Political Framing and Woman's Image in Media Coverage During The 2024 General Election

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Abstract. The role of women is often placed in the domestic sphere so that this affects the formation of women's image when participating in the public sector. Women's representation in political contestation in the 2024 elections is a discourse that cannot be missed because this is an important indicator in the political system. Magdalene.co and Konde.co as alternative mass media that raise women's issues have a crucial role in shaping public opinion and influencing people's views, especially in political circles. This research aims to analyze the representation of women's image in the 2024 elections in the online news of Magdalene.co and Konde.co. The data sources used in this study are 21 news articles about women's politics in the 2024 elections produced by the online media Magdalene.co and Konde.co. The data acquisition of this study uses documentation, referring, and note-taking techniques. The data is presented using a qualitative descriptive method focused on Sara Mills' Feminist Stylistics critical discourse analysis theory. The results of the analysis in this study are categorized into three levels of analysis, namely the level of words/phrases. This research provides an overview of the image or position of women in the 2024 election vortex and also recognizes the gender bias experienced by female politicians. The existence of a patriarchal system then creates narratives that refer to discrimination against women. The image of women in the media is often portrayed as visual objects seen from physical appearance alone rather than competent agents of change.

Keywords*: image, media online, women politics, Sara Mills

1   Introduction

The role of mass media is very important in shaping people's perceptions of women. The way women are represented through news framing by the media is often influenced by gender bias, which leads to stereotypical, subordinate, and gender discriminatory images. In both print and electronic media, women are often portrayed as commercial objects or in roles that reinforce existing gender stereotypes [1] Referring to the above understanding, the existence of an entrenched patriarchal system often still shapes how female politicians are often associated with the domestic sphere alone [2].

Women's representation in a democratic system is an important indicator in the political system [3]. Unfortunately, women's participation in Indonesian politics still shows low numbers in terms of statistics. Women are still minimally represented in strategic

positions that have significant influence on government policies, both at the local and national levels, while men still dominate [4].

This research has relevance to a study entitled "Construction of Reporting on the 2024 Female Presidential Candidates on Tirto.id, Tempo.co, and Kompas.com" by Iskandar in 2022. The study mentioned that all the media studied presented news about women's lack of resources and abilities. This means that patriarchal ideology in this case still envelops the three online media studied [5]. Referring to the description above, the researchers want to see how women's media represent the image of women in political circles. Unlike previous studies that have been conducted, this research will focus on articles produced by online media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*.

Meanwhile, Magdalene.co is an online platform focused on gender, sexuality, women's safe spaces, and political and social issues, actively criticizing sexist media coverage. Similarly, Konde.co, led by female activists and journalists, advocates for women's issues [6]. Based on the researcher's observations, the exploration of studies on online media that focus on women's issues, such as *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*, was previously limited to structural analysis and narratives presented by being linked to aspects of social construction and its implications, without covering broader dimensions such as in the field of linguistic level, namely words or phrases used in news texts [7]. Moreover, the topic of politics and women in the media vortex that is used as the object of study in this research is different from previous studies and has never been done before.

The coverage of women in Magdalene.co and Konde.co was analyzed using Sara Mills' Feminist Stylistics theory, which combines stylistics and gender analysis [8]. Sara Mills' discourse analysis includes words, sentences, and discourse, but this research focuses only on words and phrases.

2   Method

The type of research in this study is descriptive qualitative. The qualitative description method is used in this research because the data studied are words or phrases and sentences in news discourse. The objects in this research are articles about women in the scope of the 2024 elections in the online media *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*. The research data taken are words, phrases in the two online news discourses that support research problems. The data collection techniques that researchers use are documentation studies, reading and note-taking techniques. After the data is obtained, the next stage is data analysis. The data analysis technique used in this research refers to the concept of Miles Huberman, namely the interactive analysis model which classifies data analysis in three steps, namely data reduction, data presentation and conclusion [9].

3 Result and Discussion

The author analyzes 21 news articles, covering 10 articles from *Magdalene.co*m online media and 11 articles from *Konde.co* online media, which are the objects of this research. These news articles were analyzed based on their relationship with women in politics, especially on the issue of the 2024 elections. Meanwhile, after carefully analyzing repeatedly, several data were found that describe the image of women in the circle of the 2024 election issue.

3.1 Forms of Words/Phrases Related to Subordination

Women politicians are considered secondary, so their presence and contributions are often less important than men. This reflects the strong patriarchal structure, where female characters are seen as less competent and less valuable than men, both in political decision-making and in terms of public representation. As a result, female politicians are often faced with greater challenges to prove their capabilities and legitimacy in a male-dominated political arena.

> (Data 1) Selesai pemilu, pengurusan ini akan diubah. Tidak lagi ada perempuan 30 persen di parpol, hal yang menurut Amalia membuat parpol hanya melihat keterwakilan perempuan sebagai tokenisme belaka. (Floretta, 2023. *Magdalene.co*, 10 April 2023).
> *(After the election, this arrangement will be changed. There will no longer be 30 percent women in political parties, which according to Amalia makes political parties only see women's representation as mere tokenism.)*

Data (1) explains that the participation of female politicians is only considered as a requirement or symbolization. This is evidenced by the use of the word *tokenisme*. Tokenism is defined as a condition carried out to avoid accusations of prejudice and discrimination against certain groups so that minority groups are deliberately displayed to the public as a symbol of diversity. The subordination of women in politics is emphasized again in the data taken from the same news channel, *Magdalene.co*, in data (2) below.

> (Data 2) Masalahnya ada parpol yang dalam penelitian Perludem 2021, ketika mereka mencalonkan perempuan di internal mereka, mereka asal comot. Untuk formalitas aja." ungkap Amalia Kamis lalu. (Floretta, 2023. *Magdalene.co*, 10 April 2023).
> *(The problem is that there are political parties that in Perludem's 2021 research, when they nominate women in their internal parties, they just pick them. Just for formality," said Amalia last Thursday.)*

The phrase *asal comot* (take carelessly) in data (2) emphasizes that women's representation in parliament has an insignificant role so that no proper selection is needed in the nomination. This reflects the subordination of women in the political sphere, where the policy is not followed by concrete steps to ensure the active and meaningful involvement of women in the political process. As a result, women are often used as mere tools to fulfill quotas without being given a significant role and voice in political decision-making, thus perpetuating gender inequality.

3.2   Forms of Words/Phrases Related to Stereotypes

The different roles of men and women obtained from this research data are reflected in the use of pronouns that represent gender, especially in professions or jobs that are stereotypically associated with certain genders, in this case, the use of the words leader, politician, president or presidential candidate, and vice president or vice president. This can be found in the data below.

> (Data 3) Sebagai contoh, menjadi pemimpin atau politisi dianggap sebagai perilaku yang menyimpang bagi perempuan, dan kekerasan simbolik berupaya untuk "menertibkan" perempuan. (Hanifah, 2024. *Magdalene.co*, 7 Februari 2024).
> *(For example, being a leader or politician is considered deviant behavior for women, and symbolic violence seeks to "discipline" women.)*

The words *pemimpin* (leaders) and *politisi* (politicans) in Data (3) have a context related to norms or acts of deviation committed by women, especially in terms of professions and positions in government. In this case, society tries to put women back in their place in the domestic sphere. The words *pemimpin* (leaders) and *politisi* (politicans) are generic words that refer to the male profession. The use of the phrase *perilaku yang menyimpang* in Data (3) makes it clear that working as a leader or politician in government is a deviant thing for women in society. The word *menertibkan* in data (3) according to KBBI means to organize or tidy up something that is not in its proper place. In this case, the word *menertibkan* then becomes a label that women are considered deviant if they are involved in non-domestic matters such as politics. The analysis then concludes that leadership roles are usually owned by men while women are sufficient in the domestic sphere only.

In addition, women in politics are often reduced to objects of judgment based on narrow standards of beauty.

> (Data 4) Stigma ini sama dengan kultur yang dilekatkan pada perempuan selama ini: sebagai perempuan yang diterima masyarakat karena ia cantik, ia seksi dan

muda. Kemudian kultur ini dikuatkan dengan musim kampanye Pemilu. (Tim Konde, 2024. *Konde.co*, 2 Februari 2024)
(This stigma is the same as the culture attached to women so far: as a woman who is accepted by society because she is beautiful, she is sexy and young. Then this culture is reinforced by the election campaign season.)

The stigma attached to women in data (4) reflects how patriarchal societies judge and accept women based on physical appearance. Election campaign season further reinforces this culture, with women often objectified and treated as a tool to attract voters' attention through their physical attractiveness. The use of words such as *cantic* (beauty), *seksi* (sexy), and *muda (*young) are signifiers that indicate certain attributes that are considered important for women to be accepted by society. The use of these words highlights how women are judged based on physical appearance and age alone, signifying specific and narrow gender expectations. Thus confirming how women are labeled and identified based on socially advantageous physical traits (beautiful, sexy, young). The words *cantik* (beauty*), seksi* (sexy), and *muda* (young) although seemingly positive, can carry a derogative weight as it reduces women's value to physical appearance alone and ignores other qualities such as intelligence, ability, and contribution. This reinforces the view that a woman's value lies only in her appearance, not in her abilities or capacities.

3.3   Forms of Words/Phrases Related to Gender Discrimination

Gender discrimination received by women in politics is not in the form of violence, but lies in the difficulty of women who do not have special relations to enter the parliament. Not only that, women who manage to enter parliament are forced to follow masculine culture so that female politicians cannot voice their rights.

(Data 5) Perempuan Non-Dinasti Terpinggirkan (Wardhani, 2024. *Magdalene.co*, 21 Februari 2024).
(Non-dynastic women are marginalized)

Data (5) is taken from a *Magdalene.co* news article entitled "Sulitnya Perempuan Masuk DPR, Kecuali dari Dinasti Politik". The data above has the context that women will find it very difficult to enter parliament if they do not come from political dynasties, both at the national and regional levels. This fact is then supported by data on the 2019 legislative elections where as many as 24 or 50 percent percent of the 120 female legislators who were elected to the number one position in the DCT had the provision of political dynasty ties. Women who have good relationships with political ties such as bulik officials or political party elites then have the opportunity to have financial access and political networks.

The phrase "Perempuan Non-Dinasti Terpinggirkan" shows that women who do not come from political families have less chance of success in politics. The word marginalized according to KBBI has the meaning of being excluded from something. In this case, female candidates who do not have dynastic relationships tend to have a low bargaining position to be placed in strategic positions during their candidacy process. Referring to the analysis above, female legislative candidates who do not have dynastic political power are often marginalized or excluded from political contestation, especially when faced with the reality of fighting male candidates who have higher positions.

4   Conclusions

This research reveals that despite efforts to increase women's representation in politics, women's representation in politics is still limited by patriarchal structures, gender stereotypes, and discrimination. The media has an important role in shaping the image of women in politics. In this context, *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* show favoritism towards women through criticizing the image of women formed by society. The articles analyzed reflect the commitment of these two media outlets in highlighting gender issues and exposing the injustices experienced by women, in the hope of encouraging more inclusive and equitable changes in women's political representation.

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