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SOCIAL NETWORKS AS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR IN THE GLOBALIZATION OF THE INTERNET USER'S CULTURE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

The article investigates social networks and their influence on the formation of the worldview of modern humans. Using sources of media researchers such as Jaron Lanier, James Barnes, Ivan Goldberg, Kimberley S. Young, attempts have been made to critically analyze human interaction and social networks. The features of social networks are defined, and they are shown as social networks carrying out various kinds of activity.

The full definition of «social network» is given, the number of users and the level of popularity of the world's largest social networks (Facebook, YouTube, Qzone, Instagram and Twitter) is analyzed and it is also shown which social network is most effective in reaching the new audience and engaging in advertising.

The concept of Internet dependence (in particular, depending on social networks); its features, types and levels in different countries of the world is determined. It is also analyzed how governments, civic organizations, educational institutions are struggling with this problem, and on what level of development cyber education is.

Keywords: social networks, outlook of modern youth, media, internet addiction, cyber education.

Presenting main material

The Internet environment has become an Indispensable component of modern society and, in particular, social networks that have now become an integral part of it. Every year their role in society and influence on a person has been steadily increasing. The impact of the social network on the formation of the worldview of a modern person is critically important.

Important features of social media are interactivity and freedom of communication, which in turn provides the possibility of implementing various kinds of activities:

Social – the social network is a certain media among people, and people, in turn, use it as a means of rapid communication and interaction.

Political (legal) – contains feedback mechanisms, the ability to respond promptly to messages, which, accordingly, allows you to influence the political and civil processes in society.

A person easily accesses social and political materials on the basis of journalistic investigations, independent bloggers, and official online reports so can study and analyze the political and legal aspects of certain politicians, corporations, and programs.

On the one hand, the aforementioned points emphasize how much the social network enabled a person to have the freedom to communicate and control social and political life. However, on the other hand, social networks gradually begin to turn into a new social institution, which has its own characteristics, inherent only in the data of web services that unites regions of the country and continents on one page of the site. And this means, as noted by the American media scientist Jaron Lanier, that «life has become a database»¹.

Amongst the features that transform social networks into a peculiar social data institution, one can distinguish: the presence of a certain structure, similar functions, constant updating of the content, the ability to influence the motivation of users and social processes from the offline segment of the population. Also,

¹ Lanier, J. (2010). *You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto*. New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 43-44.

almost every social network has its own social groups and organizations. With the help of a social network, you can embody business interests, carry out financial activity: to buy – to sell, to create your own online stores, and to use similar ones, to look for work without leaving home. Also, it is worthwhile to add the opportunity to watch television on the network, for example, now almost every TV channel has its own match on the YouTube service or the channel is implemented on the online version of the player's page.

The viewer prefers the Internet-TV, in contrast to analog or digital TV, first of all, because of convenience – it can be viewed on the road, on vacation, at work, and wherever there is the ability to connect to the network, «forward» uninteresting content and skip ad breaks.

Despite the role of the newest social institution, social networks do not contribute to the rapid development of man as a person. This is a structure, where the collective, rather than individual, the mind is fully functioning. For example, by making a comment on a written post online, you are by no means insured from further harassment by an unhappy crowd of people. This is confirmed by the considerations of the above-mentioned Jaron Lanier: «The younger user, «the generation of Facebook», which is unexpectedly humiliated in the network, has no way out – there is only a collective mind in the network»¹.

The notion of a «social network» arose in 1954, the sociologist James Barnes introduced them into a scientific circle. For him, the «social network» is a social structure consisting of a group of nodes, which are social objects (people or organizations), and the links between them (social relationships)².

Today, more than 6 billion profiles have been registered in social networks throughout the world. The most popular are Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram³. The first place in popularity is Facebook, which has 2 billion registered users. The second place is YouTube with 1.8 billion profiles, and the third – Instagram with 1.1 billion users. Next – Twitter 500.2 million, and the fifth place – Weibo with 431 million accounts⁴.

The Bloglovin⁵ media platform has conducted a survey of various social networks on which of the networks is currently most effective in attracting new audiences and advertising. The company conducted a survey of 2.5 thousand bloggers, 60% of respondents called Instagram the most effective network for reaching the new audience and interacting with it. The Facebook social network has been approved by 18%, Snapchat says only 1% of bloggers are effective for such purposes. Regarding the placement of advertising, 90% of respondents are ready to place an advertising publication on Facebook less than \$250. Such a publication in Instagram 84% of respondents are ready to place for \$250. The cheapest Twitter ads – up to \$ 150.

This shows that the person becomes more interesting today than the forum, not the content, because Instagram gives us a forum. Easy to master and fast, which is convenient to implement in a continuously updated tape of images. Everyone here can quickly take a snapshot of the video and get an instant comment from a wide audience without thinking about the details of the content. Most importantly, a snapshot or a video should be short, bright, admittedly even scandalous, creepy or simply emotional.

Edgar Alvarez, a journalist from Engadget⁶, gives an example of a story that, for comment and popularity in Instagram, Ahmed Simri of California (USA) even mimicked his death.

After analyzing Bloglovin⁷ media platform research, we may reach the following conclusions :

- Social networks easily involve people of all ages in virtual life (the Instagram network works best).
- Social networks can cause feelings of sadness and loneliness, which, in turn, can lead to depression and suicide (or to think about it).

¹ Lanier, J. (2010). *You Are Not a Gadget: A Manifesto*. New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 43-44.

² Barnes, J.A. (1972). *Social networks*. Australia. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 29.

³ Tharon, W. (2010). *Howard. Design to Thrive. Creating Social Networks and Online Communities that Last*. Morgan Kaufmann.

⁴ Wikipedia (2018). *Social networking service*. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_networking_service>. (2018, November, 12).

⁵ Media Sapiens (2016). *Instagram є найефективнішою платформою для залучення аудиторії – дослідження*. <https://ms.detector.media/mediaprosvita/research/instagram_e_nayefektivnishoyu_platformoyu_dlya_zaluchennya_auditorii_doslidzhennya/>. (2018, August, 16).

⁶ Edgar Alvarez (2018). *Why are people pretending to be dead on Instagram?* <<https://www.engadget.com/2018/09/19/instagram-rip-comments-prank/?gucounter=1>>. (2018, September, 19).

⁷ Media Sapiens (2016). *Instagram є найефективнішою платформою для залучення аудиторії – дослідження*. <https://ms.detector.media/mediaprosvita/research/instagram_e_nayefektivnishoyu_platformoyu_dlya_zaluchennya_auditorii_doslidzhennya/>. (2018, September, 19).

– Social networks allow a person to invent a new name (nickname) and an image that later makes them self-defrauded because while communicating with others, they themselves become very quickly accustomed to the fictitious name and image.

– Social networks cause addiction, and an internet dependent person can not control his time, she has health problems.

In general, the problem of Internet dependency needs special attention, because this is a long-standing psychological illness, and dependence on social networks is one of its forms. The term «Internet Addiction Disorder» was proposed by American psychiatrist Ivan Kenneth Goldberg¹ in 199.

The sign of online dependency is the constant need to be online, check for updates on social networks and e-mail. The causes of online dependency are quite different, and depend on many factors. Namely: personal problems (misunderstandings with relatives, relatives), unwillingness to communicate with other peers, sexual dissatisfaction, financial problems, etc. All these needs are assisted by a satisfactory social network, regardless of what transforms her life from real to virtual.

Internet addiction researcher, professor of psychology at Pittsburgh University, Kimberley S. Young², highlights five types of addictions on the Internet:

- addiction to computer games;
- information dependence (endless, senseless movement over the network searching any information);
- chatting addictions in social networks;
- cyber-sex addiction;
- the constant need to be online (gambling, participation in various auctions).

The abovementioned options encourage possibility to be anonymous on the Internet, or use a fictitious nickname on a social network, this also makes the Internet more addictionable and almost uncontrollable.

In this research, one of the most important tries is to analyze how high the level of Internet addiction in different countries, and what methods are used to fight against this problem.

Not for the first time at the state level, the internet addiction problem has been discussed in South Korea. Journalist Kang Hyun-kyung in his article «Seoul to Combat Internet Addiction»³, mentioned that in South Korea about 2 million adults and 26% teenagers suffer from Internet addiction. In general, such indicators are quite understandable, countries such as South Korea, Japan, Singapore are highly developed in terms of technology, information and infrastructure, which allow to every teenager and adult man to be uncontrollable of using social networks.

Besides Eastern Asian countries, European countries also have similar problems. Thus, according to Warsaw correspondent of Radio Liberty, Alexander Lashchenko⁴, in Poland Internet addiction was placed on the list of mental illnesses, and the diagnostic center was opened for the testing and treatment of this disease. Since, every fifth teenager uses Internet till midnight and every third after midnight (mainly about dependence on social networks and game dependence). The consequence of the violation of day and night regime is the deterioration of the mental and intellectual health of the young generation. The research, provided by UNICEF in cooperation with the Ukrainian Institute for Social Research, named after Olexander Yaremenko⁵, on the Internet addiction in Ukraine among teenagers is rather important and interesting. Thus, according to the results of this research, 81% of respondents have a very strong Internet addiction, and 10.6% are strong, only 8.4% of respondents do not feel the need for constant use of the worldwide network. This research shows that the situation in Ukraine does not differ from other countries where such studies were provided. Nevertheless, it should also be added that,

¹ Wikipedia (2018). *Айвен Кеннет Голдберг* <https://ru.wikipedia.org/wiki/Голдберг,_Айвен>. (2018, June, 14).

² Kimberly Young (2000). *Cyber-Disorders: The Mental Health Concern for the New Millennium*. <<http://netaddiction.com/article-list/>>. (2018, November, 12).

³ Kang Hyun-kyung (2010). *Seoul to Combat Internet Addiction*. <http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/03/113_62386.html>. [in English]. (2018, November, 15).

⁴ Лашченко, О., Набока, М. (2010). В тенетах інтернету. Надмірне захоплення цією мережею призводить до депресій. *Radiosvoboda.Org* <<https://www.radiosvoboda.org/a/2156425.html>>. [in Ukrainian]. (2018, September, 13).

⁵ Балакірева, О. (2015). *Європейське опитування учнів щодо вживання алкоголю та інших наркотичних речовин – ESPAD*. Київ: Фоліант.

in contrast to other countries, there is no diagnosis of psychiatric or psychological internet addiction on the state level in Ukraine.

In order to fight against this disease, the abovementioned countries have begun to allocate large amounts of funds from their budgets, as well as to attract various international funds. Since, for each of these countries, the disease has become a serious social issue. For example, In South Korea, the world's first hospital for gamers¹ appeared, and according to its sample, some hospitals had been opened in China, Russia, Japan and other countries. In the USA, at the University of Texas, there is a special center for helping the Internet addiction² disease, as well as in 1995 by Dr. Kimberly Young an Internet addiction center was established³. This center is an innovative breakthrough since it provides advice on how to prevent appearing of the problems, additionally provides practical assistance on solving an already existing problem, and conducts various types of empirical studies and testing the disease.

Finally, analyzing the trends of cyberbreaking will be important. First of all to find remedies against this disease is more important. Implementing more disciplines to schools and Universities is necessary because students and pupils remain the most vulnerable group. Moreover, public organizations, city authorities, should organize optimized training, for age groups, because, unfortunately, in most cases parents of children and students also can be Internet addicted, and above all from social networks.

Beginning to implement cyber education by economically developed countries is the positive side. Since, doctors in the USA, Canada, Germany, and Australia recommend that preschool children should use gadgets for only 1 hour a day or not use them at all. In Taiwan, children's uncontrolled access to the Internet might cost thousand dollars to parents as a penalty⁴.

In The United States and the UK also have a network of public organizations, which have activity connected with cyber education (Common Sense media and Parent Zone)⁵. They offer specific practical actions, engaged with cases about how necessary it is to organize children's and students' time on the Internet, in the context of the danger of dependence on the network.

Unfortunately, in Ukraine and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe, at the legislative level, there is no regulation for youth and senior people interaction time with Internet media. There are only recommendations to follow the advice of other countries.

Thus, we can **conclude** that today social networks have become an integral part of modern society and each year their role in society and influence on a person is steadily increasing. The peculiarity of the social network is interactivity, freedom of communication and the possibility of implementing various kinds of activities (social, legal, political). These features of the social network can be attributed to the advantages of its existence.

The very concept of «social network» arose in 1954, the sociologist James Barn introduced it into a scientific circle. Nowadays, the most popular of them are Facebook, YouTube, and Instagram. The most effective network for attracting new audiences is the social network Instagram, it is also the most used to advertise.

Studying sources and conducting this research, we can say that as one of the negative features of the social network serves dependency that they cause. Furthermore, a person does not control his time while communication and monitoring the lives of others. As a result, many users have health problems. As well as the research shows that people who spend most of their time on the Internet are usually lonely in real life.

So, in order to not be limited in communication and friendship, a person creates and immerses into a virtual environment. Also, in some cases they become narcissistic, and sometimes they complex to others, because of the problems of socialization and manipulatively created images of another's ideal life.

¹ Kang Hyun-kyung (2010). Seoul to Combat Internet Addiction. <http://koreatimes.co.kr/www/news/nation/2010/03/113_62386.html>. (2018, November, 15).

² The University of Texas at Austin (2018). *Problematic Internet Use*. <<https://cmhc.utexas.edu/internetuse.html>>. (2018, November, 10).

³ Kimberly Young (2018). *The Center for Internet Addiction*. <<http://netaddiction.com/>>. (2018, November, 15).

⁴ Журнал «На Урок» (2018). *Редакція. Інтернет-залежність чи саморозвиток: технології в умовах цифрового світу Переваги та загрози для школярів*. <<https://naurok.com.ua/post/internet-zalezhnist-chi-samorozvitok-tehnologi-v-umovah-cifrovogo-svitu>>. (2018, November, 15).

⁵ Common Sense (2018). *Homepage*. <<https://www.common sensemedia.org/>> (2018, November, 10); Parent Zone (2018). *Contact Us*. <<https://parentzone.org.uk/about-us/contact-us>>. (2018, November, 10).

An essential positive aspect is the introduction of cyber education, this system of counteraction to the Internet dependence operates in developed countries, in the segment of Central and Eastern Europe the best on media literacy is Germany, significant trend in the struggle against Internet addiction is demonstrated by Poland, because this country has opened diagnostic centers and treatment of internet addiction.

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