

Recognition and Virtualization in Frankfurt School

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Abstract

Objectives: This research examines the concept of recognition according to the Frankfurt School of philosophy, focusing on first-generation thinkers like Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, and Herbert Marcuse. It explores the origins, significance, and development of the concept, linking it to postmodern philosophy and comparative studies with the Frankfurt School. The analysis also includes Jürgen Habermas and Axel Honneth's views on recognition in the virtual world.

Method: The paper follows an analytical approach by examining Habermas and Honneth's perspectives on recognition in the virtual realm, using secondary data and literature reviews.

Results: The study highlights the importance of recognition in virtual spaces, demonstrating that these environments enable participation and expression, expanding the scope of recognition within virtual interactions. The virtual world offers individuals greater opportunities for self-expression and identity formation.

Conclusions: The study emphasizes the role of society as a broad communicative environment, in line with Frankfurt School philosophers. It also underscores that the virtual space functions as a human environment that empowers individuals, enhancing their participation. Using technology for decision-making and expression broadens the application of recognition to include the virtual realm.

Keywords: Recognition; critical theory; sphere; virtualization; communication; Frankfurt school

الاعتراف والافتراضية في مدرسة فرانكفورت

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ملخص

الأهداف: يتناول هذا البحث مفهوم الاعتراف تبعاً للمدرسة الفلسفية المعروفة باسم مدرسة فرانكفورت، وتحديدًا الجيل الأول من فلاسفة هذه المدرسة مثل: ماكس هوركهايمر، وتيودور أدورنو، وهيربرت ماركوز، من خلال استكشاف أصول المفهوم وأهميته وتطوره، بواسطة فلسفة ما بعد الحداثة، وربطه بالدراسات المقارنة مع مدرسة فرانكفورت. ويشمل التحليل وجهة نظر يورجن هابرماس، وأكسل هونيث حول الاعتراف في العالم الافتراضي.

المنهجية: تتبع الورقة البحثية المنهج التحليلي من خلال تحليل وجهة نظر هابرماس، ووجهة نظر هونيث حول الاعتراف في العالم الافتراضي باستخدام البيانات الثانوية والمراجعات الأدبية.

النتائج: ناقشت الدراسة أهمية الاعتراف في مجال الفضاء الافتراضي، وبينت أن هذا المجال يمكن المشاركة والتعبير. ويوسع نطاق الاعتراف داخل التفاعلات الافتراضية. كما توصلت الدراسة إلى أن العالم الافتراضي يوفر فرصًا أكبر للتعبير عن الذات، وتحقيق الأهداف للأفراد، وتمكينهم من تشكيل هويتهم.

الخلاصة: خلصت الدراسة إلى ضرورة التأكيد على دور المجتمع كبيئة واسعة للتواصل بين الأشخاص تبعاً لفلاسفة مدرسة فرانكفورت، والتأكيد على أن الفضاء الافتراضي يعمل كبيئة إنسانية يمكن الأفراد من المشاركة، ويعزز من فاعليتهم. كما أن الاستفادة من الوسائل التكنولوجية للمشاركة في عمليات صنع القرار والتعبير عن الآراء يوسع من دائرة توظيف مفهوم الاعتراف؛ ليشمل عالم التفاعل الافتراضي.

الكلمات المفتاحية: الاعتراف، النظرية النقدية، المجال، الفضاء الافتراضي، التواصل، مدرسة فرانكفورت



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1. Introduction

The Frankfurt School is a philosophical and social movement that originated at the Institute for Social Research (Institut für Sozialforschung) at Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany, established in 1923 to advance Marxist studies in Germany (Slater, 1977). It profoundly influenced academic discourse by critiquing modernity, capitalism, alienation, and reification, while offering a distinct interpretation of Marxist economic and political theories (Corradetti, 2023).

Considering that the critical theories of Frankfurt School philosophers like Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno address modern societal issues, it is crucial to examine how these theories apply to our technology-driven world, especially concerning the concept of recognition. Why recognition specifically? Because it is considered one of the philosophical issues addressed by the first generation of the Frankfurt School, namely Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, whose critical theory dealt with the concept of recognition implicitly, explicitly, and directly because it is generally linked to a social nature that emphasizes relationships between people within the limits of acceptance and confirmation of identity. Therefore, it is embedded within a social and political reality that is controlled so that it does not result in any exclusion, rejection, or conflict. Hence, ultimately, the concept of recognition captures the nature of a relationship based on the acceptance of others regardless of their differences.

1.1 Research Objectives of the Study:

The purpose of this study is to explore and investigate the current literature review in order to answer the following questions:

Research Question1: How did the concept of recognition originate and which philosophers in the Frankfurt School were its main proponents?

Research Objective 1: to identify the concept of recognition originate and which philosophers in the Frankfurt School were its main proponents

Research Question2: According to Frankfurt School philosophers, how should the concept of recognition be applied today, especially in the virtual world?

Research Objective 2: To examine how the concept of recognition be applied today especially in the virtual world.

Research Question3: How is the concept of recognition applied today, especially the virtual world?

Research Objective3: To investigate whether recognition contributes to the promotion of human rights and equality, and whether it can enhance social cohesion in multicultural societies.

To provide a comprehensive understanding of the topics and answer the main questions to achieve the knowledge objectives of this research, a critical analysis method will be used. where an extensive literature review was conducted on the concept of recognition within the frameworks of modern and post-modern philosophy. Due to the philosophical nature of the study, a detailed analysis of the source material was essential to gain an in-depth understanding of the concept of recognition. Furthermore, critical analysis was employed to identify differences and similarities, as well as to explore the relationships and interactions among the various aspects of the research.

1.2 Study Problems, and Methodology

The previous section outlined the study's research objectives. This section will address the research problems, questions, and methodology. Philosophers Axel Honneth (1949) and Jürgen Habermas (1929) explored the concept of recognition, emphasizing its role in human relationships and its future-oriented nature (Jansson, 2015). Recognition is vital for individuals to develop autonomy, which relies on positive attention from others to foster social integration and self-worth. Given the use of secondary data in this research, it is essential to consider the pros and cons of secondary versus primary data.

Several studies (Burns, 2008; Greener, 2008; Lê & Schmid, 2022) explain that primary data is collected firsthand by the researcher to address a specific problem, while secondary data is pre-existing information gathered by others. Primary data collection takes time, whereas secondary data can be obtained quickly, though it requires proper analysis to meet the study's needs. Sources of secondary data include government reviews, research studies, and censuses (Bell et al., 2022).

This study primarily used secondary data from books, peer-reviewed journals, and the works of Axel Honneth and Jürgen Habermas, which were crucial for the research. The data collection for this study involved an extensive review of books and journals, along with a search for Axel Honneth's interviews available on YouTube and conference papers related to recognition. Keywords such as "recognition," "critical theory," "sphere," "virtualization" and "communication" were used to systematically gather relevant papers. The chosen data Collection technique was informed by the research questions. The PRISMA approach was utilized to present the findings, with a focus on categorizing studies for the clear identification of key themes and patterns. Figure 1 lists the studies obtained from databases and registers:

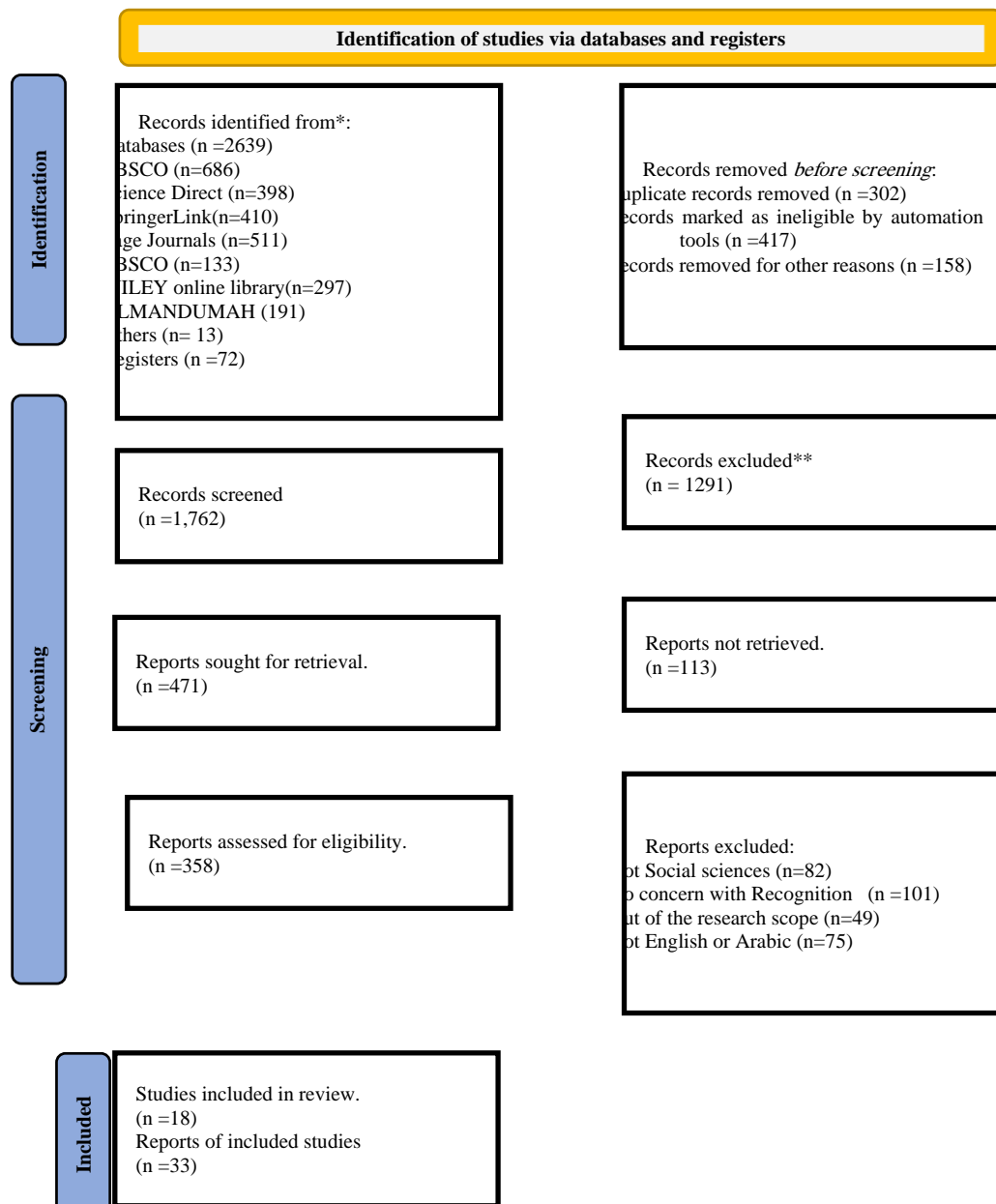


Figure 1: Studies identified via databases and registers.

(Adapted from *The PRISMA 2020 statement: an updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews*, Page et al., 2021).

The concept of recognition according to Axel Honneth and Habermas (1980s), philosophers from the Frankfurt School, was explored. These philosophers were selected due to their direct interest in the theory of recognition. Table 1 shows the most important interests of the philosophers of this school and the issues they addressed particularly in regard to the concept of recognition and indicates the most important philosophical trends that are aligned with the aims of the current research.

This section examines the works of philosophers intrigued by the notion of recognition and traces its origins. Here, it becomes evident that Axel Honneth and Habermas engage with the concept of recognition more extensively than did the first generation of Frankfurt School philosophers, drawing significantly upon the discourses of Hegel and Marx.

Table 1: Philosophers associated with the Frankfurt School, and their specific focus of interest (Note: [✓] It represents the consensus among Frankfurt philosophers regarding various concepts of recognition)

Philosopher	Reference	The concept of recognition of the Frankfurt School	Marxism: (Marxism as roots of Recognition Theory)	Idealism: (Consciousness searches for itself)	Re-analysis of recognition	Recognition: Public sphere	Recognition in virtual space
Max Horkheimer 1895-1973	(Held, 1980), (Adorno & Horkheimer, 1972), (Landmann, 2011)	✓					
Theodor W. Adorno 1903-1969	(Landmann, 2011), (Dahms, 2011).	✓					
Herbert Marcuse 1898-1979	(Gordon et al., 2019); (Pyati, 2006).	✓					
Karl Marx	(Chitty, 2013)		✓				
Jürgen Habermas 1929	(Held, 1980)	✓				✓	✓
Axel Honneth 1949	(Honneth, 2014)	✓			✓		✓
George Hegel 1770-1831	(Hegel, 2010)			✓			

Several studies, such as Frazer's (1999), proposed that the concept of the self is achieved following a process that involves purposeful communication with conflicting selves. with conflicting selves in order to achieve recognition. According to Hegel (1770), recognition is linked to the ego establishing itself through a communicative unity of conflicting selves.

The theory of recognition is not new: it has evolved throughout history, beginning with the Greek philosophers in the sixth century BC, and leading to a diversity of philosophical research on the concept and the discovery of its social and ethical impact (Am Busch & Zurn, 2010). The theory of recognition journey delved into the depths of classical Greek wisdom, traversing the concept of friendship, rekindled during the Renaissance, onward through the Enlightenment era, paving the way for the Sentiments Theory, culminating in the pinnacle of Rousseau's insights into the essence of genuine human nature (Am Busch & Zurn, 2010).

To the aim of this paper is to explore the emergence and maturity of the concept of recognition in the Frankfurt School.

indicates the importance of research in examining the concept of awareness, and the roots of recognition and its evolution throughout history. Philosopher Honneth offers a new understanding of the concept by incorporating master-slave conflict into his theory of recognition, using conflict relationships as the basis for defining ethical concepts such as law and solidarity.

The modern concept of recognition can be traced back to the first generation of Frankfurt School philosophers and was re defined by both Habermas (1929) and Honneth (1949). The communication philosopher (Habermas 1929) had a significant influence on (Honneth, 1949) towards adopting the concept of recognition while emphasizing public space as one of the keys to understanding the virtual world in which aim to employ this concept. Revealing the manifestations of the concept of recognition in the digital world, which opens horizons for questioning ethical values in this evolving digital context.

Jütten (2018) investigated the genesis of recognition, tracing its origins back to its inception within the first generation of the Frankfurt School. Subsequently, it becomes evident that the theory of recognition underwent a paradigmatic shift within Frankfurt School critical theory. Furthermore, this theory equips critical theorists with the tools to critique societal advancements that neglect to establish recognition-based relationships conducive to individual self-actualization (Jütten, 2018).

2. The concept of recognition of the Frankfurt School

Although the theory of recognition has clearly been present throughout the history of philosophy, it was the Frankfurt School that applied critical theory, which links theory and practice. The current views held by philosophers of the Frankfurt School on the concept of recognition are explained below.

Bomunere (2010) points out that Max Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno introduced the concept of recognition, which they discussed in their critique of the objectification of the mind. This critique explained the interactive and tense nature of the relationship between humans and their own selves. By emphasizing the impact on the mind of this one-sided perspective, namely its relentless pursuit of control over everything, including humanity itself, Horkheimer and Adorno shed light on the complexities inherent in human relationships.

Slater (1977, pp 94-118) indicates that “in this type of relationship, no kind of recognition can occur; otherwise, it would be artificial and selected recognition to serve the interests of only instrumental society, which languishes under the shadow of economic and political institutions and their ideological tools that devote interest and dominance to lead to the dictatorship of production”.

Certainly, in an instrumental society, genuine recognition is unattainable in its affirmative connotation, as the fundamental dynamic therein is that of master and slave. Consequently, conflict becomes the prevailing force in human relationships, exerting control and molding them into utilitarian forms. This perpetuates a cycle of alienation, disconnecting the subject from the self and the self from the object (Bomunere, 2010).

Al-Messiri (2003) suggests that recognition will be attained in technologically advanced societies, albeit under conditions that prioritize human happiness in line with the principles of the Age of Enlightenment characterized by progress, happiness, and freedom (Al-Messiri, 2003).

This departure from the norms of modernity is intended to safeguard human freedom against both overt and covert forms of oppression, whether conscious or unconscious. This oppression is intricately intertwined with the mechanisms of mass production, as well as various administrative, bureaucratic, consumer, and media institutions that seek to mold individuals according to their requirements within an instrumental society.

Marcuse (1898), cited in Piran 1977, in regard to the concept of recognition, makes an elucidating and striking observation: Social relations within instrumental societies have devolved into a simplistic, one-dimensional paradigm focused on consumption. Consequently, the power and dominance wielded by instrumental rationality have reached unprecedented levels (Piran, 1977). This dominance not only intrudes upon human instincts and desires, but also succumbs to the influence of propaganda and media, immersing individuals in a relentless consumer-centric dimension (Walsh, 2008).

This pervasive influence has exacerbated individuals' sense of alienation, severing the bonds that connect them within society. The once harmonious relationships have metamorphosed into conflicts, stripping individuals of their freedom and autonomy (Van der Post & BA, 2017). This transformation impedes the creation of an environment conducive to mutual recognition. In these instrumental societies, individuals navigate their lives within the rigid framework of production, distribution, and both material and intellectual consumption (Delanty & Harris, 2021). Their daily existence is based on the dual pillars of work and entertainment. These elements form the bedrock of social and intellectual life, seamlessly interwoven into a distinct historical tapestry dominated by the overarching influence of instrumental rationality¹ (Young, 2006).

Thus, Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) argue that true recognition arises within a rational society that opposes alienation and reification. Should Western civilization persist in these patterns, it will perpetuate individual alienation and oppression, hindering the attainment of freedom and human fulfillment. This necessitates a restoration of human relations to their authentic state, countering consumerism and the dehumanizing stereotyping used for control.

It is imperative for researchers to explore the foundational aspects as developed by key figures of the first generation, particularly considering the impact of philosophers like Marx (1818-1883) and Hegel (1770-1831). The research focus should be on discerning how their influence potentially fosters a renewed empowerment of the theory, thereby altering and evolving social relationships. Furthermore, an in-depth analysis of Hegel's influence is crucial, examining how his philosophical ideas helped to reshape the understanding of recognition by the Frankfurt School philosophers.

Thus, it can be deduced from the foregoing discussion that the Frankfurt School philosophers' concept of recognition is discernible in the dynamics of individual and societal interactions, together with the interplay between these relationships and values and consciousness.

2.1 Hegel (1770): Consciousness searches for itself

The preceding section examined the notion of recognition according to Horkheimer and Theodor Adorno, emphasizing the imperative for rational societies to eschew alienation and reification in order to foster authentic human connections and breaking the cycle of perpetual alienation and subjugation, while also combating consumerist culture and dehumanizing stereotypes.

The phenomenology of spirit is discussed in this section. Hegel presents his ethical view of the world through a stage where self-awareness recognizes duty as an absolute essence (Hegel, 2006). In this sense, Hegel (1770) introduces us to his clear concepts about recognition. According to Hegel, there are several stages of recognition. The first is that self-awareness constitutes being for the sake of the other, and this being is achieved for the sake of the other. Secondly, there is the role of behavior, which is what Hegel calls "duty", where this behavior has achieved an element in a common collective for the self-conscious, and then thirdly, recognition, where Hegel (1770) expresses duty as the essence that is recognized by others, and here the trinity is completed that makes "consciousness" i.e., "self-consciousness", and "for itself" i.e. "awareness of others" and for itself," i.e., total self-consciousness" which brings together a struggle and forms the recognized entity.

According to Krijnen (2013), Hegel guides us along two paths: firstly, towards the notion of recognition as an ideal struggle manifested in Hegel's trinity, projected onto the topics he engages with, and secondly, towards the embodiment that Hegel conveys, wherein recognition becomes internally linked moments of the "spiritual" or fully liberated human individual.

Understanding the embodiment situation, Hegel (1770) presented his theory through the model of the master and the slave, where the relationship assumes the master's need for the slave to be alive to serve him, which implicitly secures the slave's life according to the master's need. Here, there is a certain understanding that the master must promote recognition of the slave, and show some concern for his well-being, while the slave recognizes the master as a clear authority over himself.

¹ Instrumental rationality understood as a norm of rational coherence. in the "Humean" thesis that instrumental rationality is the only kind of practical rationality. <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rationality-instrumental/>

Hence, the process of recognition in the context of the relationship between master and slave is harmonious and reciprocal, with recognition on the part of the slave clearly visible. However, it is important that there be reciprocal recognition by the master as well. It appears that this exchange can be in an authoritative sense on the part of the master and ethical on the part of the slave, where the slave has authority vis-à-vis the master in conceiving a conflict situation.

Therefore, given the advent of today's technology and the creation of virtual reality, this study examines the applicability of the concept of recognition within the realm of the virtual world, marked by cultural diversity and clashes of civilizations. It emphasizes the significance of exploring the adoption of the recognition concept, particularly by the third generation of the Frankfurt School, notably Honneth, who drew upon the ideas of Hegel and Marx to comprehend shifts in the notion of recognition, especially amidst present-day social and cultural dilemmas.

2.2 Marx (1883): Marxism as roots of theory: recognition and reality

Drawing from the preceding discussion, Hegel's ethical viewpoint centers on self-awareness which acknowledges duty as an absolute essence. Hegel explains that the concept of recognition is arrived at progressively: initially, self-awareness encompasses existence for the sake of others; subsequently, duty is manifested in actions as a shared aspect of self-consciousness; finally, recognition involves others acknowledging duty as the essence.

Hegel (1804) concept of recognition led to Marxism, since Marxist philosophy is rooted in the Hegelian concept, and is considered a reproduction of the Hegelian dialectic.

This leads to the perception of recognition as reproduction according to Marxism, which leads us to understand the development of the theory of recognition according to the Frankfurt School, which in turn was influenced by Marxist roots as an evolutionary line. Marx (1848) suggested the notion of recognizing others as human beings who have needs; this subsequently led to communism which is based on the belief that individuals produce for each other, not for their own self-interest or to receive rewards as a result of this production. Rather, production is a result of people's recognition of each other as human beings with needs (Chitty, 2013).

Marx employs recognition in line with his economic theory in conceptualizing production relationships between individuals and, therefore, the theory rejects any possibility of recognition based on an imbalance between production relationships (Renault, 2013). This particular idea had a significant influence on the Frankfurt School and its approach to the theory of recognition as a social principle. Honneth (1949) presented a critical theory that raised the philosophical debate about the theory of recognition by basing it on the notion that society is the result of social action (Deranty, 2013).

Marx (1884) founded the concept of economic justice based on class struggle, so that the debate brings about a radical change in the areas of power, preventing any superiority or exclusivity of one class over another based on its possession of capital. This perception leads to a recognition of people based on the fulfillment of their mutual needs in a communist society. Honneth (1949) tried to formulate a theory in alignment with this principle through the roots of the Marxist conflict, traced back to Hegel (1804). Honneth (1969) established his theory of recognition from the first idea developed by Hegel (1949) about the struggle for recognition (Kaabouch, 2020), as the idea of conflict is based on the production of new human relationships based on the principle of social and moral recognition.

Based on the foregoing analysis, it is evident that the exploration of Hegel's ethical perspective underscores the paramount importance of self-awareness and duty as fundamental essences. The progression of Hegel's theory of recognition, transitioning from self-awareness for the sake of others to the recognition of duty as essence, provided a solid groundwork for further philosophical inquiry. Marx's examination of recognition, rooted in his economic theory, enhances our comprehension, particularly in regard to production relationships and economic justice. The influence of Marxism, notably through the Frankfurt School, accentuates the significance of recognition as a social principle, as articulated by Honneth (1969). Drawing from Hegel's concept of the struggle for recognition, Honneth's (1969) formulation of the theory of recognition highlights the transformative potential inherent in social and moral acknowledgment. Thus, the interconnectedness of Hegelian, Marxist, and Frankfurt School perspectives on recognition indicates its multifaceted role in shaping societal dynamics and ethical frameworks.

3. Honneth (1949): Conflict as a model

Hegel's (1804) philosophy has led to Axel Honneth's plan which is lead the most important thoughts that purpose to clarify the meaning of recognition and its impact on society. First, it is important to understand Honneth's (1949) goals through this concept, so: What are the broad outlines of Honneth's (1949) formation of the concept of recognition?

Conflict and progress are two concepts that are fundamental to understanding recognition according to Honneth (1949). Honneth (1969) defines recognition as a state of social conflicts that contribute to the production of new relationships that carry the meaning of social progress Honneth states: "Subjects cannot reach a practical relationship with each other unless they learn how to understand each other from a normative perspective regarding social requirements" (Honneth, 1969).

Understanding the formation of recognition requires a struggle resulting from differences, whether in social class, gender, origin, or race and, to achieve this recognition, there must be a standard that is referred to in order to make this interaction successful.

Honneth (2015) applies the concept of the self and the psychological dimension of the emergence of the self within social conditions, which in turn leads to a reflection on the totality that constitutes its identity, as it opens up the experience of a certain form of recognition. According to Honneth (1949), social conflict is not only based on recognition, but also on humiliation or contempt, that contribute in some way to strengthening the conflict which, in turn, leads to recognition. Honneth (1949) pointed out that this situation leads to the self being pushed into the struggle for recognition.

Honneth (1949) was influenced by Hegel's (1804) proposal, encouraging him to reshape and expand it in a way that directly addresses the formation of three models of recognition: love, law, and solidarity. Therefore, it is necessary to, firstly, consider Honneth's (1949) analysis of Hegel (1804) and how his critique motivated him to propose another model of conflict. as an alternative to Habermas's communicative model.

To summarize, Honneth (1949) considered that recognition based on conflict and progress can lead to effective relationships between individuals, which in turn creates a state of identity awareness to reproduce social life.

3.1 Honneth versus Hegel: Re-analysis of recognition

In this section, Honneth's (1949) and Hegel's (1804) perspectives on recognition are compared.

Several studies (Alavaetal, 2017 and Honneth, 1949) were influenced by Hegel's (1804) model, particularly his proposal regarding recognition in social relationships which shed light on ethical life. Honneth (1949) examines society from within to reveal the ethical dimension of recognition and the possibility of making it legitimate, according to the law, so that individuals feel that society meets their needs by recognizing them.

Based on Hegel's analysis, Honneth (1949) concludes that the subject is capable of self-consciousness because of its consistency with its socialization. Honneth (1949) continues discussions extending back to Habermas (1929) to form his own model rather than adopting Habermas's (1929) communicative model.

Our idea about recognizing gains momentum when recognizing that the concept of acknowledgment applies not only in virtual domains but also within the frameworks articulated by Honneth (1949). To delve deeper into this concept, it is essential to examine the modifications Honneth (1949) made to Habermas's (1929) communicative model:

1. Honneth applies Hegel's concept of mutual acknowledgment to clarify the ethical dimension of social relationships, underscoring the significance of legal recognition in fulfilling individuals' needs and nurturing self-awareness within society.

2. Expanding upon earlier discussions, Honneth constructs his own model, which considered recognition as a fundamental element of social interactions, including those occurring in digital realms.

This section juxtaposes the perspectives on recognition between Honneth (1949) and Hegel (1804). Hegel's interpretation of social relationships emphasizes that mutual recognition is fundamental to these social connections, and stresses the important of overcoming challenges to identity. Honneth (1949) leverages Hegel's framework to develop his own proposition, concentrating on the ethical aspect of recognition within society and its validation through legal acknowledgment. Expanding upon Hegel's analysis, Honneth incorporates insights from Habermas (1929) to formulate his

unique model, accentuating the importance of recognition in both physical and digital interactions. Ultimately, Honneth's framework underscores the ethical significance of acknowledgment in meeting individual needs and nurturing societal self-awareness.

4. Recognition perspective of Habermas (1929) and Honneth (1949)

This section explores the criticisms of Habermas's (1929) communicative model and their implications for comprehending the dynamics of recognition within society. It highlights the significance of acknowledging conflict as a driver of acknowledgment. Moreover, it stresses the need to examine modern social landscapes, including virtual interactions, in order to obtain a more nuanced grasp of recognition processes.

4.1 Habermas's approach to recognition

Honneth and the imposition of the alternative model Habermas (1929) tried to eliminate or at least mitigate the dominance of instrumental reason, which is the mind that imposes itself as a controlling tool that claims to possess knowledge so that it gives itself the right to dominate and control, considering the human being as one of the parts of material nature that is fixed and quantitative (Abu Al Noor, 2012).

Habermas (1929) views communication as a deliberative process that facilitates the exchange of experiences, cultures, and knowledge, with an emphasis on dialogue rather than differences. This approach leads to the concept of recognition, which is essential for promoting understanding and acceptance between individuals. Habermas connects communication to recognition, suggesting that it emerges through agreements reached during interactions, based on mutually understood behavioral standards (Habermas, 2003). Thus, recognition, in Habermas's view, is grounded in a consensual and interactive relationship between the parties involved.

Several studies (Ivković, 2016; Honneth, 1949) evaluated the critical structure of Habermas's (1929) communicative model to create an alternative model to replace it. Following this evaluation, Honneth established a new system of recognition that could be achieved in reality. Honneth (1969) believed that critical theory had lost some of its advantages through Habermas's (1929) linguistic turn. As pointed out by Honneth (1949), Habermas (1929) did not explicitly address the concept of recognition by referring to empirical examples of social injustice (Ivković, 2016).

Honneth (1969) criticized Habermas's (1929) communicative model, identifying several shortcomings particularly in regard to Habermas's understanding of conflict. Honneth (1969) considers conflict to be a positive situation that leads to recognition- an aspect that was not clear in Habermas's (1929) model which relied primarily on the use of language as a direct means of achieving communication and recognition. On the other hand, Honneth (1969) seeks to understand social reality more precisely than Habermas (1929) does, in order to address the challenges posed by contemporary reality. Hence, for this current study, the researchers investigated contemporary social reality and how this reality extends to the virtual world, in order to understand the concepts of recognition in this context.

This section examined Habermas's (1929) perspective on communication and recognition, particularly his focus on deliberative dialogue and the implicit acknowledgment that is present in human interactions. However, scholars like Honneth (1949) have pointed out the shortcomings of Habermas's (1929) model, especially concerning its handling of conflict as a means to obtaining recognition. Honneth (1969) argues for a broader comprehension of social reality, asserting that recognition arises not only from linguistic communication, but also from conflict. Emphasizing the significance of exploring contemporary social dynamics, including virtual interactions, the aim of this section was to emphasize the significance of exploring contemporary social dynamics, including virtual interactions, so as to acquire deeper insights on the recognition process.

5. Habermas (1929): Public space and recognition

Habermas's (1929) notion of the public sphere is one of the main concepts on which he based his critical social and political philosophy in 1962, as it informs democratic practice in public issues based on social interaction between and mutual recognition of individuals. This recognition leads to understanding through language (Habermas, 1929). Public

sphere created interaction between individuals to achieve integration into society (Mosaddegh, 2005).

Subsequently, the public sphere is based on the concept of the collective mind resulting from the discussion of individuals using critical reason, which results in the neutralization of the individual self and its integration into the social self. Accordingly, the public sphere conflicts with private self-interest and discussions, as it represents the public good and the common interest that promotes the values of freedom and pluralism, which leads to recognition (Anissa, 2017).

The concept of recognition in Habermas's (1929) philosophy, which arises in the context of joint discussion, is based on the principle of respect for the diversity of cultural identities and the right of individuals to live together to enhance the value of understanding and moral dialogue in society. Recognition is the acceptance of the existence of the other and coexistence without seeking to eliminate or harm it, whether that other is an individual, sect, etc. (Blau, 2022)

It can be said here that the public sphere needs common concepts, vocabulary, a system of values, and mutual recognition of multiple legitimacy for the desired discussion to take place in which the self will engage in a struggle to obtain it by avoiding discussion and understanding through language. In this way, Habermas (1929) challenges the dialectic of master and slave and their struggle to achieve recognition as proposed by Hegel (1804).

The ideas and propositions of Hegel, Habermas, and Axel Honneth in regard to the concept of recognition enable us to conceptualize a new recognition Model. Below, under various subheadings, we offer a new proposal to answer the third question: How is the concept of recognition applied today, especially in the virtual world?

This section explored Habermas's (1929) notion of the public sphere and its function in fostering mutual recognition among individuals in society. It highlights the importance of social interaction, dialogue, and the appreciation of diverse cultural identities within democratic processes. By challenging hierarchical power structures and advocating for pluralistic values, it indicates the necessity for a revised model to tackle modern societal dynamics. The sections below examine the present-day utilization of recognition, especially in the virtual domain, uncovering its evolving significance and practical implementations.

5.1. The world: as cognitive boundaries

The word "world" is rooted in the history of philosophy, so one cannot, for example, ignore the division of the dual world according to Plato, who considered that there are two worlds: the rational world, which is the world of truth and knowledge, and the physical world, which is nothing but a field for receiving false knowledge (Plato, 2017). This is also a belief held by Kant (2015) who perceived the world as a duality: the world of phenomena and the world of the thing in itself (Noumenon).

Understanding did not stop at the epistemological framework, as the concept of the world deepened to become a philosophical problem that attempts to make sense of the world. For example, the rise of capitalism actually led to the emergence of the global market, as Marx referred to it, as capitalism worked to recreate the world as a comprehensive, socio-economic one (Bencin, 2021). This is what makes us understand the world as being shaped based on our need for it, whether cognitively, economically, socially, or even religiously, in the duality of the world of this world and the world of the afterlife.

According to this pluralistic approach to understanding the world, a new duality must be understood, which is the duality of the real and the virtual.

The main ideas expressed by Frankfurt School adherents are depicted in Figure 2.

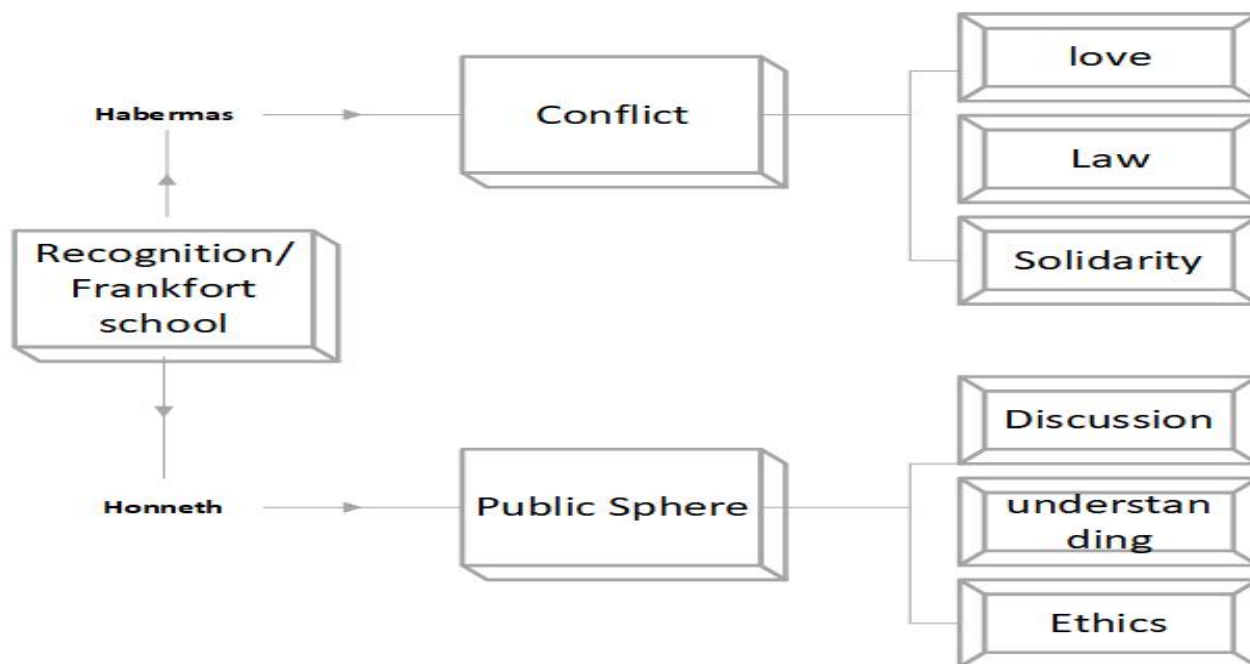


Figure 2: Recognition according to the Frankfurt School – prepared by the authors.

Figure 2 illustrates the integrated conception of recognition among Frankfurt School philosophers, primarily emphasized by Habermas and Honneth.

6. Virtualization: Technology as a world

The concept of technology is linked to the meaning that we give to development, and perhaps the technical field has begun to reinforce the concept of development by going beyond what is present, available, familiar, and limited, to what is more than that, extending to a wider field of possibilities and is also not far from activating values.

In an interview conducted by philosopher Ray Crosswell titled "Living in virtual worlds as an avatar", in which he reinforces his propositions about the environment of the virtual world, the nature of this world, and how to deal with its problems, Crosswell believes that being in virtual reality is inherently safer (Kurzweil, 2014). Here it is understood that the virtual world is a world that defines a non-physical existence for us, but with the characteristics of the physical world, and therefore humans gather in some way in this world to join a network of relationships based on communication under conditions governed by the technologies and mechanisms available to it. Although they talk in the interview about the virtual, this virtuality is a memory of us in our real world, so they can never be sure that they have erased it all.

Nowadays, numerous concepts, including identity, freedom, power, and recognition, have become focal points of research on virtual reality. Within this framework, the focus is on understanding the utilization of recognition in the virtual sphere and discerning its role within social-technological dynamics.

To conclude, virtual reality provides a distinctive perspective for examining the convergence of technology and human existence. Philosopher Ray Crosswell underscores the perceived security and integration of virtual worlds with reality. Within these digital realms, concepts such as identity, freedom, power, and recognition acquire fresh dimensions, molding the dynamics between society and technology. Grasping the notion of recognition within virtual environments is essential for navigating the evolving terrain of human interaction and technology.

7. Discussion and new theoretical significance

Axel Honneth in (1995) established the concept of recognition based on a social and moral perception resulting from conflict, or the struggle against social injustice, and it became a political and social theory (Renault, 2011). Ultimately,

recognition is based on three criteria: love, right, and solidarity, where the criterion of love assumes the existence of relationships. Love works to strengthen emotional ties between individuals, while right or law expresses the individual's support for self-fulfillment through his belief that society is ethically obligated to respect him, while solidarity works to strengthen the principle of social cooperation that results from legal recognition and strengthens the meanings of tolerance, which recommends By empathizing with the privacy of the other, these three criteria open the way for questions related to how these criteria are applied by Honneth (1949) to shape the concept of recognition.

In order to advance the proposed model, it is essential to consider the ideas that it will encompass, with a particular emphasis on the key elements of the recognition concept as outlined by both Habermas (1929) and Honneth (1949), as discussed below.

7.1. Love, law, solidarity

The trilogy of the possibility of recognition in the virtual world Honneth (1949) was able to build an ethical concept that can be used in our vision of the virtual world in terms of psychological, social, and ethical aspects. This facilitates an understanding of the concept of recognition in the virtual world based on the criteria proposed by Honneth (1949): love, law, and solidarity.

Honneth (1949) posits that love, as it originally appeared in Hegel, is the basis for building relationships in the family. Love is described as a bond of relationships between parents and their children; according to Hegel, love constitutes the beginning of self-recognition "as beings in need through the experience of mutual care" (Honneth, 2015). Here, Honneth is implying that the principle of love is the basis of mutual recognition in society, meaning that individuals gain self-confidence simply by being within a relationship that includes love, which makes them feel respected and therefore self-confident. Hence, one achieves individual independence (regarding self and social acceptance) by being a member of a social group organized on the basis of a division of labor which gives rise to certain rights (Honneth, 1996).

In the social context, laws in general grant equal rights to all without any discrimination based on their mental or physical capacities. This means that recognition between individuals is completely different from the recognition given to them by the law.

Although individuals should be recognized under the legitimacy of law, rights, and duties, some individuals may lack this recognition simply because of their deemed ineligibility and mental or physical incapacity, or even because of their ethnic origins.

This criticism follows Honneth's (1949) clearly stated argument about ethical responsibility which is consistent with our critical idea: there must be "ethical responsibility" so that individuals regulate each other since every modern law-based society is based on the assumption that all its members have to exercise ethical responsibility (Honneth, 1996). Hence, legal recognition comes not only from the legitimacy of the law, but rather the impact of this law on society in strengthening the ethical element that helps to ensure the recognition of individuals despite differences, and by means of which every individual must learn to recognize the importance of the abilities and qualities of others (Honneth, 2015).

It is concluded that encouraging solidarity among individuals is crucial, as it fosters recognition grounded in intrinsic self-esteem, devoid of comparisons with others. This shift away from individual competitiveness opens avenues to a collective pursuit of social appreciation (Honneth, 2015).

The search for self-esteem affects the individual. An individual who has valuable achievements expects acknowledgement based on society's evaluation of him. Without social solidarity, he cannot experience a high level of self-esteem. According to Honneth's (1949) proposal, this acknowledgement by others is a criterion for recognition in the real world. However, how are love, law and solidarity understood in the virtual world?

The virtual world is an open sphere that allows individuals to express their thoughts and opinions freely, which enhances its attractiveness as an important means of communication and interaction as a free space. The virtual world can provide better opportunities for individuals to achieve their goals and express themselves in ways that are not possible in the real world. This space can be of great importance in empowering individuals and shaping their identities more freely.

In this context, love appears as a criterion for recognition in the virtual world, where interaction and conflict in this supposed social space are considered the basis of social relationships, while the presence of a virtual community enables individuals to express their feelings and interact freely, which makes the concept of love a driver of communication and recognition. In this way, the virtual world can be a living environment that contributes to the formation of mutual relationships, based on love and understanding, giving individuals the space to express themselves and build relationships based on mutual recognition and understanding. Hence this question: What is the standard for individuals in terms of accepting or rejecting each other in the virtual world?

It is assumed that in the virtual world there are acceptance criteria and rejection criteria comprising notions such as knowledge, trust, reconciliation, respect, and love. Recognition is a standard for accepting people within their virtual spaces, as individuals recognize each other regardless of their differences or similarities.

Here, Honneth's (1949) concept of love is seen as a principle underpinning individual relationships, whether in cases of harmony or incompatibility.

The trend is towards solidarity taking a place within the virtual world, as Honneth (1949) considered that solidarity takes a form of recognition in the real world and that social disrespect for the individual's qualities and abilities "leads to the loss of self-respect" (Andersen, 2015). The virtual world offers solidarity. If it is assumed that there is a state of loss of self-esteem resulting from violence, for example, this image leads us to see the existence of solidarity as a form of recognition, and perhaps social media has become a world in which violence has become possible as bullying, exclusion, and marginalization.

The process of forming solidarity as a type of recognition has become clearly possible. As individuals announce their entry into different communities that exist in the real world, they are united in the virtual world. It appears that in the virtual world the sense of solidarity granted to an individual can be strengthened, not because of his participation in a social activity, but because of a personal achievement within a recognized practice that makes each person's skills and abilities appear meaningful.

In light of this, it is concluded that it is possible to apply Axel Honneth's (1949) model of recognition in the virtual world through love, law, and solidarity, especially as the digital space becomes more attractive to individual users.

8.Virtual public sphere vs Habermas' public sphere

According to the above, virtual public space enables individuals to communicate freely, transcending differences and offering a platform for expression without external restrictions. This has fostered effective dialogue, albeit with the risk of distorted communication. In this virtual realm, the traditional distinctions between public and private, culture producer and recipient, have blurred, and both entities have become consumers. The digital era has produced a shift whereby individuals are recipients rather than producers of culture, impacting social values and traditions. While the virtual space allows enhanced expression, challenges such as digital propaganda and the return of authoritative control underscore the importance of maintaining respect and trust in this evolving landscape.

This type of communication emerged in virtual space and gave rise to a new perception of the concept of recognition. In virtual space, human relationships and social phenomena with their various manifestations are perceived differently due to virtual representation in all its symbolic, digital, and mechanical forms. Accordingly, social life has become a digital life (Rahomah, 2008), affecting the representation of humans digitally, symbolically affecting culture, language, identity, privacy, and self- and global orientation. It has led to the formation of a social technological structure in which some may become unable to think for themselves when making decisions about or drawing conclusions from what they perceive in the real world (Watson, 2016).

8.1 Recognition: Public sphere (Habermas vs Cyberspace)

It is important to address Honneth's (1988) concept of recognition in the real world and examine how this concept can be applied in virtual space. Moreover, it is necessary to distinguish between public space and virtual space (Habermas, 1974).

The virtual public place is an extension of the traditional public place. The concept and place of recognition within the former must be examined, particularly since it is connected to other digital fields that have changed the nature of relationships between individuals and taken them to a completely new level.

Habermas' 1965 Western modernity project (Afaya, 1998) posits that science, technology, and politics are closely related. A new style of communication between individuals, called the virtual public space, has emerged as a logical result of modern technology and the ubiquity of the Internet which has allowed individuals to communicate digitally and achieve recognition regardless of their location and geographic boundaries.

This space includes different groups with diverse affiliations and ideologies, who form social relationships and virtual friendships with others who have similar interests. This has led to the emergence of new social relationships that go beyond real social relationships, and the concept of virtual public space has become a natural extension of traditional public space, as stated by Habermas (1929).

Accordingly, the virtual public space can be considered as a human environment or field that allows everyone to communicate via technology, sharing information, expressing personal opinions, and participating in decision-making. This social development, particularly in regard to human communication facilitated by technology, has led to fundamental transformations in the attitudes and behavior of individuals due to psychological changes and the restructuring of the mind's responses (Watson, 2016). Virtual social connections have ended the traditional fabric and led to new ways of life and communication experiences while still maintaining a connect with social reality.

These structural changes that have occurred in the virtual public space led to the spread of a new type of participatory democracy (Dutton, 2011). They have reduced the domination and power that was imposed on individuals in the traditional public space because the virtual public ensures that the individual can present himself as he wants and helps him to build shared knowledge and identities. And enhances Collectivism with others and their sense of belonging to it (Castells & Cardoso, 2006).

Figure 3 illustrates the utilization of recognition within the cyber public sphere, indicating its effectiveness in the realm of cyberspace. It highlights the role of recognition in enhancing human communication, as expounded by Honneth's concepts of love, law, and solidarity, and shows the impact of cyberspace on recognition and the promotion of social values.

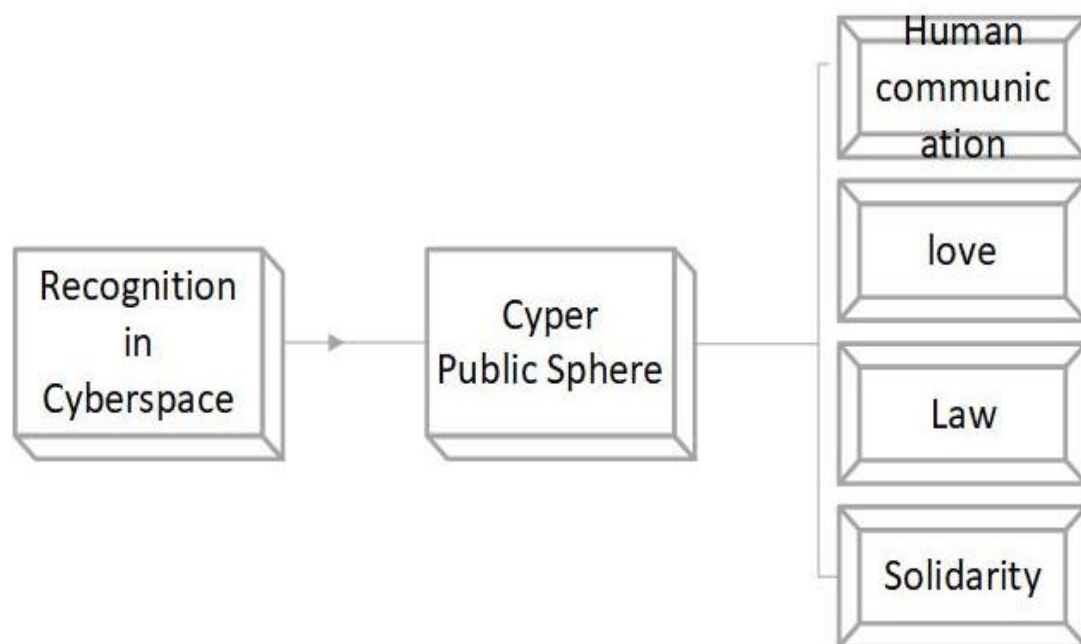


Figure 3: Final model for recognition in cyberspace

9. Research Results

After reviewing multiple studies, this section presents the research findings and validates the study's objectives.

- The concept of recognition is deeply rooted in the works of early Frankfurt School philosophers, emphasizing its development in relation to identity, self-worth, and social acknowledgment.
- Recognition is fundamental in shaping both individual and collective identities, fostering a sense of belonging and enhancing social integration among individuals.
- Technology transforms expressions of recognition, introducing challenges such as false identities, while also creating opportunities for genuine self-expression on digital platforms.
- The debates between Habermas and Honneth elucidate the complexities surrounding recognition, identity, and social relationships, providing valuable insights for contemporary social theory.
- The concept of recognition is crucial for addressing contemporary social challenges, including human rights and equality, and plays a significant role in fostering social cohesion in multicultural societies.
- Virtual reality profoundly reshapes our understanding of technology and human existence, prompting discussions about identity, freedom, power, and recognition within digital realms.
- Axel Honneth's model of recognition—integrating love, law, and solidarity—offers a novel perspective on enhancing human relationships in virtual environments.
- The rise of the virtual public sphere transforms social interactions and influences values and identities in modern society, underscoring the need for clarity between traditional and digital public spaces.
- The text highlights important ethical challenges related to virtual identities and recognition, calling for further exploration of human interactions in the digital age.
- There is a pressing need for ongoing investigation into how recognition concepts can be adapted within digital frameworks to establish ethical foundations that address the needs of a digital society.
- The understanding of recognition is changing within digital contexts, necessitating a more in-depth examination of its implications for social relationships and human values.

10. Study Limitations and Future Directions

Like preceding studies, the present research is subject to several limitations. Consequently, investigations should apply a variety of methodologies to strengthen the findings. Numerous studies published between 1977 and 2023 were examined. The inclusion of older sources was necessitated by the subject's intrinsic nature, and the selected references align with both the research topic and the tenets of the Frankfurt School. In future work, we intend to explore the concept of recognition proposed by alternative philosophical schools to enrich our understanding. Additionally, by means of comparative analysis, the results obtained from this study will be compared with those that will be derived from future studies.

11. Conclusion

The concept of recognition was not developed in one go, but rather through a gradual evolution due to various contributions from the Frankfurt School. Although some philosophers did not explicitly address this concept, their influence was evident in shaping it through their direct impact on their students' thinking and ideas. The concept of recognition is understood in various political, philosophical, and social contexts, due to the events that accompanied the different stages of the school's development throughout several generations as mentioned before. This concept became a clear and central focus of the proponents of this school due to its association with other concepts such as communication, freedom, justice, equality, globalization, etc.

In the contemporary context, considering digitalization and virtualization, this concept has assumed greater importance than ever before. Technological and digital transformations appear to have radically transformed our understanding of social relationships and ethics in the virtual world. The concept of recognition, articulated by Axel (Honneth), indicates a subtle exchange of meanings and identities between individuals in this new digital space.

The problems associated with virtual identity appear as ethical challenges that call for a comprehensive exploration of the nature of recognition in this context. The concept of virtual recognition presents a new horizon requiring us to consider how relationships and identities are formed in a world characterized by electronic interaction and changing identity. This virtual recognition can also have notable ethical implications, as a new concept of ethics can emerge that is relevant to digital interactions. This requires thinking about challenges such as the stability of virtual identity and the effects of digital interactions on social relationships. Considering the rapid developments today, it seems that the concept of recognition is moving towards a new definition in the virtual context. This new definition could contribute to the development of technology-based ethical foundations consistent with the requirements of the digital society.

In the end, it appears that understanding recognition as an exchange relationship in the virtual world opens doors for us to explore the depths of the ethical and social impacts of this digital transformation and invites us to think about a new ethical framework that meets the challenges of the evolving digital reality. This requires further research that focuses on human relationships and their connection to emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence.

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