



## The Construction of Gender Relations in Alternative Media: Cases in Online Media at Magdalene.co and Konde.co

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### Abstract

Domestic violence is rising during the pandemic, especially concerning the impact on constructing public opinion regarding the arrangement of women's social roles in the domestic scope (domestication). This research aims to describe the construction of gender relations represented by alternative online media, Magdalene.co, and Konde.co. The research method is descriptive qualitative, with data collection techniques by documentation of texts in the alternative media. The data analysis technique uses Sara Mills' theory about critical discourse. This research's result provides an overview of alternative media perspectives that focus on angles on the subject of the story. Both media deliver a narrative issue with a slightly different 'sense' of description. First, Magdalene.co and Konde.co dare to express their disapproval of discrimination among gender. Second, alternative media can break society's stereotypes and actively voice gender equality for men and women.

**Keywords:** Gender Relations, Alternative Media, Magdalene.co, Konde.co

### Introduction

The existence of online interaction among social media users often creates unsafe relationships. It allows for Online Gender-Based Violence (OGBV) and makes women and children the main targets of OGBV actors. It is supported by data about the increasing number of violent cases against women since the government issued a policy during the Large Scale Social Restrictions (Wardani, 2020).

Data recorded from the APIK Legal Aid Institute from March 16 until April 16, 2020, show 97 violence cases during that month, with details of 30 people being OGBV cases

and classified as violence from online sexual harassment to threats of violence or spreading intimate content that leads to extortion practices (Wardani, 2020). In 2020, OGBV was declared the second highest case, with precisely 307 reported cases, after domestic violence cases with 418 cases (Sari, 2021).

The trend of OGBV cases is increased significantly over the year. Comparative data from National Commission for Women displays 16 specific complaints of OGBV in 2017, an increase of 97 cases in 2018, 281 cases in 2019, and 659 cases of OGBV reported for 2020 (January-October) (Khairunisa, 2020). More expansively, SAFE-net data observes

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that OGBV is highlighted as gender-based violence facilitated by technology is harassing targets based on a specific gender or aspect of sexuality (Wardani, 2020). The practice of OGBV is expanding in society, such as cyber hacking, cyber harassment, impersonation, cyberstalking, malicious distribution, revenge porn, sexting, and morphing (Khairunisa, 2020; Hikmawati, 2021).

Other data on violence against women and children was massively recorded in 2020. The Indonesian National Commission for Women's annual data found 431,471 cases of violence against women in 2020, which increased by 6% from the previous year. The violence against women reached 792%, meaning this data increased eight times during the 12 years (Perempuan, 2020). Other Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection data support this finding. The data from January 1 to June 1, 2020, showed 3,087 cases of violence against children, including 852 cases of physical violence, 768 cases of psychological violence, 768 cases of sexual violence, and 1,848 cases of domestic violence (PPPA, 2020; Mahmudah & Ningsih, 2021).

The increasing domestic violence against women and children coincides with the pandemic, even during the implementation of Large-Scale Social Restrictions. The data collected by the National Commission for Women ultimately leads to several alternative media expected to counter this problem. The two alternative media selected in this research refer to *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co*. Both are examples of alternative media actively discussing marginal and minority topics based on feminists and gender. *Magdalene.co* is a feminist online media that raises issues of gender and feminism actively (Ndruru & Dede, 2020). Correspondingly, *Konde.co*

also focuses on conveying information from the perspective of women and minorities (Mahmudah & Ningsih, 2021).

Greta Theresia Ndruru's research explained that *Magdalene.co* was created based on anxiety towards mainstream media that does not support women according to a gender perspective (Ndruru, 2020). In line with *Magdalene.co*, *Konde.co* focuses its content on the opinions of women and minorities. This media publish their essay through websites, videos, or films and extend information via social media (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram). *Konde.co* was founded in 2016 and strived to become a media that embodies an awareness of the critical power of society (*Konde.co*, 2022.; Mahmudah & Ningsih, 2021).

As part of the alternative media that actively voices sensitive issues, the existence of *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* raises pros and cons, to the point that some doxing practices attempt to bring them down. The Indonesia Alliance of Independent Journalists (AJI) explained that *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* had encountered hacking and digital attacks after the two media actively spoke out about several cases of sexual harassment and prostitution in Indonesia. *Magdalene.co* suffered from an attack on its systems, servers, and network, making its website inaccessible. Meanwhile, *Konde.co* encountered a digital attack that caused its Twitter account to be blocked since May 15, 2020. Moreover, apart from sharing the website hack, several social media from the editorial staff of the two media were also loaded with hate speech from unknown people (Halim & Syaefullah, 2020; Jogja, 2020; AJI Jakarta, 2020).

Some previous research discusses *Magdalene.co* and *Konde.co* raises discussion

of issues and news about women (Sadasri, 2021; Sahan & Witarti, 2021; Shofiyya & Rusadi, 2018), sexual violence (Azizah, 2018; Martalena, 2019; Fahima, Nurbaya, & Ridho, 2021), gender empowerment (Putri, 2021). Other research reveals the framing and perspectives of Magdalene.co and Konde.co as alternative media (Yoedtadi & Pribadi, 2020; Mahmudah & Ningsih, 2021; Tyas, Jupriono & Danadharta, 2021; Yusnia, 2020; Maryani & Adiprasetio, 2017; Wardhani, 2019), advocacy of PKS statement (Rizky & Mar'iyah, 2021), and discussions on minority issues (Maharani, 2018). With several explanations from previous research, the author regards topics that discuss gender relations in Magdalene.co and Konde.co media are considered not being massive enough to be addressed.

Research from Fenti & Eddyono (2021) examines the critical discourse of women in Magdalene.co, especially during the covid pandemic. Other research at Magdalene.co also articulates the representation of beauty standards in the media (Sahan & Witarti, 2021), the representation of men in the feminist online magazine (Aditya, 2022), and alternative digital feminism media (Jinan, Eliyanah, & Yannuar, 2021).

The information about Magdalene.co and Konde.co focus on feminism, gender analysis, violence, the environment, and other minor issues not covered by the mainstream media. At this level, referring to the massive practice of domestic violence against women and children, this will lead to injustice and gender inequality in the social functions of men and women roles. The assumption is that women are subordinated without a significant role in the public domain. On the contrary, men will be perpetuated in more dominant public roles

based on patriarchal power. Indirectly, its paradigm will strengthen domestic violence in society.

The rise of sexual and domestic violence against women during the pandemic created a diverse representation of news in the alternative media, which tends to raise issues of minorities that are rarely published by other mainstream media. Kenix (2011) explained that alternative media emerged to seize the visibility of the media market, which tends to be abundant. Alternative media is a new form of managing fringe narratives that the mainstream media may not capture in general. In a critical context, this alternative media is interpreted as participatory media that is not financial (Atton, 2001). Furthermore, alternative media is aimed at "ordinary people" in specific layers, marginalized groups, or even not included in the mainstream media. (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2008). Alternative media bypasses the basic requirements that mass media must have, especially in deconstruction (de-professionalization, de-capitalization, and de-institutionalization) in building public-based alternative media styles. Even though they are considered distant from other mainstream media, alternative media provide a potential space to reflect on the broader practice of direct democracy in conveying information to the public (Wahl-Jorgensen & Hanitzsch, 2008).

Regarding the description above, the existence of Magdalene.co and Konde.co as alternative media provides a different angle in the publication of information, primarily related to the attitudes and perspectives towards the minority issues raised. In addition, the existence of gender relations

between women and men appears in the discussion of this research, bearing in mind that sexual and domestic violence often occurs in the household, resulting from the domestication of women in society.

Based on the above arguments, this research pursues novelty to focus on theses on how gender relations are also raised and constructed by two alternative media Magdalene.co and Konde.co. Remember that many previous studies about Magdalene.co and Konde.co have been carried out, especially examining media perspectives, framing, and representations of violence that appear through several uploaded media texts. This research will specifically be directed at the model of gender relations that arise through the Magdalene.co and Konde.co media texts, discussing the roles and functions between women and men constructed through some information (contents) uploaded through its websites.

Related to this research, critical discourse analysis tries to reveal the meaning of the text. The concept of this analysis is commonly used to study and analyze some minor problems and inequality. In this case, critical discourse seeks to dissect the system of power, domination, ideological persuasion, and injustice shown through the text (Sobur, 2001). Discourse analysis also sees relations represented and represented through language, both in spoken and written forms (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997; Eriyanto, 2015; R. Z. Pratiwi, Susilowati, Rusdiana, & Rohmatika, 2022).

Eriyanto (2015) added that discourse analysis used in a social practice also relates to the existence of dialectical relations with aspects of the situation, institutions, and social structures that surround it. Furthermore,

discourse is also concerned with ideological-based cultural concepts. For example, when a discourse gives rise to unequal practices between different social classes, between men and women, social groups are dominant over other social groups that are dominated. Thus, in this case, critical discourse will discuss how the text plays its primary role in constructing the inequality that arises, whether related to aspects of action, context, history, power, or ideology (van Dijk, Fairclough, and Wodak, in Eriyanto, 2015).

The focus of this research aims to complement the study by discussing the equality that arises through uploading media texts and explicitly talking about gender relations between men and women, especially in the realization of their roles and functions in society. It is inseparable from patriarchal discourse or community construction regarding the dichotomy of women's and men's social roles. Furthermore, the analysis of gender relations that is studied is through the media texts of Magdalene.co and Konde.co, and will then be reviewed with the critical discourse analysis model of Sara Mills.

Regarding data mining through the media texts studied, this research explicitly uses the critical discourse analysis from Sara Mills. This analysis was chosen to find the practicality between the content discussed and the type of critical discourse used. It is considering that Sara Mills' critical discourse is specifically intended to discuss message texts that talk about feminism and masculinity, gender and social analysis, and studies that talk about minorities and inequality represented through media construction.

## Methods

This research uses descriptive qualitative research with a research strategy through text studies, especially Sara Mills's critical discourse analysis model. Qualitative research has a natural background that aims to interpret phenomena and uses several available methods (Moleong, 2014). Qualitative research aims to explain how a phenomenon emerges socially through the stages of data collection (Kriyantono, 2006) and allows data analysis through words, images, or sound (recording). Bungin (2006) considers qualitative research objectives as an approach to patterns that apply as general principles within the scope of society. Thus, this type of qualitative research is chosen as the basis for the process and analysis in research to examine texts critically through the depiction of discourses formed and represented through message texts uploaded on Magdalene.co and Konde.co media.

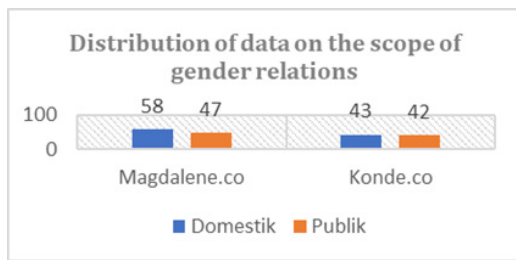
Magdalene.co and Konde.co. as research subjects is an online media focusing on gender and feminism perspectives. This online media discusses several forms of marginalization and discrimination against minorities. This research is discussed using Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis so that the primary data source used is media text published in Magdalene.co and Konde.co. Furthermore, this research uses data collection techniques mainly through the documentation by literature studies and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with the gender and feminist activist from the Center for Women's Studies in Solo (Pusat Kajian Perempuan Solo or PUKAPS), academician (lecturer and researcher in Social Sciences), and journalist (Kompas.com). The data of the FGD process is used to sharpen the analysis and discussion

of the findings of text data obtained through documentation.

The data analysis technique used is a text-level study using the Sara Mills model of critical discourse analysis. This type of analysis is utilized because the research focuses on constructing gender relations in the texts on Magdalene.co and Konde.co media, which prioritize discussion of social issues concerning women, gender equality, and forms of treatment of both based on participation. Social function attached to them. Technically, the sample chosen in this research is message information in the form of uploads or articles from the Magdalene.co and Konde.co websites published during the pandemic (2020-mid 2022) and represents the focus of the gender relations studied.

## Results

Based on search results, throughout the range of 2020 to mid-2022, raw data for initial reduction was found on Magdalene.co media with 136 uploads and Konde.co with 91 uploads. Furthermore, remarkable reduction and grouping are carried out to narrow down the article's findings to find gender relations in the domestic and public scope. Data are located on 105 articles in Magdalene.co, with details of 58 essays showing gender relations in the domestic area and 47 articles describing gender relations in the public space. For Konde.co, data are found for a total of 85 articles, with details of 43 articles for the domestic scope and 42 articles for the public area. This research only focuses on gender relation content/data. The data is reviewed through the following graph:



Graphic 1. Data Distribution for Gender Relations Scope

### 1. Subject position

Sara Mills places the subject's position or point of view as one of the descriptions of the situation in the text. This perspective means that the actors discussed are directed towards the subject and narration perspective and the active actor position of the narrative.

As for the classification of several units of analysis, which are representations related to the subject of content in Magdalene.co and Konde.co texts, represented through the following criteria:

#### a. Women's empowerment

One of Magdalene.co's articles representing the position of the story's subject can also be noticed in the essay **"The Vital Role of Housewives"** and the paper "Women Farmers in Environmental Activism." In these articles, a simple initial perspective provides a stage for women's representation in ecofeminism, especially concerning efforts to preserve the environment. One of these meanings can be reviewed through a sentence of lead that explains that the presence of housewives and farmers in environmental activism breaks the stereotype that women are weak and easily subdued. Laila Kholid Alfirtaus'paper shows the opposition to stereotypes that women, perceived as weak and helpless, can contribute to environmental preservation. It can be traced through effective environmental activism through two ecological activist

movements—first, women's networks. Second, women have creativity in expressing criticism and resistance to development.

The women's social network context emphasizes a narrative subject in Magdalene.co's text, which has excellent potential for a movement. The movement was not solely born from prominent activists in the public sphere but started from local organizations, such as Family Welfare Development Activities and integrated health service centers.

#### b. Stereotype and labeling deconstruction

Konde.co's thoughts on how gender relations are raised in the uploaded article "Not only a Male Profession: Women Can Also Be Pilots, Racer, and Truck Drivers." This content was written by Reka Kajaksana, who provided an overview of several women who could work in men's common careers. One of them is Alexandra Asmasoebrata, who works as a professional racer. This article provides her opinions on how Alexandra struggles amidst the stigma that women are often seen as a minority subject in the racing world and several other professions believed to be dominated by men.

The article also portrays another female figure, Letda PNB Ajeng Trisna who works as the first female fighter pilot in Indonesia. Statement in Konde.co uploads through:

*"...there must be people who underestimate, but if we hear a gossip from outside that makes us drop, what is the point..."*

This statement explicitly shows Ajeng's attitude regarding the social label, which states that women are weak and have limited abilities compared to men. She (Ajeng) believes that she needs to be indifferent to

the existing stigma to survive by working and continuing her career.

c. Equality and responsive to gender

Considering equality and gender responsiveness are illustrated through the text article entitled: "Wasathiyah, the Importance of Fighting for Gender Equality in Indonesia," "Women Do not Dare to Go to the Battlefield? That is a Myth, Seeing the Courage of Women in the Ukrainian-Russian Conflict." and "Acehnese Women Should Have an Equal Role with Men."

These three articles provide an overview and description of women's representation in public gender relations, explaining the perspective that fighting for women's rights to be equal to men is a struggle to obtain gender equality.

The first article was written by Nur Azka Inayatussahara, explaining the position of wasathiyah as a format of interpretation of a middle or moderate position. The position provides space for justice and equality between two perspectives (right and left). It is an exceptional value to prioritize humanity while upholding equality among many differences that exist in society.

This related article explains that the concept of wasathiyah in terms of humanity recognizes women and men in an equal position as caliphs of Allah who both have the responsibility and capacity as moral agents in life. Furthermore, women are not objects that men fully control. Women are declared free subjects with equal rights and roles as men and should not be placed in subordinate positions under men.

The article entitled "Women Do not Dare to Go to the Battlefield? That is a Myth, Seeing the Courage of Women in the Ukrainian-

Russian Conflict". This article is supported by another paper, "How Ukrainian Women Get Involved in War Against Putin," which also provides gender equality opinions regarding their courage during the conflict between Ukraine and Russia. In this case, it is stated that in the Ukrainian and Russian wars, women joined 15% of the Ukrainian military forces, with more than 13,000 women who took part in the Battlefield. This fact indicates that women can decide what they need to fight. It also means that women have free personal decisions.

The existence of other struggles for equality can be noticed in the reports of Konde.co: "Acehnese Women Should Have an Equal Role with Men," meaning that Acehnese women should have equal roles and functions with men. The argument in the article written by Rinawati (Member of the Indonesian Women's Coalition or KPI Aceh) explains how the position of Acehnese women should be equalized social role, both in the traditional Acehnese system, as well as in the context of novelty and development in the Aceh region.

## 2. Object Position

The object's position in Sara Mills' study places the subject matter of gender relations regarding gender roles and functions between women and men. As a point of view interpreted by other parties and construed as an object described by another position (actor) that is more dominant (subject) in the text. The interpretation in this object position is carried out subjectively to create one-sided meanings in understanding events, certain characters, or the subject matter conveyed in the message. Thus, the object being

interpreted cannot interpret its position freely in the text and depends on the point of view of the subject's narrative.

a. Women are weakened

The labeling of women who are considered weak is seen in some articles. For example, the article entitled "Considered Whiny and Irrational; Labeling for Women" and "The Label that Women are Weak and Submissive is Old-fashioned: It Must End." The label regarding the divergence between women and men indirectly has an unfavorable impact on social treatment. There is a statement, "Women cannot be independent; they always depend on men; women are weak, men are strong," or another statement, "...women are sensitive, easy to get angry, and offended". This prejudice ultimately emphasizes community discourse in treating men and women based on socially believed stereotypes. Concerning this prejudice, the text on Konde.co provides an initial focus on stereotypes and labels that are attached to women and are considered to tend to mislead many women.

The article from Poedjiati Tan (Konde.co) in the paper entitled "Considered Whiny and Irrational; Labeling for Women." Furthermore, it also impacts the treatment of men in society, even though it presents a title narrative that shows a weak label for women. This text considers the stereotypes in the community as detrimental to women and men. For example, men will be labeled a sissy or gay when they do activities that women usually do. Conversely, if you meet a woman who looks dashing, tall, and stubborn, she will be considered un-feminine and not elegant.

b. Discrimination against women

Many texts published through the alternative media, such as Magdalene.co, and Konde.co, certainly have many subjectivizing positions. However, in several texts that have plotted to subject women to the dominant point of view of storytelling, several sentences and dictions emphasize that stereotypes of discrimination against women repeatedly arise.

Some articles that discuss discrimination, such as: "Often Becomes Secondary, Women's Careers Have Little Hope,"; "Research on Almost Half of the World's Female Journalists Become Victims of Harassment,"; and "Marketing and Stereotyping of Women in the Media." The first article on women's careers described a point of view that presented the different treatment of women in the business world. Several statements in the article, such as:

*"Several companies are still reluctant to recruit women workers. The reasons vary, from safety factors, lack of potential, to hindering progress."*

*"He said men are more flexible and talk more broadly. On the contrary, women put their feelings first."*

These statements became the initial lead for Aurelia Gracia's papers. Even though this article explains how women should not be treated in a discriminatory manner, in their presentation, it is enough to illustrate the fundamental problem of the extent to which women accept different treatment concerning their acceptance at work. Moreover, it was also stated that women taking on the job site did not prioritize marriage, so they were considered more flexible and could concentrate fully on the work at hand.



In the second article, research results state that almost half of the world's female journalists have experienced harassment, as much as 41%. The research conducted by WAN-IFRA Women in News is of great concern in interpreting the discrimination against women, especially concerning the profession of journalist. Furthermore, how to look at the marketing and stereotyping aspects represented through the media, women have their description and representation. For example, when Melanesians or Eastern Indonesians are often identified as thugs or bad people in media coverage. It is quite a concern to emphasize the stereotyping and labeling that emerges, ultimately leading to racial discrimination.

c. Setting women in the domestic scope

One of the articles that represent women in the domestic scope can be seen in the upload entitled "Housewives in Capitalism: Their Job is Just Frying,"; "Unequal Burden between Mothers and Fathers in Study Assistance from Home,"; and "Housewives: as Always WFH Jobs/" These upload articles refer to posts on the Magdalene.co page, which describe the extent to which domestic space is often attached to women and limit the area for women to move in, strengthening the work environment dichotomy.

The first article describes aspects of capitalism that slowly obscure productive and reproductive work. In this case, the reproductive work of housewives is noticed as a matter and has low production value. It provides an initial argument about capitalism in discussing women as objects and domestication in the household. The concept of work refers to the value of productive work, synonymous with economic aspects, and

generates money. It tends to lead to the extent of patriarchy, along with the perspective of capitalism, dominating values so that men's careers are labeled productive value. At the same time, women's work is associated with reproductive workers and is worthless.

The second article refers to the unequal burden between mothers and fathers in learning assistance for children at home during a pandemic. Patriarchal culture reads the perspective of objectifying women in the domestic sphere and placing men in the productivity of the public work environment. On the other hand, this impacts reducing the involvement of men (fathers) in accompanying children while studying at home. Indirectly, patriarchal aspects are also rooted in Indonesia's context and system of work and education. Thus, gender bias appears in children's learning assistance. As a result, men are given the maximum portion of work so that there is minimal assistance for children's learning. Whereas women tend to be placed in the domestic sphere, they are considered to have much time at home. They are positioned who can optimally accompany their children while studying.

The two articles above align with the third article, which discusses the concept of housewives, which are considered WFH-based jobs, so, naturally, women (mothers) are indeed assigned to be able to accompany the learning process at any time. However, the division of labor in the house must be divided fairly and equally. The initial opinion concerning housework implicitly emphasizes that women should not work in the public domain. Instead of working outside the house, the meaning of nature and social construction also causes obstacles in dividing social roles. Many peoples believe that domestic chores

are the nature of women. On the other hand, homework resulting from the public and domestic dichotomy is not caused by the biological nature of women but rather refers to the social construction of the values of femininity and masculinity, which can be exchanged between men and women.

d. Negative stigma for women

The construction of gender relations in several articles on *Konde.co* and *Magdalene.co* also represents a particular form of labeling and stigma for both women and men. At the level of stigma against women, for example, the *Konde.co* article entitled "Marking Arawinda as Home-wrecker: Sexist and Gender Biased, The Role of Men Is Forgotten" provides an overview of cases of environmental abuse being a topic that is hotly discussed in society, especially in labeling women as home-wrecker for women who are considered evil because they have damaged other people's households. Phenomenally, this article written by Luviana was published on *Konde.co* describes the stigma attached to film actress Arawinda Kirana, who is referred to as a perpetrator on social media. Ultimately, this compares women as wives versus women as home-wrecker's competition.

The home-wreckers term in the *Konde.co* text seems to be a discussion that makes women the main "actors" in affairs. The context of women as home-wrecker is more dominant than men as home-wrecker. It can be seen from the number of searches for the *pelakor* (women as home-wrecker) term on the Google search engine is written 22,100,000 times in 43 seconds. In contrast, the search term for the word *pebinor* (men as home-wrecker) was only 129,000 searches.

The mention of the word perpetrator indirectly has a minimal impact on the role of men in the plot of the affair. On the one hand, the man is the trigger for an affair. Therefore, this case only pits women against women, while men are the only forgotten subject. It is seen in the sentence: "Looking at the stereotypes of women in cases of infidelity, it shows that women are considered as *liyan* (foreigners)." The meaning of "*liyan*" is interpreted as an object that is not free to define the meaning of its existence and presence. The word "*liyan*" is seen as something else in cases of infidelity, and a woman as a wife will be interpreted as an ideal wife if she can make her husband loyal in marriage. Conversely, when the husband is unfaithful, the wife will not be considered a perfect wife because she cannot maintain her husband's loyalty.

The negative stigma attached to women and gender relations in alternative media texts can also be seen in the published articles. For example, the article entitled "Types of Female Characters in Soap Operas, and Why is That a Problem" (*Magdalene.co*) and "Male Gaze in the Film World: Treatment of Female Artists" (*Konde.co*). These two articles provide an overview that commodifies labeling aspects of women through how the media constructs women. Regarding media argument, the concept of soap operas may emerge women in a gentle light. *Magdalene.co* article titled "The Types of Female Characters in Soap Operas and Why is That a Problem" discusses examples of the flow of the soap opera "*Pintu Berkah*" and "*Kisah Nyata*," which depicts the character of a wife in a state of abuse and torture. Women are constructed as figures who are too good without reproach. When they are abused or

experience discriminatory treatment, they will seem resigned and propose no resistance.

The second article from Konde.co is titled "Male Gaze in the Film World: Treatment of Female Artists." This article provides a description of the male side and the point of view used to perceive how women should look. This article by Reka Kajaksana explains the male point of view (male gaze) as the dominant perspective in representing women. As a result, female characters in media presentations tend to be constructed in a cornered position due to the dominance of patriarchal views. In addition, this indicates that women are ignored for their competence and abilities (objectification for women).

e. Physical standard inequality

One of the labels and stigma against women can be seen in how women portray themselves through their physical appearance. Deliberately or not, women's appearance is a basis for judgment or a stigma on women. Articles entitled "Glow Up Challenge": Standardization of Beauty in Social Media which is Detrimental to Women" and "Vaginal Makeovers, Virginitiy, and Trite Pretexts to Please Husbands" is an article that adequately represents the negative stigma against women through size or physical standards.

The first article discusses the trend regarding the glow-up challenge, which indirectly creates a beauty standard. Konde.co article written by Cempaka Wangi describes standardized portraits of women by constructing impressions on social media. On the other hand, beauty standards should not be limited only to a trend or formation in society. However, they will depend heavily on

each woman's personality because women should have authority over their bodies and character.

The objectification of women can be seen when the glow-up challenge trend challenges women to upload photos and videos of their transformation, which then depicts physical changes over time. For example, there is a change in body size from those who were initially fat, then became thin because of dieting, or those who initially had black or tan skin, then have white skin because they have undergone treatment. In short, this context can provide a new perspective for society that appearance and beauty standards will be a measure for treating someone. The women will experience different treatments based on their body or skin tone.

Different physical standards are contained in the second article from Magdalene.co entitled "Vaginal Makeovers, Virginitiy, and Trite Pretexts to Please Husbands." Purnama Ayu Rizky's writing indirectly provides an overview of how women are objectified as measured by the tendency to change their vaginal physical shape to make their husbands happy. This context also provides the main points for women's sexuality, which is often viewed one-sidedly and dominates the aspect of men's needs as something superior.

The vaginal makeover is an attempt to maintain virginitiy. It is still a concept from the eastern culture that exalts that "a wife's first success" is maintaining her virginitiy to satisfy her husband on the first night. On the other hand, the size of virginitiy is often only seen and measured by the discharge of blood due to the torn hymen. On the other hand, the hymen can be torn due to other things, such

as swimming, cycling, horse riding, injury, frequent use of tampons, and masturbation. It turned the focus that the social context views women often as synonymous with physical standards relating to sexuality.

### 3. Writer-Reader Position

Sara Mills also analyzes texts that construct and represent points from the writer's and the reader's perspectives. The existence of the reader's position is derived from the author or the people behind the media's perspectives. Sara Mills' analysis views the reader's position as essential in interpreting the text. The author's perspective and intent of the text will ultimately be meaningless if it is not negotiated concurrently with the reader's interpretation. In this context, readers are similar to audiences who consume media, read texts, receive messages, and interpret symbols in media texts. Therefore, audiences cannot influence the text directly on their interpretation but are concerned systematically and systemically with their views in interpreting the text. The reader can also transact the messages and meanings they catch (Eriyanto, 2015).

Based on the documented data, it can be obtained from the initial formulation that the author's perspective (the people behind the media and the text of the article) indeed has a different angle than readers constructed in several mainstream media. It is noticed from the authors of Magdalene.co and Konde.co, the majority of whom have backgrounds as gender and women's studies activists, journalists, and social workers. As for the viewpoints in the two media studied, Magdalene.co and Konde.co both emphasize their disagreement with the concept of patriarchy, which is often used as the primary focus or side in viewing life

in society. As a result, interpreting women's terms, for example, is usually measured and standardized based on men's opinions, which is then maintained as part of the meaning of gender construction in society.

Both Magdalene.co and Konde.co provide their analysis in several existing posts. "Skilled women workers are among the groups most vulnerable to discrimination, even the threat of losing their jobs," written in the Magdalene.co of "How Protected Are Pregnant Working Women (1-2)" or the statement of "Criticism by feminists, for example, is used to deconstruct patriarchal politics which, as often represented in misogynistic or hateful writings or language," that are published in the Konde.co, entitled "Affairs: Facing Women Vs. Women, The Role of Men Is Forgotten." The two statements in this article indirectly provide the perspectives of the two media studies, that there are facts and social phenomena regarding the different treatment of women. In this case, Magdalene.co and Konde.co provide statements of resistance and their disagreement with the existence of patriarchy.

Based on the identification in the previous data presentation for the subject and object position of storytelling in the two media's content, it is shown that the representation of gender relations is placed on the second side of storytelling, both subject and object. In the storytelling issue, the construction of gender relations is concerned with discussing women's empowerment. It is breaking stereotypes and labeling and identifying how far efforts in social life are to support gender-responsive. From this perspective, we can evaluate the qualifications of Magdalene.co and Konde.co's writing. They bring to the subject of storytelling a focus on active

women, having authority over themselves, and providing an overview of how gender relations can be carried out in an equal and balanced manner, which is suitable for all. Both men and women are equally responsible for family life. They are willing to exchange their social roles in daily activities if it does not violate the existing nature.

The angles used by Magdalene.co and Konde.co both aim to provide resistance to patriarchy and inequality. The inequality in treating women and mothers and categorizing them within domestic and public frames, in this case being the other side of Magdalene.co and Konde.co media. The media indirectly provide an overview of how women are identified in gender relation. However, in several dictionaries and editorials used to present facts and phenomena, Magdalene.co and Konde.co texts open with an initial discussion of the problem, which describes the objectification of gender relations and the social roles of men and women. The story object's description triggers the problem while emphasizing the context of the basic problem of inequality in gender relations.

The emergence of labels as weak women, standardization determined through physical size, and to what extent labels, stigma, and stereotypes appear in interpreting women to become separate limitations on the points of exposure in the narrative object section. In this aspect, the many negative labels and stigmas used in the text indirectly represent women in their gender relations in daily life. For example, the notion that women are fully responsible for homework, caring for children, cooking, and domestication of women for the patriarchal culture adopted in society. For example, a woman's appearance is seen as having to meet physical femininity

criteria (beautiful, slim, and white skin). The virginity aspect is the main criterion for newly married couples, or toxic masculinity is a matter that men must meet. It can lead to the stigma of existing gender relations. However, the two alternative media studies explicitly refer to the opinion of resistance to patriarchy and inequality in gender relations through uploading their articles. Therefore, this is offered and negotiated to the reader as a media perspective on the constructed text.

## Discussion

One of the main points regarding the description of gender relations in the uploaded texts of the two alternative media studied, Magdalene.co and Konde.co, basically refers to the perspective of the two media in packaging their published article content. It can be noticed dominantly in the several narratives raised and the diction or sentences used in leading the media's point of view. Even then, the emergence of illustrations or images in each text is a complementary element that strengthens the angle displayed.

The data presented in the previous sub-discussion refers to Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis by describing the position of the subject, the position of the object, and the position of the writer-reader about the text of the Magdalene.co and Konde.co. At this level, the position of subject, object, and writer-reader is not a "rigid" limitation for classifying the meaning of existing texts. However, the structure in Sara Mills' critical discourse analysis is expected to be a guide in dividing, sorting, reducing, and further identifying how the construction of gender relations can be represented and interpreted in the content of the texts of Magdalene.co and Konde.co.

The construction concept is about how text representation can be interpreted as a way of producing meaning. Representation works through systems related to the ideas of mind and language. These two components are interrelated, constructing representation as an essential part of the process of meaning so that meaning can be produced and exchanged in society or culture (Hall, 2020). Representation means using language, signs, or images to represent the idea. Further, Hall (2020) states that representation is the production of meaning that indirectly originates from our thinking concepts through language.

Hall (2020) suggests a connection between concepts and language that does not merely lead to natural objects, people, or events but also objects, people, or fictional events. For both of them, the represented meaning will depend on the relationship that emerges and forms or constructs the representative system. The concept of representation is usually associated with ideological aspects and is a significant element in cultural studies.

The concepts of representation and ideology in Hall's approach are necessary for social and cultural analysis. Hall identifies the main points in the "pronouncements or expressions," which will be implicated through the practice of representation, and representation will create different relationships for an ideology (Rojek, 2009). Representation leads to social processes regarding representation. Thus, at this level, products about social life processes appear related to the embodiment of representation (Purwasito, 2003).

Based on the presenting data, the discussion and analysis in this part are

discussed with the data obtained based on the Focus Group Discussion. Some main points can be identified based on the statements and conclusions shared by academicians, gender and feminist activist, and journalists. The first point underlined in this analysis is about both Magdalene.co and Konde.co place the media's perspective in disagreement about discrimination among women and men. It also includes showing the impartiality of the two media towards the domestication of women; subordination; labeling, and stereotypes; and providing a negative stigma related to toxic femininity, even toxic masculinity. In this context, Magdalene.co and Konde.co emphasize several treatment tendencies commonly encountered daily, which socially reinforce discrimination and gender inequality for women. Meanwhile, gender relations should not be interpreted identically as natural. However, the context of social discourse often generalizes the two so that what should be construed as a social construction of society is seen as an absolute argument, even referring to rules that seem to be obeyed and carried out by women and men.

Magdalene.co and Konde.co give the framing in a dominant angle, as seen by placing the text in the story's subject position. This tendency caught in the narratives, especially in putting the lines of argument and descriptions. In addition, when referring to the main title of each uploaded article, content, or lead, each packaged content's perspective and direction can ultimately indicate how far the perspectives from these two alternative media have been built.

In addition to positioning the media's argument in the story's subject, several narratives provide an image or description

of the story's object context. Even though the discussion in the data findings for storytelling tends to be more classified, the explanation that shows the object of storytelling is more directed at explaining and describing social phenomena and gender relation cases in society. Meanwhile, in their conclusion, both Magdalene.co and Konde.co continue to put an active side in storytelling to provide a narrative related to their positioning against forms of discrimination against women or inequality in gender relations for the treatment received by women and men.

Based on Magdalene.co and Konde.co's position in providing opinions, the second point in this alternative media is about their courage to break stereotypes and be active in voicing gender-responsive equality through the construction of their perspectives. Indonesia still uses a patriarchal system in men's and women's roles and social functions. Magdalene.co and Konde.co are felt to appear as alternative "voices" in raising minority issues in the face of many social labels and stigma, which has been imprinted in colonial society in Indonesia.

The concept of gender is essentially a form of the social construction of society (Fakih, 2013). In this case, gender cannot be equated with natural sexuality. The natural aspect of sexuality is related to biological factors. At the same time, an individual's gender is a social formation concerning social roles and responsibilities carried out by men and women in society (R. Z. B. Pratiwi, 2015). Thus, it can be concluded that gender will not be static but dynamic, formed and structured through dynamic social interactions. (Berkowitz, Manohar, & Tinkler, 2010).

Some statements above briefly illustrate how gender construction is attached to men

and women through gender socialization (Corrado, 2008). It relates to how women can accept social roles based on gender socialization. Likewise, for men, the gender aspect also refers to how men's social roles and functions are carried out in society. It is also based on how men play roles and carry out gender socialization in their environment. Through this meaning, the gender aspect is not congruent with natural destiny. For example, women naturally have breasts, can get pregnant and give birth, breastfeed children, and get menstruated. However, women only have to take full responsibility for raising children if the upbringing and care of children can be carried out jointly in the family between men and women. On the other hand, men, by nature, have sperm cells and a penis, but it does not mean that they have to be constructed as the strongest, mightiest, and dominating in all areas of life. If women can also do labor-intensive jobs, strength and courage should not be pinned solely on men.

Interpreting the concept of gender will eventually return to the statement of Corrado (2008), which explains the existence of gender socialization through several theoretical approaches. This process in gender socialization allows the learning process in individuals concerning how to play the gender identity that is owned (imposed on them). For example, if a woman is identified with feminine characteristics, she will play with relevant to these feminine characteristics. Even so, the men will play and show masculine traits, which are then socially constructed as dominant traits. It was rising to the term social roles and functions in society about a broader structure (in a nationalist way) regarding motherhood and fatherhood. Therefore, gender relations emerged at

the level of gender studies to describe the primary method of state construction through the social characteristics of men and women (Martyn, 2005).

Women in the state structure are seen through their maternal aspects, who are fully responsible for the formation of the state. It is represented through their social role in managing or caring for the family. Therefore, it is common for women to be identified as someone who has to take care of children, cook for the whole family, and manage household needs. Women's (mothers') workload is limited in the household, so it seems domestic and does not touch social roles in a more comprehensive (public) aspect. On the other hand, men (fathers) are constructed as decision-holders in the family and the primary breadwinners because they were formed as leaders in several public fields. This points out that men are often used dominantly as social law and are considered the most absolute in interpreting and regulating all aspects of life.

Based on this analysis, Magdalene.co and Konde.co present different thoughts on labeling and stereotypes that have long been enshrined in society. Through the several cases discussed, the narrative elaboration in the texts presented by these two media tends to be more open and critical than other mainstream media. The two media also often question why several social consensuses that emerge in a society constantly unequally discredit one side. Complete with the processing of existing cases or phenomena, Magdalene.co and Konde.co are considered brave enough to provide a different perspective in understanding and reviewing an issue and considering the socio-cultural context in Indonesian patriarchal culture. These two alternative media are seen to be

oppositional and even tend to be free (seems like liberal) in conveying information on their contents.

## Conclusion

This research concludes that the representation of gender relations that appears through alternative media Magdalene.co and Konde.co refer to the perspectives of the two media in presenting texts through narratives built at the subject (actor) level of dynamic storytelling. The stands used by the two media studies emphasize how gender relations are constructed, active, and dominant in the storytelling angle. However, later the discussion on the object of storytelling persists and appears a lot as an illustration in giving arguments to show forms of gender inequality and treatment discrimination originating from social discourse.

The two alternative media studied, Magdalene.co and Konde.co, were considered brave in conveying their arguments through their content. First, both Magdalene.co and Konde.co belong to alternative media that dare to express their disapproval of discrimination in treating women and men. It includes unilateral forms of domestication, subordination, labeling, and stereotypes, as well as giving negative stigma to aspects of femininity and toxic masculinity in gender relations. Second, the two alternative media studies broke down stereotypes that abounded in society and were active in voicing gender equality for men and women, primarily through the perspectives built by the two media on things considered representative of strengthening gender responsiveness.

Furthermore, from the perspective of conveying information, different views



emerged on how the styles used in the two media were studied. Magdalene.co tends to talk a lot about more pop and global issues, equipped with language and narrative choices, as well as packaging and content illustrations full of contemporary elements (tend to be more accessible and bolder). Whereas Konde.co, this media raises more issues in an Indonesia-centric style, still carries popular elements in its content packaging while using a more structured language and narrative, especially when discussing the story's perspective.

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