



Visual Branding Strategies in Digital Taaruf Biodata Content on Instagram

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Abstract

The expansion of Islamic pre-marital culture into cyberspace has led to the rise of *taaruf* platforms on Instagram, which face the challenge of presenting biodata attractively while protecting user privacy through designed trust. This study investigates the visual branding strategies of selected Instagram accounts (@taaruf.time, @taarufku.id, and @taaruf.uk), focusing on logo design, illustration, color, and typography, while evaluating functional quality based on the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2. Employing a qualitative descriptive approach, the research integrates visual content analysis, design criticism, and Roland Barthes' semiotic model, with functional quality assessed using four parameters: usability, accessibility, visual consistency, and responsiveness. The findings reveal three distinct strategies: @taaruf.time employs functional anonymity through 3D avatars; @taarufku.id adopts an emotional-artistic approach with faceless digital painting in warm earth tones; and @taaruf.uk applies documentary realism by censoring original photos with masks or veils. WCAG 2.2 evaluation shows @taaruf.time achieved the highest functional performance, while @taaruf.uk faced readability issues due to inconsistent photo backgrounds. The study concludes that functional aesthetics in visual branding enhance trust, safety, and comfort for audiences engaging with religiously private spaces in digital environments, thereby contributing to scholarship on Islamic digital culture, design ethics, and accessibility in social media.

INTRODUCTION

Instagram, as a social media platform centered on visual aesthetics, has evolved into a digital public space for various social purposes, including matchmaking services. Image-building activities on Instagram are influenced by the visual dimensions and message management presented on profiles. [Mujianto et al., \(2021\)](#) demonstrate that Instagram can serve as a medium for personal branding through the management of information, messages, style, and competencies displayed. Other studies also indicate that brand identity on Instagram is communicated through a combination of visual elements and

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consistent content patterns (Carcavilla Puey & Aguirre Jiménez, 2022; Carpio-Jiménez et al., 2024).

This situation has sparked both competition and a visual paradox on digital matchmaking accounts such as @taaruf.time, @taarufku.id, and @taaruf.uk. As platforms that bring individuals together for premarital purposes, these accounts must present biographical information in a way that is both engaging and informative, while also balancing the need to limit the exposure of physical identity. Strategies such as using avatars, faceless illustrations, or photos with masks or veils can be understood as design solutions that bridge brand identity, privacy, and trust.

Visual elements such as logos, colors, typography, illustrations, and layouts serve not only as ornamentation but can also build specific associations and perceptions of a brand. Research on destination visual branding indicates that shapes and colors can influence perceptions of a brand's character (Prawira et al., 2023; Sutanto et al., 2024; Ulita, 2022). Research on visual design in Instagram brand communication also highlights the importance of graphic elements and visual coherence in supporting communication functions (Carpio-Jiménez et al., 2024). In the context of Muslim communication on Instagram, typography, illustrations, and color can also interact to shape the meaning of visual messages (Halid & Fajrin, 2023).

Although research on Instagram branding and visual communication has expanded, studies that directly compare the visual branding strategies of digital *taaruf* accounts taking into account facial representation, visual identity, privacy, and the functional quality of profile content remain limited. Research on visual branding strategies on Instagram shows that visual style and narrative can shape brand perception (Mauliddiyah et al., 2024), but the context of *taaruf* services has specific needs because personal information must be communicated without disregarding identity sensitivities.

This study aims to compare the visual branding strategies of profile content on @taaruf.time, @taarufku.id, and @taaruf.uk through an analysis of visual elements and semiotic meanings, as well as an evaluation of functional quality. The study's contribution lies in a comparative analysis of how design can be used to balance visual appeal, privacy, trust, and information readability in digital *taaruf* services. Regarding accessibility, the study refers to WCAG 2.2, which are W3C recommendations covering content across various devices, including mobile devices (W3C., 2024).

METHODS

Research Approach

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach using visual content analysis and design criticism. This approach was chosen because the primary focus of the study is to examine the meaning, structure, and function of visual elements in digital *taaruf* profile content (Engkizar et al., 2025, 2026; Fitriani, 2021; Kusuma et al., 2024; Rambe et al., 2025; Sutanto et al., 2024). Roland Barthes's semiotic analysis is used to examine the relationship between denotative and connotative meanings constructed through logos, colors, typography, illustrations, and visual composition.

Research Object and Data Sources

The research object consists of visual branding elements in the *taaruf* participants' profile content, including logos, typography, colors, layout, and illustrations. The data sources consist of publicly available content on the three Instagram accounts that are the subjects of this study: @taaruf.time,

@taarufku.id, and @taaruf.uk. The documented data were used to compare visual representation strategies and patterns of information presentation across each account.

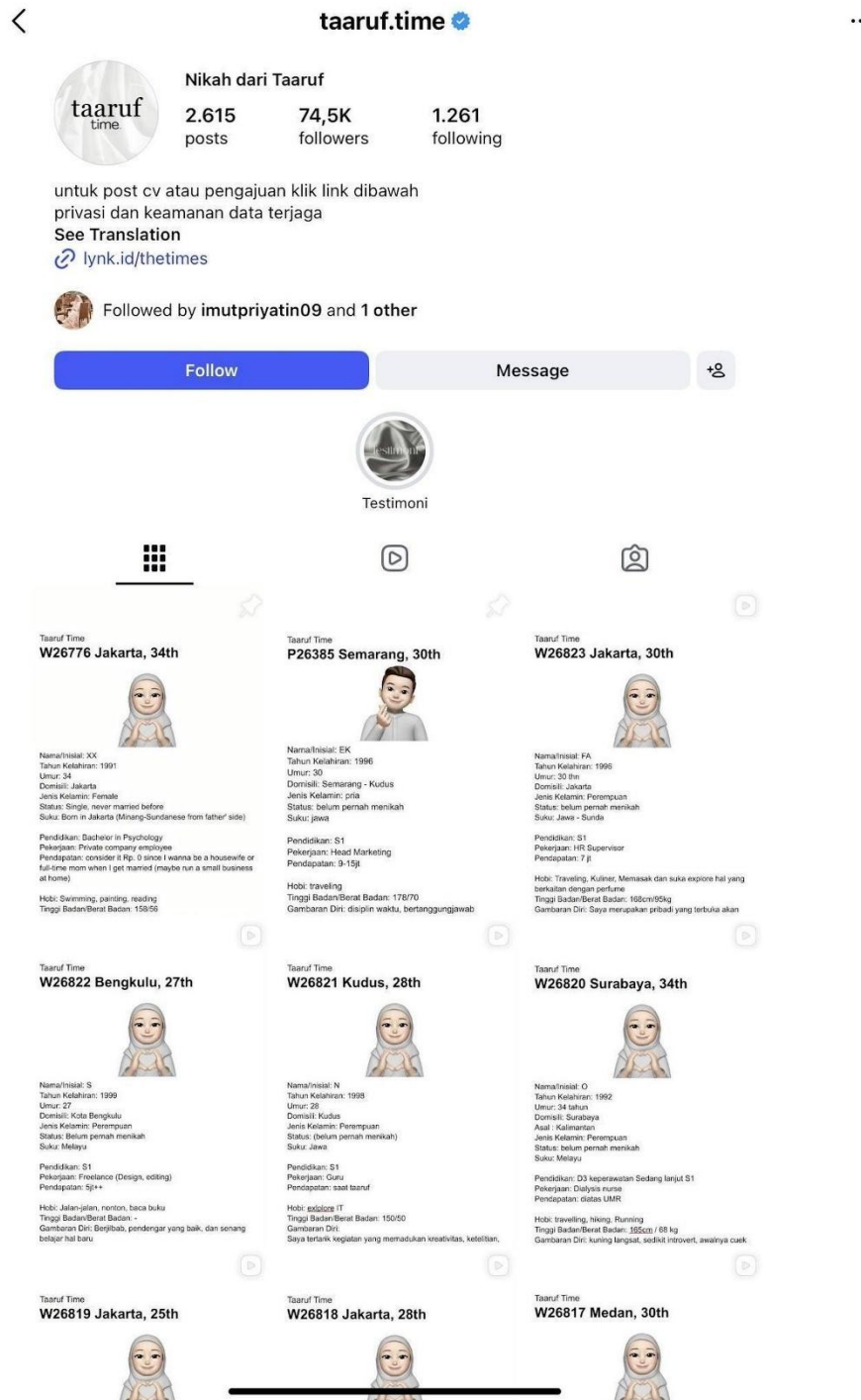


Fig 1. @taaruf.time account

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/taaruf.time/>

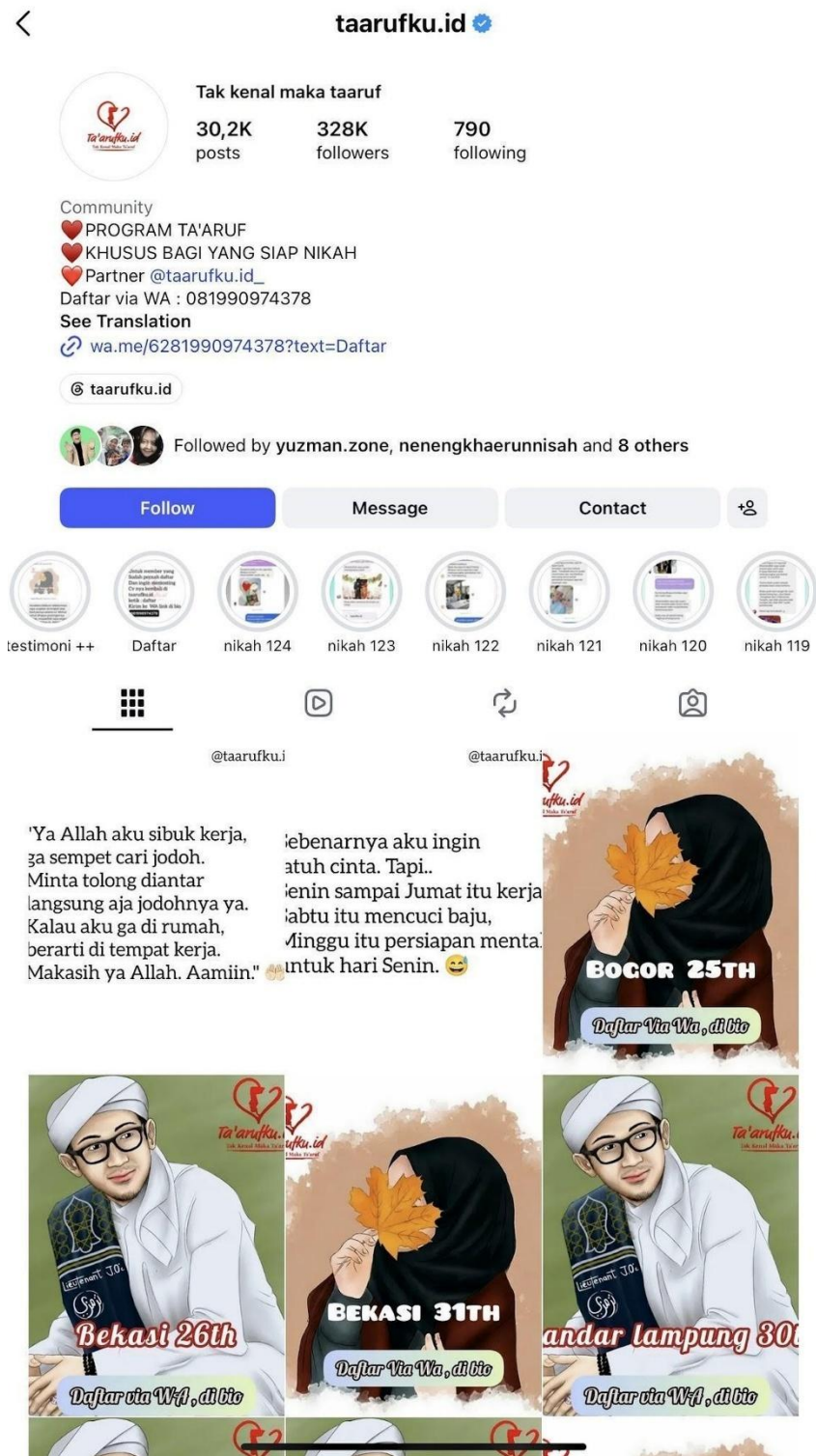


Fig 2. @taarufku.id account

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/taarufku.id/>

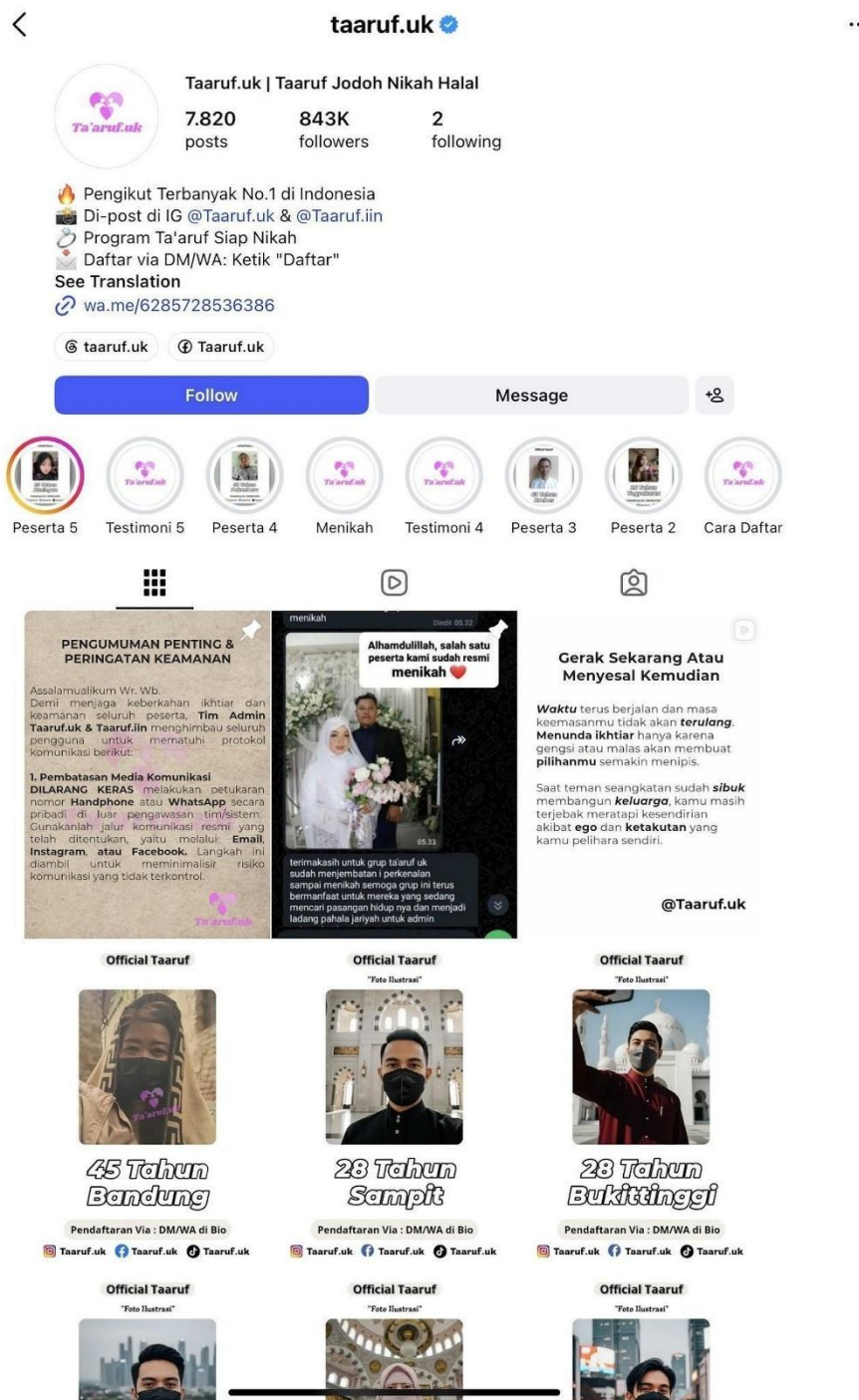


Fig 3. @taaruf.uk account

Source: <https://www.instagram.com/taaruf.uk/>

Stages of Data Analysis

Visual data analysis was conducted systematically through four main stages. First was the formal deconstruction stage. This involved isolating and identifying the basic visual components of the logos and feed content from the three accounts, including image/illustration style, color, typography, composition, and layout. Second was the semiotic analysis stage (Roland Barthes' model). This stage analyzes two levels of significance: denotative meaning, which refers to what is literally visible, and connotative meaning, which relates to associations, values, and the constructed image.

Third is the comparative synthesis stage. This involves connecting visual and semiotic findings across accounts to identify similarities, differences, and

the design problem-solving strategies employed. Fourth is the digital design quality evaluation stage. This involves evaluating usability, accessibility, visual consistency, and responsiveness. The accessibility aspect is based on the WCAG 2.2 principles, including readability and content usability on mobile devices (W3C., 2024).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

A Semiotic Deconstruction of Logos and Macro Identity

The logo or main profile photo is the first visual point of contact that can influence perceptions of a digital taaruf account. An analysis of three accounts reveals distinct differences in visual approaches.

First is @taaruf.time. The @taaruf.time logo design applies the principles of modern minimalism through a combination of typography and background textures. The circular shape, varied typography, white fabric texture, and pink dot form a visual system that conveys a modern, soft, and personal impression.



Fig 4. The @taaruf.time logo

Second is @taarufku.id. The @taarufku.id logo uses a combination mark approach featuring a heart symbol and a human silhouette. The use of red and script typography creates a more emotional, personal, and communicative image.



Fig 5. The @taarufku.id logo

Third is @taaruf.uk. The @taaruf.uk logo features two heart shapes, bold display typography, and a predominantly pink color scheme. This

combination creates a romantic, friendly, and easily recognizable impression at avatar size.

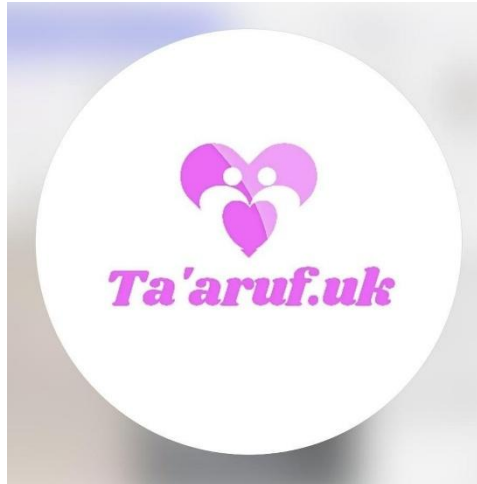


Fig 6. @taaruf.uk logo

An analysis of profile content reveals three distinct design strategies for addressing facial privacy issues. @taaruf.time uses 3D avatars to replace depictions of real faces. @taarufku.id uses faceless digital illustrations with warm earth-tone hues. Meanwhile, @taaruf.uk retains photographs of real people wearing masks or veils as a form of identity protection.

These differences demonstrate that privacy is not merely a technical issue but also an integral part of a brand's visual language. Consistent visual strategies can shape users' expectations regarding how personal information will be displayed, while choices regarding facial representation influence the relationship between realism, trust, and a sense of security.

Visual Analysis of the Logo

The main appeal of the @taaruf.time logo lies in its typographic experimentation and the use of background textures. This combination results in a relatively minimalist identity that still captures attention. This finding aligns with visual branding studies showing that the consistency of graphic elements and the selection of visual forms play a role in building brand identity on Instagram (Carcavilla Puey & Aguirre Jiménez, 2022; Carpio-Jiménez et al., 2024).

On @taarufku.id, the relationship between the heart symbol, the human silhouette, color, and typography forms a more emotional identity. This approach demonstrates that symbols and illustrations can replace photographic representations while still conveying messages about relationships and marriage. This pattern aligns with research on visual communication in Islamic-themed Instagram accounts, which found that typography, illustrations, and color can reinforce one another in creating meaning (Halid & Fajrin, 2023).

On @taaruf.uk, the dominance of the color pink, heart symbols, and display typography creates a more expressive identity. From a visual branding perspective, shapes and colors can serve as stimuli that influence perceptions of a brand's character (Prawira et al., 2023). Thus, color choices are not merely a matter of aesthetics but are integral to the account's positioning.

In profile content, three facial representation strategies reveal three forms of negotiation between privacy and visual appeal. Avatars provide the strongest anonymity; faceless illustrations allow for artistic expression; while photographs featuring masks or veils maintain a higher level of realism. These differences expand the study of visual branding on Instagram, as visual

identities on taaruf accounts must simultaneously manage personal information.

The evaluation findings indicate that visual consistency aids content readability and pattern recognition, but consistency is not always synonymous with readability. Studies on Instagram visual branding strategies suggest that minimalist visuals and emotional narratives can shape brand perception, while research on Instagram visual design emphasizes the coherence of graphic elements in supporting communication functions (Carpio-Jiménez et al., 2024; Mauliddiyah et al., 2024).

Analysis and Discussion of Evaluation Indicators

The evaluation results should be understood as a comparative assessment of the observed design, not as a formal WCAG conformance test. WCAG 2.2 provides testable success criteria that apply to content across various devices, including mobile devices (W3C., 2024). In this study, these principles were used as a reference to assess visual readability and ease of use.

First is the usability aspect. @taaruf.time received a very high rating because its biographical information system is more straightforward and has minimal visual distractions. @taarufku.id was rated at a moderate level because the illustrations can draw attention away from the content, while @taaruf.uk is more prone to visual distractions due to its complex photo backgrounds.

Second is the aspect of accessibility. Text-background contrast is a key factor. WCAG 2.2 considers readability to be part of accessibility; therefore, black text on a white background provides a more stable visual environment than text placed over variable photographic backgrounds. However, the assessments in this study are observational in nature and do not replace technical conformance testing.

Third is the aspect of visual consistency. @taaruf.time demonstrates the most uniform system in terms of typography, grid layout, and avatar style. @taarufku.id maintains consistency through a warm earth-tone palette and faceless illustrations. @taaruf.uk exhibits greater variation because it relies on participants' photographs. This consistency is important because an Instagram visual identity is built through the accumulation of content, not just a single post.

Fourth is the aspect of responsiveness. Responsiveness is assessed based on readability on mobile screens, taking into account text size, information density, and background complexity. Minimalist designs with a clear text hierarchy are easier to maintain readability on small screens.

Overall, the findings address the research objectives by demonstrating that visual branding on digital taaruf accounts serves two functions: building brand identity and managing the sensitivity of personal information. The most effective visual strategy is not merely the most decorative one, but the one that is most consistent in balancing identity, privacy, readability, and user comfort.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the visual branding strategies employed by @taaruf.time, @taarufku.id, and @taaruf.uk use different approaches to build identity while protecting participants' privacy. @taaruf.time relies on 3D avatars to provide functional anonymity and demonstrates the strongest performance in terms of legibility and consistency; @taarufku.id uses faceless illustrations and warm earth-tone colors to foster an emotional connection; while @taaruf.uk maintains photographic realism through masks or veils, but is more prone to visual clutter. These findings address the research objectives by demonstrating that privacy can be integrated into visual systems as part of

a brand's identity. Practically, operators of digital taaruf services are advised to maintain a consistent visual system, use adequate text contrast, control background complexity, and select forms of representation that align with users' privacy needs. For future research, evaluations can be expanded through technical WCAG measurements and empirical user testing so that assessments of accessibility and usability can be quantitatively validated.

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Author contribution

Yogi Abdullah: data curation, writing-original draft preparation and editing, conceptualization, **Putri Merak Jingga Sameto:** methodology, validation, visualization, supervision, **Patra Suwanda:** software.

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