

WOMEN STRUGGLE FOR WORKERS' RIGHTS IN RADICAL AND MODERATE FEMINIST MEDIA

ABSTRACT

Aims: This study sought to take a closer look at how a message and theme are presented by two online feminist alternative media considered to have distinct styles, namely Konde.co which is Radical and Magdalene.co which is Moderate, since the text in the news contains a powerful ability to influence the public's views towards existing reality.

Study design: This study used quantitative text analysis.

Place and Duration of Study: 35 articles that are relevant to the topic were taken as research material, with a publication period between April 1, 2019 – May 31, 2023. This period was chosen due to the nuance of Labor Day where many working women voiced their aspirations at that moment

Methodology: Content analysis is an important research method in social sciences and human sciences. This method has two key advantages. First, it accepts symbolic communications, which are relatively unstructured, as data. It means that content analysis can accept data in the form of text, images, or other symbols, even if they lack clear formal structures.

Results: Text in the news is very effective in shaping public perceptions of existing reality. In the context of news, text functions as a representation of communication. Through words, sentences and writing styles, text in news can shape how readers perceive and judge reality. In addition, text as a symbol has the ability to convey meaning that seeps into people's feelings or emotions. The massive scale of developments in information technology makes it easier for people to access text in the news. It is also utilized by certain groups to disseminate information using their media. As a result, media have grown healthily in Indonesia.

Conclusion: It is clear from this study that Konde.co and Magdalene.co, among others, fill the role of alternative media in voicing women's issues, especially working women. Konde.co is aggressively voicing the issue of female workers using radical language and diction. Magdalene.co, on the other hand, is consistent in pushing the belief that women deserve the same stability and career path as men.

Keywords: New Media, Female Workers, Workers' Rights, Feminist Movement, Quantitative Content Analysis

1. INTRODUCTION

Text in the news is very effective in shaping public perceptions of existing reality. In the context of news, text represents communication. Through certain words, sentences and writing styles, text in news can shape how readers perceive and judge a reality (Alimuddin et

al., 2022). In addition, as a symbol, text has the ability to convey meaning that penetrates people's feelings or emotions (Insulander, 2019)

The development of information technology plays an important role in making it easier for people to access text in the news (Sari et al., 2023). According to the Indonesian Internet penetration survey results by the Indonesian Internet Service Providers Association (*APJII*) in 2023, post-Covid-19, the internet has become a necessity for people, where the growth was tremendous, reaching 215.63 million users (Andrean W. Finaka, 2023).

The incredible developments of information technology provide certain groups with an opportunity to disseminate information in their ways. As a result, the media saw healthy growth in Indonesia, especially during the 1988 reform era. According to the Press Council data released in 2017, the number of cyber media in Indonesia reached 43,300 media (Stellarosa & Silaban, 2019).

In the latest media developments, there are at least two major interests, namely economic interest and power interest. Both are able and intend to influence the content of the information presented and the meaning conveyed. This is an irony, because the media, which is supposed to be a public sphere, is instead forced to accommodate these two interests. Ultimately, it is difficult for the media to be honest, fair, objective, and open (Media et al., n.d.).

Alternative news media outlets operate with a significant degree of independence within the news landscape, enabling them to have greater freedom in disseminating information (Buyens & Van Aelst, 2022). However, it is undeniable that in pursuing alternative media, owners often face significant obstacles, especially capital. The main reason is that alternative media usually adheres to the principle of both being business-oriented. However, due to current technology being more affordable, alternative media have a better chance of surviving.

Media alternative makes women's issues easier to be heard and disseminated to the public. *Tirto.id* stated that disseminating information on feminist issues on online media has an effectiveness figure of 57.1 percent, only behind social media with 72.5% (Iswara, 2021). It is not surprising the media's influence on public perceptions of femicides is essential. Through their choices and reporting on current issues, they mould the views, beliefs, and actions of their audiences. Additionally, the content of news can reflect how society treats women (Pröll & Magin, 2022).

Konde.co and *Magdalene.com* are among the active online media that actively echo feminist activism. *Konde.co* is an alternative medium focusing on issues such as gender inequality, marginalization, minority rights, and female workers. Founded in 2016, *Konde.co* was born from the *Konde Institute* which was initiated by several individuals. The word 'Konde' itself is derived from an Indonesian women's accessory (KWOK, 2023). Through their published writing, *Konde.co* seeks advocacy for women and marginalized groups. Based on the survey by *Similarweb*, *Konde.co* is ranked 1,485,742 in the global ranking, up 421,167 places. While domestically, it rose 14,978 places to occupy position 62,627. In the news & media publisher category, it is ranked 1,693, up by 581.

Furthermore, *Magdalene.co* is a medium focusing on women, providing critical, empowering and motivating content by inclusive and entertaining journalists. It accommodates various voices of feminist, progressive and pluralist groups. It also provides an open space for women from all walks of life to be themselves through writing without discrimination or judgment (Yoedtadi & Pribadi, 2020). In addition to providing content through their website, *Magdalene.co* is also quite adaptive in response to developments in digital media. For

example, Magdalene.co has accounts across many popular online social platforms such as Instagram, Youtube, TikTok, Twitter, Facebook, dan LinkedIn, where according to Similarweb, it is ranked 313,654th in the global ranking, down by 88,477 places. Domestically, Magdalene.co is ranked 13,562, down by 1,921 places. In the news & media publisher category, it fell 34 places to rank 416.

Konde.co and Magnalene.co hold different journalistic authority. Konde.co, according to the researcher, follows a rather radical journalistic style, where every news or article published calls for a change in the existing situation. The word 'Radical' itself came from the word "*radic*" which means root. Every news item posted on the media assertively explores every issue. Workers are the frequent focus of Konde.co featuring the keywords '*suara pekerja #StopKEKERASANdiduniaKERJA*' (<https://www.konde.co>).

Magdalene.co itself is a medium of moderate journalism. It often places itself in the middle without leaning towards a particular party. Visually, Magdalene.co comes off as more flexible and lenient compared to Konde.co, with the color pink featuring dominantly in the word 'Magdalene'. The color pink itself is often associated with feminism, creativity, love and fun (Yen Fatahila, 2022). As a result, the various articles published by Magdalene.co are intended to provide insight and motivation while still being entertaining for readers.

So far, there are not many studies that carry out quantitative text analysis using the two feminist media as the object of research and studying how text in feminist media is composed. A number of such studies only discussed the credibility of online news portals in reporting on the Sarinah bombing in 2016 (Handayani and Hermawan,2017); Image is formed through text entitled "*Citra Pemerintah Indonesia di Acara Pembukaan Asian Games 2018: Analisis Isi Kuantitatif Pada Situs Berita Online Tribunnews.com, Detik.com dan Liputan6.com*" in 2018 (Isi et al, 2020); and discussions on feminism without any comparison of two media, such as "*Gerakan Feminis Islam di era Digital: Analisis Bibliometrik pada Data Dimensions*" (Djati & Seeries,2023).

Even though research on women workers' rights is highly interesting to investigate, Marx stated that women's rights were inhibited in the working world due to there was belief in capitalism (Fediric, 2018). On the other hand, discussing related to women's and men's rights in the working world, especially in Indonesia, the equality of workers' rights have been assured in the constitution. Based on The 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia, article 28D verse 2 states that every person has an equal right to obtain reward, fair treatment, and feasibility in work relations (presidential decree, 1945)

Therefore, the researcher conducted this study to formulate the problems related to messages, themes, words, and dominant information sources that were contributed in the Konde.co and Magdalena.co media. The aim of the study is to investigate deeply how messages and themes presented by two alternative online feminist media which were considered to have different styles, namely Konde.co which has radical characteristics and Magdalene.co which has moderate characteristics. So, the result of the hypothesis is that there are differences between radical and moderate text-based feminist digital media. The study tries to examine texts in radical and moderate media.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a quantitative content analysis technique. This technique involved the use of statistical methods to analyze numerical data. It included descriptive statistics, inferential statistics and multivariate analysis. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize

and describe the characteristics of a data set such as mean, median and standard deviation (Babbie, 2004).

The content analysis method is used in the study due to the researcher intends to obtain information related to the theme in the news article. Applying content analysis is indeed can facilitate the researcher to find out how often or how much the information is written. Therefore, content analysis is considered an important research methodology in the social sciences and humanities for two reasons (Macnamara, 2019). First, content analysis accepts relatively unstructured symbolic communication as data, where it can be taken in the form of text, images, or other symbols. Second, content analysis allows us to analyze unobserved phenomena. Using this method, researchers can study phenomena that cannot be observed directly but are manifested through media or symbolic representations (Arthur Asa Berger, 2011).

Therefore, the stages carried out in this text study were:

Table 1. **Struggle for Female Workers' Rights**

Topic: Struggle for Female Workers' Rights	Category
	Working Hours
	Sustainable/Equal Income
	Sustainable Job
	Equality Before the Law
	Legal Awareness
	Off-hours

- (1) determining hypotheses discussed in the beginning of the study.
- (2) determining categories
- (3) this research took on the topic of the struggle for female workers' rights in feminist online media, namely Konde.co and Magdalene.co
- (4) 35 articles that are relevant to the topic were taken as research material, with a publication period between April 1, 2019 –May 31, 2023. This period was chosen due to the nuance of Labor Day where many working women voiced their aspirations at that moment
- (5) text explanation as a unit of analysis. Text is a form of communication message that employs symbols with a fairly broad meaning and includes several forms of communication. This also includes public communication messages, which are aimed at a wide audience, and private messages which are aimed at one or several individuals.
- (6) categorization was carried out by documenting the selected articles, which were then read and classified by the researcher according to the specified categories.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Pragmatics

Pragmatics is the study of language which focuses on communication from a functional point of view, namely by trying to explain aspects of language structure by considering factors

outside language that influence them (*Innovation Scientific Journal Innovation Scientific Journal*, 2022). Besides, using pragmatic text in the news article, implicit messages can be interpreted, so the text is able to be used appropriately. (Korkmaz & Karatepe, 2023).

This study divided pragmatics into three parts, namely dominant theme, dominant message and source in Konde.co and Magdalene.co media so that signs can be classified according to cause and effect.

Table 2: Difference between Konde.co and Magdalene.co in the Pragmatic Category

PRAGMATICS	Media			
	Konde.co		Magdalene.co	
Dominant Theme	8 articles (Sustainable/Equal Income)		6 articles (Sustainable Job)	
Dominant Message	Economy		Existence	
Dominant Word	Word	Total	Word	Total
	Salary	110	Worker	145
	Worker	74	Salary	47
	Allowance	49	Interference	13

As seen in the table above, within the specified period Konde.co has published eight articles containing the theme of sustainable/equal income. While Magdalene.co has published six articles containing the theme of sustainable job. As for dominant messages, Konde.co highlighted the Economic side, while Magdalene.co prioritized the Existence side. For the last pragmatic data, namely sources, Konde.co preferred sources such as activists, legal experts and public officials. Magdalene.co employed sources such as community activists, entertainment or entrepreneurs and academics.

It can be concluded that the frequent theme on Konde.co is sustainable income, where out of 23 articles picked as the research sample, eight articles raised the theme of sustainable or equal income. It is inline with the study of Magda & Salach, (2023) who stated that men are paid more than women. Ironically, this inequality continues to increase every year. Some researchers have corroborated this gender pay gap such as Bahransyaf (1997) and Cecep (2000).

Meanwhile, on Magdalene.co, the frequent theme is sustainable jobs, where out of 11 articles picked as the research sample, six out of them raised the theme. The results of this study are also corroborated by the study conducted by Rohmany & Alfirdaus, 2018, which expressed that female workers are still shackled by a patriarchal culture which results in them still facing discrimination both from their employers and their male counterparts. This is exacerbated by sexual harassment practices that occur in the work environment. In addition, the existence of the view that women are the second sex further perpetuates discriminatory practices that lead to unsustainable employment for a woman.

Both dominant themes are also found in dominant messages, where Konde.co emphasizes women workers' rights from an economic perspective, with a number of articles talking about wages, salaries, Holiday Allowances (*THR*), and Pension funds such as Employment

Security (*JKT*). These themes missing on Magdalene.co which leans more towards how women can exist in the working world. Economic aspects are pushed aside in favour of appeals for women to have a clear career path, a prestigious position, and to respect working women as they are.

Some words appeared more often than others in Konde.co and Magdalene.co's articles. In the case of Konde.co, they want to constantly put a spotlight on the struggle of women workers and their economic issues until a change happens. As for Magdalene.co, they want the struggle of working women to at least be known to the public, that women can occupy certain positions with affirmative language.

3.2 Semantics

Semantics is one of the linguistic disciplines that has a notable association with the social sciences, including in the discipline of communication science (Du et al., 2022). Broadly speaking, semantics categorizes meanings in language and in this case, text in articles on Konde.co and Magdalene.co.

Table 3: Frequently Appearing Words

Information Sources	Konde.co	Magdalene.co
	Women Activist	Society
	Law Expert	Entertainment/entrepreneur.
	Public Official	Academics

As a medium that often imbues radicalism in its articles, Konde.co often used women activists as sources to complement their stories of working women. In addition to activists, legal experts and public officials were quite regularly featured in their articles. In other words, the presence of these resource persons is intended to corroborate the statement written by Konde.co in fighting for the rights of working women. In stark contrast, common figures in Magdalene.co's articles include community activists, entertainers or entrepreneurs, and academics. The researcher believes that the reason these resource persons were often featured is because Magdalene.co wanted to make a point that voicing women workers' rights can be done in any form and through the lowest stages, namely, awareness or introduction to the public. (It is reversed from pragmatic into semantic material and vice versa can be seen in the table above)

4. CONCLUSION

Movement in the digital world is very massive concerning the dissemination of information. This is evidenced by alternative media that emerged as an answer to activists' concerns in fighting for minority voices. Here, Konde.co and Magdalene.co, among others, fill the role of alternative media in voicing women's issues, especially working women.

In terms of writing style, Konde.co and Magdalene.co could not be more different when it comes to the words contained in the title, lead and content of the news. Konde.co with its bright orange color is aggressively voicing the issue of female workers using radical language and diction, where such use of language is intended to encourage readers to act in unison in realizing justice, especially related to economicssuch as, from the pragmatic aspect that is the dominant theme which related to sustainable or equal income, the dominant message is related to economy, and the word that often appears or dominant is

wages. Meanwhile, for Semantic, the dominant sources are activist aspects such as wages, allowances and so on so that women can live a financially sufficient life. On the other hand, Magdalene.co, in writing their news, is consistent in pushing the belief that women deserve the same stability and career path as men. This phenomenon can be recognized from the pragmatic aspect, the dominant theme is sustainable work, the dominant message is existence, and the dominant word is worker. Meanwhile, the information source is the community. Using more general, educational and entertaining choices of words, Magdalene.co positions itself as a moderate alternative medium. Unlike Konde.co, Magdalene.co's mission is to make readers aware of the issue of working women.

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