

# Emotional Oversharing in The Quality of Student Friendships In The City of Cirebon

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**Abstract.** Emotional oversharing is the act of sharing personal information or emotions excessively with others. This study aims to analyze the phenomenon of emotional oversharing among students in Cirebon City and its impact on the quality of friendships. Emotional oversharing refers to the act of sharing personal information or emotions excessively, which can affect the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. The author chose this research topic due to the prevalence of oversharing among university students, particularly in the context of friendship, which often affects the quality of friendships. The research method used was a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with three student informants who had experienced oversharing in their friendships. The results of the study show that psychological factors such as the need for validation, situational factors such as a social environment that supports openness, and relational factors such as the level of familiarity, also influence oversharing. Although oversharing can deepen intimacy in relationships that have been built on trust, the negative impacts are more dominant, such as a decline in the quality of friendships, loss of trust, and the emergence of interpersonal conflicts. These findings emphasize the importance of privacy management in friendship communication, as explained by the Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory, which highlights the importance of awareness in setting boundaries for personal communication. Overall, this study adds to the understanding of the dynamics of interpersonal communication in the context of friendships among students in Cirebon City.

**Keywords:** Emotional oversharing, Relationships, Friendships, Students, Information

## 1 Introduction

Emotional oversharing is the act of sharing personal information or emotions excessively with others, either directly or through social media platforms. This can occur due to a desire for recognition, anxiety, or an inability to control emotions, and can make others feel uncomfortable or burdened (Kristihandari, 2025). Emotional oversharing, which refers to the process of unintentionally overhearing other people's conversations or emotional expressions, has become an interesting topic in social psychology because it can affect the dynamics of interpersonal relationships [1]

The quality of a friendship is how deep and good the relationship is, characterized by support, trust, and intimacy, as well as minimal conflict and competition. A quality relationship creates comfort, a sense of security, and emotional support that affects a person's mental health [2]. The quality of student friendships in the city of Cirebon is very important to study, given that Cirebon is an educational city with universities such as Gunung Jati Cirebon University, which accommodates thousands of students from various backgrounds. Factors such as urbanization, academic pressure, and post-COVID-19 social changes may exacerbate the phenomenon of emotional oversharing, which has not been extensively studied in the local Indonesian context. This research aims to address this gap by analyzing how emotional oversharing affects aspects of friendship quality, such as intimacy, emotional support, and conflict, based on both international and local literature.

The phenomenon of emotional oversharing is common among students, especially in social interactions, both in person and through digital media [3]. This behavior has the potential to affect the quality of friendships, both in terms of increasing intimacy and causing conflict. Oversharing is the habit of individuals sharing excessive personal information or other people's problems through social media or in direct conversation. Usually, oversharing is characterized by a need for connection, support, and validation from others [4]

Theoretically, emotional oversharing can be explained through social psychology theory, which emphasizes that humans tend to process emotional information from their environment to form social perceptions [5]. In the context of friendship, oversharing can improve the quality of relationships when used to provide support, but it

can also be damaging if it causes misunderstandings. Research by [5] shows that meaningful conversations involving deep emotions correlate positively with well-being, but unintentional oversharing can invade privacy and cause interpersonal stress.

The author chose this topic because there are many people around the author who engage in oversharing on campus and among friends. Personally, the author has witnessed how this pattern of communication causes discomfort, damages relationships, and creates psychological burdens for those who receive these confessions. However, this research approach is not intended to judge those who engage in oversharing. Instead, this study seeks to understand the perspectives of both parties proportionally, and more importantly, to investigate the factors that cause people to overshare, as well as to discover the quality of student friendships in the city of Cirebon.

Research on the quality of student friendships at the local level shows that emotional factors such as empathy and social support greatly influence the sustainability of relationships [6]. However, there has been no research specifically linking emotional oversharing with friendships in the city of Cirebon. Research (Parker & Asher, 1993) Related to the scale of friendship quality, it identifies dimensions such as trust and conflict as key indicators, which can be expanded to analyze the influence of oversharing. Thus, this study is expected to provide useful insights for students and educational institutions in creating a healthy social environment. In this study, the author uses Sandra Petronio's Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory. Open communication is very important in resolving conflicts by expressing feelings, thoughts, and personal experiences to others [8]. However, if done excessively, this open communication can turn into oversharing.

## 2 Literature Review

Emotional oversharing is a process in which a person unintentionally overhears another person's emotional expressions or conversations, which can affect the dynamics of interpersonal relationships. Interpersonal research on emotional oversharing shows that this process correlates with the quality of social relationships. [5] found that substantive conversations involving deep emotions, including oversharing, are associated with increased well-being and friendship quality. However, unintentional oversharing can invade privacy, as shown in the study [9] which reveals that listening to emotional conversations increases the potential for conflict in close relationships. In practical terms, this study recommends the implementation of interpersonal communication education and training for adolescents, particularly in the context of conflict management and avoiding silent treatment behavior [8]. However, uncontrolled oversharing can lead to gossip and a decline in trust levels.

The quality of friendships is measured through dimensions such as intimacy, emotional support, level of trust, and the presence of conflict [10]. Friends can make a positive contribution to adolescents if the friendships are of high quality. Research [11] on friendships highlights the importance of emotions in shaping the quality of relationships [12]. It is very important for teenagers to develop healthy communication skills, including the ability to express themselves and manage their emotions effectively. These skills are the main foundation for building and maintaining quality friendships.

The Communication Privacy Management theory, developed by Sandra Petronio (2002), explains how individuals manage the privacy of personal information through boundaries and rules in communication. In the context of emotional oversharing, this theory is particularly relevant because oversharing involves violating privacy boundaries, where emotional information that should be private is accidentally revealed. Research linking CPM to oversharing reveals that privacy violations through unauthorized listening can cause interpersonal stress and reduce trust [9] the assumption that privacy is a continuously managed resource; when oversharing occurs, individuals may respond by readjusting boundaries, for example by avoiding personal conversations or increasing trust in friendships [13]. In the context of student friendships, CPM helps explain why positive emotional oversharing (such as listening to emotional support) can increase intimacy, while negative oversharing (such as conflict) can trigger conflict or withdrawal. This theory provides a basis for understanding how students in the city of Cirebon, with its collective social culture, manage privacy in high-interaction situations such as on campus.

Adolescence is the perfect time to learn more about the values and ethics of communication, both in person and on social media, in order to become wiser [14]. Emotional oversharing is rampant in college environments, especially in the city of Cirebon. Therefore, the author chose this topic, and in this study, the author attempted to understand the perspectives of both parties proportionally. and more importantly, to investigate the factors that cause people to overshare, as well as to discover the quality of student friendships in the city of Cirebon, because previous studies have not discussed the impact of oversharing on the quality of friendships among students, especially in the city of Cirebon.

### 3 Research Method

This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design to explore students' subjective personal experiences from a personal perspective on emotional oversharing in friendships. This method was chosen because emotional oversharing is a complex and contextual social phenomenon, where a deep understanding of its meaning and impact on the quality of friendships requires interpretation from individual experiences.

The research subjects consisted of active students and people around the author who had experienced emotional oversharing in friendships. The object of the study is the process of emotional oversharing (accidentally listening to a friend's emotional expressions or conversations) and its impact on the quality of friendships, which is analyzed through CPM dimensions such as privacy boundary violations, emotional information management, and consequences for intimacy, trust, and conflict in friendships. This research was conducted in the city of Cirebon, West Java, Indonesia.

Sampling using purpose sampling technique (sampling) participants were selected based on specific criteria: students who had experienced emotional oversharing in friendships at least once in the last six months and were willing to participate voluntarily. The sample size was determined based on the principle of data saturation, meaning that no new themes emerged, with a target of three informants to ensure depth of analysis. This technique ensures that the sample is relevant and representative of the research phenomenon, taking into account ethical aspects such as informed consent and confidentiality.

The main data collection technique was semi-structured in-depth interviews. This process followed research ethics guidelines, including obtaining written consent and stopping the interview if the subject felt uncomfortable. Emotional oversharing occurred naturally without intervention. Additional data was obtained from the researcher's reflection notes to minimize bias. This process complies with research ethics, including obtaining written consent and terminating interviews if subjects feel uncomfortable.

The main data collection technique used was in-depth interviews. In addition, the theoretical framework of this study was supported by information obtained through interviews with students in the city of Cirebon who directly experienced oversharing. The research data sources consist of qualitative data, including observational data, interview data, and documentation. Observational data was obtained from field notes documenting interactions and communication among students in the city of Cirebon. Interview data was collected from conversations with key informants to understand the triggering activities of Oversharing. Documentation data includes photos and audio recordings of communication activities. This study explores the phenomenon of Oversharing through various analytical methods, particularly using data collection techniques such as direct interviews and observations of students who experience Oversharing.

Data analysis techniques using methods from CPM (Communication Privacy Management) theory, which includes data reduction, data display, conclusion/verification, with validation tested through triangulation.

- a. Data reduction: Data from interviews, observations, and documentation were selected with a focus on experiences related to the phenomenon of emotional oversharing among university students in Cirebon, based on CPM (communication privacy management) theory.
- b. Data display: The reduced data is presented in the form of a narrative description that illustrates patterns of privacy management, limitations in communication, and the impact of emotional oversharing on friendships.
- c. Conclusion drawing/verification: After the data was presented, the researchers drew conclusions about the effect of emotional oversharing on the quality of student friendships in the city of Cirebon. These conclusions were then verified using triangulation to ensure the authenticity and validity of the data.

## 4 Research Results And Discussion

### 4.1 Factors Triggering Emotional Oversharing in the Quality of Friendships

Oversharing According to [illinoisworknet.com](http://illinoisworknet.com), "Oversharing is when people share too much personal information with the public or a stranger. It can happen both online and offline." Oversharing occurs when someone shares too much personal information with the public or strangers. This can happen both online and offline. Some examples of oversharing behavior include sharing intimate details about relationships, friendships, family problems, or personal issues, using social media or in person as a way to vent emotions [15].

Based on qualitative data analysis conducted through in-depth interviews with students in Cirebon City, this study reveals the complexity of the phenomenon of emotional oversharing in the context of friendship among students. Post-oversharing privacy boundary management strategies developed in accordance with Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory. Participants developed defense mechanisms through the establishment of privacy rules, as described. When someone feels that their privacy boundaries have been violated by others, that individual will set privacy rules or boundaries for themselves so that they can decide in advance what information/stories can be shared with others and what stories cannot be shared with others.

These findings reinforce the relevance of CPM theory in analyzing the phenomenon of oversharing among students, particularly students in the city of Cirebon, while confirming the complexity of interpersonal communication dynamics in a collective culture where the boundaries between privacy and openness are often blurred. The Communication Privacy Management (CPM) theory is highly relevant to the phenomenon of oversharing. This theory provides a strong framework for understanding why and how individuals disclose or conceal their personal information, including sharing information excessively with others either directly or through social media. With this framework, we can assess how the quality of friendships is greatly influenced by the management of privacy boundaries. The phenomenon of oversharing, which involves sharing information excessively, can disrupt the balance in relationships, especially friendships.

Research findings indicate that oversharing occurs due to several psychological, situational, and relational factors, with a significant impact on the quality of friendships.

Psychological factors include the need for emotional validation and excessive trust. According to psychologists, we should not reveal too much personal information to the public through social media or directly to other people. Examples include personal financial problems, relationships with partners, people we dislike, and past traumas (Nadya Quamila, 2025).

*“When I am in any condition, whether I feel sad or happy, I always overshare with my friends. I tell them everything. I unconsciously tell them everything when I am with my friends. Results of interviews with informants (Ridwan Firdaus, 2025).*

Similarly, the second informant, Citra, stated that

*“I tell my friends everything when I am feeling sad or happy. I trust my friends very much because I feel like I have told them everything. Results of interviews with informants [18]*

Based on the findings of interviews with informants, it can be analyzed that psychological factors, particularly the need for emotional validation and excessive trust, play a supporting role in oversharing. The informants' statements, along with warnings in psychological literature, as quoted from Nadya Quamila's article, emphasize the risks of revealing excessive personal information to the public or sources. They describe oversharing as an automatic response to various emotional conditions, both sad and happy, indicating that this action serves as a strategy to gain recognition and social support.

However, overconfidence due to feeling that one has shared stories frequently can create vulnerability, given that the depth of personal information disclosed is not always matched by guarantees of confidentiality or empathy from the recipient. This finding is consistent with warnings in psychological literature, as quoted from Nadya Quamila's article, which emphasizes the risks of disclosing excessive personal information to the public or individuals.

Situational factors in the context of environment and time can contribute to oversharing, as expressed by participants regarding their activities. Oversharing on social media or in person is a way to cope with emotional pressure. Oversharing is considered a way to maintain psychological balance, especially in situations where direct communication occurs (Restu & Triyono, 2025).

*“I usually overshare when hanging out with friends at a cafe or at my boarding house, and usually at night.” Results of interviews with informants [17]*

Similarly, the second informant, Citra, stated that

*“Oversharing usually occurs when hanging out with friends at a cafe or boarding house, and people prefer to talk at night.” Results of interviews with informants (Ratu Citra, 2025).*



**Figure 1.** College Students During their Oversharing Session  
Source: Researcher's Documentation, 2026

Based on the interview results, it can be analyzed that situational factors such as environment and time play an important role in triggering oversharing behavior. Situations like this can be perceived as a safe and comfortable space to express feelings with friends, such as in a cafe or boarding house, especially at night. This context is not a coincidence. The relaxed, private atmosphere and the feeling of tiredness at the end of the day create

psychological conditions that encourage people to be more open and reduce their control over privacy boundaries. Situations like this can be perceived as a safe and comfortable space to express feelings.

The relational factor of familiarity affects the intensity of oversharing. Oversharing in friendships is largely determined by the context of the relationship; what is considered openness in one relationship may be considered a boundary violation in another.

*“Oversharing greatly affects the dynamics of friendship. If my trust is violated, I will definitely feel disappointed and my trust will diminish.” Results of interviews with informants (Ridwan Firdaus, 2025).*

This is reinforced by the statement of the second informant, Citra, who felt a similar impact

*“I felt betrayed when my friend told other people what I had told them, it strained our friendship and destroyed my trust in them.” Results of interviews with informants (Ratu Citra, 2025).*

Meanwhile, the perspective of the third informant who received Oversharing, Frida, revealed that

*“I feel uncomfortable when my friends share excessive stories with me. When my friends share stories with me, I usually just listen. Actually, I don't really care what my friends are talking about, because when my friends overshare, I feel a little uncomfortable listening to their stories.” Results of interviews with informants (Frida Tilani Abuti, 2025).*

Based on the interview results, it can be analyzed that relational factors indicate the complexity of oversharing in friendships. The level of familiarity creates an expectation that openness is a sign of trust, as expressed by [17] and [18]. However, the greatest risk arises when boundaries of trust are violated, causing disappointment and damaging friendships. On the other hand, the perspective (Frida Tilani Abuti, 2025) as the recipient reveals that oversharing is not always received positively.

The discomfort he felt shows that excessive storytelling can become an emotional burden, and can even be seen as an inability to read social situations. Thus, oversharing is not just a one-way action, but a two-way interaction that often leads to misunderstandings, where the intention to share on one side can result in a breach of trust for the person doing the oversharing, or a psychological burden for the person listening.

## 4.2 Quality of Friendship Relationship

Oversharing complicates the quality of friendships. On the one hand, oversharing can strengthen intimacy in relationships that already have a strong foundation of trust. However, oversharing predominantly has negative consequences that result in a decline in the quality of friendships when privacy boundaries are violated. When a trusted individual violates privacy boundaries, the quality of the friendship is certain to decline and even result in a loss of trust. Oversharing is now common among student friendships in the city of Cirebon, and the level of trust in someone who frequently overshares is very low because personal secrets can be shared with others, especially secrets belonging to other people.

*“In my opinion, the quality of friendships so far has varied, some have developed well and some have not.” Results of interviews with informants [17]*

Similarly, the second informant, Citra, stated that

*“The quality of friendships around me varies, some are good and some are not so good, but I choose not to think about it too much.” Results of interviews with informants (Ratu Citra, 2025).*

However, a different perspective emerged from informant three, Frida, as the recipient of oversharing. As expressed by informant Frida

*“In my opinion, when someone overshares, it diminishes the quality of the friendship or makes it less enjoyable.” Results of interviews with informants [20].*

Based on the interview results, it can be analyzed that oversharing in the quality of friendship is contradictory and context-dependent. On the one hand, oversharing can be a sign of intimacy in relationships that already have strong trust. However, in reality, among Cirebon students, it was found that oversharing plays a negative role in the quality of friendship. The informants' statements as recipients of oversharing clearly link this habit to a decline in the quality of friendship. This shows that oversharing can be high risk when privacy boundaries are violated, such as when personal secrets are spread, resulting in a loss of trust, which is the foundation of friendship.

Other informants who viewed the quality of their friendships as “diverse,” although not directly mentioning oversharing, can be understood as reflecting the dynamics or state of friendships that are vulnerable to such conditions. In other words, oversharing is not just sharing stories, but an action that can alter the balance of a relationship. Oversharing can be a bonding agent in the right context, but more often than not, it acts as a factor that weakens social bonds when it is not managed with awareness of the limits and responsibilities of the information being shared.

## 5 Conclusion

Based on research conducted on emotional oversharing in the quality of friendships among students in the city of Cirebon, it can be concluded that the phenomenon of emotional oversharing is a complex and contextual reality among students. Oversharing is understood as the act of sharing personal information or emotions excessively, motivated by psychological factors such as the need for validation, situational factors such as environment and time, and relational factors such as familiarity. These findings indicate that oversharing does not just happen, but is the result of a combination of internal and external conditions of individuals within their social circle.

Oversharing in friendships is contradictory and highly dependent on the context of the relationship that has been established beforehand. On the one hand, in relationships with a strong foundation of trust, oversharing can be a catalyst that deepens intimacy and solidarity. However, what is more dominant and high-risk is a decline in the quality of the friendship. This decline occurs when excessive sharing is perceived as a violation of privacy boundaries, which in turn causes discomfort, erodes trust, and has the potential to trigger conflict or withdrawal from interaction.

Informants demonstrated active agency by developing various strategies to reorganize their communication boundaries. These strategies include establishing stricter internal privacy rules to control what information will be shared in the future, as well as adopting a preventative approach such as anticipating the depth of conversations. This mechanism confirms that oversharing is often a critical moment that forces individuals to readjust and rearrange the rules of ownership and boundaries in their friendships.

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