EVOLUTION OF COMMUNICATION SOCIOLOGY: SOCIAL MEDIA INTERVENTION IN THE REALITY CONSTRUCTION OF SECOND ACCOUNT PHENOMENON IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL SOCIETY

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Article Info	ABSTRACT
  	This study investigates the sociological evolution of communication within the digital society, focusing on the phenomenon of second accounts as a strategic response to the social pressures prevalent on primary social media platforms. Using a qualitative methodology and virtual ethnography approach, the research aligns with the constructivist paradigm, aiming to deeply understand how individuals navigate and construct their social identities in digital spaces. Data sources encompass a comprehensive collection of academic books, peer-reviewed journals, and scholarly articles that discuss the nuances of digital communication and identity construction. Data collection methods integrate virtual observation and in-depth interviews, capturing the authentic experiences of individuals who maintain second accounts. Analytical techniques are guided by thematic analysis, emphasizing the identification and interpretation of patterns related to digital identity and social interaction. Data validity is ensured through triangulation, comparing observational data, interview transcripts, and existing literature to affirm the consistency and reliability of the findings. The study reveals that secondary accounts serve as a crucial medium for individuals to express their genuine selves, free from the curated personas often necessitated by primary accounts. This practice not only reflects a tactical management of social visibility but also illustrates a complex negotiation between personal freedom and social conformity. In conclusion, the research highlights the dynamic nature of digital identities, shaped by ongoing interactions within social media ecosystems. Second accounts emerge as a significant social phenomenon, allowing individuals to craft segmented identities that offer respite from the public gaze, thus enriching our understanding of modern communication practices in the digital era. ***Keywords:*** *Social Media, Netizens, Second Account, Digital Identity.*

1.   INTRODUCTION

The digital era has brought significant changes in people's communication patterns, especially through the presence of social media as the main space for interaction. Based on the 2024 We Are Social report, Indonesia has more than 212.9 million active social media users, with Instagram and Twitter being the two dominant platforms among Generation Z and millennials (Ihsan et al., 2024). In this context, the phenomenon of a second account is a unique form of adaptation that is increasingly being used to express identity and create alternative realities (Wattimena et al., 2022).

This phenomenon is closely related to the complexity of digital society, where identity is no longer singular, but rather layered and contextual. Second accounts allow individuals to show their authentic side to a specific audience, often consisting of a smaller and more intimate circle of friends. This shows how technology can be used to build deeper emotional connections (Bilqis et al., 2024). At the same time, the second account phenomenon also reflects the need for privacy amidst the rapid flow of information and high social expectations. In this context, social media acts as a medium to relieve the pressure that arises from the demands of a perfect self-image. Second accounts are a solution for those who want to maintain a balance between privacy and the need to socialize. From a cultural perspective, second accounts show the values of individualism that are increasingly dominant in digital society. However, the existence of these accounts not only reflects individualism, but also collaboration in creating a shared narrative among small groups. In this space, users can support each other and share experiences without fear of being judged by a wider audience (Hermulya & Rini Rinawati, 2023).

However, this phenomenon also presents challenges, especially in terms of authenticity and identity consistency. The use of a second account can cause individuals to face gaps between the various personalities they present, both in the virtual and real worlds. This shows how technology can influence the way individuals understand and respond to their own identities (Basanti & Susanto, 2020).   In Indonesia, the second account phenomenon has become part of the dynamics of digital culture that continues to grow. This can be seen from the increasing number of online communities based on second accounts, as well as the popularity of viral content that often comes from anonymous or semi-private accounts. This phenomenon emphasizes the importance of understanding the role of social media in shaping communication patterns and interactions in society (Mayasari, 2022).

The urgency to understand this phenomenon is growing as the use of social media in the digital era increases. As part of an increasingly technologically connected society, it is important to see how second accounts affect social dynamics, identity, and privacy. This study aims to dig deeper into this phenomenon and its implications for communication patterns in the digital era.

2.   RESEARCH METHODE

This study uses a qualitative approach to deeply understand the phenomenon of second accounts as part of the evolution of communication sociology in the digital

era (Fadli, 2021; Weyant, 2022). The qualitative approach was chosen because it is able to reveal the complex meanings, patterns, and social dynamics behind the use of second accounts by digital society. This method allows researchers to explore the subjective experiences of individuals who are part of this phenomenon.

The data sources in this study use a literature study method that involves collecting information from various trusted references, such as previous scientific journals, academic books, and relevant scientific articles. Scientific journals are selected based on the credibility of the publisher and the relevance of the topic to ensure that the data used is valid and can be scientifically accounted for. The books used are the works of recognized authors in related fields, thus providing a strong theoretical basis to support the analysis. Scientific articles from reputable platforms are also used to complement and update information, especially regarding the latest developments in the topic being studied. This approach aims to present a comprehensive, in-depth study based on data sources that have high accuracy.

Data collection techniques are carried out through literature studies and observations to produce in-depth and holistic data. Literature studies are conducted by reviewing literature from scientific journals, reference books, and trusted articles. Data searches use specific keywords in academic databases to ensure the credibility and relevance of sources. In addition, observations are carried out directly to obtain relevant empirical data and complement information from the literature. All documents and observation data are evaluated based on validity, relevance, and reliability, so that they can be the basis for objective and integrated analysis.

Data analysis used techniques developed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana, which include three main stages: data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction is done by filtering relevant information from the results of observations and interviews. Data presentation is done by creating matrices and diagrams that visualize patterns and key findings. Drawing conclusions is done iteratively to ensure that the results of the analysis reflect the dynamics of the phenomenon being studied (Miles et al., 2021).

The data validity test was carried out using the source triangulation method. Data obtained from virtual observation, interviews, and documentation were compared to ensure the consistency and validity of the findings. This approach is used to minimize bias and increase the credibility of the research results. Thus, the methodology applied is expected to be able to provide a comprehensive and in-depth picture of the second account phenomenon in the context of digital society (Flick, 2020).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dimensions of Privacy and Personal Expression in the Use of *Second Accounts*

The phenomenon of *second accounts* in the context of digital society reflects the urgent need for individuals to maintain privacy amidst high social expectations on their primary accounts. These second accounts often become a space for users to express their personal and authentic side that is difficult to express through primary accounts that tend to be tied to social imagery. From a sociology of communication perspective, second accounts can be understood as a form of adaptation to public pressure on social

media, where individual digital identities are more often constructed to meet social standards. The existence of second accounts provides an opportunity for individuals to control their personal narratives, minimize the risk of judgment, and create a safer environment for sharing emotions and personal experiences. Thus, privacy in *second accounts* is not only seen as a self-protection mechanism, but also as a social strategy to create a more flexible and inclusive alternative reality (Sri Devi Januarifka Fitria et al., 2023).

Structurally, *the second account* shows how communication technology enables the formation of intimate spaces within a digital ecosystem that is generally public. Through privacy features such as limited access settings and audience selection, users can easily filter their social circles, so that only certain individuals are allowed to access personal content (Herna & Sari, 2023) . This indicates that the privacy dimension in the second account is not only related to anonymity, but also to the selective management of social relations. In this case, social media is no longer just a communication tool, but also a medium that emphasizes the dialectic between the need for privacy and the desire to stay connected. Therefore, the second account is a manifestation of the complexity of digital society, where privacy and personal expression operate simultaneously in the construction of digital identity. (Oleo et al., 2024) .

Table 1. Privacy and Personal Expression in the Use of Second Accounts

Aspect	Explanation	Implications in Digital Society
Privacy Needs	*Second accounts* provide a safer space to maintain privacy, protecting users from expectations and social pressures on the main account.	Increasing individual awareness of digital identity management in the increasingly open social media ecosystem.
Personal Expression	Through *a second account* , individuals can express their authentic side, including sharing emotions, opinions, and personal experiences that don't fit on the primary account.	Giving individuals the freedom to develop a more flexible and personal digital identity.
Social Adaptation	*Second account* as a form of adaptation to social pressure to display an "ideal" identity on public social media.	Demonstrates how technology enables individuals to create narratives that align with personal and social needs.
Social Relations Management	The privacy features on *the second account* allow for strict audience selection, creating an intimate space in an otherwise public digital environment.	Indicates a paradigm shift in social interactions, from public relations to selective private connections.
Social Strategy	*Second accounts* are used to construct alternative realities that engage a limited audience, reducing the pressure of self-image.	Promote deeper emotional connections among small and intimate social circles.
Function of Technology	Social media has become a medium that emphasizes the dialectic between the	Shows how technology facilitates a balance between privacy and the need to socialize.

	need for privacy and the desire to stay connected with others.	
Digital Identity Paradigm	Digital identity through *a second account* is dynamic, allowing individuals to show different sides of their personality separately.	Demonstrates the complexity of layered and contextual digital identity in the era of digital society.
Value of Individualism	*Second accounts* reflect the value of individualism by allowing users to prioritize personal needs over social demands.	Strengthening the culture of individualism in digital society, but also facilitating collaboration in small groups.
Identity Anomaly	The duality of identity between the primary account and *the secondary account* can create a persona gap that affects an individual's understanding of themselves.	Describes the challenges of authenticity in the digital age and its impact on the consistency of social and personal identities.
The Role of Social Media	Social media facilitates private and public spaces simultaneously, allowing for contextual and selective social interactions.	Emphasizing the role of social media in shaping communication patterns and interaction dynamics in the digital society era.

Source: Researcher Observations (2024)

The table above shows the phenomenon of second accounts reflecting the individual's need to create a private space amidst the openness of social media. The need for privacy accommodated by second accounts provides protection against social expectations and self-image pressures that are often attached to the main account (Paramesti & Nurdiarti, 2022) . This indicates that the existence of a second account is not only a tool for self-protection from public exposure but also reflects user awareness of the importance of digital identity management. In the context of an increasingly open digital society, the ability to control privacy is a strategic effort to mitigate negative impacts such as social judgment or emotional distress.

Furthermore, the aspect of personal expression in the use of a second account shows that this account is a significant space for expressing the authentic side of the user. Through this account, individuals can share emotions, opinions, and personal experiences without fear of violating the social expectations that apply to the main account. This phenomenon reveals that digital identity in the modern era has complex and flexible dynamics. Personal expression through a second account also illustrates how social media can facilitate deeper emotional connections with selectively selected audiences, allowing users to develop more diverse personal identities (Anggraini et al., 2022).

The social adaptation dimension reflected in the use of second accounts shows that these accounts function as a response. Social media, as one of the products of communication technology, has created a space where individuals feel the need to align themselves with certain social standards. However, social pressure to display an "ideal" image on public social media, second accounts allow them to build alternative narratives that are more in line with personal needs (Mahmud, 2024) .

Second Account as a Response to Mainstream Social Media Pressure

In the digital era, social interactions are increasingly connected through social media that dominate public life. Social media, as a new mass communication medium, is not only a space for sharing information and building social relationships, but also functions as an arena for constructing social reality. The reality constructed through social media is often colored by social norms determined by dominant groups and platform algorithms that influence what users see and hear. (Dalimunthe, Djuniardi, et al., 2024) . In this context, the second account phenomenon emerged as a response to social pressures caused by mainstream social media, where individuals feel the need to maintain their public image and identity in accordance with existing social expectations (Ihsan Suri & Arsenius Wisnu Aji Patria Perkasa, 2023).

The second account phenomenon refers to the use of a second social media account that is usually created by individuals to access a more private and freer space for expression. Often, the primary account is used to share a life that is more controlled, ideal, and in accordance with broader social values. Meanwhile, the second account functions as a space for individuals to share more authentic experiences, often not bound by the norms or social pressures that exist on primary social media. Within the framework of the evolution of the sociology of communication, this phenomenon reflects the transition of social media from being merely a communication tool to a platform for managing more complex and segmented social identities (Prihantoro et al., 2020; Watuseke et al., 2023).

In George Herbert Mead's symbolic interaction perspective, the phenomenon of second accounts on social media represents how individuals form, adjust, and project their self-identity based on the social interactions they face. Second accounts allow users to create a private space to express themselves more authentically, free from public judgment that often dominates the main account. Mead's concept of "Mind" emphasizes that humans, unlike animals, always go through a process of reflection before acting, including deciding what is appropriate to share on social media. In this context, second account users demonstrate a pattern of thinking that takes into account specific audiences, avoids rigid social expectations, and facilitates the fulfillment of their emotional needs. This evolution of social media not only affects interpersonal communication but also constructs a new social reality, where individuals are able to navigate their social roles more flexibly in the digital era (Nabilah & Sinduwiatmo, 2023).

Primary accounts on social media require careful self-image management, which is often driven by the dominant narratives prevailing in the digital space. Social media users, especially the younger generation, often feel pressured to meet the standards of beauty, professional success, or lifestyle displayed by influencers and digital celebrities. This phenomenon creates discomfort for individuals who do not feel able or willing to follow these norms. This is where second accounts come into play: providing a space for individuals to express themselves in a way that is freer and less tied to these social demands (Sinaga et al., 2023).

The use of a second account also reflects the process of dual identity that is increasingly developing in the digital era. In the sociology of communication, dual identity refers to a situation in which individuals construct and manage two different identities in two different social spaces (Kobayashi, 2020; Wang & Feng, 2023) . The first identity, formed through the main account, tends to be more public and controlled, while the second identity, which emerges through the second account, is often more

private and unburdened by external social expectations. In this case, social media is not only a communication tool, but also a social space that allows for identity fragmentation in order to maintain a balance between social demands and personal freedom (Darmawan et al., 2019).

In response to the tension between public and private identities, second accounts allow individuals to escape the intense social surveillance of mainstream social media. In the study of digital social surveillance theory, mainstream social media is often defined as a space where social interactions are monitored and filtered by platform algorithms and the social influence of networks of friends and followers. Second accounts allow individuals the freedom to share views or content that may be considered controversial, emotional, or even personal without the risk of negative social judgment from a wider audience. (Budiani et al., 2023).

The phenomenon of second accounts also shows how it is shaped by the framing process that occurs in the digital public space. This framing process influences how individuals view themselves and how they expect to be seen by others. In this context, second accounts function as a tool to shift this framing and allow individuals to present a more authentic side of themselves, which is often marginalized in the dominant narrative on mainstream social media (Lundahl, 2021; Motahar et al., 2024; Ugochukwu & Nwolu, 2021) . In other words, second accounts function as a form of resistance to the construction of reality that occurs on mainstream social media, which tends to show an ideal and perfect image.

On the other hand, the phenomenon of second accounts can be seen as a reaction to the pressures of conformity imposed by mainstream social media. Social media, with algorithms that continue to prioritize engagement and popularity, often create a homogenous environment, where only certain voices or views are heard and supported. Second accounts, in this case, provide an alternative space to express more critical or unconventional views that may not be accepted in mainstream social media spaces. This is one of the reasons why second accounts are often used to share more personal or even controversial opinions, without fear of negative impacts on reputation or self-image (Bilqis et al., 2024) .

However, although second accounts provide space for freedom of expression, this phenomenon also shows the complexity in the construction of reality in the digital world. In the process of managing dual identities, there is a shift between the desire to continue to adapt to social norms on mainstream social media and the need to protect a more intimate part of oneself on the second account. Therefore, although second accounts provide freedom, they also add a layer of complexity to digital social interactions, as individuals now have to manage two separate but connected parallel realities (Motif et al., 2024) .

From the perspective of communication sociology, the second account phenomenon also shows that social media does not only function as a communication tool, but also as an arena for social negotiation where individuals must balance between personal freedom and the social influence present in the digital space. In this case, social media can be seen as a social construction space that allows individuals to continue to adapt to changes in social values, both through interactions that take place on mainstream social media and through the creation of alternative spaces that are more private and free.

Overall, the phenomenon of second accounts in the context of the evolution of communication sociology indicates that social media has become more than just a

platform for sharing information. It has developed into a space full of identity negotiations, a place where individuals not only act as senders and receivers of messages, but also as subjects who manage their self-image, regulate exposure, and design their social reality according to existing demands. In this dynamic, second accounts emerge as a form of response to these pressures, as well as a manifestation of the complexity of social identity in an increasingly fragmented digital society.

The evolution of communication sociology in the context of the digital era shows a fundamental transformation in the way individuals and groups construct social reality, especially through the phenomenon of second accounts. Second accounts reflect a response to increasingly intense social pressures and expectations in digital society. This concept can be seen as a form of *impression* management, where individuals create alternative realities to escape from primary identities that may be constrained by norms and public judgment on social media. In the perspective of reality construction, this phenomenon emphasizes how social media acts as an *intervening factor* that reproduces new social realities with more flexible and multidimensional characteristics. This is in line with the theory of deconstruction which emphasizes the dismantling of single meanings in order to open up space for more complex identities.

In addition, social media intervention in the context of *the second account phenomenon* reflects the dynamics of *cancel culture* and inferiority in cyberspace. The existence of a second account is often an individual's attempt to participate in digital discourse without facing the risk of judgment. This phenomenon also reflects a contradiction: on the one hand as a safe space for freedom of expression, but on the other hand strengthening the fragmentation of identity which can actually deepen feelings of inferiority. The sociology of communication in the digital era needs to critically evaluate this aspect, where the construction of reality through social media is not only limited to virtual existence, but also has an impact on real social interactions. Thus, the *second account phenomenon* represents the evolution of increasingly complex digital communication and demands an inclusive approach in understanding social dynamics amidst the development of communication technology (Dalimunthe, Syam, et al., 2024).

4. CONCLUSION

The phenomenon of second accounts reflects the evolution of the sociology of communication in an increasingly connected digital society. Amid high social pressure on mainstream social media, second accounts become an alternative space for individuals to express their personal identities more freely, avoid strict social surveillance, and manage self-image without the burden of conformity. Thus, second accounts function as a response to the need for privacy, freedom of expression, and adaptation to the evolving social dynamics on digital platforms. In this context, second accounts also demonstrate the complexity of digital identity which is dynamic and segmented, where individuals manage multiple personas in cyberspace.

Overall, the second account phenomenon not only highlights the shift in how individuals interact with social media, but also shows how social media functions as a social space that allows for the formation of alternative narratives. It illustrates how communication technology influences the construction of social reality and individual identity, where personal freedom and social pressure interact in continuous

negotiation. Therefore, the study of second accounts provides deep insight into the dynamics of social identity in the digital era, as well as the challenges in maintaining a balance between privacy, authenticity, and increasingly complex social expectations.

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