INFORMATION CULTURE OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN RUSSIA IN THE INTERNET SPACE: ITS CURRENT STATE AND METHODS OF ITS MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

Modern society is characterized by the information technology rapid development, which results in the cultural and social sphere changes. New communicative norms and rules are formed in the Internet space, while the public relations are transformed. Cultural and social changes are most noticeable among the young people. The rate of information technology development is considerably higher than the development rate of the information culture of the youth. As a result, there arises a number of problems and conflicts, associated with the information culture development in the Internet space, which in its turn results in the real risks and threats formation among the young people. Therefore, this process management is necessary for the youth' information culture development. Determination of the current state of the Russian youth' information culture in the Internet space as well as the information culture management methods is the research objective. The analysis of the current state of the information culture among the young people in the modern Russia, the identification of the problems and contradictions in the youth information culture, as well as the definition and classification of the information culture management methods in the Internet space are the research tasks. The questionnaire survey (V-2039) is the basic research method.

Key words: information culture, young people, management methods

JEL Code: Z13, J13

Introduction

The young people are of key importance in our society life as far as they form a social group, which determines our future. Thereby the researchers have an increased focus on the youth. The values-based orientations, which have been adopted yet or are being adopted by the youth today, as well as the methods of these values implementation in social life, are of crucial importance. The vast majority of the modern youth is socialized by means of the

Internet. The virtual ties with increasing frequency replace real social ties. Today a person should possess the sufficient level of information culture for successful socialization.

It should be mentioned, that the "information culture" term first appeared in the scientific literature in the 1970s in the papers of such Soviet bibliographs as K.M. Voykhanskaya and B.A. Smirnova (1974) and E.L. Shapiro (1975). Today there exists a number of approaches to the "information culture" concept essence (Zabokritskaya, 2017).

The information culture is considered as the socially divided behavior patterns, norms and values, which define the information value and usage (Choo, 2008). Actually, stability and integrity of the large and small social groups depend on the way of information interpretation and usage by these groups. With increasing frequency, the Internet becomes a platform, where people can prepare for the real social processes. The norms, rules and accepted behavior patterns, broadcasted by the media and the Internet, define the normal and expected social behavior.

We offer an integrative approach, according to which the information culture in the Internet space is defined as an integral feature of the Internet space users, which regulates social interactions, both in the virtual space and in the real world, through the values and norms system as well as the informational competence of these users.

Today people exist in the following two spaces: the off-line space, which has been occupied throughout history for thousands of years, and the online space, which has been created only within the last 30 years or so with the advent of the Internet. Although the online space is still considered as an extension or a part of the off-line space, there is no doubt that the online space will influence our lives with increasing intensity with the dawn of the smart era (Sung and Kim, 2016).

A number of researches use the "cyberculture" term instead of the "information culture" term in relation to the Internet space (Levy, 2000; Sak et al., 2007; Hartmanova and Smahaj, 2015; Katarína, 2016, and al.). According to the classical definition, the cyberculture is a set of techniques, practices, approaches and modes of thought, which are developed with the cyberspace growth, and the cyberculture is established through the ties based on the interaction in the computers world (Levy, 2000). We believe that the "information culture in the Internet space" is a wider concept as compared to the "cyberculture" term as far as the former includes the value-based component.

It is offered to study the information culture in the Internet space on the basis of the definition, mentioned above, through such elements as the values and norms in the Internet space as well as the informational competence.

During investigation of a phenomenon, the clear understanding of its characteristics, by which the current state and changes of this phenomenon can be described, is required. Let us describe in detail the characteristic features of the information culture elements in the Internet space, on which this research was based.

For instance, the values in the Internet space mean significance of the phenomena, objects and processes considered as the patterns accepted in the Internet space. The values are the basis for particular behavior norms and standards, which are implemented during social interaction in the Internet space.

The norms in the Internet space are the rules, expectations and standards of behavior, which determine social interaction in the Internet space. We follow some norms only in theory, while other norms control our behavior. From the one hand the norms can be imposed on us from the outside, for instance, by means of laws. In this case, the norms are the external rules. From the other hand, they can be formed within the certain groups (virtual communities). The constantly repeated behavior patterns in the Internet space, which can be considered as the inherited stereotypical ways of behavior, belong to one of the norms type.

By the informational competence we mean the availability of knowledge and experience necessary for effective activity in the Internet space. For instance, the knowledge and skills sufficient for programs and applications installation on a device, the ability to use these programs, etc. are the particular characteristics of the information competence in the Internet space.

It seems possible and appropriate not only to study the information culture in the Internet space, including the information culture study through its elements, but also to intentionally control its development. The methods of the information culture control in the Internet space are the set of practices and ways of influencing the Internet space with the purpose of the values, norms and informational competence adoption, preservation and development. At the present time, no complex recommendations for the cyber security and the information culture consolidation in the Internet space are available (Reid and Niekerk, 2014).

It is in the authors' opinion, that the methods of the youth information culture control in the Internet space comprise:

- the advocacy of positive values among the young people;
- the motivation for the appropriate norms adoption and execution;
- education (for the specific norms adoption and the competence development);
- tightening of legislation, including sanctions for non-fulfillment of the norms.

1 Research Methodology

The sociological research was based on the questionnaire survey, performed from May to October 2016. N=2039. The research was carried out on the territory of the Sverdlovsk region, which is one of the largest regions in Russia. The quota sampling and the written questionnaire were used in the research, the respondents where asked to fill in the printed forms. The quotas were based on the statistical data on the sex and age structure of the young people in the Sverdlovsk region as well as the number of the young people living in the following population centers: a big city (more than 100 thousand of people), a middle-sized city (50-100 thousand of people), a small town (less than 50 thousand of people), a village. Different types of population centers were chosen due to the fact that one of the hypotheses was based on the assumption that the young people in different population centers have different information capabilities, therefore, their information culture can also differ. It was decided to consider the respondents at the ages from 14 to 30 years as the young people. The results of the research were processed with the IBM SPSS Statistics Base 22.0 software program.

Investigation of the youth information culture in the information space was based on the study of its elements state, namely the values and norms in the Internet space as well as the information competence of the young people. On the basis of these elements state, the conclusion concerning the current state of the youth information culture in Russian Internet space was drawn, and also the contradictions in the information culture of the youth were identified.

2 Research Results and Discussion

First of all, we asked our respondents about the degree of importance of their presence in the Internet space and the main purposes of their online activity. The study results have shown that almost 98 % of the respondents visit the Internet space regularly with the help of mobile devices or personal computers. The majority of them (56 %) feel anxious or unsatisfied if they do not go online during the day. The presented data shows that the Internet space is a very significant phenomenon in the life of the Sverdlovsk region youth.

According to the official data, the Sverdlovsk region is also one of the leaders in terms of the Internet users number, as well as the media activity. More than 70 % of all news in the Ural Federal District is received from Ekaterinburg. Nowadays the Internet access is available

in all general educational institutions, secondary specialized colleges and the universities of the city.

In order to analyze the importance level of the Internet space for the young people, we asked the respondents about the purpose of the information search and acquisition over the Internet (Table 1).

Table 1

The purpose of the information acquisition over the Internet depending on the population center type

The purpose of the information acquisition over the Internet	Type of population center, in % of the respondents number				
	Big city	Middle-sized city	Town	Village	Total
To keep track of the current events	54.7	50.1	53.3	42.2	53.2
To broaden one's horizons and self-development	56.9	54.1	53.8	51.1	55.3
The information is necessary for studies/work	68.3	66.9	65.1	73.3	67.1
To keep in touch with friends, relatives	54.4	51.5	49.9	60.2	52.6
For leisure, entertainment (watching photos, films, listening to music, etc.)	58.9	56.8	55.2	73.3	57.7
To solve social problems	9.4	10.9	8.8	13.3	9.5
For shopping on the Internet	25.2	25.9	23.6	22.2	24.7
To overcome boredom	19.5	13.9	22.8	24.4	20.2
Other	0.1	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.2

*Source: the table was developed by the author

On the basis of the research results, the corellation between the purposes of information acquisition and the population center type was found. The bigger the population center, the more often the young people use information for studies or work, "broadening their horizons" or "keeping track of the current events". On the contrary, in villages the young people use the Internet more often for communication with friends, for entertainment or just spend their time online "to overcome boredom". In villages the young people compensate the lack of leisure activities by spending time online.

It should be noted that the presence in the Internet space by itself is significant for the young people. The problems, which the young people solve with the help of the Internet resources are also of great social importance. More often the young people satisfy their need for communication, education, information search, and other types of social needs in the Internet space (Dobrotina and Erokhina, 2017).

After that, we asked the respondents about the rules and standards of behavior they follow on the Internet. As to the official norms, regulating the Internet users activity, there are

very few of them. Among these norms one can mention the rules of working with programs and the Internet resources which a user should read upon registration (Cezar, 2017).

According to our research, 73 % of respondents do not read these rules in most cases, but rather "tick off for registration", while 18 % just run through them. Consequently, if the young people do not know the formal rules of behavior on the Internet they do not comply with these rules.

Moreover, the research results have shown that the informal rules are also poorly fulfilled. For instance, 35 % of respondents use simple passwords for the Internet log-on, another 14 % of respondents use the same passwords for different internet resources. The overwhelming majority of the young people allow themselves to use the wrong personal information (51 %) and offensive language on the Internet (43 %).

The fact that 14.2 % of respondents lost their money on the Internet due to online fraudsters activity is the indication of the low level of social norms development among the young people in the Internet space. Furthermore, 7.4 % of respondents were involved in the destructive groups (sects, suicide groups, etc.), 5.8 % were involved in the extremist internet groups, 5.6 % bought illegal goods through the Internet (drugs, spice, etc.). Generally, the criminal activity over the Internet is focused on teenagers. Thus, 6.5 % of respondents at the ages from 14 to 17 were involved in the extremist groups, while for the people at the ages from 25 to 30 this index is one half as high.

Thus, the low level of behavior norms development in the Internet space leads to the decrease in the information security of the young people. According to the paragraph 18 of the Doctrine of the information security in the Russian Federation of December 5, 2016, "the information security state in the science, technologies and education sphere is characterized…by the low awareness of citizens on the issues associated with the personal information security assurance". Therefore, it is necessary to step up efforts in this direction.

In order to analyze the information competence in the Internet space, we asked the respondents if they knew how to use browsers and search systems, and what programs and applications they used for communication and information acquisition, processing and protection.

Generalizing the study results for this information culture element, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents themselves are sure that they have a sufficiently high level of competence in the Internet space (at an average of 54 %). As for specific questions about the ability to set up particular applications, transfer information safely and protect personal data, the research has shown the low level of the young people's competence. For instance, only 10

% of the young people do not read the letters from the unknown message senders and only 6 % of respondents close or block the computer or smartphone camera. By being the active users of the Internet space, the young people are quite presumptuous and, in fact, the level of their information competence development is low, especially concerning the information safety culture (Svard, 2017).

Conclusions and recommendations

The youth is the most active social group in the Internet space. At the same time, the study results have shown, that the information culture level of the young people in the Internet space remains quite low even though the level of the Internet penetration in the youth life is close to 100 %. The values of the information culture in the Internet space are highly developed among the young people, but at the same time the level of the norms and informational competence development is rather low. It can be stated that the development of the youth information culture in the Internet space has faced a number of problems and contradictions, which comprise:

- the society's demand for formation of the high level of the information culture of the population, in particular the young people, and the actual low level of the information culcture development;

- the high rate of the Internet technologies development and penetration into the youth environment and significant lag of the information culture development (especially the developemnt of such elements as norms and certain types of knowledge);

- the importance of the youth, as a social group in the modern Russian society and the high level of risks and threats in the Internet space, especially as applied to the youth;

- the rapid growth of the virtual social ties in the youth environment and the low level of communication culture and information security culture development.

The planning and the administrative decisions making are necessary for these problems and contradictions solving. It is required to intensify the efforts concerning developement of the information culture management methods in the Internet space. It seems appropriate to step up efforts for development of all the above-mentioned methods of the information culture control in the Internet space, with regard to the youth of Russia. The educational method is particularly promising for the youth. This method makes possible the information culture formation and developement, in particular its normative and competence based elements (Bannykh and Kostina, 2016). The educational programs of all the training

levels should comprise the issues of the information culture in the Internet space, including the information security culture (Koshevenko and Silchenkova, 2016).

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