

## 'Myth' or Fact: Textual Analysis on Social Media Postings of Health Issues

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### ABSTRACT

The use of social media such as Instagram and TikTok is increasingly widespread. Its use is not just to meet the need to communicate but also to disseminate information. Not all information on social media is not all true. Social media has become a means of spreading false information. By applying textual analysis, this paper aims to examine how Instagram and TikTok postings of health issues communicate health information. The findings show that the contents of the postings are misleading, fabricated content, false, and manipulated. It can be concluded that the postings deliver information based on 'myth' rather than the correct medical facts.

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### Introduction

In the current technological era, children, adults, and the elderly are dependent on the internet and various social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and Twitter. Therefore, having an account to share any information you want to share through social media, whether it is about celebrities, your health, and lifestyle, or political content, is not a typical thing that people do. The reason that other people want to share any postings is that they believe it contains vital information that needs to be distributed to everyone, despite the fact that they are unaware of the facts of the information they share. There are 7.7 billion people on the planet, and at least 3.5 billion of us are connected to the internet at any given time (Ospina, 2019). These are enormous numbers. This suggests that more than two-thirds of all internet



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users participate in social media and that one-third of the world's population uses these platforms. In this paper, we examine how Instagram and TikTok postings of health issues communicate health information. This paper is a textual analysis that explores the characteristics of the postings. Regardless of the readers' lack of knowledge about the subject matter, this paper focuses on examining the characteristics of the postings. Regardless of the characteristics of the social media users and their connection with the quality of the social media postings they produce, this paper explores type of false information on Instagram and TikTok postings on health issues and the characteristics of the postings that are able to persuade the readers to believe that the news is accurate.

Prior studies on false information on social media have claimed that hoaxes use the various forms and linguistic elements of false news. Tobing, dkk (2020) maintains that hoaxes of Covid-19 issues circulate through social media use various forms and linguistic elements of false news about Covid-19. This study also reveals that the hoaxes gained high reactions because it is supported by video with multiple types of information, including the ability to share and comment on content; therefore, this particular platform was selected.

Fatmawati, Salzabila, and Rizkitama's (2020) study on hoaxes on social media corpus maintains that interests and partisanship are always increasing in the media. The researcher decided to use several online news sources as the data source to be analyzed using the discourse analysis approach following the Teun A. Van Dijk theory. These news sources will specifically focus on celebrity issues regarding specific topics, such as marriage, divorce, accidents, and other criminal news. This research aims to conduct a critical discourse analysis of several articles to understand how the national online media depicts certain celebrity instances. The primary question that needs to be answered is how can articles published by online media outlets across the country report news about celebrities. The findings of the poll indicate that there have been three significant developments. One of the reasons is that individuals in the region are increasingly consuming more online media to keep themselves updated. Second, the increase in the participation of online social media users is in terms of providing data and



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sharing the data. Third, the amount of entertainment, gossip, and game content that users consume grows.

Degaf, Wijana, and Poedjosoedarmo (2019) investigated celebrity news in online media using textual analysis theory and a CDA study. This study aims to discover how the National Online Media covers certain celebrity situations by conducting a Critical Discourse Analysis of some of its pieces. This analysis will determine how the National Online Media covers specific celebrity situations. The most important question at this juncture is how national internet media outlets report news about celebrity happenings in their articles. The findings of the study point out three significant developments. First, more users in the region are now consuming online media to stay current on the news. Second, more users are participating in online social media for the distribution and contribution of data. Third, more users are consuming content related to entertainment, rumors, and gaming.

Utami (2018) studies the hoaxes associated with politics in Indonesia with the title "Hoax in Modern Politics: The Meaning of Hoax in Indonesian Politics and Democracy." This paper examines the hoaxes that are related to politics in Indonesia. In this paper, the author investigates hoaxes' effects in contemporary Indonesia's politics. The paper examines the characteristics of a sample of hoax records disseminated on social media at some point during Jakarta's gubernatorial election in 2017 by employing three memetic dimensions: content, form, and stance. The paper also investigates the hoax records themselves. It explores the hoax approach used in Indonesian politics, particularly regarding the rising partisanship and polarization among the younger generation.

Previous research provided a reference for this current research to examine types of hoaxes on Instagram and Tik Tok's postings on health issues and their characteristics by analyzing the postings and the comments section.

A qualitative method was used in this current study. The data were taken from Instagram and Tik Tok's postings on May 2022 and June 2022. Two postings of health issues and comments were analyzed. The selected postings were from @tempodotco Instagram posting and @Aurel Lis Tik Tok account. The selection of @tempodotco Instagram posting is due to the number of followers of this account. In this regard, it shows that @tempodotco



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is appealing to Instagram. Meanwhile, the selection of @Aurel Lis Tik Tok account is because the content is directed to 'for your page' (FYP). The FYP platform provides users with a recommended content selection system. In this respect, the possibility of spreading the posting is more widespread. The video posting has been pinned up until now. The video has received 21.7 views which indicates that it is appealing to the public.

In conducting the textual analysis, the data analysis procedure is as follows. First, identifying the content of the Instagram and Tik Tok's posting on health issues shared by @tempodotco and @Aurel Lis. Second, identify the readers' comments regarding the postings. Third, select the identified information gained from the postings relevant to the research problems. Fourth, discuss the type of false information and its characteristics.

### **Discussion**

On the first of June, 2022, @tempodotco post an Instagram content entitled *5 Tanda Kolesterol Tinggi yang Muncul di Kaki (5 Signs of High Blood Cholesterol That Show Up in the Skin)* (see image 1). It is mentioned in the posting that there are indicators of cholesterol in the feet, and the reader should keep this in mind. The information presented in the posting detailed five symptoms that will present on a person's feet if they have high cholesterol. These symptoms include shivering in the legs, leg pain, a change in the color of the skin, leg cramps, and atrophy in the calf muscles. All of these symptoms will present themselves in a person who has high levels of cholesterol. The content of the posting is verified by a comment and is said that the information is not accurate. It is said that the information presented in the posting is completely false.



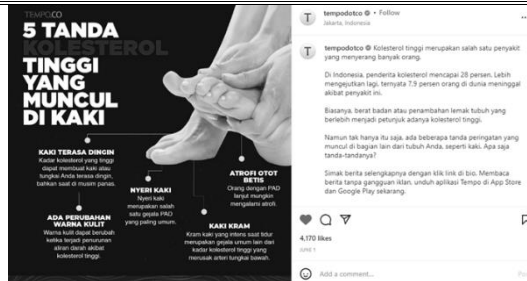


Image 1. @tempodotco's Posting

“High cholesterol has no symptoms, the title is inaccurate, and it can be misperceived in the community,” said @dokterdecsa, a doctor (see image 2). This comment counters the posting. It implicitly claims that the content of the posting is false information. The image of the posting is considered canonical within the context of an academic category for hoaxes. It contains information that has the potential to have an impact on society because it stimulates the readers to make a decision in terms of health issues. To @zaldydjauhari, the information about High cholesterol symptoms of is taken for granted.



Image 2. @dokterdecsa's Comment

@ Aurel Lis posted Tik Tok video entitled “Causes of Breast Cancer” (see image 3). The creator of the video provides a condensed explanation of the possible causes of the illness from having breasts massaged.



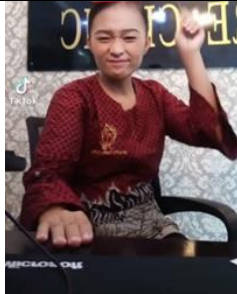


Image 3. @Aurel Lis's Video Posting

@soniahanafati, a dermatologist (see image 4), claimed that the information that was disseminated on Tiktok was inaccurate. To counter this false information, she presented the correct information regarding the risk factors of breast cancer.



Image 4. @soniahanafati's Response

@ Aurel Lis' false information also invites other responses from Tik Tok users. Most of the users take for granted the correctness of the information. In spite of the absence of any verifiable sources of information, the individuals who commented on this post are convinced that the information presented therein is accurate (see image 5). Because the Tik Tok user spreads false



information, the followers may feel intimidated by the content of the posting. Most of the viewers show their agreement with the content of the posting.



Image 5. Comments for @Aurel Lis's Posting

@tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting denote the characteristics of false information or hoax. The postings give incorrect background information. The contents are not based on fact, but 'myth' that is frequently used to serve up misleading content. The postings indicate a lie that is frequently disseminated across social media platforms. The contents of the postings correspond to the notions of false information proposed by Adnan (2019). @tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting doesn't have the potential to be harmful, but it is deceptive. Readers take for granted and consider the information in the content to be accurate and take it seriously. @tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting is misleading. The content is created with an ulterior motive to deceive people. This can result in misleading readers. The content of the posting is the result of deliberate creation. The creators of the postings intend to influence readers' perspectives to meet their goals. Medical information is used wrongly to create misleading content, and that information is mixed and matched in such a way. It is placed in an inappropriate context.



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The false information of @tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting refers to an 'academic hoax.' The postings present information that may have a significant impact on a number of different societies.

@tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting is fabricated. The contents are widely regarded as a perilous form of fabricated content. The contents of the posting cannot be justified in an objective sense. The titles of the posting are made distinctive from others. Though the content may seem very informative like news content, @tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's postings are created with the intention of getting attention from the readers. It is the particular profit that Instagram and Tik Tok content makers intend to gain. The creators of @tempodotco's and @ Aurel Lis's content posting typically modify the materials of the content to give people a new false understanding, which makes it easier for people to believe.

### **Conclusion**

It can be concluded that the contents of the postings on health issues are misleading, fabricated content, false, and manipulated. The postings deliver information based on 'myth' rather than the correct medical facts. The connection of posting, comments, and responses implies that readers are not only subject to false information, but also have the capacity to counter it. 'Academic hoax' has been present as a challenge to the professionals in the fields.

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