COMMUNICATION ETHICS AS VIRTUAL VIRTUE CONTROL IN MEDIA BEHAVIOR SOCIETY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

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Abstract

This paper delves at communication ethics as a means of controlling virtual piety in public media conduct in the digital age. The objective of this research is to describe, explain, and determine the role of communication ethics in the digital era as a control of virtual piety in public media behavior. The communication ethics notion employed is based on Haryatmoko's viewpoint and is supported by Habermas' theory of communication activities. This study employs qualitative research methods and a descriptive methodology. Observation and documentation were utilized as data collecting methods. The successfully gathered data is then examined, compared, and merged to generate a systematic, coherent, and comprehensive study result. According to the findings of this study, communication ethics is a set of standards, values, or a measure of good behavior in communication activities. In this regard, communication ethics as virtual piety control in public media behavior in this digital era is meant to ensure the attainment of general characteristics of acceptable norms in people's lives. Furthermore, it ensures individual autonomy through emancipatory powers, which leads to the establishment of a common will through logical dialogue. As a conclusion, communication ethics is an attempt to govern the communication process in order to ensure social stability in a pluralistic society in the digital era.

Keywords: *Ethics, Communication, Piety, Virtual, Digital*

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's world is accompanied by fast technological and scientific advancement, including advancements in the social sciences of humanity as well as in media and communication information technology, particularly social media, which reduces the distance between one region and another in spite of the existence of significant cultural differences between them. Because of this, in 2009, social media was changed into a channel of information with great potential in Indonesia (Fahmi, 2013). The significant increase in social media users in Indonesia is applicable to both friendship-based networking applications and information-sharing websites. In this instance, practically every community in Indonesia has access to and uses social media platforms that are already in place. As such, the social media platforms used vary, including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Path, and many more (Nurudin, 2012).

The socialization process that takes place on social media platforms must be conducted with consideration for ethical communication practices. The importance of this is underscored by the fact that all community actions on social media have the potential to negatively effect human life, either directly or indirectly. Communication on social media

platforms must be communicative as well as respectful. As humans, we are unable to remain independent from the socialization process in our day-to-day lives (Nasrullah, 2015). No matter if it's formal communication or non-formal communication, communication has always been the most important activity for humans, from the moment they get up to the moment they go to sleep. People's lives are already being influenced by social media, so they must be able to respond appropriately so that they do not lose sight of their responsibilities in real life. Aside from that, persons must adhere to ethical standards when using social media in order to receive excellent and favorable outcomes, at the very least as a source of entertainment and factual information.

The evolutionary process that occurs in the sphere of technology and internet innovation results in the formation of new media, but also in the emergence of new business models. The deterioration of civility rules in many facets of human life has, however, resulted in cultural upheavals in several elements of human existence, such as communication and contact, which has had a negative impact on society in general. As a consequence, physical or metaphorical violence is linked with polite discourse rather than the other way aroun (Magnis-Suseno, 1984). There are various rules that have been established in society to control the procedure of communicating between human beings without hurting the heart and to uphold ethics as a symbol of respect for the interlocutor. These rules are based on the values produced in society. On the other hand, the manner in which we communicate, the use of words or sentences that are regarded ethical, can occasionally produce something unpleasant and lead to misinterpretations between people (Kismiyati & Wahyudin, 2010; Nurudin, 2012).

Because the world begins to be devoid of bounds, there seems to be no secret that can be kept hidden. Through social media, the general public can learn about upcoming activities, events, and other activities. The virtual world, such as social media, represents a major transformation that has the potential to alter human behavior in the modern era. At the end of the day, reality becomes increasingly virtual, and it is this virtual reality that must be adapted and integrated into present scientific investigations. Because of this, we require some type of management or supervision to ensure that virtual piety and social media behavior are maintained, entertained, and informed.

Several previous studies related to this research include research on the implementation of Islamic communication ethics in netizens' social actions on Twitter social media, which explains that the application of good Islamic communication ethics on social media is expected to prevent negative effects in the use of social media (A. Ihsani, 2020). Following that is research on group communication in virtual communities, which explains that in social media, every individual is involved in a virtual space that forms social network capital and knowledge capital, and trust and security must be maintained by always paying attention to communication ethics (Nurhaliza & Fauziah, 2020). Furthermore, there is research on islamic communication ethics, which indicates that communication activities must be carried out based on ethical ideals adopted in a society, with the goal of establishing communication in a pleasant, kind, and beneficial manner (Susanto, 2016).

Thereby, the purpose of this research is to analyze the use of communication ethics in controlling or controlling virtual piety in social media conduct in the digital era. Further, since they are intertwined, we will discuss some about the different sorts of social media activity that emerge in people's lives. The goal of this research is to identify and describe the

role of communication ethics in social media as a virtual piety control. As a conclusion, it is intended that this scientific paper will provide an in-depth explanation of the role of communication ethics. Once again, as a contribution of ideas in society's scientific treasures for the advancement of associated science.

In addition, it can also serve as a comparison for other scholars or writers working on similar topics, and it can serve as a reminder that ethical communication is critical in curbing the rise of "virtual piety" in modern media consumption. Furthermore, in this digital era, people's media consumption habits are evolving at an astonishing pace.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a descriptive approach and a qualitative research method. As a result, observation and documentation are utilized to acquire data. The collected observations and records are studied, compared, and merged to create a systematic, meaningful, and comprehensive study outcome (Sugiyono, 2013). This study utilized the social media platforms Twitter and Instagram. Twitter was chosen as the social media platform due to its advantage in terms of direct and exclusive contact. Meanwhile, Instagram was chosen to match the emerging community's social media activity, as Instagram is indeed a very popular social media platform in Indonesia. Furthermore, data is gathered from social media accounts that engage with the researcher's and are within the researcher's reach.

The author collected data for the study by observing and documenting related social media accounts, and then processing the data as needed. Consequently, qualitative data analysis is an effort made by working with data, organizing data, sorting data into a manageable, integrated whole, seeking and discovering patterns, determining what is significant and what can be learned. Afterwards, consider whether it can be communicated effectively and easily to others.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Communication Ethics

In social interactions, there is a structure in place that governs how people get along with one another. Politeness is the term used to describe the social procedures that promote mutual respect. When a procedure of association is followed, the interests of the communicator and the communicant are protected, allowing them to feel happy, peaceful, and protected without causing harm to any other party, and the actions taken are in accordance with applicable customs and do not conflict with human rights. Ethic can be analyzed in terms or application of social procedures, standards of behavior, human conventions in society, and the determination of good and negative values (Haryatmoko, 2007).

Ethics is derived from the Latin term ethicus, and in Greek it is referred to as ethicos, which denotes the practice of standards, values, principles, and measures of acceptable and unacceptable human behavior (A. F. A. Ihsani & Febriyanti, 2021). While communication is a sign of intercommunity connection, because it always involves at least two people. Norms or guidelines that function as social control or control are always required in interaction. The objective is to establish an ordered society. One way to achieve an orderly

community is through the existence of ethics, a philosophy that assesses the relative merits and demerits of human actions (Kismiyati & Wahyudin, 2010). Thus, communication ethics is a standard, value, or norm for appropriate behavior in a society's communication activities (Haryatmoko, 2007).

According to Nilsen, in order to achieve communication ethics, it is necessary to pay attention to characteristics such as respect for another person as a person regardless of their age, status, or relationship with the speaker, respect for the speaker's ideas, feelings, intentions, and integrity, agreeableness, objectivity, and openness. Considerations that promote freedom of expression, adherence to evidence, and reasonable analysis of numerous possibilities, and that begin with a thorough listening before expressing agreement or disagreement (Nugroho, 2010). Hence, communication ethics can be seen of as a guideline for acting morally, which is strongly tied to the development of conventions, norms, values, and standards in life (Kismiyati & Wahyudin, 2010).

3.2 Virtual Piety

Humanity has arrived at global exploration today, an adventure in a virtual environment that exists outside of reality (hyper-reality) (Hadi, 2015). According to Baudrillard, hyper-reality is a process that results in the disintegration of the barriers between media and the social world, such that news and entertainment combine and television becomes the world. Television simulates actual life and is not so much a representation of the world as it is an execution of it (Barker, 2006).

According to its etymology, the term pious derives from the Arabic word shalih, which literally translates as "avoiding injury or ugliness." "Good deeds" are acts or deeds that do not cause harm or do not contain elements that cause harm.

Thus, pious individuals are those who avoid harm or harmful things. Obviously, this refers to his behavior and personality, which encompasses his words, attitudes, actions, and even thoughts and feelings. Not only that, according to al-Mu'jam al-Wasith the source of the word pious, shaluha, also implies useful. By combining these two definitions, a pious person is defined as someone whose conduct and personality are preserved from harmful influences while also contributing to the well-being of the surrounding environment. With these characteristics, he transforms into a symbol of hope and a role model for others around him. Piety is classified as a noun in the KBBI; it refers to obedience in doing worship; his sincerity in carrying out his religious teachings is reflected in his attitude toward life. Therefore, piety can be defined as obedience in the performance of worship or sincerity in the performance of religion. Likewise, the KBBI classifies the term virtual as an adjective, which denotes (in practical terms): democracy in the virtual sense. In this example, it is critical to understand the meaning of the term in brackets, because the word 'as' can be equated with 'as if'. So, virtual might be defined as 'virtual' or 'as if' real (Cahyono, 2016).

This is consistent with Werner's assertion that virtual is cyberspace. The term "cyberspace" is derived from the terms cybernetics and space. William Gibson coined the term "cyberspace" when he asserted that it is a globally connected reality supported by computers, computer access, and is multidimensional, artificial, or virtual (Severin et al., 2001).

Based on some of the definitions that have been described above, it can be understood that virtual piety is obedience in carrying out worship or a sincerity in carrying out religion

which is presented in a communication process in a virtual community that is connected globally, and is supported by various media including computers, televisions, and smartphones.

3.3 Social Media

The term "new media" refers to media that use digitization, convergence, interactivity, and the growth of networks in the creation and distribution of messages (Apdillah et al., 2022). The potential of new media to provide this level of engagement enables users to control what information is ingested while also regulating the output of information produced and making the choices desired by users. This capability to provide interactivity is critical to comprehending new media (Flew, 2002). Watie defines social media, alternatively referred to as social networks, as a subset of new media (Watie, 2011).

Social media is a website-based feature that allows people to connect with one another and interact with one another in a community. Using social media, people can engage in a variety of types of communication and collaboration, as well as getting to know one another in written, visual, and audiovisual formats (Herlanti, 2016).

Examples include social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram (Puntoadi, 2011). Likewise, according to Andreas, social media refers to a collection of internet-based apps that are built on ideological and technological foundations and that allow for the creation and exchange of user-generated content (Cahyono, 2016). While this is going on, Meike said that the term "social media" refers to a fusion of two concepts: personal communication in the sense of sharing between individuals (to be shared one-to-one) and public communication in the sense of sharing with anybody without any individual specificity (Setiadi, 2016). To put it simply, social media is an online medium that allows users to interact with one another while also creating, sharing, and consuming content (Herlanti, 2016).

When social media is used properly, it allows for the merging of interpersonal communication with mass communication. When someone uploads something, and the other party answers, there is an interaction, and then there is interpersonal contact between the two parties. Furthermore, when someone uploads something, the content of the upload can be seen and enjoyed by a large number of people, resulting in the creation of widespread public awareness and appreciation. This is due to the fact that mass communication does not necessitate the active participation of all parties (Watie, 2011).

According to Nasrullah (2015), social media has six distinct qualities that set it apart from other forms of media. Firstly, there is the network, which is the backbone that connects computers to other hardware. This link is required because communication, including data transfer, can occur when computers are connected. Second, because social media users construct representations of their identities, produce material, and interact based on information, information becomes an important entity in social media. Furthermore, archives become a character for social media users, explaining that material has been kept and may be viewed at any time and through any device. Moreover, interaction, Social media creates a network of people that must be built by interactions between these users, not only friendships or followers. Fifth, social simulation, social media has the feature of being a virtual medium for society (society). Social media has a distinct personality and pattern that, in many situations, is not found in real life. Lastly, user-generated content (UGC), on social

media, the content is entirely owned and is based on contributions from users or account owners. In a new media culture, UGC is a symbiotic connection that provides possibilities and freedom for people to contribute. This is in contrast to the previous (traditional) media, in which the audience was merely a passive object or target in the spread of messages (Nasrullah, 2015).

Piety has a strong virtual support on social media since it is a place where one can reveal one's own religious identity, such as Islam, which involves a variety of religious rituals. Finally, the images, status updates, profiles, and even the groups that are followed on social media might be understood as an individual Muslim's attempt to reveal his true identity. However, the question arises if each identity constructed represents or demonstrates individual piety in the actual world, or is it limited to identity discourse on social media (Nasrullah, 2015).

3.4 Community Social Media Behavior

Today's advancements in information technology are actually causing a shift in the worldwide community's social values. Social transparency is a condition of the abolition of social categories, social boundaries, and social hierarchies that previously defined a society (Lubis et al., 2022). Following that, the information network becomes transparent and virtual when moral categories and value measures no longer constrain it. Indeed, individuals who are trapped in the virtual world's communication process can become immersed in it and carried away by the existing communication styles, to the point where it is not uncommon for them to would seem to be another figure who is considerably different from the real world in daily life (Piliang, 2004).

The information and communication network activities conducted by people worldwide in the modern day can be classified as large and intensive. Numerous motives and objectives serve as the foundation for people to access information network services, particularly new media. The authors describe the various types of social media behavior of the community in the following section. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of new media has relatively attracted the attention of various parties, including selfies, cyberwar, online shopping, user personalization, and a sharing culture.

To begin, Selfie is a phenomenon that has emerged as a result of the growth of information technology, specifically the emergence of new media and cyber culture, one of which is the selfie or selfie. This term has also been formally recognized as a new word, having been introduced in the 2013 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary. It simply refers to a'self-portrait distributed via social media'. According to Jerry Saltz, a selfie is an instant self-portrait taken with a smartphone camera and quickly disseminated or shared on the internet as a means of instant visual communication about where a person is, what they are doing, what they are thinking, and who they think sees them (Nasrullah, 2015; Setiadi, 2016).

Selfies first debuted and can be observed virtually concurrently with the introduction of camera devices in mobile phones. It's not the case with digital images shot with a DSLR or other sorts of cameras; with a cellular phone, photos taken can be immediately published to social media. As a result of this reality, a user or someone initially wishes to share their moments or activities with their peers via social media networks. The following fact is that self-portraits are displayed on social media as a form of self-expression and an attempt to demonstrate what people have accomplished outside of the network. As a result, self-

portraits cannot be viewed just in terms of face, expression, and style. It must, however, include the atmosphere, time, building, location, and environment that serve as the background for a photograph of oneself (Nasrullah, 2015).

Second, cyberwar, this cyberwar phenomena may be observed in the fanaticism of followers of Jokowi and Prabowo in the 2019 election contestation. At the time, the two factions were in an intense competition with one another to carry each candidate. The aura of euphoria and confusion created by differing perspectives and reports on the figures of Jokowi and Prabowo has become an inevitable hue. The one-of-a-kind manifestation of the behavior of Jokowi and Prabowo support groups manifests itself in large numbers in virtual spaces or resides in the constellation of social media accounts assembled in specific groups of people. Debate versus hoax news appeared to be a menu package that was widespread in social media notification flows, such as those on Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. This is in addition to any fresh information or support status for them.

Smelser highlighted that there are various causes of collective action, including structural variables in social contexts that enable collective activity, such as religious, ethnic, ideological, and racial variety within a given area. Additionally, there are discrepancies and inconsistencies across social, ethnic, and religious groups, which create potential for various forms of strife. The more structural stress there is, the greater the possibility of collective behavior. All of this can occur as a result of a variety of factors, including rumors that are easily believed to be true and then spread, factors that contribute to the community's suspicion and anxiety, and then the manifestation of collective behavior directed by leaders, either to flee dangerous situations or approach people considered targets of action (Krahé et al., 2005).

Thirdly, online shopping; the Indonesian people's purchasing habits are constantly evolving, most notably the shift toward electronic shopping via various media. This begins with the attractiveness of advertising banners, video lessons, discounts, joint account payments, and the payment system used once the goods are acquired (cash on delivery). The company's success in marketing its items via e-commerce is followed by the irony of hiding truth in the eye of the public. Tokopedia, Lazada, Olx, Bukalapak, Shopee, and Jd.id are just a few of the major online shopping sites in Indonesia today (Mursito, 2006).

Consumers' satisfaction with online shopping will be extremely high if they are satisfied with the quality of services provided by the online sales system on associated websites. Customer pleasure when shopping online and customer satisfaction following a transaction are signs of how an online store site might retain clients by raising interest in buying on similar sites in the future (Irmawati, 2011).

Fourthly, personalize the user. The growing use of social media has resulted in a number of fascinating phenomena, such as the emergence of user accounts who purposefully upload a profile photo that is not their own, or that operate without a profile photo or a clear identification. Along with user accounts that lack a clear identity, the irony in social media users' behavior is reflected in their attempts to reconstruct identity through status updates or the distribution of links to specific pages that serve only to explain who and how or, on the contrary, do not represent users' identities at all (Nasrullah, 2015).

Consequently, in the minds of social media users, awareness of anything genuine is gradually being eroded and replaced by virtual reality. This state is exacerbated by the media's constant presentation of imagination, to the point where individuals appear to be

caught between reality and fantasy, since the media's indications appear to be separated from reality. In some ways, social media has evolved into a realm unto itself. But instead, in truth, what is contained within is far more genuine and authentic.

Fifth, there is a sharing culture. There are numerous webpages or blogs today that are unclear. The management is not afraid to use aggressive language like "spread it out" or other bombastic phrases. "Share to others, share, or save" is a common message. In the past, it was sometimes accompanied by threats such as chain letters. If the news is not spread, the populace is cursed to experience tragedy, disaster, and grief. During this political year, the phenomena of sharing culture is becoming more extreme. Several well-known personalities who favor specific presidential candidates, whether purposefully or unintentionally, twist the news, remark on, and ultimately knock down their political opponents. The patterns of hoax reporting are likewise relatively consistent, with grandiose titles designed to pique readers' curiosity. Sometimes the title and content of the news are completely out of sync. Unfortunately, many people in this country who consume media are too lazy to read. They are readily swayed by enticing names and will distribute links to specific pages without previously reviewing them.

Hence, various manifestations of public media behavior mentioned above are inextricably linked to communication ethics and virtual piety. For instance, when taking selfies, users might adhere to prevalent values and standards to avoid sharing selfies that are detrimental to the communication partner. Additionally, the presence of cyberwar demonstrates unequivocally that no virtual piety has been formed. In some ways, communication ethics has been disregarded in this instance. Following that, in online shopping behavior, communication ethics can be utilized to regulate the transaction process in such a way that no party feels tricked or hurt, so fostering virtual piety. While users' self-personalization behaviors vary, numerous anonymous accounts or accounts with uncertain identities are discovered on social media, posing a number of concerns and undermining the ethical standards of acceptable communication on social media. Meanwhile, the sharing culture necessitates the practice of sound communication ethics, ensuring that social media users do not carelessly transmit anything that is harmful or unpleasant to the public, implying that virtual piety does not exist.

3.5 Communication Ethics As Virtual Error Control In The Digital Age

According to the author's observations, communication on social media platforms is frequently conducted in non-standard language. One reason for this is that in the virtual world, it is frequently unclear who the communication partner is and his position, despite the fact that many individuals have interacted and met in the real world and contact continues in the virtual world. Social media language is not an established language for scientific writing, such as articles, papers, journals, theses, and theses. According to Enhanced Spelling, there is little to no use of social media in writing status. Indeed, proper writing styles are critical because they pertain to the ethics of engaging with other social media users.

Social media seems to be a place to spill stories and all forms of activity, emotional outbursts in the form of writing or photos that often override existing ethics. Social media is no longer a medium for sharing information, but only sharing sensations. If technological advances are not accompanied by advances in thinking, then what is technological progress is the opposite in terms of mindset. In social life in society, the term ethics is often associated

with one's morality. Someone who does not have good ethics is often called immoral because the actions or words taken are not through good or bad considerations. Because it involves consideration of good values that must be done and bad values that must be avoided (Nurhaliza & Fauziah, 2020).

One example of communication ethics in action is polite communication, which, among other things, demonstrates its importance. This is a reflection of the politeness of one's own unique personality. Communicating with others, identifying oneself, and working together is like the lifeblood of life; it is a manifestation of one's personality or character and allows people to interact with one another, identify themselves, and work together. In communicating, communication ethics is not only concerned with good speech, but it must also be distinguished from real intentions, which are represented in the form of calmness, patience, and individual empathy in the process. Due to the nature of this style of communication, it will result in two-way conversation characterized by reciprocal appreciation, attention, and support from the parties who are communicating.

While ethical communication is critical for policing virtual piety, it is also critical for transmitting ambitions. In the daily living of communicating ambitions, there are still a lot of concerns concerning impolite communication conduct. Communication ethics is frequently relegated to the margins, owing to the fact that it has not been established as the lifeblood of society and the state. In social media, proper communication ethics prohibit the use of harsh, provocative, pornographic, or tribe, religious, race, or interfaith words. Additionally, avoid posting articles or fake statuses, avoid from copying and pasting articles or photos that are protected by copyright, and provide meaningful comments (Mursito, 2006)

Communication ethics as a means of policing virtual piety is a necessary condition of communication that will later ensure the attainment of the general characteristics of acceptable norms, as well as individual autonomy through emancipatory abilities, in order to facilitate the formation of a common will through rational conversation. Moreover, according to Habermas, communication ethics is an attempt that can be utilized to translate the idea of communicative activity in order to sustain and create social stability in a pluralistic society (Fuchs, 2016). In some ways, the reality of a pluralistic society cannot be reduced to an assertion of certain values or moral standards.

Virtual communities that have different value orientations cannot bridge their desires and interests in social media, except by taking communication actions. A communicative society that prioritizes ethics is expected to be able to overcome various conflicts and behavioral problems using social media. When a communicative society is able to think maturely and rationally, piety in the virtual world will gradually manifest. The way to realize this virtual piety is to communicate ethical discourse to the virtual world, both through official and unofficial media that the public has deliberately created as a response to what is happening in the virtual world (Watie, 2011).

4. CONCLUSION

In this case, communication ethics might be simply defined as a system of standards, values, or measures of acceptable behavior in a society's communication activities. Respect for another person as a human, regardless of their age, status, or relationship with the speaker, can be gained through communication ethics. Respect for others' views, feelings,

intentions, and integrity, as well as agreeableness, objectivity, and open-mindedness, all of which promote freedom of expression. Additionally, respect for evidence and rational analysis of other possibilities, as well as extreme caution when expressing agreement or disagreement. Following that, virtual piety can be simply defined as obedience in doing worship or a sincerity in performing religion that is shown in cyberspace that is globally connected and promoted by many media. Nevertheless, public media behavior can be summarized as follows: selfies, cyberwar, online shopping, user personalization, and sharing culture.

The ethics of communication as a means of regulating virtual piety is a condition of communication that is expected to ensure the attainment of the general characteristics of acceptable norms, as well as individual autonomy through emancipatory abilities, in order to facilitate the formation of a common will through rational conversation. Thus, communication ethics is a translation attempt of the theory of communicative action in order to sustain and create social stability in a pluralistic society. Consequently, communication ethics must be implemented in order to regulate community media activities or behavior in the digital era, in order to foster virtual piety. Especially, a condition in which social media users can practice or allow religious ideals to be turned into a virtual space for the purpose of fostering virtual society harmony and order.

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