Socratika: Journal of Progressive Education and Social Inquiry
E-ISSN: 3047-020X
Vol. 3 No. 3 (September–December 2026), pp. 1061-1072
https://doi.org/10.58230/socratika.v3i3.1068
© 2026 The Authors. Licensed CC BY 4.0

Anomalous Instagram Accounts: A Phenomenological Study of Digital Ethics and Citizenship

Lathifah Sandra Devi[1], Lina Marlina[2], Arini Meidiana[3], Rosa Nia Puji Ningsih[4]
[1,2,3] Pancasila and Civic Education, Pamulang University, South of Tangerang, Indonesia

[1]disandradevi@unpam.ac.id

Abstract

Purpose : This study explores how Instagram users experience and interpret accounts they perceive as anomalous, and what these experiences mean for trust, accountability, and ethical responsibility as dimensions of digital citizenship. The study examines perceived anomalous accounts; it does not verify whether those accounts are bots, fake accounts, or deliberately manipulative.

Method : A qualitative phenomenological design (Moustakas, 1994) was used with 10 purposively selected active Instagram users aged 18–25 in South Tangerang, Indonesia (P1–P10), all of whom had encountered accounts they perceived as suspicious or inauthentic. Data were collected through semi-structured online interviews (March–May 2026), digital observation of public posts, and documentation. Analysis followed bracketing, horizonalization, thematic clustering, and textural-structural description. Credibility was supported by triangulation and member checking.

Results : Four themes were identified: (1) perceived inauthenticity of identity, (2) an eroded sense of security and trust, (3) perceived erosion of communication ethics, especially accountability, and (4) critical verification practices and a shared view of moral responsibility. The essence of the experience was a loss of certainty about who the other party is in digital interaction.

Conclusion : From participants' perspective, perceived anomalous accounts are an ethical as well as a technical matter. The findings tentatively extend the digital citizenship dimensions of digital etiquette, digital rights and responsibilities, and digital security by foregrounding accountable identity. They describe the perceptions of 10 participants and do not support causal claims about the effects of anomalous accounts or conclusions about account operators' intentions.

Keywords: anomalous accounts, digital ethics, digital citizenship.

1. Introduction

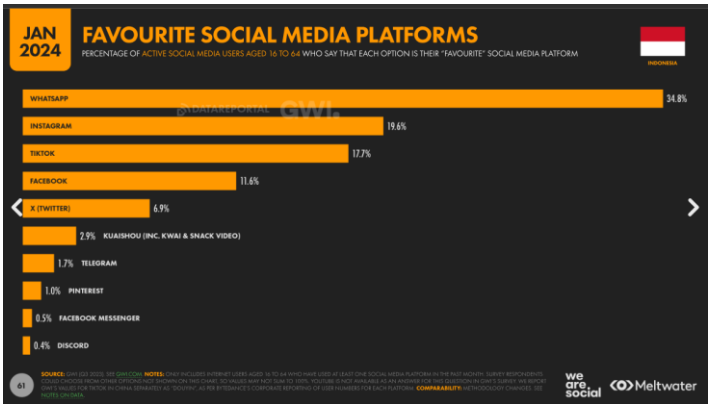
The development of digital technology has transformed how people interact, communicate, and participate in social and political life. Social media has become a digital public space in which individuals express opinions, construct identities, and take part in broader social discourse. In this

context, digital citizenship has emerged as a framework that emphasizes citizens' responsibility to use technology ethically, critically, and responsibly. Digital ethics, understood as the values and norms that govern individual conduct in digital interaction, is one important dimension of digital citizenship (Ribble, 2015). Digital citizenship is also understood more broadly as a multidimensional concept that includes ethics, literacy, and participation (Choi, 2016).

Social media use has grown substantially over the past decade, particularly among younger people, and Instagram has become one of the most popular platforms because it offers a visual space for sharing experiences, opinions, and daily activities. This growth has been accompanied by problems such as misinformation, hate speech, manipulation of public opinion, and the circulation of inauthentic accounts that affect the dynamics of digital communication (Alharbi et al., 2024).

Indonesia is a significant context for this concern. According to We Are Social and Meltwater (2024), WhatsApp is the most preferred social media platform in Indonesia (34.8%), followed by Instagram (19.6%), TikTok (17.7%), and Facebook (11.6%). Other platforms are far less preferred: X (6.9%), Kuaishou (2.9%), Telegram (1.7%), Pinterest (1.0%), Facebook Messenger (0.5%), and Discord (0.4%) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Favorite Social Media in Indonesia



Source: (We Are Social & Meltwater, 2024).

Although WhatsApp remains the primary communication platform, Instagram holds a strong position as a favorite platform for sharing visual content and for social interaction. Its scale makes it a relevant digital public space in which opinions, social interactions, and communication norms are shaped. However, freedom of expression in this space is often not matched by awareness of digital ethics, and phenomena such as hoaxes, hate comments, and identity manipulation challenge a healthy digital citizenship culture (Utami et al., 2024).

The literature and everyday talk use several overlapping terms for accounts that appear not to be what they claim to be. These categories should not be treated as equivalent, and none of them is inherently unethical simply because it exists. Fake accounts rely on fabricated identity information. Bots are accounts operated wholly or partly by software that often mimic human behavior (Cresci, 2020; Ferrara et al., 2016). Impersonation accounts copy the identity of a real person or organization (Zarei et al., 2020). Anonymous accounts conceal the operator's identity, which can be a legitimate means of protecting privacy and freedom of expression (Marx, 1999). In this study, an *anomalous account* is an analytic label for an account that participants perceive as

unusual or suspicious on the basis of visible cues, such as unclear identity or repetitive comments. The label describes the participant's perception. It is not a technically verified classification, and the study does not claim that any account was a bot, a fake account, or deliberately manipulative. Table 1 summarizes these distinctions.

Table 1: Operational Distinctions Among Anomalous, Fake, Bot, Impersonation, and Anonymous Accounts

Category	Operational definition	Status in this study
Anomalous account (perceived)	An account that participants perceive as unusual or suspicious on the basis of visible cues (e.g., unclear identity, repetitive comments), without technical verification.	Object of study. The unit of analysis is participants' experience, not the account.
Fake account	An account created with fabricated or false identity information to appear to be someone or something it is not.	Not verified. May overlap with perceived anomalous accounts.
Bot (social bot)	An account operated wholly or partly by software that produces content or interaction automatically, often mimicking human behavior (Cresci, 2020; Ferrara et al., 2016).	Not verified. Suspicion of automation is treated as perception.
Impersonation account	An account that copies the identity of an existing person or organization to pass as that entity (Zarei et al., 2020).	Mentioned in participants' reports. Not verified.
Anonymous account	An account whose operator is not identifiable to others. It may serve legitimate purposes such as privacy and free expression (Marx, 1999).	Not treated as inherently unethical. Anonymity is distinguished from deception and unaccountable conduct.

Source: Authors' synthesis based on Cresci (2020), Ferrara et al. (2016), Marx (1999), and Zarei et al. (2020).

Prior research can be grouped into three strands. The first is technical. Studies of fake-account, bot, and impersonation detection show that inauthentic accounts can be distinguished by patterns in profile data and behavior (Alharbi et al., 2024; Bazm & Asadpour, 2020; Zarei et al., 2020), and that social bots can distort the apparent popularity and spread of content (Ferrara et al., 2016; Shao et al., 2018). In this strand, inauthenticity is a property of accounts to be classified, and users appear mainly as data sources or targets.

The second strand concerns digital ethics and literacy among Indonesian social media users. Juliani et al. (2025) report that Instagram use has both positive and negative effects on civic ethics among young people, fostering civic awareness while also facilitating misinformation and digital intolerance. Asnaria et al. (2022), using a theoretical design, discuss the role of digital literacy in responding to hoaxes on Instagram. Haurissa et al. (2025), through a literature review, link hate

comments to the weakening of moral values in digital communication, and Utami et al. (2024) examine how Generation Z understands digital ethics and responds to hate speech. This strand emphasizes literacy and the ethical awareness of users, but it concentrates on what users write and know rather than on uncertainty about who is on the other side of an interaction.

The third strand concerns anonymity and accountability. Anonymity can protect privacy and enable expression that might otherwise be suppressed (Marx, 1999), while the online disinhibition effect shows that anonymity, among other factors, can produce both benign and toxic behavior (Suler, 2004). This literature suggests that the ethical problem lies less in anonymity as such than in deception and unaccountable conduct, a distinction that digital citizenship research has seldom examined empirically.

Taken together, these strands show how inauthentic accounts can be detected and why digital ethics matters, but they leave insufficiently understood how users themselves experience accounts whose authenticity they cannot verify, and what this lived experience reveals about trust, accountability, and ethical responsibility. This study addresses that gap. Its novelty lies not in documenting that anomalous accounts exist on Instagram but in a phenomenological interpretation of how trust, accountability, and ethical responsibility are experienced under conditions of uncertain identity. The scholarly contribution is threefold: (1) a conceptual clarification that separates perceived anomaly from verified inauthentic behavior; (2) an empirical account of the essence of this experience among Indonesian young adult users; and (3) a tentative extension of the digital citizenship dimensions of digital etiquette, digital rights and responsibilities, and digital security.

The study asks: (RQ1) How do Instagram users recognize and make sense of accounts they perceive as anomalous? (RQ2) How do encounters with such accounts shape their sense of security, trust, and communication ethics? (RQ3) What responsibilities do users attribute to themselves, to the platform, and to educational institutions in dealing with such accounts?

2. Method

This study used a qualitative approach with a transcendental phenomenological design (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). The design suits the research questions because the aim was to describe the essence of a shared experience, that of encountering accounts perceived as anomalous, and not to measure how common such accounts are. Because the phenomenon is defined by participants' perception, no attempt was made to technically verify account authenticity, for example through platform data or detection tools. The unit of analysis is the experience, not the account. The research proceeded through phenomenon identification, participant selection, data collection, data analysis, and interpretation of meaning.

Participants and Recruitment. Participants were selected through purposive sampling using three criteria: (1) active Instagram use for at least two years, (2) having encountered or interacted with accounts they perceived as inauthentic or suspicious, and (3) willingness to describe their experiences in depth. The study involved 10 participants aged 18–25, consisting of university students and young professionals living in South Tangerang, Indonesia. Initially, 25 potential participants were contacted through the researchers' academic networks based on their relevance to the research criteria. Of these, 11 individuals expressed their willingness to participate, while five

declined the invitation. The remaining nine individuals did not proceed to the participation stage. Subsequently, snowball referrals were used to support participant recruitment. From the individuals who agreed to participate, 10 were included in the final study. Each participant was assigned a code (P1–P11) to protect anonymity.

Sample Size and Data Saturation. The number of participants was not fixed in advance. Data saturation was assessed at the thematic level through an iterative process in which each interview transcript was coded shortly after the interview. The analysis indicated that no substantially new meaning units emerged after the eighth interview (P8). The subsequent interviews with P9, P10, and P11 were conducted to confirm the consistency and stability of the previously identified meaning units and themes. These three interviews reinforced the existing thematic patterns without generating substantively new meaning units. Therefore, recruitment was concluded after 11 participants had been interviewed. Research on interview-based studies suggests that themes can stabilize within approximately 12 interviews when the sample is relatively homogeneous (Guest et al., 2006). The present sample was relatively homogeneous in terms of age range, geographical location, and social media platform use, which supports this assessment of thematic saturation, although it also limits the transferability of the findings (see Limitations).

Interview Development and Procedure. The researchers served as the primary research instrument. The semi-structured interview guide was developed based on the research objectives and the digital citizenship dimensions proposed by Ribble (2015). Before data collection, the interview guide was reviewed and discussed collaboratively by the research team to ensure the relevance, clarity, and alignment of the questions with the research focus. This process was conducted as an internal research-team review rather than a formal expert validation or pilot interview. The guide covered five areas: (1) participants' first encounters with accounts they considered anomalous, (2) the characteristics by which they recognized such accounts, (3) their emotional and behavioral responses, (4) their views on ethical communication and moral responsibility on Instagram, and (5) their expectations of users, the platform, and educational institutions. Each interview lasted approximately 30–60 minutes, was conducted online between March and May 2026, was audio-recorded with participants' consent, and was transcribed verbatim. Interviews were conducted in Indonesian to allow participants to express their experiences naturally and comprehensively. For the purposes of this English-language article, selected quotations were translated from Indonesian into English by the researchers. Particular attention was given to preserving the original meanings, contextual nuances, and intended expressions of the participants during the translation process.

Observation was limited to public posts and comment sections that participants named as places where they had encountered such accounts. Observation notes recorded what was visible, such as username patterns, profile photos, repeated or near-identical comments, and timing of comments. These notes served to check whether participants' descriptions were consistent with what could be seen on the public post. They were not used to classify an account as a bot or a fake account. Screenshots were collected as documentation, and third-party account names and profile images were masked in all documentation.

Data analysis followed the phenomenological procedures outlined by Moustakas (1994). First, each interview transcript was read repeatedly to develop a holistic understanding of the

participants' experiences. Second, bracketing (epoché) was applied through reflective note-taking, in which the researchers documented and consciously set aside their pre-existing assumptions and judgments about anomalous Instagram accounts. This process was particularly important because the researchers' academic backgrounds in civic education and their experiences as social media users could shape their initial interpretations of digital ethics, online identity, and responsible digital behavior. Third, significant statements relevant to the research phenomenon were identified through horizonalization. These statements were then organized into meaning units and clustered into themes that represented the participants' shared experiences. Finally, the themes were synthesized into textual and structural descriptions to capture the essence of the phenomenon under investigation.

. Third, significant statements about how participants encountered, judged, and responded to such accounts were listed (horizonalization), and repetitive or overlapping statements were removed. Fourth, the remaining meaning units were clustered into themes. Fifth, themes were checked against the original transcripts, observation notes, and documentation to ensure that each was grounded in the data. Sixth, a textural description (what was experienced) and a structural description (the conditions and context of the experience) were written for each participant and integrated into a composite description of the essence of the experience. Interpretations were therefore developed from participants' own statements and returned to the transcripts at each step.

Credibility was supported through triangulation and member checking. For triangulation, interview data were compared with observation notes and documentation. For each theme, the researchers examined whether the public posts showed observable features consistent with what participants described, and they recorded where observation could not corroborate a participant's account; these points are reported in the Results. Member checking was used to return interpretations to participants for confirmation or correction (Birt et al., 2016).

Participation was voluntary, all participants received an explanation of the study's purpose and gave informed consent before the interview, and participants could withdraw at any time without consequence. Participants were identified only by codes. Observation was restricted to publicly visible content. The researchers did not interact with the accounts concerned and made no attempt to identify the people operating them. Screenshots were processed so that usernames, photographs, and other identifying details of both participants and the accounts discussed could not be traced.

3. Results

Analysis of the interviews, digital observations, and documentation produced four themes that correspond to the research questions: (1) perceived inauthenticity of identity, (2) an eroded sense of security and trust, (3) perceived erosion of communication ethics, and (4) critical verification practices and a shared view of moral responsibility. In all four, participants described accounts that *they perceived* as anomalous. Their judgments rested on visible cues and were not verified by the researchers.1. Perceived inauthenticity of identity

Participants 25 of 11 said they recognized anomalous accounts by cues such as an unclear identity, a suspicious profile photo, repetitive comments, a random-looking username, and interaction patterns that seemed unnatural. From these cues they inferred that the accounts did not

represent an authentic personal identity and that they were created for a purpose, such as provoking others or amplifying an issue. Several participants 2 noted that these accounts tended to appear under posts about social, political, or viral topics. Participants did not treat such accounts as merely "fake"; they described them as signs of irresponsible use of identity.

2. Eroded sense of security and trust

Participants 25 of 11 reported that encountering such accounts affected their sense of security, comfort, and trust on Instagram. Several said they became more cautious when reading comments, joining discussions, or responding to certain issues, because it was difficult to tell authentic interaction from manipulated interaction. When a post was filled with uniform, provocative, or personally attacking comments, participants described doubting whether the visible support or opposition reflected real public opinion. Some limited their interactions, deleted comments, blocked accounts, or avoided public discussion of sensitive issues, and they described unease and strain as part of this experience.

3. Perceived erosion of communication ethics

Participants linked the accounts they perceived as anomalous to communication that violates basic norms of politeness and respect. They described comment sections in which such accounts posted insults, mockery, threats, identical or copy-pasted remarks, and unverified claims, often within a short period and under posts on sensitive social or political topics. Because these accounts hide behind unclear identities, participants felt that their operators could say things they would not say face to face without visible consequence. In this sense, the lack of accountability, rather than the lack of a real name alone, was seen as the core ethical problem.

Participants also described a spillover effect: when hostile comments from such accounts dominated a thread, authentic users were seen to adopt the same tone, and the discussion gradually turned into a confrontation. Several participants 5 reported being the target of personal attacks or knowing someone whose photo or name had been used by an account that they believed was impersonating that person, and said that reporting features felt slow or ineffective. Participants described these accounts as a source of normalized incivility that undermines honesty, respect, and responsibility in digital communication.

4. Critical verification practices and a shared view of moral responsibility

Participants did not describe themselves only as victims. Many developed practical strategies: checking the profile of an unfamiliar account (posting history, follower and following ratio, consistency of photos), comparing claims with other sources before believing or sharing them, avoiding replies to obvious provocation, and reporting or blocking suspicious accounts. They described these habits as lessons learned through repeated exposure, and several said the experience made them more critical of what they read and more careful about what they wrote.

Participants also articulated a clear view of moral responsibility at three levels. At the individual level, being a good digital citizen meant using a truthful identity, refraining from provoking or spreading unverified information, and not amplifying content from suspicious accounts. At the platform level, they expected more effective detection, verification, and reporting mechanisms. At the societal level, they argued that digital literacy and ethics should be taught in schools, universities, and families, because technical protection alone cannot make users act

responsibly. For participants, handling such accounts was a shared responsibility in which individual ethical awareness is the starting point.

Table 2 summarizes the four themes, the essential meaning of each, and the related elements of digital citizenship (Ribble, 2015).

Table 2: Summary of Research Themes and Their Relation to Digital Citizenship Elements

Theme	Essential meaning of participants' experience	Related element of digital citizenship (Ribble, 2021)
1. Perceived inauthenticity of identity	Accounts are recognized as anomalous through cues such as unclear identity and unnatural behavior, and are interpreted as irresponsible use of identity. These are participants' perceptions, not verified findings.	Digital rights and responsibilities; digital literacy
2. Eroded sense of security and trust	Uncertainty about who is authentic produces caution, doubt about apparent public support for an issue, and withdrawal from discussion.	Digital security and privacy; digital health and wellness
3. Perceived erosion of communication ethics	Unclear identities are linked to insults, provocation, and unverified claims without visible accountability, and to normalized uncivil language.	Digital etiquette; digital communication
4. Critical verification and shared moral responsibility	Repeated exposure fosters verification habits and a view of responsibility shared among users, platforms, and educational institutions.	Digital literacy; digital rights and responsibilities

Source: Processed research data, 2026.

Following Moustakas (1994), the textural description of the experience can be summarized as repeatedly meeting accounts that look and behave unnaturally in public comment sections, accompanied by suspicion, annoyance, and unease. The structural description shows that this experience was shaped by several conditions: the perceived ease of creating anonymous accounts, the tendency of such accounts to appear around viral, social, and political posts, and the limited accountability that participants perceived on the platform. Combining both descriptions, the essence of the experience is a loss of certainty about the authenticity of the other party in digital interaction. This loss weakens trust and safety, and it shifts the burden of maintaining a healthy communication space onto users' own ethical awareness and literacy.

4. Discussion

The cues that participants used, such as random usernames, repetitive comments, and suspicious profile photos, resemble the features that technical studies use to detect fake accounts, bots, and impersonators (Alharbi et al., 2024; Bazm & Asadpour, 2020; Zarei et al., 2020). This

resemblance shows that participants' everyday judgments are not arbitrary, but it does not confirm that the accounts they described were inauthentic. People can misjudge, for example by taking a new user, a pseudonymous account, or a genuinely angry commenter for an anomalous one. The findings therefore concern perceived anomaly and its meaning. They are not evidence about the prevalence of bots or about what account operators intended, which this design cannot identify. The phenomenological contribution lies in showing the meaning that technical studies, which treat the problem as a classification task, leave aside: participants interpreted the cues morally, as signs that identity was being used irresponsibly.

Anonymity has legitimate functions. It can protect privacy and make it possible to speak when identification would be risky (Marx, 1999), and its relationship to hostile behavior is not simple (Suler, 2004). Participants' own accounts point in the same direction: they located the ethical problem in the absence of accountability rather than in the absence of a real name (Theme 3). This distinction matters for interpretation. The findings should not be read as an argument that unidentified accounts are unethical or that real-name policies are the remedy. They suggest instead that trust in digital public spaces depends on whether participants can expect conduct to be answerable, whether or not the speaker is named. An implication is that discussions of platform design and digital citizenship education should separate anonymity, which may be legitimate, from deception, harassment, and impersonation, which are the conduct participants objected to.

Participants' caution, doubt, and withdrawal indicate that uncertainty about who is authentic can affect the willingness to take part in public discussion. In Ribble's (2015) framework this relates to digital security and to digital health and wellness, because users who feel unsafe or strained may take part less fully as active citizens. Participants' doubt about uniform and provocative comments is consistent with concerns that fabricated or coordinated interaction can create an impression of popularity or public support (Ferrara et al., 2016; Shao et al., 2018). The present data show that participants experienced this doubt. They do not show that such manipulation occurred on the posts concerned.

Studies of hate comments and hate speech among young Indonesian users stress that weak ethical awareness encourages irresponsible communication (Haurissa et al., 2025; Utami et al., 2024). The present findings add a perception-based dimension: participants experienced hostile comments as more damaging when they could not tell who was speaking or whether anyone could be held answerable. The attribution of hostile comments to anomalous accounts may also be partly an interpretive habit, since hostile comments can come from authentic users as well, which participants themselves noted in describing spillover. The study cannot separate these cases, and this is a limit on what the findings can say about the source of incivility.

The fourth theme is in line with research showing that digital literacy helps users respond to misinformation on Instagram (Asnaria et al., 2022) and that literacy and ethical awareness matter for the civic ethics of Indonesian youth (Juliani et al., 2025). Participants' verification habits are concrete examples of such literacy in practice. Their view that responsibility is shared among users, platforms, and educational institutions suggests that literacy alone is not sufficient and that users also need an environment that supports accountable communication. Literacy programs may therefore need to teach calibrated judgment, that is, the difference between suspecting an account and verifying it.

The findings tentatively extend three dimensions of digital citizenship (Ribble, 2015). For *digital etiquette*, they suggest that norms of respectful conduct presuppose some recognizability of the other party, so that etiquette is experienced as fragile when the interlocutor's authenticity is uncertain. For *digital rights and responsibilities*, participants paired freedom of expression with accountable use of identity and placed responsibility at the individual, platform, and societal levels. For *digital security*, they extended the idea beyond protection of data and devices to the ability to judge who one is interacting with, which can be called relational or epistemic security. These are interpretations from a small phenomenological sample and are offered as propositions for further testing, not as established theory.

The findings come from 10 purposively selected Instagram users aged 18–25 in one region, so they describe the depth of shared experience rather than its distribution in the wider population, and readers should judge transferability to other contexts. Participants were selected because they had encountered accounts they found suspicious, so people who had no such experience are not represented. The study relied on participants' perceptions and on observation of public posts; it did not use platform data or detection tools, and it did not examine the intentions of account operators. The interpretations were produced by the research team and were translated from Indonesian for reporting, which may shape nuance. Future research could combine this approach with computational detection to compare perceived and verified inauthenticity, include older users and other platforms, and study the perspectives of people who operate anonymous or pseudonymous accounts for legitimate reasons.

5. Conclusion

This study explored how Instagram users experience accounts they perceive as anomalous. Four themes captured the experience: perceived inauthenticity of identity, an eroded sense of security and trust, perceived erosion of communication ethics, and critical verification practices alongside a shared view of moral responsibility. The essence of the experience was a loss of certainty about who the other party is in digital interaction.

For these 11 participants, the issue was an ethical one as well as a technical one. They described trust and accountability, and not anonymity as such, as what was at stake, and they placed responsibility on users, platforms, and educational institutions. The findings tentatively extend the digital citizenship dimensions of digital etiquette, digital rights and responsibilities, and digital security by foregrounding accountable identity.

These findings reflect participants' perceptions. They do not establish that the accounts concerned were bots or deliberately manipulative, and they do not support claims about the effects of anomalous accounts on digital society more broadly. A practical implication is that digital literacy and ethics education should help users distinguish suspicion from verification and should address accountability in online communication. Further research that combines lived-experience and verification methods is needed to test these interpretations.

6. References

Alharbi, N., Alkalifah, B., Alqarawi, G., & Rassam, M. A. (2024). Countering social media cybercrime using deep learning: Instagram fake accounts detection. *Future Internet, 16*(10), Article 367. https://doi.org/10.3390/fi16100367

Asnaria, F. R., Muthali'in, A., Prasetiyo, W. H., & Patmisari, P. (2022). The role of digital literacy in the spread of hoax on Instagram to strengthen the character of unity. JED (Jurnal Etika Demokrasi), 7(3), 695–704. https://doi.org/10.26618/jed.v7i3.8084

Bazm, M., & Asadpour, M. (2020). Behavioral modeling of Persian Instagram users to detect bots. arXiv. https://arxiv.org/abs/2008.03951

Birt, L., Scott, S., Cavers, D., Campbell, C., & Walter, F. (2016). Member checking: A tool to enhance trustworthiness or merely a nod to validation? Qualitative Health Research, 26(13), 1802–1811. https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732316654870

Choi, M. (2016). A concept analysis of digital citizenship for democratic citizenship education in the Internet age. Theory & Research in Social Education, 44(4), 565–607. https://doi.org/10.1080/00933104.2016.1210549

Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Cresci, S. (2020). A decade of social bot detection. Communications of the ACM, 63(10), 72–83. https://doi.org/10.1145/3409116

Ferrara, E., Varol, O., Davis, C., Menczer, F., & Flammini, A. (2016). The rise of social bots. Communications of the ACM, 59(7), 96–104. https://doi.org/10.1145/2818717

Guest, G., Bunce, A., & Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. Field Methods, 18(1), 59–82. https://doi.org/10.1177/1525822X05279903

Haurissa, L. E. M., Sembiring, S. I., Putri, R. A., Ningtias, T. W., Wuwungan, D., Kaamilah, S. K., & Utami, Y. S. (2025). Etika komunikasi digital dalam menanggapi hate comment di Instagram [Digital communication ethics in responding to hate comments on Instagram]. Communicatio: Jurnal Ilmu Komunikasi, 1(2). https://doi.org/10.33830/communicatio.v1i2.13007

Juliani, A., Sulistyarini, S., & Dewantara, J. A. (2025). Dampak penggunaan Instagram terhadap etika kewarganegaraan di Indonesia [The impact of Instagram use on citizenship ethics in Indonesia]. Jurnal Pendidikan dan Pembelajaran Khatulistiwa, 14(6). https://doi.org/10.26418/jppk.v14i6.92620

Marx, G. T. (1999). What's in a name? Some reflections on the sociology of anonymity. The Information Society, 15(2), 99–112. https://doi.org/10.1080/019722499128565

Moustakas, C. (1994). Phenomenological research methods. Sage Publications.

Ribble, M. (2015). Digital citizenship in schools: Nine elements all students should know (3rd ed.). International Society for Technology in Education.

Shao, C., Ciampaglia, G. L., Varol, O., Yang, K.-C., Flammini, A., & Menczer, F. (2018). The spread of low-credibility content by social bots. Nature Communications, 9, Article 4787. https://doi.org/10.1038/s41467-018-06930-7

Suler, J. (2004). The online disinhibition effect. CyberPsychology & Behavior, 7(3), 321–326. https://doi.org/10.1089/1094931041291295

Utami, D. N., Normansyah, A. D., & Sjam, D. A. (2024). Etika digital dalam menanggulangi ujaran kebencian pada penggunaan media sosial Instagram oleh generasi "Z" [Digital ethics in addressing hate speech in Instagram use by Generation Z]. Journal of Multidisciplinary Inquiry in Science, Technology and Educational Research, 1(3c), 1304–1312. https://doi.org/10.32672/mister.v1i3c.1871

We Are Social, & Meltwater. (2024). Favorite social media platforms (January 2024). https://www.wearesocial.com

Zarei, K., Farahbakhsh, R., Crespi, N., & Tyson, G. (2020). Impersonation on social media: A deep neural approach to identify ingenuine content. In Proceedings of the 2020 IEEE/ACM International Conference on Advances in Social Networks Analysis and Mining (ASONAM) (pp. 11–15). https://arxiv.org/abs/2010.08438