting on the 2024 Female Presidential Candidates on Tirto.id, Tempo.co, and Kompas.com". The study mentioned that all the media studied presented news about the lack of women's resources and abilities. This means that patriarchal ideology in this case still envelops the three online media studied

2. Research Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative research to describe the position of subjects, objects, and readers in the text of women's news discourse in the 2024 election. Data collection was carried out with documentation studies, reading and note-taking techniques. Through this technique, researchers can obtain information from written documentaries on the online media channels *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*.

Meanwhile, the text of news articles related to women in the 2024 elections on the *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* online pages is used as the object of research. The data was then analyzed using Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis theory.

3. Result and Discussion

Sara mills sees how the positions of actors are displayed in the text. This position means who is the subject of the news and who is the object of the news. Women who are featured in the news about the 2024 election can be seen from three things based on Sara Mills' method, namely the position of the subject, the position of the object, and the position of the reader.

3.1 Subject Position

The subject position in the 2024 election news in the online media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* published during the campaign is found in the *Magdalene.co* news article entitled " Baliho 'Mama Semok' dan 'Mama Muda': Benarkah Ini Objektifikasi dan Seksualisasi Diri?" published on January 27, 2024 in the Election 2024 section.

Data (1)

"Semok kan dipahami orang-orang sebagai singkatan seksi dan montok. Sudah ada stigma atau pelabelan negatif di situ sama dengan kata melayani. Karena saya backgroundnya psikologi saya paham perlu ada stimulus untuk menarik perhatian. Jadi ini memang sebuah pancingan untuk menggebrak Depok," kata Lydia.

("Semok is understood by people as an abbreviation for sexy and plump. There is already a stigma or negative labeling there, similar to the word serving. Because my background is psychology, I understand that there needs to be a stimulus to attract attention. So this is indeed a courtship to kick off Depok," said Lydia.)

Lydia Octavia is a candidate for the Depok City DPRD, Sukmajaya constituency. When the campaign began, Lydia used billboards that were considered self-objectifying for personal political interests. 'Mamah Semok' Ready to Serve Depok' was Lydia's campaign jargon. Based on Data (1), Lydia's statement about the use of the term "semok" which is understood as an abbreviation of "seksi and montok" and her aim to attract attention in Depok can be analyzed using Sara Mills' critical discourse approach. This analysis will discuss how the position of the subject and object is shaped in the discourse, as well as how this text affects the meaning received by the community.

Lydia takes the position of the subject who provides an interpretation of the term "semok" and states that the use of the word is a strategy to attract attention. In this case, Lydia as a female politician positions herself as a subject because she has the authority to provide interpretation and justification for the use of the word. She also

positions herself as an individual who understands psychology, thus giving more weight to her explanation.

Women are positioned as subjects discussed also in the *Konde.co* news article entitled "Nenden Sekar Arum: Ini Tahun Politik, Perempuan Jadi Korban Digital, Tapi Tak Dianggap Vital" published on January 1, 2024 in the Women and Elections section.

Data (2)

Nenden memang tak berekspektasi apapun kepada masing-masing pasangan calon. Ia hanya meminta agar momen pemilu bisa memberikan ruang aman bagi perempuan dan kelompok rentan dan tak melulu dijadikan komoditas. Mengingat banyak perempuan yang terjun ke dunia politik justru menjadi objek pelecehan.

(Nenden does not expect anything from each candidate pair. She only asked that the election moment could provide a safe space for women and vulnerable groups and not merely be used as a commodity. Given that many women who enter politics become objects of harassment.)

Data (2) describes Nenden Sekar Arum as the director of SAFEnet speaking out about politics that is still dominated by men. Meanwhile, Nenden acts as a subject who provides a critical assessment of elections and the treatment of women and vulnerable groups in the political context. In her statement, Nenden takes a position as an advocate who fights for the rights and security of women, as well as vulnerable groups. Nenden's statement paints a picture that elections, which are supposed to be democratic and inclusive moments, often do not provide safe spaces for women and vulnerable groups.

3.2 Object Position

The position of the object in the 2024 election news in the online media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* published during the campaign is found in the *Magdalene.co* news article entitled "Alasan di Balik Minimnya calon Capres dan Cawapres di Indonesia" published on April 10, 2023 in the Election 2024 rubric.

Data (3)

Selain keterwakilan perempuan dalam politik dan penyelenggaraan pemilu, dua hal penting lainnya yang harus dibahas soal minimnya capres dan cawapres perempuan adalah politik dan media yang tidak ramah atau berpihak pada perempuan.

(In addition to women's representation in politics and organizing elections, two other important things that must be discussed about the lack of female presidential and vice presidential candidates are politics and media that are not friendly or favorable to women.)

The objects in this discourse are female presidential and vice presidential candidates, as well as politics and the media. The lack of female presidential and vice presidential

candidates is the main focus, while politics and media that do not favor women are the factors highlighted as the cause. Data (3) reveals how political structures and media that are not friendly to women can hinder their representation in the highest leadership positions such as presidential and vice presidential candidates. This analysis shows that there are structural and cultural factors that reinforce gender injustice and limit women's opportunities to participate fully in politics.

Women are positioned as object discussed also in the *Konde.co* news article entitled "Minimnya Capres Perempuan dalam Pemilu: Perempuan Harus Berjibaku Lawan Hegemoni " published on April 14, 2023 in the Women and Elections section.

Data (4)

Nurul juga mengamati bahwa dalam media, politisi perempuan sering kali tidak mendapatkan ruang yang cukup untuk berbicara, dan dalam konteks Pemilu 2024, perempuan politisi jarang muncul sebagai calon yang ditonjolkan oleh media.

(Nurul also observed that in the media, women politicians often do not get enough space to speak, and in the context of the 2024 elections, women politicians rarely appear as candidates highlighted by the media.)

Still in the same discussion with the previous data, namely regarding the lack of female presidential candidates, data (4) explains that female politicians in this discourse are positioned as objects. Nurul Nurul Amalia Salabi from the Association for Elections and Democracy (Perludem) observed that female politicians are often not given adequate space to speak and are rarely highlighted as the main candidates in elections, especially the 2024 elections. Nurul's statement paints a picture that the media plays a role in perpetuating gender inequality by giving inadequate attention to female politicians. This creates the impression that women in politics are less important or less worthy of the spotlight than male politicians.

3.3 Reader Position

The position of women as subjects in politics in *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* news articles often places women voicing their opinions about male dominance in parliament. This can be seen in the following excerpt from a news article published by *Magdalene.co* with the title " Alasan di Balik Minimnya calon Capres dan Cawapres di Indonesia" published on April 10, 2023.

Data (5)

“Ketika mereka ingin menyampaikan pendapat, perempuan suka tidak dianggap serius. Ruangnya terlalu maskulin, ngebuat perempuan jadi jarang ngomong. Saya melihat tendensi ini ketika perempuan kalah jumlah,” jelas Amalia.

(“When they want to express their opinions, women are not taken seriously. The space is too masculine, so women rarely speak up. I see this tendency when women are outnumbered,” Amalia explains.)

In the quote, it appears that the reader is positioned between the parties seen in the news discourse, Data (5) forming a picture that political space is often dominated by masculinity, which makes women feel that they are not taken seriously when they want to express their opinions. This is indicated by the sentence "perempuan suka tidak dianggap serius". This domination creates a hostile environment for women, so they become less vocal or rarely speak up.

Through Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis, Amalia's statement shows that the political space dominated by masculinity inhibits women's participation and makes their opinions less valued. This discourse emphasizes the need for changes in political structure and culture to create a more inclusive environment that values women's opinions. From the reader's perspective, this statement encourages critical reflection on gender power dynamics in politics and the importance of creating more inclusive and equitable spaces. Readers are positioned to understand that the dominance of masculinity in political spaces inhibits women's participation and makes their opinions less valued. Readers are invited to support efforts aimed at reducing the dominance of masculinity and increasing women's participation in politics.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results and discussion above, it can be concluded that the 2024 election news in *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* shows that women are often placed in an unfavorable position in political discourse. Both as subjects and objects, women are faced with structural and cultural challenges that hinder their participation. This underscores the need for changes in political structure and culture to create spaces that are more inclusive and respectful of diverse voices, particularly women's voices.

References

1. Kumar, Pankaj. Participation of Women in Politics: Worldwide experience. 22. 77-88. (2017).
2. Phillips, Anne. The Politics of Presence. Oxford: Clarendon Press. (1995).
3. Adriani, S. and Maulia, S. T. Women's Participation in Politics, *Journal of Practice Learning and Educational Development*, 4(2), pp. 131-136. (2024)
4. Press Council. Monitoring the Presence of Women in Mass Media in Indonesia in 2019. (2020).
5. Arum Imeliana, & Siti Tiara Maulia. Women's Political Participation in a Democratic System: Obstacles and Opportunities in the Decision-Making Process. *Causa: Journal of Law and Citizenship*, 3(7), 87-97. (2024).
6. Fahira Adinda, Muhammad El Fahrizi Noor, Ayu Wardani Sitompul, & Wisman Hadi. Discourse Analysis: Gender Representation in Mass Media and the

- Construction of Social Identity. *Sabda: Journal of Literature and Language*, 3(2), 35-39. (2024).
7. Iskandar, D., Suryawati, I., & Liliyana, L. Construction of Reporting on the 2024 Female Presidential Candidates on Tirto.id, Tempo.co, and Kompas.com. *NYIMAK: Journal of Communication*, 6(2). (2022).
 8. Yoedtadi, M. G., & Pribadi, M. A. *Alternative Media as Counter-Hegemony: A Case study of Konde.co and Magdalene.co*. Atlantis Press. (2020).
 9. Mills, Sara. *The Interface Series: Feminist Stylistics*. London: Routledge. (1995).
 10. Eriyanto. *Discourse Analysis: An Introduction to Media Text Analysis*. Yogyakarta: LKIS. (2006).