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Oversharing in the Digital Era According to Herbert Marcuse's Study

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ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini fokus membahas mengenai perilaku *oversharing* dari sudut pandang studi kritis pemikiran Herbert Marcuse yaitu teori manusia satu dimensi. Metode penelitian yang dilakukan adalah studi pustaka, dengan mengumpulkan data terkait pemikiran Herbert Marcuse dan perilaku oversharing. Hasil penelitian yang didapatkan bahwa perilaku oversharing sesuai dengan ciri dari masyarakat satu dimensi yang disebutkan Herbert Marcuse yaitu bahwa; *Pertama*, masyarakat berada di bawah kekuasaan prinsip teknologi dengan banyaknya pilihan sosial media yang menjadi wadah untuk melakukan oversharing. *Kedua*, masyarakat modern menjadi irasional secara keseluruhan, dikarenakan terjadinya kesatuan antara produktivitas dan destruktivitas, perilaku oversharing secara tidak sadar menuntut untuk menghabiskan waktu dalam melakukan cek atas apa yang sudah di posting dalam sosial media.

Kata Kunci: Oversharing, Herbert Marcuse, Masyarakat Satu Dimensi

ABSTRACT

This research focuses on discussing oversharing behavior from the perspective of a critical study of Herbert Marcuse's thinking, namely one-dimensional human theory. The research method used was a literature study, by collecting data related to Herbert Marcuse's thoughts and oversharing behavior. The research results showed that oversharing behavior is by the characteristics of a one-dimensional society mentioned by Herbert Marcuse, namely that; First, society is under the power of technological principles with the many choices of social media which have become a forum for oversharing. Second, modern society has become irrational as a whole, due to the unity between productivity and destructiveness, oversharing behavior subconsciously requires spending time checking what has been posted on social media

Keyword: Oversharing, Herbert Marcuse, One Dimensional Society

1. Introduction

The rapid development of Internet technology has become inevitable. The existence of the internet is like two blades; it can have a good impact if used for the right thing and can have a bad impact if used excessively and not by its function. The development of the Internet itself can be seen in all human activities already connected to the Internet. A report from a research institution about the Internet, namely APJII (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia) is a concrete thing about the development of Internet use. In the 2024 period, there were 221.5 million people who used the internet. This figure shows an increase compared to the previous year, which is 1.31%, with the number of users in 2023 being 78.19%. The number of internet users equals 79.50% of Indonesia's population, 278.69 million (APJII, 2024).

Rapid internet usage is not only shown by the quantity of how many users or internet users but the quantity of time is quite long. Compared to internet users from other countries, the Indonesian people have a high allocation of time; if the world community on average accesses the internet within 6 hours and 43 minutes, and the Indonesian people access the internet on average, it can take up to 7 hours and 59 minutes every day (Akhtar, 2020). This shows that Indonesian people are very active in using the internet.

The next thing that becomes interesting to discuss, with the high time allocated to open the internet, the next question is what content or things are accessed on the internet. A report from APJII states that as many as 98.02% of internet users open social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, telegram, line, Twitter, Instagram,

YouTube, etc (APJII, 2024). A study by Ipsos, a world market research company, stated that when people worldwide use the internet to do searches, such as Google, as much as 74% visit social networking sites such as Facebook. As many as 55% open portal sites to interact via email. Meanwhile, Indonesians carry out Internet activities, namely, 78% open social networking sites, 40% visit search engines, and as many as 59% interact via email (Ipsos, 2021). The two statements above show that Indonesians use the Internet to communicate through messages and social media. People like to interact on social media compared to searching for information.

APJII, in the 2024 period, stated that the social media actively used by the Indonesian people is Facebook, which is used by 64.35% of the population, and YouTube, as much as 50.84%. However, data from social media in January 2024 shows that Facebook is second only to Instagram for the category of social media we frequently access (Upgraded.id, 2024). According to a survey by the Ministry of Communication and Information with the Katadata Insight Center, most people use social media to browse 72.7%. The second activity is sharing statuses/photos/videos, as much as 56.2% (Ahdiat, 2022). Data from Ipsos explains specifically the identification of what content is often shared on social media. The most shared content is images, as much as 53%; opinions, as much as 42%; updates about activities that are being carried out, as much as 37%; sharing article links, 36%; sharing likes, as much as 35%, and sharing about things that are being felt as much as 33%.

The oversharing phenomenon in society is also motivated by increasing engagement; the algorithm is designed to maximize interaction between users, such as likes, comments, and shares, and how much time other users spend on the content being viewed on the platform. The purpose of increasing engagement is monetization (a source of income). With increased engagement, many advertisers will want to advertise on the platform, eventually increasing revenue from advertising. This is explained in a statistical report conducted by eMarketer, which states that as much as 80% of social media platform revenue comes from targeted ads based on user data (*Social Media Marketing in Tourism*, n.d.)

The phenomenon of massively sharing information on social media is called *oversharing*. Oversharing. The Oxford Dictionary explains that it is the act of sharing much information that others do not want to hear about personal life, ('Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com', 2020). Hoffman interprets *oversharing* as revealing information that is excessive or not in a certain context. According to illinoisworknet.com, "*Oversharing is when people share too much personal information with the public or a stranger. It can happen both on and offline.*" Examples of oversharing behavior are posting intimate details about relationships, friendships, family issues, or personal drama, venting emotions on social media, and behavior that is out of context and excessive.

Several studies explain that oversharing behavior has a negative impact, such as addiction (FoMO) (Christina, Yuniardi, & Prabowo, 2019), the occurrence of cyberbullying (Noviani, 2024), the practice of doxing (exposing someone's disgrace) (Arianto, 2021) and comparing yourself to people (Aisafitri & Yusriyah, 2021). In addition to psychological problems, other impacts caused by oversharing can trigger criminal acts, such as the theft of personal data used for fraud, child abduction, and sexual predators on social media. So, the problems caused by oversharing are quite dangerous.

Several studies discuss oversharing behavior, including; *First*, a research conducted by Siti Alpiyah entitled *Oversharing: The Urgency of Privacy in the Digital Era*, where the focus of the research conducted is to explain the causes of oversharing and the results obtained are that so far, the goal of people who overshare is to get important attention in the digital world (Alpiyah, Asbari, Saputri, & Adilya, 2023). *Second*, is a study by Hanif Akhtar titled *Overshaing Behavior on social media: Threat or Opportunity?* The study discusses the causes of why someone overshares from a psychological point of view (Akhtar, 2020). *Third* is a research conducted by Dewi Bunga, *Digital Literacy To Overcome Oversharing Behavior on Social Media*; this paper discusses efforts to counter oversharing behavior in society by doing digital literacy (Dewi Bunga, Cokorde Istri Dian Laksmi Dewi, & Kadek Ary Purnama Dewi, 2022). *Fourth* is a research conducted by Julia Natasya with the title *Oversharing Behavior on Instagram Social Media*; the focus of this research is to examine the oversharing behavior of adolescents with broken home family backgrounds, which specifically researches sharing behavior to meet needs (Natasya & Yulianita, 2023).

Of the several studies that discuss oversharing behavior, no research discusses it from the perspective of critical studies. The reality of oversharing behavior will be analyzed from the perspective of Herbert Marcuse's thinking, using the theory of a one-dimensional man or a one-dimensional society.

1.1. *Methods*

This research is a type of qualitative research. Qualitative research aims to understand the field's deeper reality of human and social problems (Rukin, 2019). The approach will be carried out by studying literature using several sources such as books, journals, and the Internet. The analysis technique used is to read thoroughly and capture a synopsis of the content, from the chapters that compose it to the smallest parts of the other. Then, read at the semantic stage, which means reading in detail and then revealing the essence of the data obtained.

The methods used are descriptive, analytical, and interpretive methods. Problems are not only presented in the abstract and separate from concrete life but also felt, and the conception presented is indeed born and grows from concrete problems so that it can provide answers to problems. In the initial stage, the author will collect data on Oversharing and Marcuse's critical thinking, then understand and explain it carefully. Meanwhile, the interpretation method looks at it exponentially and implicitly from Herbert Marcuse's point of view. After the data is collected, the author will analyze and interpret the data so that the essence of the data can be understood according to the context of the problem discussed, namely oversharing.

1.2. *Results and Discussion*

To find out what motivates a person to overshare, data from Ipsos regarding why someone performs sharing behavior can be the most dominant picture or reason for oversharing.

Table 1 Reasons for carrying out sharing behaviour

Reasons for carrying out sharing behaviour	%	
	Global	Indonesia
Share interesting things	61	76
Share important things	43	58
Share funny things	43	36
Make people know my beliefs and know who I am	37	40
Recommend something	30	40
Express my support for something	29	14
Share something unique	26	47
Make people know what I'm doing	22	29
Adding networking and conversation	20	10

Shows that I know	11	9
etc	10	6

Source: (Akhtar, 2020)

The table above can be summarized into four activities that are simpler than oversharing: maintaining social relationships, self-presentation, entertainment, and learning. *First* is to maintain social relations, better known as engagement. Maintaining engagement is the most dominating factor in why someone overshares on social media. Maintaining social relations and sharing attitudes are carried out to maintain their existence among netizens.

In maintaining social relationships, individuals can carry out various activities, such as uploading content in photos, videos, writings, links, reposting, and commenting on uploads considered interesting or "liking." Giving likes and comments makes it seem like there is an interaction between the two parties. Responding with likes or comments can also create a feeling of connection and support for what is happening in the surrounding environment.

Influencers often use social relations on social media to make the platform a means of advertising. The marketing technique through these influential figures has become a promising new method to generate income. Ward also mentioned that many celebrities employed as influencers on social media have proven to be effective in influencing their followers to buy certain products they offer (Meifitri, 2020). *Second*, the motivation for sharing behavior on social media is for self-presentation. Self-presentation is a motivation driven by the desire to be impressed by the eyes of those who see it or the impression of the ideal self (Herring & Kapidzic, 2015). Visual presentation is the most important factor in self-presentation on social media, which is why a person likes to upload photos on their social media with the best quality. Self-presentation is about visuals and creating an image so that others will perceive us as we want (Anasari & Handoyo, 2015). Self-presentation can be seen from research conducted by Youyou, which looked at self-presentations made by students on Twitter. As is known, Twitter is a social media platform that is dedicated to uploading text with short characters. In his findings, the main reason students use Twitter is conformity with their friends. Another reason is impression management, the goal of which is that users want to give the impression they want to show to other users. For example, by giving critical comments on an event to create the impression of "I know" the problem. This self-presentation motive leaves an important question related to disclosing a person's identity: Is what is seen on social media the real user's personality, or is it just an image deliberately created to impress others? (Youyou, Kosinski, & Stillwell, 2015). The phenomenon of self-presentation shows the complexity of digital identity, where the boundaries between reality and self-construction often become blurred.

The phenomenon of self-presentation has to do with interpersonal communication theory. In interpersonal communication, it is explained that a person interacts, exchanges information, and builds relationships through communication. It has a relationship purpose and perception to be built by someone. One of the concepts in interpersonal communication theory is self-closure, where individuals share personal information about themselves with others to build a sense of interconnectedness and closeness (Septiani, Azzahra, Wulandari, & Manuardi, 2019). Erving Goffman explained that individuals who do self-presentation will consciously manipulate their self-image to manage other people's perceptions of themselves. With the current digital development, it is easy to form a self-image on social media as they want (Merunková & Šlerka, 2019).

The third motive for oversharing social media behavior is entertainment and learning. Alhabash and Ma's research shows that Instagram is the most accessed social media by students for entertainment media (Alhabash & Ma, 2017). The third motive can also be represented by sharing articles or links that are felt to be unique, interesting, and useful. This is also by research conducted by Juwita, which found that informants tend to feel bored when they do not open social media; this is because they feel that they do not get the latest information, so it will not be easy to adjust the topic of conversation with relatives at school (Juwita, 2023).

One-Dimensional Society and Oversharing

When you want to examine Herbert Marcuse's thoughts, his background will affect the results of Herbert Marcuse's thoughts, so it is important to explain the background of Marcuse's life. Herbert Marcuse was born in Berlin on July 19, 1898, and came from an upper-middle-class family of Jewish descent. He studied philosophy and literature at the University of Berlin and Freiburg. Marcuse briefly took part in the German military unit during World War I. After the war, Marcuse became a member of the Socialist Democratic Party and then left in 1919. In 1923, he earned his Doctorate at the University of Freiburg with a literature dissertation after some adventure in book sales and publishing. 1929, Marcuse returned to Freiburg and continued his philosophy studies with Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger (Darmaji, 2013).

He lived a life full of trials and political turmoil at the time, by the conditions under which he joined the German Socialist Party. The experience he gained during his military service and involvement in political parties encouraged Marcuse to find scientific foundations to criticize the practice of political life in society. This is where Marcuse discovered that the public would increasingly recognize knowledge born and developed from phenomena (the reality of life) if it contributes to the renewal of living (Fajarni, 2022). In 1933, Marcuse joined the Frankfurt Institute for Social Research, which became a center for developing critical studies on various practical issues. As a Neo-Marxist thinker, Marcuse was no different from his peers, such as Adorno and Horkheimer. He is also certainly inseparable from the influence of Kant, Hegel, and Marx. Under the influence of the three Critical Figures, of course, Marcuse became one of the pioneers of the Frankfurt School to criticize various kinds of social realities at that time. Less than a year after joining the Institute, he published a critical review of Karl Marx's thought entitled *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844*. Through this publication, Marcuse began to be widely known as a columnist and thinker who was very sharp in analyzing social issues. The publication of scientific works is a path that Marcuse pursues to build a democratic public discourse. One of his works, which thinkers of the Frankfurt School most widely consumed, is about one-dimensional society (*One Dimensional Man*), which was published in 1964.

The One-Dimensional Society Man is Marcuse's monumental work and is the most popular among the Critical Theories of the Frankfurt School. Through this work, Marcuse criticizes the social reality of society that is spreading in modern society. According to Marcuse, there are three main characteristics of an industrial or modern technological society (Darmaji, 2013): *First*, society is under the rule of technological principles. A principle in which all the pressure is exerted to expanate, expand, and enlarge production. The indicator of human progress is equated with the creation of technological expansion (Marcuse, 2013). The power of technology already covers all areas of life; It does not only cover the economic field but also other fields such as politics, education, and culture. *Second*, Modern society has become irrational due to the unity between productivity and destructiveness. The forces of production are not used for peace but to create potential for hostility and destruction, such as armaments. All parties agree that the arms and defense budgets must be increased when this is unreasonable. However, for defense continuity, the military budget must continue to grow. That is why destructiveness is the inner law of productivity, so modern industrial society appears to be rational in details but irrational. *Third*, In a one-dimensional society, all aspects of life are directed to only one goal: improving and maintaining a system that has been running. Humans no longer have other dimensions; even with this one goal, the other dimensions are eliminated (Darmaji, 2013).

The life of modern society is not far from technology and capitalism. Marcuse argues that technology, currently developing rapidly, is a form of control of this capitalist system. There are 4 impacts that the community will feel an impact from this system. *The first* is the emergence of many new forms of control; *the second* is a society that has merciless repressive behavior; *the third* is the closed discourse and criticism of the political system so that it makes the public accept all forms of what is offered, *the fourth* the loss of critical thinking from the public about the system that is not suitable. According to Herbert Marcuse, this kind of thing is considered a society with one dimension.

The power over technology is a concern here, as is information because the discussion focuses on disseminating information through social media. The number and variety of social media platforms that are the same in principle are used to connect or interact, such as Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, Twitter, and other social media. However, with this diverse social media, capitalism is a medium to promote products. When someone shares through social media, there will always be a desire to see who has seen what is shared and see the response through likes and comments given, and this is the reality of the destruction carried out with social media. It is possible that what is shared is not based on the facts that should be; it is done for the sake of engagement and validation from society.

Mercuse's thinking about the advancement of digital technology, one of which forms oversharing behavior, is in line with the concept of Hyperreality offered by Jean Baudrillard. Hyperactivity is a concept that describes a condition in which the boundaries between real reality become blurred (Masut, Wijanarko, & Pandor, 2023). Reality simulations are considered more real than the original facts. In a hyperreal world, images, signs, and symbols will create a more interesting reality than everyday life experiences. One of the realities of hyperactivity is the phenomenon of influencers flexing, one of the examples of how to get public attention (Pakpahan & Yoesgiantoro, 2023). Flexing is carried out by influencers for the sake of smooth product sales. If examined more deeply, it is all a lie far from the original reality.

The community's oversharing behavior aligns with the concept of mediatization offered by Hjarvard. In the concept of Stig Hjarvard, it is explained that the media has become a social institution that depends and dominates modern society. Media is not only a communication channel, but it can influence the way individuals interact, build identities, and understand the world (Hjarvard, 2013). In the concept of mediating that the media is an independent social institution, it is explained that the media has its own rules to reflect reality; in the current context, for example, TikTok has new norms about how individuals pretend to be themselves and interact with others. In mediatization, it is also explained that the media has its logic. This refers to how the media organizes, produces, and distributes a message; for example, there is an algorithm in social media. Algorithms in social media are rules that determine which content will be displayed to generate high engagement, such as likes, comments, and shares. Thus, oversharing behavior can be understood as a response to the demands and logic of the media that encourage individuals to continue sharing information to gain validation and attention in an increasingly competitive digital space.

Digital Well-Being as an Approach to Reduce Oversharing

Oversharing behavior hurts physical health, especially mental. For physical health, excessive use of gadgets can cause eye strain, headaches, and sleep disturbances. Mentally, excessive use of social media can result in anxiety, depression, and feelings of not being enough FoMo (fear of missing out), one of which is the fear of missing out. To overcome this problem, the digital well-being theory put forward by Olij Burr can be one of the solutions to the problem of oversharing. Digital well-being theory focuses on how individuals interact with digital technology, which affects individual well-being. This theory tries to understand the positive and negative impacts of the use of digital technology on the mental, physical, and social health of individuals (Burr, Taddeo, & Floridi, 2020).

Individuals must realize that social media works using algorithms to maximize user engagement. This algorithm measures success based on how highly engaged users are and how much time they spend accessing content. The higher the engagement, the better the platform considers it (Rouse, 2011). This engagement is also an attraction for advertisers, who ultimately aim to generate financial gains. Therefore, individuals need to realize that there are limits that need to be implemented in using social media to reduce negative impacts, such as behavior **oversharing**, which can affect their digital well-being.

Once the individual realizes how the algorithm works, which attracts much attention from the user, the next thing to do is to improve the individual's ability to make decisions (agency and user control). Users need to have control over the use of technology to achieve prosperity. The inflection point of digital well-being is not just about how much time is spent with technology but about how technology is used. If technology is used for productive purposes, the measure is no longer time; it is how social media users know the limits to which social media positively impacts their lives.

So, several strategies can be used to achieve Digital well-being. *First*, do time management. In the context of using social media, it is very possible to set daily limits for using social media. *Second*, realizing how to use social media (mindful use), users must be aware that the use aligns with personal values and goals. *Third*, the technology is designed to support the well-being of users, for example, by providing the option to limit notifications or set rest times. *Fourth*, digital literacy should be increased, and we should understand how it works and what technology's impact on social media is. With the understanding and implementation of digital well-being strategies, it is hoped that individuals can be wiser in using social media and not be trapped in oversharing behavior.

1.3. Conclusion

The development of social media has a significant impact on society, both positive and negative. One of its negative impacts is oversharing. The most dominant reason for oversharing is the desire for engagement on social media, which is ultimately used by platforms to attract advertisers and generate financial viability, better known as monetization. Oversharing reflects the one-dimensional man society proposed by Oelth Herbert Marcuse, where technology and capitalism control human life, reduce critical dimensions, and direct society to a single goal: to maintain the existing system. The Digital Well-being Theory put forward by Burr et al. (2021) offers a solution to reduce the negative impact of oversharing. This theory emphasizes the importance of individual awareness of the use of technology, time management, conscious use of social media (mindful use), and increasing digital literacy. By understanding how social media algorithms work and implementing digital well-being strategies, individuals can use social media more wisely and avoid oversharing behavior.

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