

“SOCIAL-PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF YOUTH'S PERSONAL IDENTIFICATION”

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Abstract: This article scientifically analyzes the socio-psychological characteristics of the information environment in the development of youth's personal identification. The widespread use of modern digital technologies, the Internet and social networks has a significant impact on the process of self-awareness of young people. The study covers the psychological foundations of the process of personal identification, mechanisms of social comparison, and the role of the virtual environment in the formation of identity. Based on the theories of Erik Erikson and Henry Tajfel, the formation of the sense of belonging to social groups and the concept of “I” of young people is analyzed. Also, the psychological impact of the digital environment is considered based on the theory of social comparison put forward by Leon Festinger. The results revealed that the information environment, on the one hand, expands the social activity and self-expression of young people, and on the other hand, it increases identity instability, stereotypes and psychological pressure. The article substantiates the development of media literacy and critical thinking as an important factor in the formation of a healthy identity of young people.

Keywords: Youth, personal identification, information environment, social psychology, social networks, digital technologies, social comparison, identity, media literacy, critical thinking.

Introduction

In modern society, globalization processes, the rapid development of digital technologies and a sharp increase in the flow of information have a profound impact on all aspects of young people's lives. In particular, the information environment is an important factor in the formation of a person's worldview, values and self-awareness. The personal identification of young people is the central psychological phenomenon of this process, which determines the individual's concept of "I", social roles and place in society. Personal identification, as a complex socio-psychological process, is formed on the basis of the interaction between the internal psychological characteristics of the individual and the external social environment. The family, education system, peer group and mass media play an important role in this process. However, in modern conditions, the increasing influence of the digital information environment is significantly changing the mechanisms of formation of youth identity. In particular, the Internet and social networks have become not only a source of information for young people, but also a space for self-expression, social comparison and acquaintance with various identity models. On the one hand, this situation has created wide opportunities for personal development, but on the other hand, it has also led to the instability of identity, social pressure and increased psychological conflicts. This article analyzes the socio-psychological characteristics of the information environment in the development of youth personal identification. Also, the impact of the information flow on the self-awareness of young people, the mechanisms of social comparison, and the positive and negative aspects of the digital environment in the formation of identity are scientifically covered.

Main part

The formation of personal identity of young people is considered a complex socio-psychological process in modern society. This process is directly related to the formation of the individual's concept of "I", the assimilation of social roles, and the adoption of a system of values. According to psychological theories, especially adolescence and early adulthood are considered a stage of identity crisis and its resolution. According to Erik Erikson's theory of

psychosocial development, a person's personality is formed gradually throughout life, while at each stage a certain socio-psychological conflict (crisis) is resolved.

The period of youth, especially adolescence and the early stages of adulthood, is characterized as a stage of “identity and role confusion”. During this period, a person tries to determine his identity, place in society, values, as well as future goals. If this process is successful, a strong personal identity is formed; otherwise, uncertainty, self-doubt, and problems of social adaptation arise. As Erikson noted, the social environment plays a decisive role in the formation of identity. In modern conditions, an important part of this environment is the information space. Young people are exposed to various social roles, values, and life models through the media, the Internet, and social networks. In accordance with Erikson's theory, young people form their own concept of “I” by trying out these models, imitating them, and internalizing them. In this regard, the information environment appears as a factor that accelerates and complicates the process of identification. The book notes that during adolescence, a person often experiences a state of “psychological moratorium”, that is, he searches for a suitable path for himself by temporarily trying on different roles. In today's information environment, this process has expanded even further: young people create different images in virtual space, feel that they belong to different social groups. On the one hand, this situation provides an opportunity for personal growth, on the other hand, it can lead to a “false identity” or superficial self-awareness. Erikson also emphasizes the importance of social recognition and acceptance by others in the identification process. In the information environment, this need is satisfied through “likes”, “comments” and “subscribers”. As a result, young people can become overly attached to external social opinion in their self-assessment. This creates a psychologically unstable identification. Another important aspect in the theory is the formation of a value system. According to Erikson, a healthy identity is based on strong moral and social values. The information environment, on the other hand, offers different, sometimes contradictory values. Young people are forced to make choices within this stream, and this process depends on their level of critical thinking. The theory of psychosocial development put forward by Erik Erikson explains the central mechanism of this process, namely, the individual struggles with internal and external factors in order to find his place in society and achieve personal stability. The modern information environment is emerging as one of the main factors that strongly influences the process of personal identification. The Internet, along with social networks, digital platforms are not only a source of information for young people, but also a space for social comparison and self-expression. According to Leon Festinger's social comparison theory, an individual evaluates himself by comparing himself with others. In the digital environment, due to the proliferation of images filtered through idealized lifestyles, young people may experience low self-esteem, dissatisfaction, or identity uncertainty. In terms of social identity, young people understand themselves through belonging to different groups.

According to the theory of social identity developed by Henry Tajfel, an individual's self-esteem is closely related to the social group to which he belongs. Virtual communities formed on digital platforms - fandoms, online groups, blogger audiences - create a new identification space for young people. On the one hand, this process enhances social integration, but on the other hand, it can also lead to the formation of narrow-minded thinking or radical views. Another important feature of the information environment is the multiplicity and fragmentation of identity. Young people have the opportunity to try out different roles in the virtual space and express themselves in different ways. This situation, while creating a positive opportunity for personal development, complicates the formation of a stable image of the “I”. As a result, an individual may experience a discrepancy between real and virtual identities. In addition, the excessive flow of information increases cognitive load and affects the process of critical thinking. Young people are often inclined to accept ready-made information and rely on stereotypes instead of independent analysis. This leads to the dominance of external influences in the formation of identity. The “information bubble” formed by algorithmic systems reinforces

existing views and leads to a limitation of the worldview. In general, the information environment has a two-way effect on the formation of personal identity of young people. On the one hand, it expands the possibilities of extensive information resources, social connections and self-expression, on the other hand, it can cause negative consequences such as psychological pressure, increased social comparison and identity instability. Therefore, in modern conditions, media literacy, the development of critical thinking and the formation of psychological stability are important factors for the healthy identification process of young people.

CONCLUSION

The formation of youth personal identity in modern social conditions is a complex, multi-stage and dynamic process, which is formed not only under the influence of traditional social institutions, but also under the influence of the digital information environment. The conducted analyses show that the information environment directly and indirectly affects the self-awareness of young people, serving as an important factor in the formation of their value system, social views and the concept of "I". The socio-psychological characteristics of the information environment are such that it is manifested as both an opportunity and a risk factor at the same time. On the one hand, digital platforms provide young people with access to a wide range of information sources, expand social contacts and express themselves in various forms. On the other hand, increased social comparison, the influence of idealized images, and the excessive flow of information can lead to identity instability, low self-esteem, and psychological pressure. The analysis revealed that the sense of belonging to social groups plays an important role in the identification of young people. Virtual communities formed in the digital environment not only strengthen the social identity of young people, but also in some cases lead to the strengthening of one-sided thinking and stereotypes. This process complicates the formation of a stable identity of an individual. In addition, the cognitive and emotional impact of the information environment has a significant impact on the critical thinking ability of young people. As a result of the increasing speed and volume of information flow, the tendency to superficial perception increases, which can negatively affect independent decision-making and the formation of a personal position. In general, in the development of young people's personal identification, the information environment is manifested as a complex socio-psychological system with a dual - positive and negative - effect. Therefore, in modern conditions, it is important to develop media literacy, strengthen critical thinking skills, and form a culture of conscious and purposeful use of the digital environment to form a healthy identity for young people.

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