Chapter 15

Voyeurism in Social Networks and Changing the Perception of Privacy on the Example of Instagram

Serpil Kır

Hatay Mustafa Kemal University, Turkey

ABSTRACT

With the development of communication technologies and changing perceptions of privacy in Turkey, it has emerged to problematize as concept voyeurism. The basic element that framed the intimate place over the body is the place. In social networks, the reset function of the place transforms the private body into a public domain for consumption. The notion of voyeurism, which means watching, is also related to place as of origin. The pleasure of peeping the place belonging to others is also related to the pleasure of penetrating the boundaries of place. Social networks threaten privacy/space as a voyeur environment in the context of establishing this system of pleasure. In the context of social networks, place, and body, a conceptual framework will be discussed, as well as privacy and voyeurism. Also, the selected social network activities will be examined by Instagram's photo and video sharing content analysis method.

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INTRODUCTION

With the rapid incorporation of computer and telecommunication networks into daily life, especially after the 1990s, it became impossible for individuals to remain indifferent to technology and developments in the world. With the constantly upgraded technology, especially the digital environment transformed into a point where all needs of an individual are met through an endless information acquisition, unlimited shopping, and unlimited socialization. The Internet and social media are constantly updated to meet the needs of the individual and in return expects the user to put something forward. The user responds to this expectation of social media with or without awareness.

Surrounded with all the opportunities offered by the internet in everywhere, the individual is in an activity race in many ways from socializing to shopping in order to always be present and popular on social media. In a time where curiosity is included to this activity race, the content of the privacy concept changes.

The sense of unlimited freedom in social media that stimulated the feeling I can do anything - especially in Instagram – poses a threat to that privacy. Instagram, which is a social media as a photo sharing platform, gives users the freedom to look at the photos of members. In addition to the introductory, educative, and longing feelings photos, the platform also host photos that require a certain age limit. Some photographs, which are accepted as weird, sin or shame in daily practice are considered normal in this virtual space.

In a study that will be conducted through Instagram where exhibitionism and voyeurism are legal and there is no diagnosis of psycho-pathological cases in unlimited conduction, the approaches to privacy should be reviewed and perhaps redefined. Because, the perception of privacy in social media and the perception of privacy shaped by real-life value judgments are no longer the same. In this study, the problem of privacy that has emerged on the axis of Instagram has been changed with shared photographs and live broadcasts and the extent to which the concept of voyeurism has started to be regarded as routine.

CONCEPT OF THE PRIVACY AND ITS LIMITATIONS

It is very difficult to make a concrete definition and to determine the limits of privacy, which is one of the most important defense mechanisms established by the individual against his/her environment. One of the important reasons for this difficulty is that the concept of privacy has a variable characteristic from individual to individual, from culture to culture and from year to year. Within these variables, the individual exists with the personal perception of privacy and uses this privacy as a kind of defense armor in many environments from social life to work, from family life to friendship circles and even to the virtual world that the individual has set up in the computer environment.

Attempting to explain the phenomenon of privacy, which shows variations in space and time by definition, there emerges another common point that literature emphasizes: the habitat (space) of the person. Because privacy is related to habitats. These habitats are open to others. For example, common life is the area known to many relatives. The private life is a hidden area where privacy and confidentiality are defined. “The private space/life consists of the views of life kept to oneself and includes knowledge desired to be enclosed from the others” (Yüksel, 2003, p. 189).
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