

Women's Alternative Media, Visibility Politics, and Inclusive Development in Indonesia

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Abstract

This study examines how six women's alternative media outlets in Indonesia organize counterpublic communication under platform conditions and how their editorial practices broaden the agenda of inclusive development. Using a qualitative multiple-case design, the study draws on in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and qualitative content analysis of 90 purposively selected Instagram posts, supported by NVivo-assisted thematic coding. The corpus shows that employment, violence against women, education, patriarchy, activism, public representation, environment and food, and health are connected to development through labor dignity, bodily safety, reproductive autonomy, ecological justice, pluralism, and political participation. The findings support the concept of platformed feminist counterpublics: not a replacement for feminist counterpublic theory, but a specification of how counterpublic work is reorganized by algorithmic ranking, metrics, moderation, cross-platform distribution, and dependence on commercial infrastructures. The evidence demonstrates organizational practices, representational strategies, and opportunities for participation; it does not establish audience-level transformation. Visibility is therefore ambivalent, enabling circulation and solidarity while increasing exposure to harassment, algorithmic uncertainty, and platform dependency.

Keywords: feminist counterpublics, inclusive development communication, visibility politics, women's alternative media

1. Introduction

Gender inequality in the digital public sphere concerns not only women's access to technology but also who is recognized as a producer of knowledge, an authoritative source, and a legitimate actor in setting the public agenda. Contemporary media representations continue to reproduce stereotypes, objectification, and visual conventions that normalize narrow gender roles (Santoniccolo et al., 2023). These inequalities are also embedded in news production through source selection, newsroom composition, and editorial authority (Leiva & Kimber, 2022). Audience valuations of news may likewise be shaped by gendered perceptions of whose interests and experiences are represented (John et al., 2024). Women's visibility should therefore be understood not as presence alone, but as a political struggle over recognition, legitimacy, and equal standing in the production of social meaning.

Digital media create opportunities for women's groups to build alternative communicative spaces beyond mainstream news institutions. Networked feminist practices can turn personal testimony into collective issues through witnessing, affective connection, hashtags, and participatory circulation (Trott, 2021; Quan-Haase et al., 2021). In Global South contexts, such practices also support alternative epistemic communities that challenge patriarchal and Western-centered hierarchies of knowledge (Okech, 2021). Transnational conversations show that platforms can facilitate dialogue, mobilization, and solidarity across borders (Larrondo Ureta et al., 2021). Yet this potential is uneven because platforms govern circulation through technical standards, commercial priorities, datafication, and algorithmic ranking.

Platformization sharpens the tension between feminist political aims and the infrastructures through which messages must circulate. Instagram activism adapts to aesthetic conventions, engagement metrics, visual formats, and shifting moderation practices (Barbala, 2024; Caldeira, 2024). Re-sharing can extend everyday feminist solidarity, but such participation may be temporary, low-intensity, and difficult to distinguish from durable political engagement (Caldeira, 2025). Digital feminist spaces also involve conflict, emotional labor, vulnerability, and the risk of political exhaustion (Coffey & Kanai, 2023; Vachhani, 2024). An intersectional approach is therefore essential because class, geography,

religion, occupation, education, and disability shape both access and visibility (Dosekun, 2023). Feminist organizations use posting, commenting, sharing, and community interaction to assemble collectivities from dispersed individual actions (Navarro & Gómez-Bernal, 2022). Women's alternative media are consequently more than channels for digital activism: they are editorial institutions in which situated knowledge, journalistic routines, and platform-dependent circulation converge.

Women's alternative media do not operate in a neutral digital environment. News organizations increasingly depend on platform infrastructures, algorithms, metrics, moderation policies, and distribution interfaces that they do not control (Meese & Hurcombe, 2021; Poell et al., 2023). Although the intensity of platformization varies across media systems, platforms have reconfigured relations among news producers, audiences, and information distribution (Nielsen & Fletcher, 2023). Practitioners must respond to comments, engagement indicators, and demands for interactivity while translating complex issues into platform-specific formats (Dvir-Gvirsman & Tsurriel, 2022). For women's media, this means adapting discussions of labor, violence, reproductive health, ecology, religion, and representation to Instagram, TikTok, X, YouTube, and other channels without reducing their political depth. Cross-platform journalism therefore depends on adaptation to platform affordances and audience practices, but adaptation also deepens infrastructural dependency (Hase et al., 2023; Hendrickx & Vázquez-Herrero, 2024).

The politics of visibility is therefore ambivalent. Greater visibility can expand circulation and recognition while also increasing exposure to harassment, doxxing, misinterpretation, and opaque moderation. Algorithmic opacity makes it difficult for marginalized media actors to determine whether limited circulation results from content quality, audience behavior, or platform governance (Cotter, 2023; Duffy & Meisner, 2023). Social media labor also remains largely invisible within small organizations, even though it is central to public engagement and sustainability (Duffy & Sawey, 2022). These risks are particularly relevant to women journalists, whose professional visibility can trigger gendered intimidation and threats (Zviyita & Mare, 2024).

In Indonesia, women's alternative media have developed within a commercially oriented media environment in which gendered experiences, labor precarity, violence, minority rights, and everyday care are often underrepresented or episodically covered. Mapping of the national women's-media field describes a fragile but collaborative ecosystem sustained through networks, training, memberships, grants, and community support rather than advertising alone (Nurhajati et al., 2023). The regulatory context is similarly double-edged. The Sexual Violence Crime Law strengthens a survivor-centered legal framework, while the Personal Data Protection Law and the revised Electronic Information and Transactions Law shape how small outlets manage source protection, personal data, online harassment, and contested digital speech (Republic of Indonesia, 2022a, 2022b, 2024). Visibility is thus both a democratic resource and an organizational risk.

Three bodies of scholarship remain insufficiently connected. Feminist counterpublic theory explains how subordinated groups create alternative discourses, but it often treats the communicative arena as more stable than contemporary platform infrastructures allow. Platform studies explain algorithmic and infrastructural power, but often under-specify how gendered counterknowledge is organized within alternative news institutions. Development communication emphasizes participation, voice, and social justice, yet rarely examines how these aims are conditioned by rankings, metrics, and moderation. This study brings these approaches together through the concept of platformed feminist counterpublics. The term does not claim that platformization replaces counterpublic formation; rather, it identifies how platformization reorganizes the conditions of visibility, participation, vulnerability, and institutional sustainability.

Accordingly, the study asks: (1) how do Indonesian women's alternative media organize feminist counterpublic communication across editorial, organizational, and platform practices; (2) how do they negotiate the opportunities and constraints of platformed visibility; and (3) how do their issue agendas reframe inclusive development? The analysis distinguishes organizational intentions and communicative affordances from empirically demonstrated audience effects.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design, Context, and Participants

This study adopted a qualitative multiple-case design to examine how women's alternative media in Indonesia organize counterpublic communication under platform conditions (Priya, 2021). The cases were Konde.co, Bincang Perempuan, Jurnal Perempuan, Suluh Perempuan, Srikandi Lintas Iman, and Marsinah.id. Case selection was analytical rather than statistically representative. Each outlet consistently addressed women, gender, or marginalized groups; used digital platforms, particularly Instagram, for public communication; and combined journalism with advocacy, education, research, or community participation. The six cases also provided maximum variation in institutional history and issue specialization, including labor, violence, health, religion, ecology, minority rights, and social justice. This variation enabled cross-case comparison while preserving the organizational specificity of each outlet.

2.2 Data Sources and Sampling

Data were generated through in-depth interviews, non-participant observation, and qualitative content analysis. Interview recruitment was purposive and role-based, targeting participants with direct knowledge of editorial decision-making, content production, platform management, or gender-media advocacy. The participant profile included editors-in-chief or executive editors, editors, journalists, content managers, and representatives of institutions or associations with expertise in media and gender issues. Interviews examined editorial missions, source selection, production routines, platform strategies, community engagement, resource sustainability, and perceived risks of digital visibility. Non-participant observation focused on editorial practices, issue management, distribution strategies, and publicly observable interactions with audiences. A balanced corpus of 90 Instagram posts was assembled by selecting 15 posts from each outlet during the study period. Eligible posts were publicly accessible, contained substantive textual or visual material, and addressed at least one gender, development, or visibility issue relevant to the research questions. Duplicate posts, purely promotional items, and posts without analyzable issue content were excluded. Units of analysis included captions, images, campaign posters, short videos, and publicly visible comments or responses.

2.3 Data Collection and Analytical Procedure

NVivo was used to organize documents, retrieve coded segments, compare cases, and visualize relationships among themes; interpretive decisions remained the responsibility of the research team (Dhakal, 2022). Analysis proceeded in six stages: (1) transcription and repeated familiarization; (2) first-cycle descriptive and in vivo coding of interviews, observation notes, and posts; (3) second-cycle pattern coding into issue, editorial-practice, organizational, visibility, and development categories; (4) cross-case comparison using outlet-by-theme matrices; (5) integration of categories into micro-level standpoint, meso-level organizational infrastructure, and macro-level development framing; and (6) theoretical interpretation in relation to feminist counterpublics and platformization (Naeem et al., 2023). Coding dependability was strengthened through an iteratively revised codebook, recoding of ambiguous segments, research-team review of category definitions, attention to discrepant cases, and source and method triangulation. The resulting framework connects empirical codes to theoretical claims without treating software-generated frequencies as evidence by themselves.

3. Results

The findings indicate that Indonesian women's alternative media operate not only as content producers but also as organizational sites of feminist counterpublic communication. They translate everyday experiences into publicly available knowledge, negotiate recognition within algorithmically mediated environments, and connect gender justice to broader development agendas. The empirical basis comprises interviews and observations with media practitioners and relevant institutional actors, a purposive Instagram corpus of 90 posts from six outlets, and NVivo-assisted coding organized at micro, meso, and macro levels. The evidence supports claims about organizational practices, editorial representations, and publicly observable participation opportunities; it does not by itself demonstrate audience interpretation or social transformation.

The NVivo word cloud offers an exploratory orientation to the discursive field rather than a standalone analytical finding. Prominent terms include "perempuan" (women), "media", "informasi" (information), "alternatif" (alternative), "berita" (news), "redaksi" (editorial office), "Instagram", "akses" (access), "komunitas" (community), "buruh" (workers), "gender", and the names of several outlets. Read alongside the coded transcripts and observation notes, this vocabulary directs attention to access, editorial work, community-based communication, labor visibility, and relationships with mainstream media. Subsequent thematic and cross-case analysis, rather than word frequency alone, provides the evidentiary basis for the argument.



Figure 1. NVivo word cloud of interview transcripts and observation notes

3.1 Empirical Profile of the Media Corpus

This research corpus was built from six women's alternative media outlets in Indonesia: *Konde.co*, *Bincang Perempuan*, *Jurnal Perempuan*, *Suluh Perempuan*, *Srikandi Lintas Iman*, and *Marsinah.id*. Each outlet contributed 15 purposively selected Instagram posts, resulting in a balanced corpus of 90 posts. The selected cases represent different institutional histories and issue specializations. *Konde.co* and *Bincang Perempuan* primarily challenge mainstream gender bias through accessible digital journalism. *Jurnal Perempuan* operates as a long-established feminist knowledge institution integrating research, education, and advocacy. *Suluh Perempuan* highlights the intersections of gender, labor, ecology, and discrimination. *Srikandi Lintas Iman* connects women's issues to interfaith peacebuilding and the protection of minorities. *Marsinah.id* focuses on women workers, labor rights, and grassroots advocacy.

Table 1. Distribution of selected women's alternative media and Instagram corpus

Media outlet	Instagram account	Posts analyzed	Issue focus
Konde.co	@konde_co	15	Women and minority perspectives: digital journalism
Bincang Perempuan	@bincangperempuan	15	Amplifying women's voices; challenging mainstream bias
Jurnal Perempuan	@jurnalperempuan	15	Feminist research, education, and human rights advocacy
Suluh Perempuan	@suluhperempuan	15	Intersections of environment, labor, and women's oppression
Srikandi Lintas Iman	@srikandilintasiman	15	Social issues, children, and the interfaith women's movement
Marsinah.id	@marsinah.id	15	Women's rights, labor issues, and social advocacy

This diversity shows that women's alternative media in Indonesia do not constitute a single organizational type; they form a distributed feminist media ecology. Each outlet has a distinct issue specialization while sharing an orientation toward making marginalized women's experiences publicly legible. The balanced corpus supports comparison within the selected sample by preventing large or highly active accounts from numerically dominating smaller community-based outlets. It does not, however, represent each account's overall posting volume or the wider Indonesian digital public sphere.

3.2 Mapping Women and Development Issues in the Instagram Corpus

Qualitative content analysis identified eight issue categories (Table 2): women's employment, violence against women, education and awareness, patriarchy and culture, women's activism and movements, representation in the public sphere, environment and food, and women's health. The frequencies are descriptive counts within a purposively selected corpus; they are not prevalence estimates for the outlets' complete archives or for Indonesia's digital public sphere. Within these boundaries, the distribution shows how the selected media connect development to issues that extend beyond state-centered economic indicators.

Women's employment was the most frequent category in the selected corpus, appearing in 21 posts. Within this sample, labor justice was the most visible entry point for connecting gender to development. Posts addressed maternity and menstrual leave, non-discrimination in hiring, wage disparities, informal work, domestic workers' rights, and the everyday insecurity of women workers. Violence against women appeared in 14 posts and was framed as a structural and institutional problem rather than an isolated event. Education and awareness appeared in 13 posts, indicating a pedagogical orientation in which feminist media translate gender concepts, legal rights, and social critique into accessible public narratives.

Patriarchy and culture and women's activism and movements each appeared in 11 posts. Together, these categories show attention to the normalization of gender inequality and to collective efforts that contest it. Representation in the public sphere appeared in nine posts, emphasizing political literacy, participation in decision-making, and the symbolic consequences of exclusion. Environment and food appeared in seven posts, primarily through *Suluh Perempuan*, linking development communication to ecofeminism, Indigenous women's land rights, and household sustainability. Women's health appeared in four posts and addressed reproductive rights, bodily autonomy, healthcare access, and harmful practices such as female genital mutilation.

Table 2. Thematic issue categories and dominant framing orientation

Issue category	Posts	Dominant framing orientation
Women's employment	21	Labor rights, maternity/menstrual leave, anti-discrimination, and visibility of women workers
Violence against women	14	Survivor-centered advocacy, anti-violence campaigns, and critique of institutional impunity
Education and awareness	13	Gender literacy, public pedagogy, myth-busting, and critical awareness
Patriarchy and culture	11	Critique of unequal gender norms and reframing of private anxieties as structural issues
Women's activism and movements	11	Grassroots solidarity, public protest, campaigns, and transnational mobilization
Representation in public spaces	9	Political literacy, visibility in decision-making, and symbolic inclusion
Environment and food	7	Eco-feminism, sustainable traditions, and indigenous women's land rights
Women's health	4	Reproductive justice, bodily autonomy, and health access

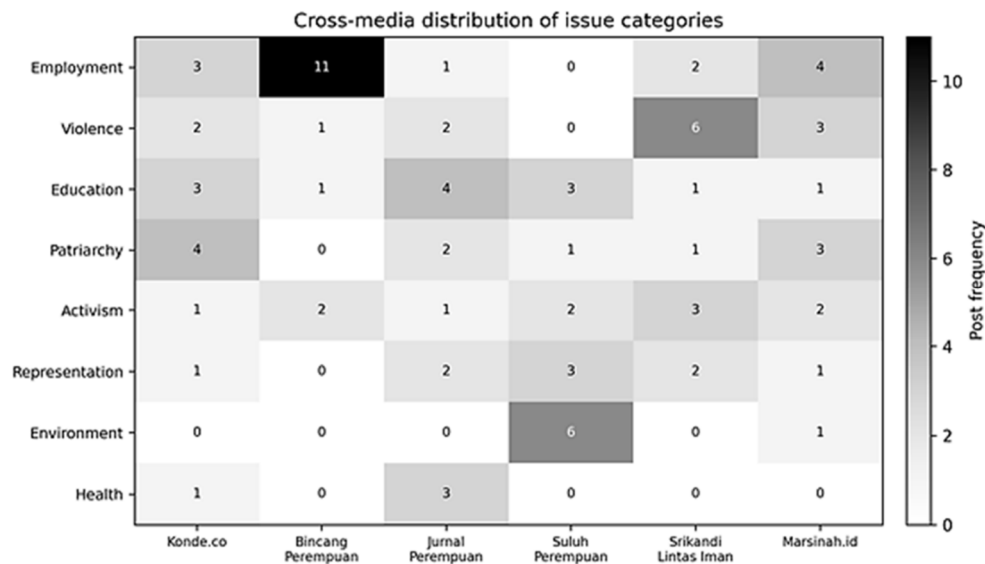


Figure 2. Heatmap of cross-media issue distribution

Within the selected corpus, development is represented as an embodied and intersectional process rather than solely as infrastructure, economic growth, or policy implementation. It is interpreted through working conditions, bodily safety, reproductive autonomy, ecological vulnerability, cultural recognition, and political participation. This agenda-setting

pattern is consistent with feminist counterpublic practice because it renders the experiences of women workers, survivors, minority groups, and marginalized communities available for public deliberation. The finding concerns representational and editorial work; whether audiences adopt these interpretations requires separate investigation.

3.3 Institutional Practices and Performed Visibility

The findings show that all six media outlets possess several institutional features that distinguish them from commercial newsrooms. First, they place gender equality, feminist knowledge, and the experiences of marginalized groups at the center of editorial decision-making. This editorial mission is not limited to producing women-centered content; it also determines the selection of sources, language, visual formats, and ethical boundaries of what can be published. Second, their organizational forms are flexible and relatively lean. They combine websites, print or online journals, transitions from radio to online, podcasts, newsletters, WhatsApp groups, and community channels. Third, content production combines journalism, advocacy, research, education, and community storytelling.

The management data in Table 3 show that these outlets rely on hybrid resources rather than advertising alone. Grants, training, seminars, memberships, donations, products, publishing, and collaborative programs support their operations. This model creates vulnerability because funding can be intermittent, but it may also reduce direct dependence on commercial advertising. Interviews and observations further show that the organizations design community models such as Konde Fellas, Lingkaran Bincang Perempuan, Sahabat Jurnal Perempuan, Suluh Perempuan members, Srili members, and Lingkaran Baca Marsinah. These arrangements invite followers to participate as informants, supporters, contributors, or circulation partners. The evidence demonstrates organizational intentions and participation mechanisms, not a general transformation of all audience members.

Table 3. Indicators of women's alternative media management

Indicator	Cross-case pattern	Empirical evidence
Editorial mission	Gender justice, feminist knowledge, and marginalized experiences are placed at the center of editorial decision-making.	Issues include minority perspectives, gender equality, feminist research, labor rights, environmental justice, interfaith peace, and social advocacy.
Organizational format	Flexible, hybrid, and relatively lean structures are used instead of hierarchical corporate newsrooms.	Online portals, print/online journals, radio-to-online transformation, podcasts, newsletters, and community channels.
Content production	Production combines journalism, advocacy, research, education, and community storytelling.	Feature writing, fact-checking, opinion, research articles, campaign posters, short videos, podcasts, webinars, and digital explainers.
Audience engagement	Audiences are invited to participate as community members, contributors, informants, and partners.	Konde Fellas, Circle Bincang Perempuan, Friends of Jurnal Perempuan, Srili members, Suluh members, and Marsinah Reading Circle.
Resource strategy	Sustainability relies on a mix of resources rather than advertising alone.	Grants, training, seminars, membership, donations, products, publishing, workshops, and collaborative programs.
Distribution strategy	Information is distributed through multi-platform networks to reach audiences with different access patterns.	Instagram, Facebook, X, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, Threads, websites, newsletters, and podcasts.
Visibility strategy	Platform visibility is negotiated through accessible language, visual formats, issue campaigns, and community amplification.	Legal, labor, cultural, and ecological issues are translated into visual and narrative content that can be reposted and discussed.

Platform visibility is negotiated through accessible language, visual formats, issue campaigns, and community amplification. Instagram is central but not exclusive; the outlets also use Facebook, X, YouTube, TikTok, WhatsApp, Threads, newsletters, podcasts, and websites. This cross-platform strategy responds to different patterns of access and attention. Short videos, infographics, and bullet-point posts provide concise entry points, whereas long-form articles, podcasts, webinars, reading circles, and newsletters provide greater interpretive depth. Figure 3 reports publicly displayed follower counts as a descriptive indicator of account size at the time of data collection. Follower counts are not equivalent to post reach, exposure, engagement, audience interpretation, or social impact. Visibility is therefore produced through designed circulation pathways, but its effects cannot be inferred from account size alone.

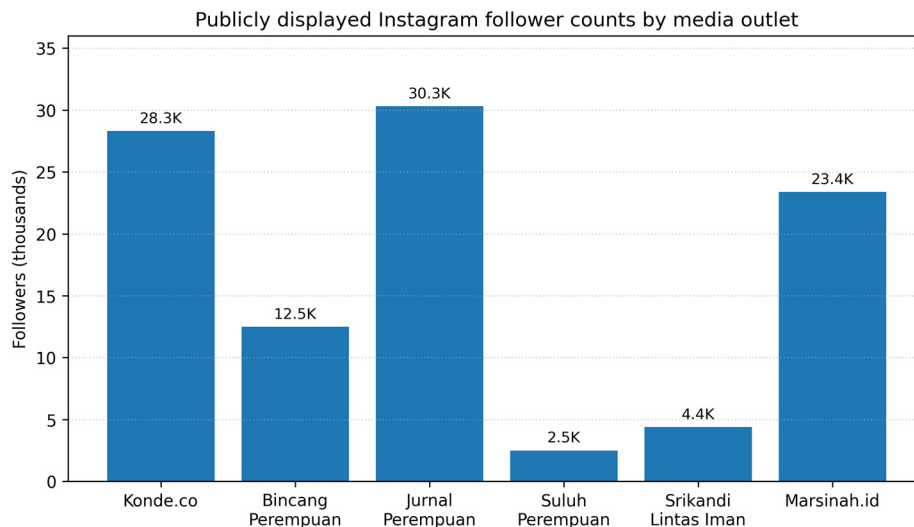


Figure 3. Publicly displayed Instagram follower counts of the six media outlets

Note. Follower counts are a descriptive snapshot of account size and should not be interpreted as post reach, exposure, engagement, audience interpretation, or social impact.

3.4 Feminist Standpoint as Editorial Cognition

Micro-level findings suggest that feminist visibility begins with standpoint. Journalists and editors interpret media work through distinct but complementary positions. Journalists articulate a grounded perspective formed through everyday interactions with audiences, survivors, workers, and marginalized communities. This perspective is practical and emancipatory: media should be safe, inclusive, and useful to women who are poorly served by mainstream information infrastructures. The accounts include women with disabilities, women in rural areas, workers with limited time, mothers with household responsibilities, and groups facing linguistic, economic, or technological barriers.

Table 4. Comparison of feminist perspectives between journalists and editors-in-chief

Analytical dimension	Journalists: grounded perspective	Editors-in-chief: strategic perspective
Focus of standpoint	Practical-emancipatory: inclusivity as a lived value; sensitivity to daily inequality; closeness to audiences and community issues.	Philosophical-systemic: feminism as an ideological position; structural awareness; long-term mission of sustaining feminist media.
Situated knowledge	Detailed awareness of technical, economic, and cultural barriers experienced by audiences; recognition of access problems and everyday exclusions.	Knowledge of structural constraints: marginal institutional position, sustainability challenges, and the need to maintain a distinctive editorial character.
Sexual division of labor	Direct experience of double burdens, gendered precarity, and vulnerability in journalistic work.	Attention to staffing policy, staff development, training, and organizational conditions that support women's labor and editorial safety.
Voice claim	Using reportage and storytelling to challenge inequality and assert the authority of women's experiences.	Corrective and structural criticism aimed at patriarchal media systems, hegemonic discourse, and monopolized public knowledge.

Editorial leaders articulate a strategic perspective. Their perspective is both philosophical and systemic: feminism is treated not only as a topic but also as an institutional position. Editorial leaders are concerned with organizational sustainability, the protection of media workers, the long-term mission of feminist education, and the need to redress patriarchal media dominance. A comparison between journalists and editors suggests that feminist media knowledge is generated through two layers of cognition. The first is experiential knowledge generated from close contact with the community. The second is strategic knowledge generated from the responsibility to maintain institutions, define editorial boundaries, and build collective safeguards. These interpretive processes can be understood as sensemaking, through which actors organize experience, negotiate ambiguity, and form adaptive judgments under changing conditions (Sidharta et al., 2024).

Locational knowledge is crucial. Journalists recognize that women's access to information is constrained by time, literacy, geography, infrastructure, and household labor. This knowledge shapes formatting decisions: content must be concise, accessible, visual, shareable, and compatible with fragmented attention. Editors, meanwhile, emphasize structural constraints such as platform dependency, limited funding, labor insecurity, algorithmic uncertainty, and the challenge of

sustaining feminist language without becoming inaccessible. Together, these forms of knowledge explain why women's alternative media combine popular language with critical content. Their political voice is not limited to speaking on behalf of women; it seeks to create conditions in which women's experiences can contest and reframe dominant media narratives.

3.5 Alternative Media as collaborative Feminist Infrastructure

At the meso level, women's alternative media operate as collaborative infrastructures rather than editorial organizations alone. They also function as educational spaces, community networks, advocacy channels, and knowledge archives. Their practices depart from a conventional newsroom model that sharply separates journalists, audiences, sources, and activists. Instead, they create more horizontal arrangements in which audiences may contribute stories, communities may become sources, and editorial work may take the form of collective care. These are organizational possibilities documented in the cases; the study does not assume that every follower participates or that all interactions are equally horizontal. The collaborative infrastructure is visible in content, form, reproduction, distribution, and communication processes.

Table 5. Organizational and operational mechanisms of women's alternative media

Analytical dimension	Organizational finding	Operational finding
Content	Domestic, intimate, and labor-related experiences are turned into public feminist issues.	Content responds to macro issues such as cabinet policy, labor law, violence legislation, and public controversy through a gender lens.
Form	Constructive and solution-oriented journalism combines factual reporting with feminist interpretation.	Infographics, short videos, explainers, and campaign posters simplify feminist theory and legal issues.
Reprographic innovation	DIY and low-cost infrastructure challenge dependence on expensive production tools.	Domestic workers, garment workers, survivors, and minority women are given narrative prominence.
Distributive use	Digital networks, social media, and community channels support editorial independence.	Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and WhatsApp amplify issues and extend campaign circulation.
Transformation of social relations	Membership models, collective work, networking, and hybrid funding reduce dependence on donor funding.	Special units in production, research, and training professionalize work while maintaining a movement-oriented approach.
Transformation of the communication process	Audiences are invited to participate as informants, contributors, and partners.	Two-way interaction is sustained through comments, reading circles, live sessions, WhatsApp groups, and direct feedback.

In terms of content, these media politicize everyday life by treating household labor, intimate relationships, work precarity, and bodily experience as public issues. In terms of form, they use constructive journalism, feminist interpretation, infographics, short videos, explainers, and campaign posters to make legal or theoretical questions more accessible. In terms of reproduction, they rely on low-cost and partly self-managed infrastructures that support circulation beyond expensive production systems. In terms of distribution, they combine platform networks with community channels. Finally, their communication practices invite audiences to respond, contribute, and circulate material rather than positioning them only as consumers. These mechanisms illuminate the ambivalence of platform visibility: platforms enable circulation, reposting, discussion, and community formation, while simultaneously creating dependence on algorithms, engagement metrics, moderation rules, and shifting visibility regimes.

4. Discussion

At the macro level, women's alternative media contribute to inclusive development communication by reframing what counts as development knowledge. Mainstream development narratives often privilege economic growth, infrastructure, and policy performance. In contrast, the six outlets frame development through worker dignity, bodily autonomy, freedom from violence, ecological security, religious and cultural pluralism, political representation, and women's capacity to define their own social realities. This pattern is consistent with communication for social change because it emphasizes dialogue, voice, recognition, and justice rather than top-down transmission. The evidence supports a claim about communicative reframing and agenda construction; it does not demonstrate that media content directly produces development outcomes.

The concept of platformed feminist counterpublics specifies this dual process. Feminist counterpublic theory identifies spaces in which subordinated groups formulate counterdiscourses and contest dominant definitions of public relevance. The qualifier platformed adds an infrastructural dimension: visibility, participation, and vulnerability are conditioned by ranking systems, metrics, moderation, data practices, and commercial dependencies. Platformization does not fundamentally replace feminist counterpublic formation; it reorganizes the conditions under which counterpublics become visible, sustain institutions, and connect with dispersed publics. The concept therefore offers an analytical advantage over the broader label of digital activism by linking micro-level standpoint, meso-level editorial and organizational practices, and macro-level development agendas. The cases also show that platform dependence is negotiated, rather than passively accepted, through editorial ethics, community networks, accessible formats, and cross-platform distribution.

Table 6. Summary of major empirical findings and theoretical implications

Empirical finding	Interpretation	Implication for inclusive development
Women's employment dominates the corpus.	Development is framed through labor dignity, workplace rights, reproductive protection, and women workers' visibility.	Inclusive development must address gendered labor precarity, not only macroeconomic growth.
Violence against women is framed structurally.	Survivor-centered communication challenges institutional impunity and patriarchal normalization of violence.	Safety and justice are core dimensions of development communication.
Editorial work is grounded in a feminist standpoint.	Journalists and editors use lived experience and strategic ideology to define newsworthiness.	Alternative media produce situated knowledge that counters mainstream epistemic exclusion.
Audience engagement is community-based.	Followers, members, reading circles, and WhatsApp groups are organized as potential circulation networks.	These arrangements create opportunities for participation in feminist knowledge circulation; audience-level transformation is not established by this study.
Visibility is negotiated across platforms.	Digital formats can expand circulation but also create algorithmic and safety vulnerabilities.	Platformed counterpublics require both technical adaptation and collective protection.

The study identifies three empirically grounded contributions. First, the outlets function as infrastructures of recognition by legitimizing experiences often excluded from mainstream news, including domestic work, menstrual leave, survivor justice, reproductive health, ecofeminist vulnerability, and minority women's participation. Second, they function as pedagogical infrastructures by translating laws, gender concepts, and structural critique into accessible visual and narrative forms. Third, they function as participatory infrastructures by creating channels through which audiences may comment, share, join reading circles, submit stories, support membership programs, and enter advocacy networks. These mechanisms connect visibility to inclusive development at the level of communication practice. Their existence should not be equated with uniform participation or verified social transformation.

4.1 Indonesian Context and Theoretical Implications

The Indonesian cases clarify why the organizational dimension of counterpublic formation matters. The six outlets respond to distinct but interconnected national concerns: labor precarity, gender-based violence, feminist education, religious pluralism, ecological justice, minority protection, and political representation. The 2022 Sexual Violence Crime Law gives survivor-centered reporting a stronger legal reference point, while data-protection and electronic-information regulation heighten the importance of source safety, consent, and careful digital publication (Republic of Indonesia, 2022a, 2022b, 2024). Small feminist outlets therefore perform a mediating role between formal policy, everyday experience, and public interpretation. Their importance lies less in replacing mainstream media than in maintaining specialized knowledge, issue continuity, and community relationships that mainstream cycles often cannot sustain.

4.2 Limitations

Several limitations define the scope of the claims. First, the Instagram corpus was purposively selected and balanced across outlets; it does not represent each outlet's full archive, posting frequency, or the Indonesian digital public sphere. Second, the study relies on publicly visible follower counts, posts, and comments rather than platform analytics. It therefore cannot measure algorithmic distribution, unique reach, silent audiences, or causal effects on attitudes and behavior. Third, comments and community activities capture only partial and self-selected forms of participation, and no audience interviews were conducted to establish how users interpreted the content. Fourth, the cross-sectional design cannot show how issue agendas, platform rules, or organizational strategies change over time. Finally, the interview evidence primarily represents organizational actors, so claims about participation and transformation are framed as intentions, practices, and communicative opportunities rather than verified audience outcomes. Future research should combine longitudinal cross-platform analysis, platform analytics where ethically available, and audience interviews or participatory methods.

5. Conclusion

Women's alternative media in Indonesia operate as platformed feminist counterpublics by combining situated editorial standpoints, collaborative organizational infrastructures, and platform-dependent circulation. Their issue agendas broaden development communication beyond economic growth to include labor dignity, bodily safety, reproductive autonomy, ecological justice, pluralism, and political participation. The concept of platformed feminist counterpublics contributes by showing that platformization does not replace counterpublic formation; it reorganizes the conditions under which feminist knowledge becomes visible, vulnerable, and institutionally sustainable. The study demonstrates how these outlets construct recognition, pedagogy, and opportunities for participation while remaining cautious about audience effects.

Inclusive development communication, from this perspective, depends not only on whose voices appear in public but also on the infrastructures, editorial practices, and safeguards that allow marginalized knowledge to circulate.

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Author contributions

Diah Amelia: conceptualization, methodology, data curation, formal analysis, writing-original draft, editing, and project administration. Siti Amanah: supervision, methodology review, validation, writing-review, and editing. Pudji Muljono: supervision, theoretical framing, writing-review, and editing. Dwi Retno Hapsari: supervision, interpretation of findings, writing-review, and editing. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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Obtained.

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The Publication Ethics Committee of the Redfame Publishing.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

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Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

Open access

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