

# Digital Forensic Analysis of Online Gambling Cases on Instagram Application using National Institute of Standards and Technology Method

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## ABSTRACT

Advances in communication technology and social media, particularly Instagram, have created opportunities for the misuse of digital platforms to promote online gambling via the Direct Message (DM) feature. The private nature of this communication and the dynamic nature of digital data make the identification and verification processes more complex, necessitating a systematic digital forensic approach. This study aims to analyze the process of collecting and examining digital evidence in cases involving online gambling promotion on Instagram, using the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) method, which comprises the stages of collection, examination, analysis, and reporting. The data acquisition process was conducted from mobile devices using the tools MOBILedit Forensic Express, Magnet AXIOM, and Hash My Files. The study identified 30 message artifacts and 10 image files related to online gambling promotional activities. The verification process, which utilized MD5 and SHA-256 hash values, demonstrated that the data had not been altered, thereby ensuring its integrity. These findings indicate that the NIST methodology, when combined with several digital forensic tools, is capable of producing valid and reliable digital evidence.

## Keyword

Digital Forensics, Instagram, Online Gambling, NIST, MOBILedit Forensic Express, Magnet AXIOM.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Advances in information and communication technology have brought about significant changes in the way people interact and have driven the formation of a complex and dynamic digital ecosystem [1]. The Internet serves not only as a medium of communication but has also become an integral part of social, economic, and entertainment activities. One such development is the emergence of social media platforms like Instagram, which allow users to share information and interact widely [2]. Instagram is a visual-content-based platform equipped with interactive features, one of which is Direct Message (DM), enabling private communication [3]. The high number of active Instagram users in Indonesia gives the platform a wide reach for information dissemination [4]. However, this situation also creates opportunities for misuse, such as its use as a medium for promoting online gambling conducted covertly via private messages [4], [5]. Digital forensics plays a role in identifying, collecting, and analyzing digital evidence to support legal proceedings [6], [7]. This process is conducted systematically to ensure the integrity and authenticity of the data so that it can be held accountable [8]. In addition to the NIST method, there are several other methods in digital forensics, such as the Digital Forensic Research

Workshop (DFRWS), which divides the investigative process into seven stages: identification, preservation, collection, examination, analysis, presentation, and decision [9]. The National Institute of Justice (NIJ) method emphasizes the stages of acquisition, identification, evaluation, and admission, focusing on the validation of digital evidence [10]. The Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) method emphasizes the principle of maintaining the integrity of digital evidence throughout the investigative process [11].

The NIST method was chosen for this study because it offers a simpler and more systematic structure for the digital investigation process [12]. This method is capable of accommodating all stages of digital investigation, from the collection and examination of digital evidence to the analysis and structured reporting of investigation results [13]. The approach used in the NIST method is considered effective in producing valid and accountable digital evidence analysis. Therefore, this study aims to analyze digital evidence in cases of online gambling promotion via Instagram using the NIST method and utilizing several digital forensic tools to obtain optimal results [14].

## 2. LITERATURE STUDY

### 2.1 Digital Forensics

Digital forensics is the scientific process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting digital evidence from electronic devices to support legal investigations [15]. This process is conducted systematically to ensure the integrity, authenticity, and reliability of digital evidence throughout the investigation. In practice, digital forensics is used to identify user activities, trace digital footprints, and reconstruct user activities. An illustration of digital forensics process can be seen in Figure 1.

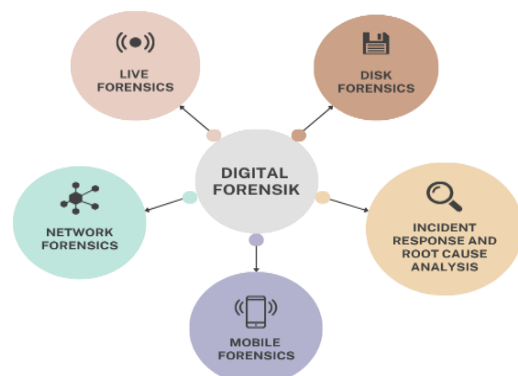


Figure 1 : Digital Forensics Process

## 2.2 National Institute of Standards and Technology Method

The National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) method is a digital forensic framework commonly used in mobile forensic investigations. This method consists of four main stages: collection, examination, analysis, and reporting [16]. The framework is designed to ensure that the investigation process is conducted systematically while maintaining the integrity and authenticity of digital evidence throughout the forensic process. In mobile forensics, the NIST method is applied to analyze digital evidence obtained from mobile devices such as smartphones, including messages, images, and user activity data that are relevant to investigations [17]. The workflow of the National Institute of Standards and Technology method is shown in Figure 2.



Figure 2 : Workflow Diagram of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Method

## 2.3 Instagram Mobile

Instagram, as a social media platform, is frequently used as a promotional tool, including for illegal activities such as online gambling. Promotions are typically conducted covertly through private messages and visual media [18]. An illustration of Instagram’s system workflow can be seen in Figure 3.

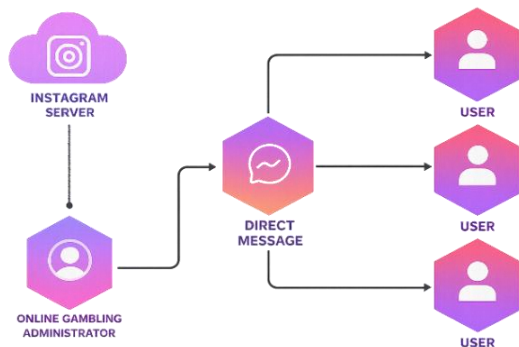


Figure 3 : Simplified Workflow of Instagram Mobile

## 2.4 Online Gambling

Online gambling is a form of gambling conducted via digital media and the internet. This activity often leverages social media as a promotional tool due to its wide reach and the difficulty of direct oversight. Promotions are typically conducted covertly through private messages and visually appealing content, such as images of wins and persuasive calls to action designed to capture users attention [19].

## 2.5 Digital Evidence

Digital evidence refers to electronic information such as messages, images, and metadata used in legal proceedings. The authenticity and integrity of the data are critical factors for the evidence to be admissible in court [20]. Proper handling of digital evidence is essential to prevent alteration, contamination, or loss of information during the forensic investigation process. Therefore, a structured evidence handling procedure is required to maintain the reliability and credibility of the collected data. An illustration of the digital evidence handling workflow is shown in Figure 4.



Figure 4 : Digital Evidence Handling Workflow Model

## 2.6 Data Recovery

Data recovery is the process of retrieving lost or deleted data from digital storage media. This process aims to recover information that can still be used as evidence in digital forensic investigations [21]. The stages of the data recovery process are shown in Figure 5.

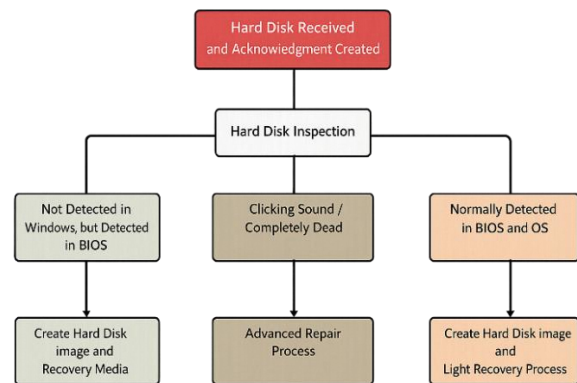


Figure 5 : Data Recovery Process Workflow

## 2.7 MOBILedit Forensic Express

MOBILedit Forensic Express is a digital forensic tool used to extract data from mobile devices, such as messages, contacts, call logs, and media files. This tool is capable of accessing both existing and deleted data, thereby supporting a more comprehensive digital investigation process [22]. In addition, MOBILedit Forensic Express provides structured extraction results that assist investigators in identifying and analyzing digital artifacts relevant to a case. The MOBILedit Forensic Express workflow is shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6 : MOBILedit Forensic Express Workflow

## 2.8 Magnet AXIOM

Magnet AXIOM is a digital forensic tool used to analyze and manage digital artifacts from various sources. This tool displays data in a structured manner, thereby facilitating the analysis and identification of digital evidence [23]. The Magnet AXIOM workflow is shown in Figure 7.

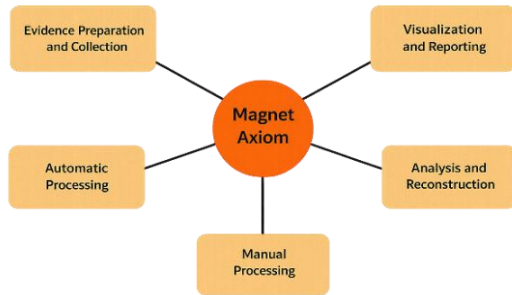


Figure 7 : Magnet AXIOM Workflow

## 2.9 Hash My Files

Hash My Files is a tool used to verify data integrity by calculating hash values such as MD5 and SHA-256. If the hash values match, the data can be confirmed as unchanged during the investigation process [24].

## 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses the NIST digital forensics framework consisting of four stages: collection, examination, analysis, and reporting. In the collection stage, Instagram DM data was extracted from a smartphone using MOBILedit Forensic Express and Magnet AXIOM, then verified using MD5 and SHA-256 via Hash My Files to ensure data integrity. The examination stage involved organizing and validating digital artifacts such as messages and images. In the analysis stage, Magnet AXIOM was used to identify communication patterns and evidence related to online gambling promotion activities. Finally, the reporting stage documented all findings systematically. This framework ensures that the digital forensic process is conducted in a structured and repeatable manner in accordance with established standards, as shown in Figure 8.



Figure 8 : Stages of the National Institute of Standards and Technology Method

The forensic scenario begins when the perpetrator sends an online gambling promotional message via the DM feature to the victim. After receiving the message, the victim suspects illegal activity and reports it to the authorities. The investigator then performs data acquisition from the involved devices, followed by verification, analysis, and the preparation of a forensic report as the basis for legal evidence.

## 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study simulates a case of online gambling promotion via the Instagram app using a three-stage approach: pre-incident, incident, and post-incident. These stages describe the sequence of events, starting from the initial communication between the perpetrator and the victim, the emergence of indications of illegal activity, to the conduct of the digital forensic investigation process. In the pre-incident stage, the perpetrator sent a message via the Direct Message (DM) feature containing

an invitation to participate in online gambling activities, accompanied by an image file displaying claims of winnings to attract the victim's attention. Next, during the incident stage, the victim begins to notice signs of illegal activity marked by the use of persuasive language such as "jackpot" and "big winning opportunities," leading the victim to cease communication. In the post-incident stage, a digital forensic investigation is conducted on the device to obtain digital artifacts related to the activity. These three stages are illustrated in Figure 9.

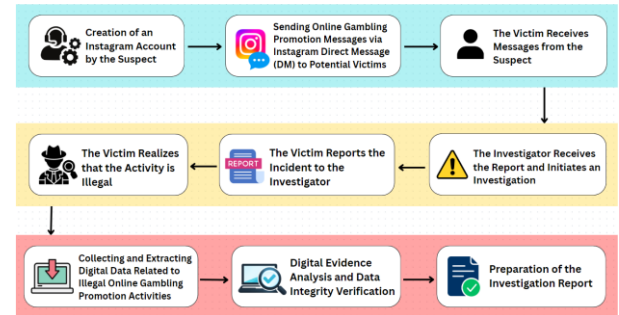


Figure 9 : Case Simulation

## 4.1 Collection

The collection stage is conducted to obtain digital evidence from the smartphone used in communication via the Instagram app, specifically the Direct Message (DM) feature. The data obtained consists of conversation messages and image files related to online gambling promotion activities. The acquisition process was performed using MOBILedit Forensic Express and Magnet AXIOM to extract digital artifacts from a Xiaomi Redmi 5A device. The specifications of the device used are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Smartphone Evidence Specifications

No	Specification	Details
1	Brand	Xiaomi
2	Model	Redmi 5A
3	IMEI	868939035729102
4	Operating System	Android
5	OS Version	7.1.2

In MOBILedit Forensic Express, extraction is performed by connecting the smartphone to a computer to obtain data such as chat messages, image files, and application information. This tool also generates a structured report as a basis for analysis. The extraction process using MOBILedit is shown in Figure 10.

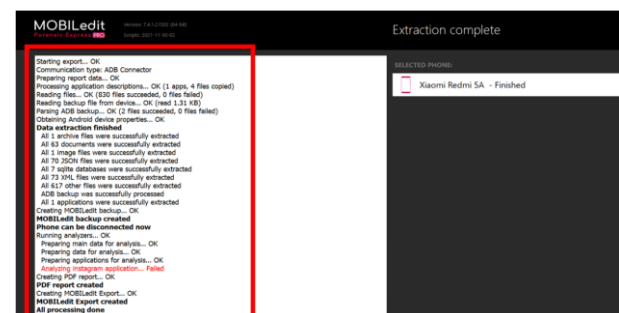


Figure 10 : Extraction Process Using MOBILedit Forensic

Figure 10 shows the process of retrieving data from a smartphone device using MOBILedit Forensic Express via a direct connection. The extraction results consist of a report containing digital artifacts such as conversations and media files related to online gambling promotions, organized systematically to facilitate identification. As shown in Figure 11.

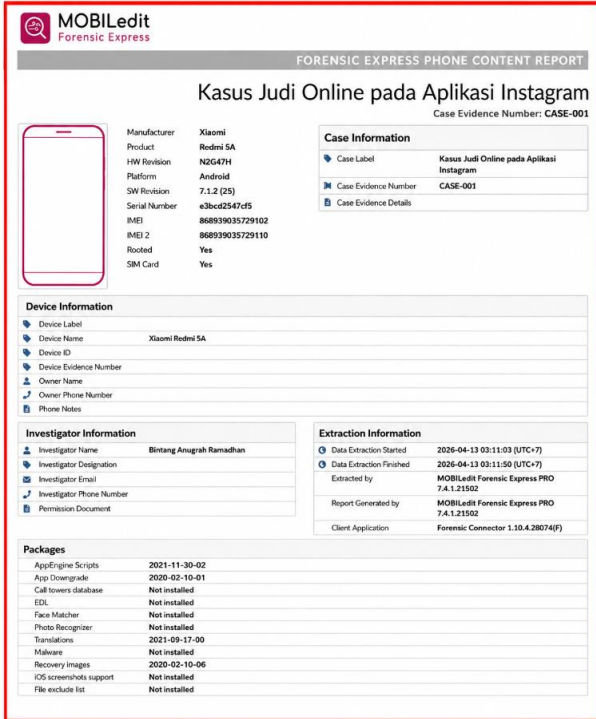


Figure 11 : MOBILedit Forensic Extraction Results

Figure 11 shows the data extraction results in the form of digital artifacts from the Instagram app presented as a report. Magnet AXIOM is used for more in-depth data extraction to obtain artifacts such as messages, media files, and metadata. This tool presents the data in the form of a structured database, thereby facilitating the analysis process. The usage process is shown in Figure 12.

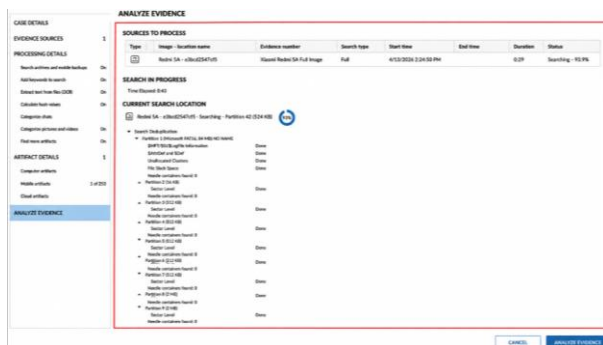


Figure 12 : Extraction Process Using Magnet AXIOM

Figure 12 illustrates the data acquisition process using Magnet AXIOM to obtain digital artifacts more comprehensively. The extraction results using Magnet AXIOM are presented in the form of a database containing digital artifacts such as conversations and image files related to online gambling

promotions. This data structure enables systematic tracing of relationships between artifacts, as shown in Figure 13.

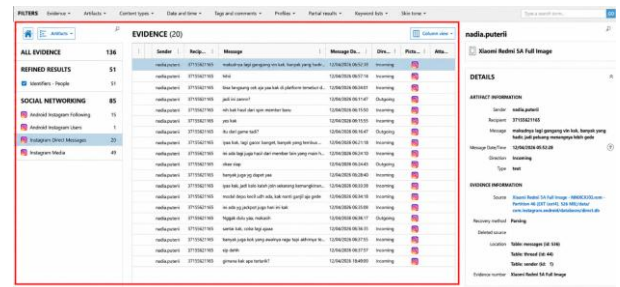


Figure 13 : Magnet AXIOM Extraction Results

Figure 13 shows the data extraction results in the form of a database that facilitates the analysis process. Hash My Files is used to verify data integrity by calculating MD5 and SHA-256 hash values for the extracted files. This process ensures that the data has not been altered from acquisition through analysis, thereby preserving the authenticity and validity of the digital evidence.

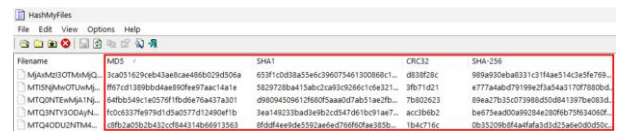


Figure 14 : Verification Results Using Hash My Files

Figure 14 shows consistent hash value verification results, confirming that the data has not changed during the investigation process. Thus, the collection phase is conducted systematically using a combination of digital forensic tools to maintain the integrity and authenticity of the data.

## 4.2 Examination

The examination phase involves reviewing collected data to identify its structure and storage location, as well as to verify the integrity and authenticity of digital artifacts. The data examined includes chat messages and image files from the Instagram app using MOBILedit Forensic Express, Magnet AXIOM, and Hash My Files. In MOBILedit Forensic Express, the examination was conducted on data stored in the Instagram app database. The directory `com.instagram.android/live_data/database/direct.db` serves as the primary location for Direct Message conversations. The results indicate the presence of messages containing references to online gambling promotions, invitations to play, and the use of persuasive language. The examination results are shown in Figure 15.



Figure 15 : Message Extraction Results Using MOBILedit Forensic Express

Figure 15 shows the message data structure and conversation content pointing to online gambling promotion activities. Image files in the directory com.instagram.android/live\_data/cache/images.stash though lacking an extension were identified as image/jpeg and are linked to promotional activities. The examination results are shown in Figure 16.

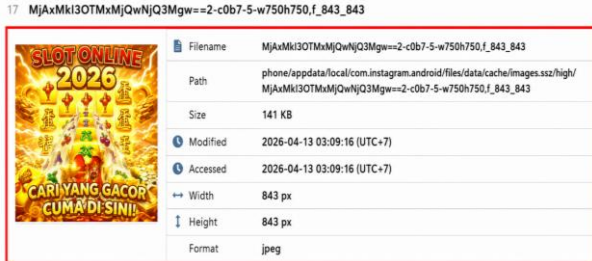


Figure 16 : Image Extraction Results Using MOBILedit Forensic Express

Figure 16 shows the results of the image file identification along with its characteristics. Subsequently, an examination using Magnet AXIOM was conducted to validate the previous results. The message data showed consistency in terms of content and structure, indicating consistency between the tools. The examination results are shown in Figure 17.

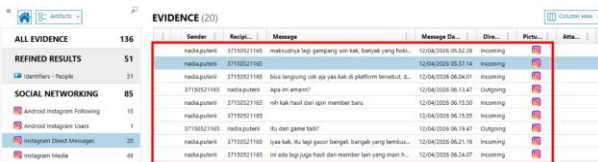


Figure 17 : Message Examination Results Using Magnet AXIOM

Figure 17 shows the consistency of message data with the previous results. The examination of image files using Magnet AXIOM also showed consistency, including size, dimensions, and image/JPEG format, thereby demonstrating the validity of the digital artifacts. The results are shown in Figure 18.



Figure 18 : Image Examination Results Using Magnet AXIOM

Figure 18 displays detailed image file information that is consistent with the results obtained from previous forensic tools. This consistency indicates that the recovered image artifacts originate from the same source and retain identical characteristics across different examination tools. To further validate the authenticity of the evidence, hash verification was performed using Hash My Files by calculating the MD5 and SHA-256 values of the acquired files. The matching hash

values confirm that the files remained unchanged throughout the acquisition and examination processes. The verification results are presented in Figure 19.

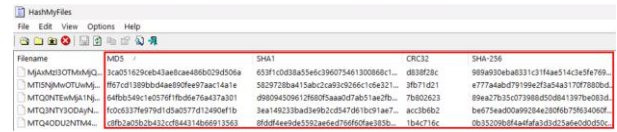


Figure 19 : Hash Calculation Results Using Hash My Files

Figure 19 shows the hash value calculation results to verify the authenticity and integrity of the data as digital evidence. Thus, the examination phase not only serves to inspect the data but also to validate the consistency of digital artifacts and ensure their integrity and authenticity.

### 4.3 Analysis

Analysis using MOBILedit Forensic Express revealed conversations containing indications of online gambling promotion, marked by the use of persuasive language such as “easy win,” “jackpot,” and “big winning chances.” These keywords indicate a deliberate promotional strategy aimed at attracting potential victims by emphasizing financial rewards and increasing user curiosity. The recurring appearance of such expressions suggests that the communication was not random but systematically designed to encourage user participation in online gambling activities. This finding strengthens the indication that the Instagram Direct Message feature was used as a medium for promoting online gambling. The results of this analysis are shown in Figure 20.



Figure 20 : Chat Extraction Results Using MOBILedit Forensic Express

Figure 20 illustrates conversation content containing persuasive elements and invitations related to online gambling promotion activities. The recovered messages indicate an effort to attract users through promises of winnings and gambling opportunities. Analysis of the image files also revealed a relationship with the message content, including visuals of slot games and winning claims used to increase the attractiveness of the promotion. This consistency between textual and visual artifacts strengthens the indication of online gambling promotional activities. The results of the image analysis are shown in Figure 21.

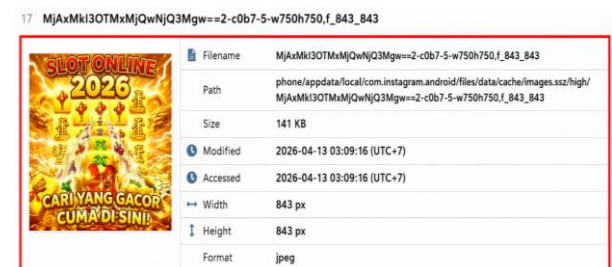


Figure 21 : Image Extraction Results Using MOBILedit Forensic Express

Figure 21 shows visual content that supports the promotional messages. The image contains gambling-related elements, including slot game graphics and claims of winning opportunities, which are commonly used to attract user attention. The consistency between the visual content and the message conversations indicates that both artifacts were used together as part of a promotional strategy to increase the effectiveness of online gambling advertisements.

Sender	Recipi...	Message	Message Da...	D...	Pictu...
nadia.puteri	37150521165	maksudnya lagi gampang win kak, banyak yang h...	12/04/2026 05.52.28	Incomi...	
nadia.puteri	37150521165		12/04/2026 05.57.14	Incomi...	
nadia.puteri	37150521165	bisa langsung cek aja yaa kak di platform tersebu...	12/04/2026 06.04.01	Incomi...	
37150521165	nadia.puteri	Apa ini aman?	12/04/2026 06.13.47	Outgo...	
nadia.puteri	37150521165	nih kak hasil dari spin member baru	12/04/2026 06.15.50	Incomi...	
nadia.puteri	37150521165		12/04/2026 06.15.55	Incomi...	
37150521165	nadia.puteri	itu dari game tadi?	12/04/2026 06.19.47	Outgo...	
nadia.puteri	37150521165	iyaa kak, itu lagi gacor banget, bangak yang temb...	12/04/2026 06.21.18	Incomi...	

Figure 22 : Conversation Extraction Results Using Magnet AXIOM

Figure 22 presents the structured format of conversation data, which is consistent with the previous extraction results. The identification of text fragments such as “gacor” and “jackpot” provides additional evidence of gambling-related communication. These terms are frequently associated with online gambling promotions and are commonly used to persuade users by suggesting high winning potential. The consistency of these findings across different forensic tools increases the reliability of the recovered digital evidence. The results are shown in Figure 23.

GO TO	FIND	HOE DECODING	COPY SELECTION	SAVE SELECTION
097350	6F 64 65 22 3A	66 61 6C 73 63 2C 70 72 6F 63 65 73 65 64 5F	ode": "false,"processed_	
097372	62 75 73 69 6E	75 73 5F 73 76 76 67 65 74 69 6F 6E 22 3A 66	business_suggestion":f	
097394	61 6C 73 65 7D	87 05 84 19 0D 00 23 53 58 23 36 61 15 8A 76	alew).#. #83(#.....v	
097416	33 37 31 35 30	35 32 31 31 36 35 32 37 36 30 35 34 30 35 38	3715052116532760954058	
097438	39 32 30 38 34	30 37 22 32 39 32 34 30 36 32 26 30 33 36 32	9208407792924062660362	
097460	32 34 37 34 38	37 38 35 33 34 38 39 34 31 33 34 35 38 39 33	2474489785341394459893	
097482	34 30 32 38 32	33 36 36 64 31 37 31 30 30 31 32 34 32 37	402823644171030124421	
097526	35 39 30 38 20	06 1F 3D 5F BE 17 9D 74 65 78 74 69 61 61 20	59082....."textiyaa "	
097548	6B 61 6B 2C 20	69 67 20 6C 61 67 69 20 67 61 63 6F 20 62 61	kak, ini lagi gacor ba	
097570	6E 67 65 74 20	61 6E 67 61 6B 20 79 61 6E 68 74 65 60 62 78	nget banget bangak yang	
097592	20 74 65 6D 62	73 20 68 61 72 69 20 69 69 65 62 69 22	tembus hari ini"	
097614	6D 5F 74 79 70	22 3A 22 74 65 78 74 22 2C 22 74 65 6D 5F 69	m_type": "text", "item_1	

Figure 23 : Chat Data in Text Format

Figure 23 illustrates raw data fragments that still contain relevant information related to promotional activities. Analysis of image files using Magnet AXIOM also demonstrated consistency in both content and metadata, reinforcing the relationship between textual messages and visual media. The results are shown in Figure 24.

ARTIFACT INFORMATION	
MIME Type	image/png
Created Date/Time	12/04/2026 08.14.04
Last Accessed Date/Time	13/04/2026 08.49.24
Last Modified Date/Time	13/04/2026 08.49.24
Size (Bytes)	148877
Original Width	843
Original Height	843
Skin Tone Percentage	61.5
MD5 Hash	3ca051629ceb43ae8cae486b029d506a
SHA1 Hash	65916c438a54e41960754813086616553876
EVIDENCE INFORMATION	
Source	Xiaomi Redmi 5A Full Image - MMCBLK03.raw - Partition 49 (EXT Family, 5.87 GB) (data\com.instagram.android\cache\image\static\user\6484865078ad9\Qw4fQ3UMg==.2-cbb7-5-w750h750.f_843_843)
Recovery method	-
Deleted source	-
Location	n/a
Evidence number	Xiaomi Redmi 5A Full Image

Figure 24 : Image Extraction Results Using Magnet AXIOM

Figure 24 shows the consistency of visual content with previous findings. Verification using Hash My Files confirmed that the MD5 and SHA-256 hash values remained consistent, indicating that the data were not altered during the investigation process. This confirms the integrity of the digital evidence. The results are shown in Figure 25.

Filename	MD5	SHA-256
3ca051629ceb43ae8cae486b029d506a	3ca051629ceb43ae8cae486b029d506a	65916c438a54e41960754813086616553876

Figure 25 : MD5 Matching Results with file\_hashes\_backup

Figure 25 presents the consistent results of the hash value calculations. In addition, the comparison of hash values between MOBILedit Forensic Express and Magnet AXIOM demonstrated matching results, confirming that the digital artifacts originated from the same source and remained unchanged throughout the extraction and analysis processes. The results are shown in Figure 26.

Mobiledit Express	Magnet Axiom
MD5 / 3ca051629ceb43ae8cae486b029d506a	MD5 Hash 3ca051629ceb43ae8cae486b029d506a

Figure 26 : MD5 Hash Comparison Between MOBILedit Forensic Express and Magnet AXIOM

Figure 26 illustrates the consistency of hash values across forensic tools. The overall analysis demonstrates a strong relationship between the recovered message conversations, image files, and hash verification results. The extracted messages contain persuasive terms such as “gacor” and “jackpot,” which are commonly associated with online gambling promotions. These findings are further supported by the recovered image files that display gambling-related content and promotional visuals, indicating a coordinated promotional strategy. In addition, the consistency of artifacts identified by MOBILedit Forensic Express and Magnet AXIOM, together with the matching MD5 and SHA-256 hash values, confirms the reliability, integrity, and authenticity of the recovered evidence. The consistency of findings across different forensic tools also demonstrates the effectiveness of the NIST framework in preserving and validating digital evidence throughout the investigation process. Collectively, these findings indicate that the digital artifacts form a coherent body of evidence supporting online gambling promotional activities conducted through Instagram Direct Messages. Therefore, the analysis results indicate that the obtained digital artifacts possess consistency, authenticity, and validity that can be scientifically justified within the digital forensic investigation process.

#### 4.4 Reporting

The reporting stage is the final phase of the digital forensic process, aimed at documenting and presenting the examination and analysis results systematically. The findings focus on digital artifacts in the form of message conversations and image files associated with online gambling promotion activities. Data integrity verification was conducted through hash value comparison using Hash My Files. The results indicate that the

MD5 and SHA-256 hash values remain consistent, confirming that the data were not altered and can therefore be considered valid digital evidence. These findings demonstrate that the recovered digital evidence meets the requirements of integrity and authenticity, making it suitable for use in digital forensic investigations and legal proceedings. A summary of findings is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Final Digital Evidence Findings**

Type of Evidence	Specification
Brand	Xiaomi
Model	Redmi 5A
IMEI	868939035729102
Operating System	Android
OS Version	7.1.2
Application	Instagram
Account Name	pratamarizeki
Number of Image Evidence	10
Number of Message Evidence	30
Number of MD5 Hash Codes	15
Number of SHA-256 Hash Codes	10
Number of SHA1 Hash Codes	15

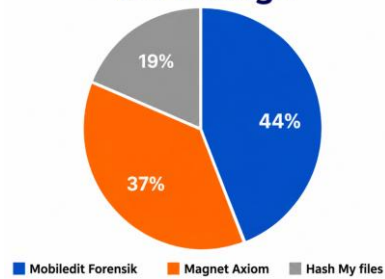
Table 2 shows that 30 message conversations and 10 image files related to online gambling promotion activities were successfully identified, indicating an active communication pattern conducted through the Direct Message feature. The findings demonstrate that both textual and visual artifacts play an important role in promoting online gambling activities on social media platforms. The presence of multiple evidence types also strengthens the reliability of the recovered digital artifact. A comparison of findings is presented in Table 3.

**Table 3. Findings from Each Forensic Tool**

Findings	MOBILedit Forensic Express	Magnet AXIOM	Hash My Files
Messages	15	15	0
Images	5	5	0
Number of MD5 Hash Codes	5	5	5
Number of SHA-256 Hash Codes	5	0	5
Number of SHA1 Hash Codes	5	5	5
Total Findings	35	30	15

Table 3 shows that MOBILedit Forensic Express produced the highest number of findings, followed by Magnet AXIOM and Hash My Files. These differences reflect the distinct functions of each tool: MOBILedit Forensic Express focuses on artifact extraction, Magnet AXIOM on structured analysis and artifact correlation, and Hash My Files on integrity verification. The findings suggest that combining multiple forensic tools provides a more comprehensive investigation outcome than relying on a single tool. Illustrated in Figure 27.

**Percentage Distribution of Findings**



**Figure 27 : Percentage Distribution of Findings**

Figure 27 illustrates that MOBILedit Forensic Express contributes 44%, followed by Magnet AXIOM at 37%, and Hash My Files at 19%, emphasizing the respective roles of each tool in extraction, analysis, and verification processes. Overall, the implementation of the NIST method combined with multiple digital forensic tools successfully produced a systematic investigation process and generated valid and reliable digital evidence.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrated the successful implementation of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) framework in investigating online gambling promotion activities on Instagram. Through the collection, examination, analysis, and reporting stages, digital artifacts in the form of message conversations and image files were successfully recovered and analyzed. The findings identified 30 message records and 10 image files containing persuasive and promotional elements related to online gambling activities. Hash verification using MD5 and SHA-256 confirmed the integrity and authenticity of the recovered evidence. In addition, the comparison of forensic tools showed that MOBILedit Forensic Express contributed 44%, Magnet AXIOM 37%, and Hash My Files 19%, indicating that the combined use of multiple forensic tools can produce more comprehensive and reliable investigation results. These findings demonstrate the importance of integrating multiple forensic tools to enhance evidence recovery and validation in digital investigations. Furthermore, the consistency of digital artifacts across different forensic tools strengthens the credibility and evidential value of the recovered data. This study was limited to a single smartphone device, one Instagram account, and a specific online gambling promotion scenario. Therefore, the findings may not represent all digital forensic cases involving social media platforms. Future research should evaluate multiple devices, operating system versions, social media applications, and investigation scenarios, as well as incorporate additional forensic tools to provide a broader assessment of forensic tool performance and evidence recovery capabilities.

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