

The Phenomenon of Brand Hijacking on Social Media: An Analysis of Public Perception and its Implications for Consumer Trust

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Abstract

The phenomenon of brand hijacking, or the misuse of a brand's identity on social media, is becoming increasingly prevalent, often through the creation of fake accounts, unauthorized use of logos, and the dissemination of misleading content that resembles official brand communications. This creates confusion among consumers and poses a serious threat to brand reputation, especially in Indonesia, where digital literacy remains relatively low. This study aims to analyze public perceptions of brand hijacking and evaluate the effectiveness of existing legal protections in Indonesia, particularly through Law Number 20 of 2016 on Trademarks and Geographical Indications, Law Number 1 of 2024 concerning the Second Amendment to Law Number 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions, and Law Number 8 of 1999 on Consumer Protection. The research employs an empirical legal method through questionnaires distributed to 60 respondents, analyzed using a statutory and analytical approach. The results show that the majority of respondents are aware of brand hijacking and perceive it as a violation that can diminish consumer trust. Most respondents also reported feeling uncertain or even canceling purchases after encountering fake accounts or misleading content impersonating well-known brands. This uncertainty leads consumers to be more cautious, selective, and sometimes to avoid the brand altogether, even when the brand is not directly at fault. Additionally, most respondents believe that brands, digital platforms, and the government share collective responsibility in preventing brand hijacking and enforcing stricter measures against impersonator accounts. Therefore, regulatory reforms that are more adaptive to digital developments and enhanced coordination among brand owners, legal authorities, and platforms are urgently needed.

Keywords: Brand Hijacking, Social Media, Consumer Trust, Legal Protection, Digital Regulation

Introduction

In today's digital era, social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook have become the primary channels for brands to communicate directly with consumers (Watajdid et al., 2021). According to a report by We Are Social cited by Annur in Databoks, Facebook was the most popular social media platform globally as of October 2023, with 3.03 billion active users, followed by YouTube (2.49 billion), and both WhatsApp and Instagram with 2 billion users each. Overall, the number of global social media users has reached 4.95 billion, accounting for 61.4% of the world's population of 8.06 billion. This high level of social media penetration creates a vast opportunity for brands to reach wider audiences (Oldisan et al., 2025). However, the openness of social media also increases the risk of brand identity misuse, known as brand hijacking.

Brand hijacking refers to the unauthorized use or imitation of a brand's identity elements for purposes such as fraud, propaganda, or damaging the brand's reputation (Sari, 2024). In Indonesia, this phenomenon has led to several harmful cases affecting both consumers and companies. For instance, in 2021, a fake Instagram account impersonating Tokopedia used identical logos and visual branding to distribute false promotional campaigns and collect personal data, resulting in financial losses and diminished public trust (Prasetyo & Cokki, 2022). A similar case occurred with Gojek, where a fake Facebook account promoted fraudulent job offers, leading to public confusion and damaging the brand's communication credibility (Apriliani et al., 2021). These cases illustrate that brand hijacking can go beyond brand communication issues and result in legal violations and economic harm.

A study by Lestari & Suryani (2022) examined how brand image, perceived price, and product quality influence consumers' decisions to purchase counterfeit fashion products, even though their focus was not on social media impersonation. The findings illustrate that identity misappropriation both visual and symbolic can significantly shape consumer behavior. This reinforces the idea that brand hijacking extends beyond communication manipulation and includes broader commercial infringements, where brand identity is exploited without authorization to gain unfair advantage, ultimately damaging public trust.

Moreover, fake accounts violate provisions in Indonesia's Law Number 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions (ITE Law) as forms of electronic information manipulation (Rezky & Ibrahim, 2022), and are often used to spread hate speech or commit online fraud (Ayu & Alfitra, 2019).

Academically, brand hijacking is understood as a form of non-collaborative co-creation, in which external parties recreate brand identity without the owner's approval. According to Siano et al. (2022), brand hijackers not only use unauthorized brand elements like logos and names, but also manipulate consumer perception. The primary consequence is reputational damage and the decline of consumer trust, ultimately threatening long-term brand-audience relationships. Therefore, it is essential to understand this phenomenon from the public's perspective in order to assess how brand hijacking impacts consumer trust in an era where brand reputation heavily depends on digital presence.

From a *das sein* (reality) perspective, brand hijacking on social media poses a real threat to companies and consumers, as brand identities can easily be falsified and exploited for malicious purposes. Unfortunately, platform-based monitoring and protection mechanisms remain ineffective in preventing the spread of fake accounts. While Law Number 20 of 2016 on Trademarks and Geographical Indications (Trademark Law) provides legal protection for registered trademarks, the regulation focuses more on formal aspects and does not specifically accommodate digital identity misuse (Sugianto et al., 2021). As a result, companies struggle to take legal action against impersonators, and consumers remain highly vulnerable. From a *das sollen* (ideal) standpoint, there should be stricter and more specific regulations to address brand hijacking on social media. The current legal gaps fail to offer comprehensive protection to brand owners, highlighting the need for reform or additional provisions in the Trademark Law to address impersonation mechanisms (Matompo, 2018). Strengthening digital legal protections will ensure brand trust remains intact in this evolving environment.

The issue of brand hijacking on social media remains underexplored in academic literature, particularly from the public's perspective and its implications for consumer trust. While several studies, such as those by Afni & Roostika

(2024) and Juwita (2021), discuss the influence of digital marketing on consumer trust, they do not specifically address the misuse of brand identity by third parties. Other works by Siano et al. (2022) and Estrella (2021) focus more on perpetrator motivations and online fraud techniques, rather than public perception or trust implications. Thus, this research aims to fill that gap by analyzing public perspectives on brand hijacking and its impact on consumer trust.

This study holds both academic and practical significance. Academically, it contributes to the legal and digital marketing literature by examining public perceptions of brand hijacking and its impact on consumer trust. Practically, the findings are expected to assist brands in designing preventive strategies and provide input for regulators to develop more adaptive brand protection policies in the digital era. However, this study has several limitations, including a normative legal analysis and a limited number of respondents, which may not fully represent Indonesia's broader social media user population. It also does not quantitatively measure the long-term impact of brand hijacking on consumer behavior. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted with these constraints in mind. The objectives of this research are to analyze public perspectives on brand hijacking on social media and its implications for consumer trust also to evaluate the legal protection available in Indonesia for brand owners against such practices.

Research Method

This study applies an empirical legal research method, which aims to present real and objective facts about the social function of law, facts that can be directly observed and to serve as a foundation for designing, interpreting, applying, and critiquing the law (Tan, 2021). This method was chosen because it aligns with the research objective, which is to examine the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of existing legal regulations (Disemadi, 2022). In addition, this study seeks to understand public perceptions of the brand hijacking phenomenon and its implications for consumer trust on social media. The

analytical approaches employed in this research include the statute approach and the analytical approach.

Primary data were collected using a questionnaire distributed to social media users in order to capture their perceptions and experiences regarding brand hijacking. The study also utilized secondary sources, including: 1) primary legal materials such as Law Number 20 of 2016 on Trademarks and Geographical Indications; Law Number 1 of 2024 as the Second Amendment to Law Number 11 of 2008 on Electronic Information and Transactions; Law Number 8 of 1999 on Consumer Protection; and Ministerial Regulation of Communication and Informatics (Permenkominfo) Number 5 of 2020 on Private Electronic System Operators; and 2) secondary legal materials including academic journal articles, previous research findings, expert opinions in relevant fields, and other related data published by research institutions. The data were analyzed using a descriptive-qualitative method, in which responses from the questionnaire were classified, presented, and interpreted to identify general patterns in public perception. Legal data were then analyzed to assess the alignment between current regulations and the social phenomena under study.

Results and Discussions

Public Perception of The Brand Hijacking Phenomenon on Social Media and Its Implications for Consumer Trust

Clothing Brand hijacking is the unauthorized misuse of a brand's identity by third parties with the intention of deceiving consumers or strategically damaging the brand's reputation. This phenomenon has emerged alongside the increasing reliance of companies on social media as a medium for brand communication. In this context, digital communication strategies characterized by transparency, education, and authenticity have been found to increase consumer trust and purchase intentions (Jeromina & James, 2024). On the other hand, brand hijackers exploit the high level of public trust in visual elements to disguise fake accounts. They typically mimic brand names, logos, and even communication styles to fabricate false brand identities (Siano et al., 2022). This

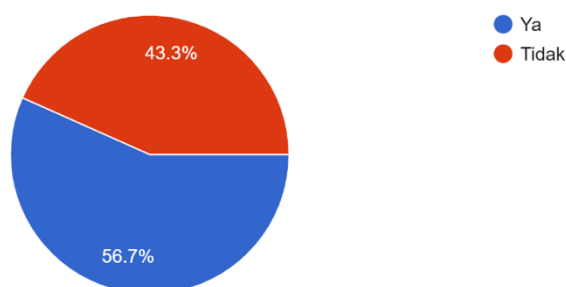
form of impersonation is far more systematic than ordinary parody accounts, as it is intentionally manipulative and aimed at causing harm. The main risk lies in the erosion of consumer trust due to uncertainty in digital brand identity (Dineva et al., 2025). If left unaddressed, brand hijacking can destroy the long-term loyalty painstakingly built by companies. Thus, a conceptual understanding of brand hijacking must be established before examining public responses.

In Indonesia, brand hijacking has become an increasingly real threat in the digital lives of its citizens. Low digital literacy causes the public to rely heavily on visual features such as logos and account names without verifying their authenticity. This is further exacerbated by the rapid spread of information through social media, making fake accounts highly influential in shaping public perception (Rezky & Ibrahim, 2022). Real-life examples, such as fake Tokopedia and Gojek accounts, show that brand hijacking not only deceives but also causes financial and reputational losses. In this context, social media is not merely a communication tool, but a vulnerable space often exploited for identity abuse. People's reactive behavior to viral content makes it easier for deceptive information to spread. Therefore, it is crucial to understand how public perception is formed in relation to this issue.

Public perception plays a key role in determining the sustainability of a brand's reputation in the digital era. When consumers feel deceived or uncertain about a brand's authenticity, they tend to lose trust immediately (Afni & Roostika, 2024). In the long run, this affects purchasing decisions, brand loyalty, and the overall image of the company. Therefore, brand hijacking is not only a corporate issue but also intersects with consumer protection and information security. Public perception is often shaped by direct experiences on social media, including how users distinguish between authentic and fake accounts. If the majority of people are unaware of the risks of brand hijacking, prevention becomes increasingly difficult. Analyzing this perception is essential for developing more effective legal and social protection strategies.

Figure 1. Diagram of Respondents' Understanding of Brand Hijacking

Apakah Anda pernah mendengar istilah brand hijacking sebelumnya?
60 responses

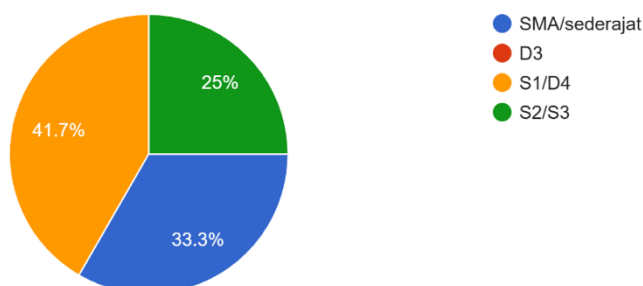


Source: Questionnaire Results

Based on a questionnaire conducted with 60 respondents, public understanding of the term brand hijacking remains relatively low. Only 56.7% had previously heard the term, while the rest were unfamiliar with its meaning. Nevertheless, 83.3% of respondents admitted to having seen social media accounts or content impersonating official brands. This highlights a gap between exposure to the phenomenon and awareness of its terminology. Most respondents reported encountering such content “occasionally” (48.3%) or “rarely” (25%), indicating that the phenomenon is frequently experienced but not always recognized. This suggests that people have unconsciously become both witnesses and victims of brand identity misuse. Therefore, strengthening digital literacy is necessary so that individuals can identify and report instances of brand hijacking proactively.

Figure 2. Diagram of Respondents' Demographic Profiles

Pendidikan Terakhir
60 responses



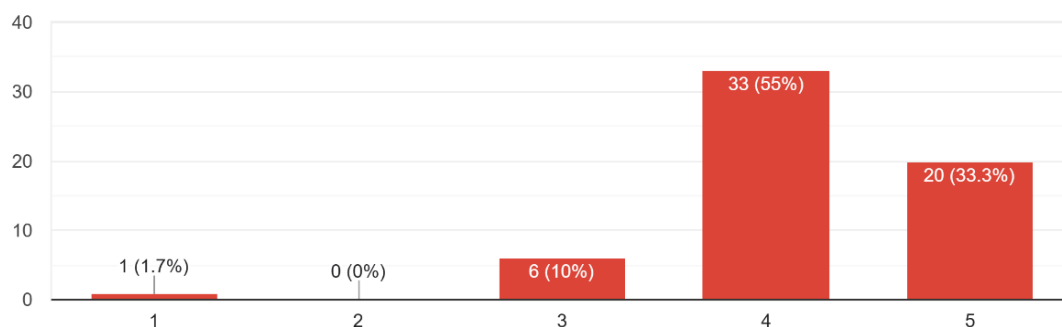
Source: Questionnaire Results

Respondents were predominantly in the 17–25 age group (51.7%), who are known to be active users of social media. Most had completed high school or equivalent education (53.3%) and reported using social media for 1–3 hours (41.7%) or 4–6 hours (35%) per day. This demographic indicates a high level of digital exposure. However, frequent use does not always correlate with the ability to critically assess the authenticity of online information. In this context, younger users are particularly vulnerable to deceptive content or fake brand accounts. When fake accounts convincingly imitate brand symbols and communication styles, respondents are likely to believe them. Therefore, these demographic characteristics must be considered when designing consumer education strategies and brand protection policies.

Figure 3. Respondents' Attitudes and Perceptions Toward Brand Hijacking

Saya merasa brand hijacking membingungkan konsumen.

60 responses



Source: Questionnaire Results

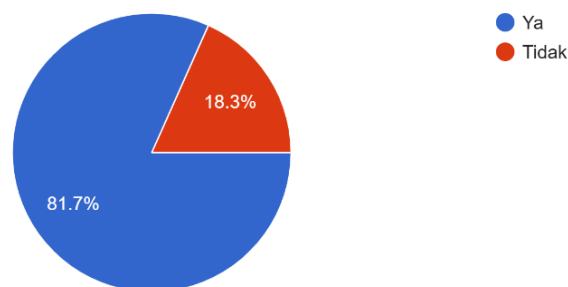
Most respondents demonstrated a high level of concern regarding the threat of brand hijacking. A total of 88.3% agreed that this phenomenon confuses consumers in identifying legitimate accounts. Additionally, 86.7% believed it causes doubts about the authenticity of brand information. As many as 96.7% stated that brand hijacking significantly damages brand reputation and credibility. These figures indicate that the public no longer sees fake accounts as trivial. Moreover, 61.7% of respondents believe that such practices should be subject to legal action. This reflects a growing awareness that fake accounts cause

not only economic harm but also legal and ethical violations. Clearly, there is strong public support for stricter regulations against brand hijacking offenders.

Figure 4. Diagram of Brand Hijacking's Impact on Consumer Trust

Apakah Anda pernah merasa ragu atau batal membeli suatu produk karena melihat konten atau akun palsu dari brand tersebut?

60 responses



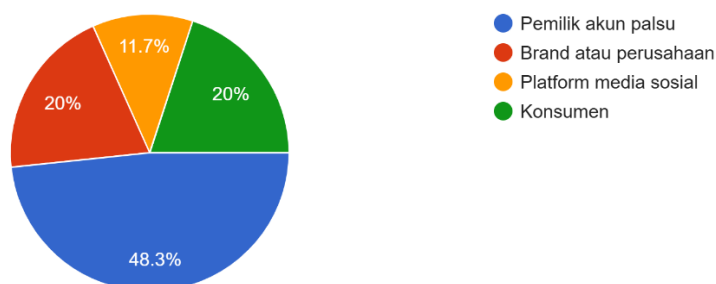
Source: Questionnaire Results

The brand hijacking phenomenon has been shown to erode consumer trust. As many as 81.7% of respondents admitted feeling doubtful or even canceling a purchase after encountering a fake account impersonating a brand. Only 35% of respondents stated they would still trust a brand that had been hijacked. The rest answered “no” (41.7%) or “depends on the situation” (23.3%), indicating that consumer trust is highly contextual. Those who chose “depends” often based their judgment on how the brand responded to the incident. If the brand reacted quickly and transparently, trust could be restored. However, if the brand remained silent or slow to act, consumers would likely switch to competitors. It is therefore evident that a brand’s response to a digital identity crisis greatly influences consumer decision-making.

Figure 5. Diagram of Perceived Responsibility for Brand Hijacking

Menurut Anda, siapa yang paling bertanggung jawab atas kerugian akibat brand hijacking?

60 responses



Source: Questionnaire Results

When asked who bears the most responsibility for brand hijacking, 48.3% of respondents identified the fake account holders. However, others also held the brand (20%), social media platforms (11.7%), and even consumers themselves (20%) accountable. This suggests that the public understands that addressing brand hijacking requires shared responsibility. In open-ended responses, many respondents proposed solutions such as account verification, digital education, and public clarification by the brand. Some also recommended active collaboration between platforms and brands to quickly take down fake accounts. These suggestions highlight the public's expectation for a more holistic and participatory protection system. Thus, the role of regulators becomes crucial in coordinating all stakeholders involved.

Interpretation of the questionnaire results shows that brand hijacking has disrupted the digital trust ecosystem in a systemic manner. Consumers are not only confused but also lose their sense of security when interacting with brands. In the long term, this can reduce loyalty, hinder business relationships, and foster broader distrust of the digital space. Implicitly, the public demands more adaptive and responsive policies to address this issue. Whether through regulations, verification technology, or ongoing user education, proactive protection is essential. On the other hand, brands are also expected to take a more active role in protecting consumers from deception. Therefore, the urgency to reevaluate the effectiveness of existing legal frameworks becomes increasingly evident.

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that the public is aware of the serious impacts of brand hijacking on consumer trust and behavior. The high level of vigilance against fake accounts and public demand for legal action reflect a pressing need for stronger protection. Respondents also called for systematic collaboration between brands, platforms, and the government in combating this issue. However, mitigation efforts must go beyond social or technical measures alone. A legal framework that specifically addresses the complexity of brand identity abuse in digital spaces is essential. Hence, the following section will focus on analyzing the effectiveness of Indonesia's legal protections in responding to the dynamics of brand hijacking violations in digital spaces.

Legal Protection in Indonesia for Brand Owners against Brand Hijacking on Social Media

The legal basis for brand protection in Indonesia is stated in Law Number 20 of 2016 concerning Trademark and Geographical Indications (Trademark Law), which emphasizes the constitutive principle through the first-to-file system, where brand rights are obtained through official registration. The scope of protection includes trademarks, services, collectives, geographical indications, to non-traditional brands such as sound and holograms. The main focus of this law is to prevent similarities that can cause consumer confusion about the origin of goods or services, an approach that is relevant in the context of conventional brand infringement in the physical world. However, the effectiveness of this law in dealing with contemporary challenges such as brand hijacking on social media remains questionable. This presents a legal challenge because many forms of digital violations such as account plagiarism, logo hijacking, dissemination of false information, or use of usernames similar to brands that do not directly fulfill the elements of "use in trade" or "for similar goods and/or services" as regulated in the law, making it difficult to prosecute legally (Sinaga & Ferdian, 2020). This situation shows that the existing legal framework still does not fully cover brand infringement practices in the dynamic digital ecosystem, and this requires a more progressive legal interpretation, development of jurisprudence, and regulatory

updates to provide more effective protection against brand hijacking on social media (S et al., 2024).

Given the limitations of the Trademark Law in responding to the dynamics of brand hijacking on social media which are often not directly oriented towards conventional commercial transactions (Yulianto, 2023), legal protection efforts in Indonesia also rely on other legislative frameworks, especially Law Number 11 of 2008 concerning Information and Electronic Transactions as last amended by Law Number 1 of 2024 (ITE Law) and Law Number 8 of 1999 concerning Consumer Protection (Consumer Protection Law). The ITE Law has a crucial role in overcoming aspects of digital fraud, the existence of fake accounts, and information manipulation (Hans & Kansil, 2023), for example Article 28 paragraphs (1) and (2) of the ITE Law can ensnare perpetrators who spread false or misleading news that is detrimental to consumers, or information that causes hatred, relevant when brand hijacking involves hoaxes or hate speech. Article 35 of the ITE Law also criminalizes the creation or manipulation of fake electronic documents, potentially applied to cases of fake social media accounts that imitate brand identities to deceive the public. The strength of the ITE Law lies in its broad reach to cyber activities and its ability to prosecute digital crimes. However, its limitations arise because the focus of the ITE Law is more on unlawful acts or content (e.g. fraud, defamation), not on exclusive rights to the brand itself, making it difficult to apply to brand hijacking that is not accompanied by elements of fraud, defamation, or the spread of clear false information, such as non-commercial parody accounts.

On the other hand, the Consumer Protection Law exists to protect consumer rights, including the right to correct and clear information (Article 4 letter c) and protection from misleading information (Article 8 paragraph (1)). The Consumer Protection Law can be the basis for a lawsuit if brand hijacking results in the offering of fake products/services or misleading information that is detrimental to consumers, for example through fake accounts that promote discount fraud (Salsabilla et al., 2024). However, the power of the Consumer Protection Law is limited to the existence of a legal relationship between business actors and consumers, if brand hijacking does not involve transactions or offers

of goods/services to consumers, but only in the form of reputation damage or takeover of digital identity without a clear commercial motive, the Consumer Protection Law is likely not to be applied directly and is more reactive than proactive in protecting brand integrity. Therefore, although the ITE Law and the Consumer Protection Law can be complementary instruments to address some aspects of brand hijacking involving fraud, the spread of false information, or consumer losses, these two laws are not specifically designed to comprehensively protect brand integrity, especially when there is no direct commercial transaction or clear fraud involving goods/services. This leaves a significant legal loophole for non-commercial brand hijacking modes or those that only aim to damage reputation.

The existence of the Regulation of the Minister of Communication and Information Technology Number 5 of 2020 concerning Private Electronic System Organizers (Permenkominfo 5/2020) is the initial basis for assessing the extent to which platforms have responsibility in handling content or accounts that are detrimental to other parties. This regulation requires electronic system organizers to take down content containing false, manipulative, or unlawful information within a certain time after receiving a report. Normatively, this can include fake accounts that carry out brand hijacking, for example imitating official trademarks as happened in the case of fake Tokopedia and Gojek accounts that offered fictitious promos and job vacancies. However, in practice, action against fake accounts still depends on the platform's internal policies, not solely on the national legal framework. This causes many violations to not be immediately prosecuted or ignored because the content removal mechanism is slow and unresponsive to the complexity of brand hijacking cases, even though according to (Banindro, 2021), digital brand imitation can be used for fraud, spreading hatred, and even propaganda, so that the potential losses are massive and systemic. In this context, the role of the platform should not only be technical as a service provider, but also active in maintaining a safe digital space from misleading content and accounts.

According to Soerjono Soekanto, the effectiveness of law is determined by five interrelated factors, which is legal substance, legal structure (law

enforcement), legal culture (public awareness), legal facilities, and the community itself (Yustitiana, 2021). In the context of brand hijacking, the existing legal substance such as the Trademark Law, ITE Law, and the Consumer Protection Law has not yet fully adapted to the dynamics of the digital environment. This results in a normative gap between the law “in books” and its implementation “in action”. The legal structure, particularly law enforcement institutions, has yet to demonstrate optimal synergy with brand owners and digital platforms, resulting in delayed responses to public reports. Public legal culture also remains weak although awareness of brand hijacking is increasing, digital literacy and understanding of the available legal remedies are still limited. Legal facilities, such as reporting systems and content take-down mechanisms, depend largely on the policies of each platform and often lack speed and transparency. Meanwhile, the broader community, particularly younger, digitally active users, still requires more targeted digital literacy campaigns to help them critically assess online information and recognize fake brand accounts. Addressing all five factors simultaneously is key to achieving effective legal protection against brand hijacking.

In practice, weak legal structure and enforcement contribute heavily to the failure of brand protection efforts. Reports to authorities such as the police or Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kominfo) often experience delays, lack transparency, or are dismissed due to unclear digital legal procedures. Law enforcement officers are frequently unprepared to detect and handle online identity misuse, particularly when brand hijacking does not involve direct economic transactions. According to Yuliska (2023), the lack of understanding by law enforcement regarding elements of violations on social media often results in either slow or failed responses. This is compounded by the reluctance of brand owners, especially Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), to file reports due to costly, lengthy legal processes with uncertain outcomes, which emboldens perpetrators to repeatedly commit violations without consequences.

Another contributing factor is the weak synergy between brand owners and digital platforms. Although Permenkominfo 5/2020 mandates electronic system providers to remove unlawful content promptly after receiving reports,

implementation still heavily depends on internal policies of foreign platforms like Instagram or Facebook. These platforms are not fully bound by Indonesian regulations, making enforcement inconsistent (Banindro, 2021). As a result, brand owners often face rejection or delays when requesting takedowns, especially when their reports do not align with the platforms' internal standards. This dependency exposes Indonesian users and brands to ongoing risks and highlights the need for stronger national regulatory instruments to exert pressure on global platforms in protecting brand identities within the domestic digital sphere.

Public legal culture is also a critical issue. Based on the questionnaire results presented in this study, many of the respondents still cannot differentiate between official and fake accounts, especially when impersonators mimic brand visuals, language, and promotional formats convincingly. This lack of awareness makes them vulnerable to scams and misinformation, unintentionally contributing to the spread of deceptive content (Rezky & Ibrahim, 2022). The consequences extend beyond brand reputation, they undermine trust in the entire digital transaction ecosystem. Legal protection, therefore, should not only involve rule-making and law enforcement but must also encompass wide-scale public education on verifying brand authenticity and reporting suspicious accounts. Without improving digital literacy, especially among younger and more active social media users, efforts to curb brand hijacking will remain reactive and ineffective.

Looking ahead, Indonesia needs to consider either revising the current Trademark Law or introducing a *lex specialis* to regulate digital brand protection. The existing law focuses mainly on physical brand misuse and fails to account for identity abuse on digital platforms that is often non-commercial in nature (Dharma, 2014). Comparative legal frameworks, such as those in the European Union, already regulate domain name squatting and online impersonation as intellectual property violations (Pratama et al., 2021). Indonesia could adopt similar measures to address legal loopholes exploited by brand hijackers. Without such reform, digital identity misuse will continue to flourish, especially as cybercrime tactics evolve faster than conventional legal responses. An adaptive,

collaborative, and digitally literate legal ecosystem is urgently required to ensure consumer trust and brand integrity in Indonesia's growing digital economy.

In conclusion, applying Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness reveals that Indonesia's current legal framework falls short in comprehensively addressing the brand hijacking phenomenon. While legal norms do exist, weaknesses in institutional enforcement, public digital awareness, inter-agency coordination, and platform responsiveness have limited their practical impact. Strengthening each of the five elements, which is substance, structure, culture, facilities, and society is essential to closing the gap between the written law and its real-world application. This analysis reinforces the need not only for adaptive legal reform but also for a collaborative approach that engages regulators, businesses, digital platforms, and the public to combat identity-based threats in the online environment.

Conclusion

The findings reveal that brand hijacking on social media is a real and impactful phenomenon that significantly undermines consumer trust and disrupts brand reputation. Although many consumers have encountered fake brand accounts, their conceptual understanding of the term remains limited, indicating a gap between experience and awareness. The study shows that young, active social media users are particularly vulnerable due to high digital exposure but low verification habits. Public perception of brand hijacking is predominantly negative, with most respondents recognizing it as misleading, damaging, and deserving of legal sanctions. Consumer trust is shown to be highly situational, dependent on how transparently and quickly a brand responds to impersonation. Moreover, there is a collective expectation that brand owners, platforms, and regulators must share responsibility in prevention and enforcement efforts. These insights underscore the urgent need for not only better public education but also a stronger legal framework to address the complexities of brand identity abuse in digital environments. Therefore, evaluating the adequacy of current Indonesian legal protections becomes the next essential step in formulating a comprehensive response to this issue.

Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that the current legal protection in Indonesia for brand owners against brand hijacking on social media remains insufficient and fragmented. While the Trademark Law, ITE Law, Consumer Protection Law, and Permenkominfo 5/2020 offer partial frameworks, they are not fully responsive to the complexities of digital brand abuse. Enforcement mechanisms are often constrained by platform policies, lack of legal coordination, limited law enforcement capacity, and low public digital literacy. Applying Soerjono Soekanto's theory of legal effectiveness, it is evident that gaps exist across all five legal factors, which is substance, structure, culture, facilities, and community. Therefore, comprehensive legal reform, improved inter-agency collaboration, proactive platform responsibility, and nationwide digital literacy initiatives are essential to achieving effective and adaptive legal protection for brand owners in Indonesia's evolving digital ecosystem.

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Competing Interest

The authors declare that there are no competing interests.