

Consumptive Behavior of Students: Analysis of Herbert Marcuse's Perspective

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ABSTRACT

Human life in the post-modern era is characterized by very varied needs and has penetrated all levels of society, including students. In practice, students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Universitas Negeri Makassar tend to act excessively and prioritize desires over needs, for certain reasons. This must be addressed as soon as possible because students are a key element in the movement to stop the pressure from capitalist activities that have developed, not to become supporters in inheriting and expanding the capitalist system. Therefore, this research aims to determine the consumer behavior of students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Makassar State University. This type of research is qualitative descriptive research using Herbert Marcuse's theoretical approach. Data collection techniques, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Researchers used source triangulation to ensure the validity of the data, where the data collected in this research was analyzed using theories related to the object of research, namely the consumer behavior of students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Makassar State University. The results of this research show that students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law at UNM tend to prioritize secondary needs solely to achieve inner satisfaction. In essence, a new form of control has been integrated within students, accompanied by various forms of repression. Apart from that, by using Herbert Marcuse's theory the author also found that students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law at UNM in the era known as Gen-Z have been influenced by the urge to fulfill their needs even by ignoring other aspects of their lives, including lectures.

Keywords: Herbert Marcuse, student, consumer behavior

INTRODUCTION

Behavior includes any form of observable or measurable action, response, or interaction of an individual, group, or organism (Hanson et al., 2015; Ma et al., 2020; Wang & Zhang, 2021). These are manifestations of physical activity, emotional responses, and cognitive activity that can be identified by observers or researchers. Behavior consists of interactions between various interconnected factors. Behavior, when viewed from a biological perspective, reflects the result of the complexity of interactions between biological and environmental factors, (Arhas et al., 2022; Rahmat, 2021). These biological factors involve the structure and function of an individual's nervous system, hormones, and genetics. Hormones also have a significant impact on behavioral regulation, influencing mood, motivation, and response to stress. Additionally, genetic factors can contribute to certain behavioral tendencies, creating a basic framework that influences how individuals respond to their surrounding environment. Therefore, the nature of human behavior reflects the complexity and diversity of individual responses to the environment and life experiences. Human behavior is the result of interactions between various factors, including biological, psychological, social, and environmental factors. It includes various types of actions, emotional reactions, and cognitive processes that shape the way individuals interact with the world around them. So from the explanation above, it can be concluded that human behavior is all forms of human activity and activity itself.

As time goes by, humans tend to imitate certain things, as a manifestation of the process of forming their identity in the social environment, (Mesra, 2023; Nasdian, 2015; Salkind, 2019). Copying, for example: people can imitate the lifestyle, eating habits, or fitness routines of people who are considered role models

or have a desirable lifestyle. This description indicates that interaction or communication has an important role in forming human identity, both as individuals and as part of social creatures.

This also applies to students at the Faculty of Social Sciences, Makassar State University. Student refers to students who are at the tertiary level. In the definition of the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), students are defined as students who are undergoing a learning process at a higher education institution. Students are considered to have a high level of intelligence, showing intelligence in thinking and the ability to plan actions. The ability to think critically and make decisions quickly and accurately is considered to be a trait that is generally possessed by every student, and these traits are considered to complement each other. However, the current reality is that there may be many forms of student behavior in the classroom, with some being relatively passive, some getting the nickname GEN-Z, and more and more being involved in recreational activities to create content or get an intragenic impression. Meanwhile, the phenomenon of "hanging out" is also increasingly popular, where these places are often advertised with food stall promotions.

The lifestyle that is currently developing among students, as described in the previous paragraph, is generally approved and considered something normal. This kind of lifestyle has been structured and organized by the capitalist system. Observing visible symptoms of existing reality, where a student should have the aim of seeking knowledge through academic activities such as attending seminars, scientific discussions, and reading lots of literature, which functions to enrich knowledge. However, a student's lecture orientation seems to have changed, so the author is interested in exploring the consumer behavior that appears among students, especially FIS-H students at Makassar State University.

One of the philosophers who deeply explored the consumer lifestyle was Herbert Marcuse, a modern philosopher who through his concept of "one-dimensional man" tried to provide a point of view on this issue. Marcuse is of the view that consumer behavior is an urge to fulfill needs that are false, (Saumantri, 2022). The abundant products resulting from technological advances continue to be offered to people in advanced industrial countries. In advanced industrial communities, the rapid development of transportation and communication facilities, entertainment facilities, and industry is becoming increasingly significant. Increased information and an abundance of commodities such as clothing and food have created innovative lifestyle perspectives. This lifestyle continuously supports needs caused by technological developments without considering whether these needs are truly essential or not. This reflects a lifestyle driven by excessive consumption patterns.

METHOD

This type of research is qualitative descriptive research, (Sugiyono, 2015) using Herbert Marcuse's theoretical approach. Data collection techniques in this research, namely observation, interviews, and documentation, (Sugiyono, 2015). The data analysis used in this research uses source triangulation to ensure the validity of the data, where the data collected in this research is compared with theories related to the research object, (Miles & Huberman, 1994), namely the consumer behavior of students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Makassar State University.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

According to (Waluya, 2007) that every community group has needs. This includes students from the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Makassar State University, which can be divided into three types of needs, namely: 1) primary needs; 2) need; secondary; and 3) tertiary needs. However, currently, the boundaries between these three types of needs are increasingly unclear. In general, student needs involve paying a single tuition fee (UKT) and supporting needs, such as shoes, stationery, and so on. However, needs

that should be more basic have developed, to include activities such as watching cinema, traveling to various destinations, and other things.

Herbert Marcuse stated that in a one-dimensional society, there are several characteristics, including the erasure of history. In a historical context, the human mind takes two different stances. On the one hand, there is a dialectical continuation in thinking to recognize, understand, and analyze facts, data, and events. This continuity refers to the authentic and transcendent capacity of the mind. On the other hand, there is a rupture in history when the mind is integrated with the body. In this unity, the mind is bound by space and time, so that its activities are bound by the laws of before and after, here and there, now and next. Critical awareness is a historical understanding that occurs when we view and evaluate social reality, so, naturally, it raises questions about the continuity of existing power. The authorities' concerns arise from the impact that arises when understanding history through critical awareness is expressed in the language of science.

Furthermore, there is a reconstruction of language carried out by capitalist groups, causing dysfunctionality by creating a new language or single meaning that opposes resistance. This involves the creation of comfort in socio-economic aspects by capitalist groups to control the consciousness of life, ensuring that control and its series of repression remain entrenched in human life, (Setiawan, 2019). For example, the phenomenon of gadget addiction among students reflects that almost no students do not have a smartphone, some of whom even have smartphones with the latest technology which is intensively promoted by the world of advertising, creating dependence on gadgets. Although technological advances make human physical work easier, they also present new challenges related to meeting various comfort needs, especially among students.

Human life in the post-modern era is characterized by needs that are very varied and permeate all segments of society, (Barry, 2020; Sarup, 1993; Suyanto et al., 2023), including students. Initially, students need a source of funds to pay single tuition fees and obtain equipment such as stationery, bags, shoes, and supporting electronic devices, but the reality does not always match these claims. In practice, students tend to act excessively and prioritize desires over needs, for certain reasons.

Explicitly, an increasingly common phenomenon, especially among students at the Faculty of Social Sciences, UNM, is the application of brands that are attached to themselves and have become part of their lifestyle patterns. FIS-H students follow the brand loyalty phenomenon and consciously or unconsciously engage in consumer actions. To fulfill their secondary needs, there are also other habits, namely the tendency to shop online at online stores which are currently popular. As a result, there has been rapid growth in various online stores that offer a variety of attractive promotions, including providing all kinds of necessities, especially those that may be difficult to find in conventional shopping places, as well as relatively cheaper prices, and so on. The author states that attachment to brands is common in social interactions, making it difficult to resist the urge to fulfill false needs, even to oneself, for various reasons.

The influence of the consumptive behavior of students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, UNM, whether they realize it or not, also influences students' tendencies in carrying out lecture activities. However, it appears that a consumerist attitude seems to have been embedded in some students' mindsets before they were officially involved in higher education. Student consumer behavior has a significant impact on lectures at the Faculty of Social Sciences, UNM. In this context, technology results in students' tendency to be consumptive, in that their lifestyle influences their focus and participation in academic activities. Students who are involved in purchasing goods that do not meet their basic needs or focus too much on a particular lifestyle experience problems in distinguishing between consumer activities and the demands of college. In addition, the drive to fulfill consumer desires has an impact on their priorities in achieving academic achievement because students have been trapped in false needs by capitalists.

Limited resources owned by a person result in the person not being able to fulfill what he wants. In terms of economic concepts, distinguish between needs and wants. Needs are usually based on the fact that a person has the ability to fulfill them, whereas desires are usually not based on the ability to fulfill them. The fundamental concept of economics becomes very important for society to manage limited resources in order to be used efficiently. This will affect human consumption behavior in meeting their needs. Human behavior requires management ability to achieve a certain goal efficiently and effectively (Arhas et al., 2022;

Darwis et al., 2023; Niswaty, 2014). Everyone has their own needs. These needs are trying to be met in different ways

The tendency of consumptive behavior is also influenced by other internal factors. One of the internal factors is lifestyle. Often people buy things like shoes because of the invitation of group mates or alleys. Their appearance must always be stylish so as not to be different from their gang mates. When life is influenced by the surrounding environment, a person will follow the lifestyle in his group to look the same and not different (Haryono, 2020; Priananda & Harwanti, 2020; Zahra & Anoraga, 2021). Lifestyle shows how people live, spend money, and how to allocate time. So, it can be concluded that lifestyle is a person's pattern expressed in activities, interests and habits in spending money and how to allocate time.

CONCLUSION

Students, who essentially play a role as knowledge gainers in the academic world and as agents of change, are now involved in the gap between imagination and reason. The increasingly advanced dimensions of capitalism seem to have penetrated the intellectual soul which should be an important pillar in the resistance to capitalism. Meanwhile, the application of forms of consumer behavior from Herbert Marcuse's theory is that students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law at UNM tend to prioritize secondary needs solely to achieve inner satisfaction. This can be seen from the students' orientation, even though in reality they are objectively able to fulfill all these desires. In essence, a new form of control has been integrated within students, accompanied by various forms of repression. Apart from that, by using Herbert Marcuse's theory the author also found that students at the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law at UNM in the era known as Gen-z have been influenced by the urge to fulfill their needs, even though they ignore other aspects of their lives, including lectures. Following the technological rationality proposed by Herbert Marcuse, it is considered beneficial as long as the technology continues to function well, increases production, and the like. However, research findings show that technological rationality has not only had an impact on the economic sector but has also seeped into the education sector.

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