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Youth in digital media: formation of the network “I”.

The article presents a philosophical and cultural-philosophical analysis of the formation of the networked “self” of youth in the context of contemporary digital culture. The aim of the study is to identify the mechanisms through which the global digital environment influences processes of self-identification, self-presentation, and social interaction. The methodological framework is based on qualitative analysis of scholarly literature, a comparative-analytical approach, and an interdisciplinary synthesis of theoretical concepts developed in contemporary philosophy, sociology, cultural studies, and media studies. Particular attention is paid to the role of social media, algorithmic systems, and participatory culture as key factors in the formation of a new digital subjectivity. The study demonstrates that the networked “self” represents a dynamic, multi-layered, and distributed form of identity, emerging through the continuous interaction of the subject with digital platforms, imagined audiences, and algorithmically structured environments. It is revealed that self-presentation, active participation in online communities, and rigid algorithmic regulation function as interrelated mechanisms in the construction of identity. The findings enhance understanding of personality transformation in the information society and can inform educational strategies and digital literacy, while contributing to the theoretical analysis of anthropological shifts driven by rapid technologization.

Keywords: digital culture, youth, networked self, identity, self-presentation, algorithms, social media, digital citizenship, participatory culture, online communities.

Introduction

The contemporary life of young people is increasingly connected with the digital environment, where social media, online platforms, and various forms of digital communication become not merely tools but an important part of everyday culture. Today, young people enter adulthood under conditions that radically differ from the experience of previous generations. Whereas previously the process of personality formation took place predominantly in offline space within the family, school, among friends, and in real social institutions, now a significant part of these processes has been transferred into digital space. In this regard, studies devoted to the formation of youth identity within digital culture acquire particular significance.

Digital culture is not a simple technological environment. It represents a complex set of social practices, visual forms of communication, algorithmic mechanisms, and cultural norms that together create conditions in which young people can see themselves, interact with one another, construct their images, and present their individuality to the world. Within this environment emerges what in academic literature is referred to as the “networked Self,” that is, a form of identity that is simultaneously distributed across different platforms, dependent on user reactions, constructed through visual and textual representations, and constantly transformed under the influence of audiences and algorithms. It should be noted that the interest in studying digital identity did not emerge by chance. Youth became the first social group that not only actively consumes digital technologies but also uses them as a space for self-presentation, experimentation with image, and the search for belonging. For many, platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, or Telegram become primary arenas where new understandings are formed regarding “who I am”, what my individuality means, what I belong to, and how I wish to be presented to others.

This transformation is connected with several key factors. First, digital culture changes the very notion of privacy. Whereas previously personal life and public appearance were clearly separated, today the boundaries between the private and the public are blurred. Young people live simultaneously in two realities: in the offline world and in the digital environment, and their sense of self depends on how they are represented in these realities. Second, digital media intensifies processes of comparison and observation: youth constantly evaluate themselves through likes, comments, visibility, and audience engagement. This creates new psychological pressures that influence self-esteem and emotional state. Third, digital culture affects social connec-

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tions. Young people increasingly find friends, like-minded individuals, and communities online. Online belonging becomes for them an important source of emotional support, creative self-realization, and civic activity. This is especially evident in studies of digital activism, where young users not only express opinions but participate in the creation of movements, disseminate ideas, and form new types of civic identity. Fourth, platforms are governed by algorithms that invisibly, yet very effectively, influence which images youth see, which messages they receive, and which values they gradually internalize. Algorithms do not simply filter information; they construct digital reality, and this affects the formation of subjectivity. Young people often do not notice that their preferences, moods, or views are shaped under the influence of recommendation systems, visual trends, and algorithmically curated content.

These features create the necessity to reconsider traditional conceptions of how identity is formed. Whereas previous studies of personality were built around notions of stability, consistency, and inner integrity, today it has become evident that digital identity is flexible, distributed, and to a large extent dependent on external factors. Young people may possess several digital “selves,” each represented on different platforms, with different audiences and different rules of visibility. Recent academic literature demonstrates a growing interest in this topic. Researchers from various countries and disciplines, including philosophy, sociology, psychology, media studies, and cultural studies, examine in detail how digital culture transforms modes of self-presentation, self-perception, and social interaction. The works of Soh [1], Gitomer [2], Amaral and Ventura [3], Chung [4], Milan [5], Ettlinger [6], Brites et al. [7], Avci et al. [8], Pérez-Torres [9], as well as the study by Kochetova and Klimakova [10], demonstrate that these changes affect not only communicative habits but also deeper psychological and cultural processes.

In this regard, it becomes especially relevant to define the philosophical and cultural-philosophical dimension in the study of the formation of the networked “Self” of youth within digital culture. This issue acquires particular urgency when considering the large-scale influence of social media and algorithms on individual and collective identity. Digital culture creates new opportunities for self-presentation, which requires a rethinking of traditional concepts of identity and subjectivity. In the context of constant interaction with various online platforms, youth encounter challenges related to constructing and maintaining their image, which in turn forms new modes of self-expression and participation in public life. Philosophical analysis makes it possible to understand more deeply how these processes influence the transformation of identity and to illuminate the ethical questions that arise as a result of the manipulation of digital algorithms and their impact on personal autonomy. Thus, the study of the philosophical dimension of the networked “Self” of youth becomes necessary for revealing the essence of the transformations taking place in society and for understanding their influence on new forms of sociocultural reality.

In the article, the authors propose a theoretical model of the formation of the networked “Self,” yet there remain directions that require further study. Despite the high level of scholarly interest in this issue, it has recently become increasingly necessary to examine, first of all, the Kazakhstani context. It is important to demonstrate more concretely how national cultural characteristics, the linguistic environment, and social experience influence the digital identity of youth. The influence of algorithms also requires additional attention. It is necessary to study more deeply how they shape the information environment, amplify or smooth social differences, and affect users’ values and behavior. Attention should also be paid to the long-term consequences of digital self-presentation. It is important to understand whether constant public visibility contributes to the formation of a stable personality or, on the contrary, leads to the fragmentation of identity. It is also necessary to clarify the boundary between digital citizenship and digital governance: whether youth participation in online practices represents autonomous activity or is largely determined by platform logic. Thus, the prospects for further research are connected with specifying the national context, analyzing algorithmic influence, and studying the sustainability of digital identity.

This article is aimed at a philosophical and cultural-philosophical reflection on how the networked “Self” of youth is formed within digital culture. The subject of the research is the theoretical, philosophical, and methodological approaches to the study of the problem of the formation of the networked “Self” of youth within digital culture and the social sciences. The aim of the article is to demonstrate how the digital environment influences the formation of youth identity and how the networked “Self” emerges within social media. The authors seek to explain which mechanisms of self-presentation, platform algorithms, and participatory culture are involved in the construction of contemporary digital personality. Within the framework of the article, the following tasks are set:

- to describe the influence of digital culture on identity;
- to analyze practices of self-presentation;

- to identify the philosophical, cultural, and psychological consequences of networked life;
- to examine the role of algorithms in the formation of digital subjectivity;
- to consider the significance of digital participatory culture;
- to demonstrate how digital citizenship and online belonging create new forms of youth participation.

The novelty of this article lies in the comprehensive consideration of the formation of youth digital identity within the contemporary media environment. The authors demonstrate that social platform algorithms function not merely as technical instruments but as active factors in the construction of the networked “Self,” influencing visibility, norms of self-presentation, and value orientations. Moreover, the work combines cultural, philosophical, sociological, and media approaches, proposing an interdisciplinary model for the analysis of digital subjectivity.

An important contribution of the article is the systematization of the mechanisms of formation of the networked “Self” — self-presentation, participatory culture, and algorithmic regulation — in their interrelation. Thus, the article offers a more holistic understanding of digital citizenship as a form of social maturity and youth participation in public life, moving beyond narrowly technological or psychological explanations.

The theoretical contribution of this work consists of proposing an integral understanding of digital identity as a process that occurs simultaneously in the internal and external worlds of the young person. Identity in the digital environment can no longer be regarded as a static structure. It is formed through the interaction of youth with cultural symbols, visual codes, platform algorithms, and social networks. The analysis has shown that the networked “Self” represents a new form of identity that requires a reconsideration of classical theories of personality. Traditional concepts, developed during offline socialization, view personality as a relatively stable structure. Contemporary research, however, emphasizes that for digital youth variability, experimentation, and multiplicity constitute the norm. In this article, the authors also substantiate the importance of understanding the role of algorithms and digital architecture in the formation of identity. This direction remains relatively new in social philosophy and philosophy of culture, and the presented analysis highlights the necessity of deepening research in this area, since algorithms exert a systemic influence that youth rarely fully recognize.

Methods and Research Methodology

The methodological section of the present article is based on the principles of qualitative, comparative-analytical, and thematic synthesis of academic literature. Since the article is devoted to the study of the philosophical and cultural-philosophical aspects of the formation of youth identity in the digital environment, particular attention was given to the selection of sources representing different scientific disciplines. Therefore, the methodological approach was constructed in such a way as to ensure a comprehensive analysis that integrates theoretical models, findings of empirical research, and concepts of digital culture. In this work, the authors relied on quantitative and qualitative studies, as well as critical and philosophical interpretations. This enabled the authors to examine youth identity from different perspectives, combining psychological, sociological, cultural, and technological approaches.

Results

Digital culture as a new social environment for the formation of youth identity. Contemporary digital culture creates a new space in which young people undergo important stages of personal development, self-acceptance, recognition, and self-knowledge. In the studies of Soh [1], Avci et al. [8], and Pérez-Torres [9], it is emphasized that the digital environment has ceased to be a secondary background for socialization. It has become the cultural and social environment that directly shapes the ways of thinking, behavior, self-perception, and self-presentation of the younger generation. Researchers note that digital culture is not neutral. It sets standards and norms, expectations and rules that youth are compelled to consider in the process of forming their identity. This concerns not only the visual standards characteristic of platforms such as Instagram or TikTok, but also new expectations regarding social activity, publicity, emotional openness, the formation of one’s own style and image, participation in trends, and high speed of response. Soh [1] demonstrates that digital culture influences how young people understand the very nature of identity.

Youth are aware that their digital image may change depending on the platform, the audience, or even their mood. Such flexibility gives young people a sense of freedom and makes digital identity dynamic and multilayered. It exists in several versions: one image on Instagram, another on TikTok, a third in chat communication or in a game, and a fourth in the professional environment. Avci et al. [8] note that this process is accompanied by constant attention to audience feedback — likes, comments, and views. At times, this may

form a dependency in the individual. Young people do not merely publish content; they mentally return to it, track reactions, compare themselves with others, and analyze the success of their posts. There are many examples of successful publications through which their creators became famous and successful.

Public metrics of popularity, such as likes, comments, reposts, and an increasing number of followers, constantly create a space for comparison with others. Such “digital reflexivity” becomes part of self-determination and strengthens orientation toward external evaluations, influencing self-esteem. In the work of Pérez-Torres [9], an important idea is introduced that digital culture creates the effect of a “digital mirror.” A young person looks at themselves through the prism of the platform and its indicators. This mirror does not always reflect reality, yet it influences self-evaluation and provides a sense of individuality, self-confidence, and the formation of life goals. The study by Kochetova and Klimakova [10] confirms that youth often encounter situations in which the digital image becomes stronger than the real one. This is due to the fact that digital platforms possess such tools as visual-communicative influence, short video formats, stories, reels, and mimetic structures that stimulate rapid perception and create a strong emotional response. Visuality becomes the main channel of self-presentation for youth. Adolescents note that it is easier for them to be themselves, or conversely, a better version of themselves, in the digital environment than offline. Such tools of identity construction as profiles, reactive masks, avatars, filters, musical effects, and multimodal formats provide users with the opportunity to create a desired version of themselves. These platforms set templates of self-presentation and standardize the visual language of identity. This creates a certain tension between two worlds, requiring the individual’s ability to balance between them. Thus, digital culture has become an integral part of the contemporary process of growing up, defining values, communication patterns, and ways of expressing identity.

Self-presentation and the formation of the networked “Self” in the digital environment is one of the key dimensions in the formation of youth identity. Communication tools such as chats, groups, channels, live broadcasts, and comments provide connections and enable users to participate in networked communities. These tools facilitate the dissemination of information, mobilization, and the creation of collective identities. Many researchers emphasize that self-presentation in digital culture is not merely the demonstration of appearance or achievements, but a way of participating in social relations, in groups, in trends, and in symbolic exchanges of meaning. The works of Amaral & Ventura [3], Gitomer [2], and Pérez-Torres [9] show that young people use digital platforms to express their individuality, their relationship with the world, and their membership in specific social or cultural groups. Self-presentation becomes a process of creating a digital image that must correspond to the expectations of the audience.

The study by Amaral and Ventura [3] emphasizes the role of emotional expressiveness, visual storytelling, and participation in social and political initiatives. Youth activity on Instagram or TikTok is not only an expression of a position, but also a way of forming the image of an active, conscious, socially engaged person who represents a persona that is interesting for communication. In the work of Gitomer [2], the phenomenon of remix culture is examined as an instrument of self-presentation. Young people use music tracks, popular sounds, trends, and visual elements to create their own style and image. This requires a certain level of digital literacy and emotional courage. Self-presentation becomes a form of creativity, where young people, combining ready-made elements, present themselves in the most ideal form; to express themselves, they sometimes rely on standard templates of visual image.

In the research of Pérez-Torres [9], it is emphasized that platforms create a particular logic of visibility and success. Young users begin to compare themselves with the idealized images they see in their feed. They adjust their behavior and appearance, striving to correspond to these visual standards. As a result, self-presentation turns into a way of constructing the “best version of oneself.” However, such practices have an ambivalent effect. On the one hand, they allow youth to feel confidence, belonging to a group, self-expression, and recognition. On the other hand, they intensify pressure, because the digital image must be maintained, updated, and aligned with audience expectations; to retain attention to their persona, individuals must constantly post information about themselves and their activities and remain socially active. The key conclusion is that self-presentation is not merely an option; it is one of the mechanisms of forming the networked “Self,” which must constantly be fed with content. It should be noted that self-presentation on social media forms psychological dependence and makes it necessary to investigate the psychological dimension of the problem.

Philosophical, psychological, and cultural consequences of networked life. The psychological consequences of digital activity constitute one of the most studied and discussed topics in the contemporary academic environment. The works of Avci et al. [8], Pérez-Torres [9], Amaral & Ventura [3], and Kochetova &

Klimakova [10] emphasize that the digital environment evokes in youth a wide spectrum of emotional experiences. These experiences may be both positive and negative. Many studies point to: an increase in self-esteem through audience support; the strengthening of a sense of belonging; the possibility of creative self-realization; the development of social connections; and the opportunity to receive recognition. Social support and recognition represent the subtlest feeling, one that provides enormous strength and faith in being needed by society. For example, the works of Amaral and Ventura [3] show that participation in digital activism helps young people feel the meaning of their existence, influence ongoing processes, and expand the boundaries of their possibilities. We understand this as a feeling of satisfaction in one's necessity. These may be considered positive consequences.

Let us now consider the negative consequences. Researchers also record parallel negative emotions such as anxiety, emotional burnout, dependence on external evaluation, heightened sensitivity to criticism, and comparison with "ideal images." Avci et al. [8] indicate that constant exposure to audience observation creates an "effect of the glass wall," where a young person feels intensified attention toward their actions. The work of Pérez-Torres [9] shows that adolescents perceive digital norms as obligations that require conformity. If an image does not receive the expected support, a feeling of inadequacy or failure arises. The phenomenon of dual identity is also emphasized separately. A young person may have one image in real life and another in the digital environment. This creates internal tension, especially when the two images differ significantly. Kochetova and Klimakova [10] note that this is particularly relevant in cultures where there is a gap between traditional values and contemporary digital reality.

Algorithms and platform architectures are factors in the formation of digital subjectivity. The studies of Chung [4], Milan [5], Ettlinger [6], and Brites et al. [7] demonstrate that algorithms represent one of the key factors in the formation of youth digital identity. Young users do not always realize that their interaction with platforms is governed by algorithmic systems. Chung [4] introduces the concept of "algorithmic knowledge," showing that more informed users are able to regulate their behavior, disable notifications, limit engagement, or choose safer spaces. Milan [5] considers algorithms as a form of control. Platforms determine which content becomes visible, which trends emerge, and what is considered "valuable" in the digital environment. Ettlinger [6] emphasizes that in the educational sphere, algorithmic logic forms new expectations of students. Their activity is increasingly evaluated through quantitative indicators. Brites et al. [7] show that among youth there are several types of algorithmic literacy. Some understand how algorithms function, others do not. This affects behavior, risks, and the ability to think critically. The conclusion is that algorithms shape the digital reality of youth as strongly as social connections and media content.

Another important topic is participatory culture and collective identity. Participatory culture has become a significant part of the digital experience of youth. The studies of Gitomer [2], Amaral & Ventura [3], and Soh [1] emphasize that young people actively participate in content creation, discussion of trends, and support of movements and communities. Participation has two dimensions. The individual dimension: self-realization, the search for recognition, and the strengthening of personal identity. The collective dimension: solidarity, belonging to a group, and involvement in shared initiatives. Amaral and Ventura [3] show that collective movements, for example those related to racial justice or feminism, help youth develop a sense of belonging to a larger community. Gitomer [2] emphasizes that participation is connected not only with activism but also with creativity. Remixes, challenges, and memes are forms of collective creativity that help youth feel part of something greater. Soh [1] notes that participation is a mechanism for the formation of the digital Self, which enables youth to "co-create" their identity together with other users.

The philosophical dimension of studying the problem of the formation of the networked "Self" of youth makes it possible to understand more deeply the transformations of identity and subjectivity within digital culture, revealing the influence of social media, algorithms, and participatory culture on self-determination and self-presentation of individuals, digital citizenship, and online belonging. The works of Milan [5], Soh [1], and Brites et al. [7] show that digital citizenship has become an important element of contemporary adulthood. Digital citizenship includes: the ability to behave online, participation in social discussions, understanding of rights and responsibilities in digital space, a critical attitude toward information, and algorithmic literacy. Online belonging is a profound feeling that youth experience toward the communities with which they interact on the Internet. This may include a fan community, a political or activist movement, a creative group, an educational or professional community. Milan [5] emphasizes that digital participation gives youth the opportunity to influence social processes. This represents a new form of civic identity that does not always coincide with traditional offline citizenship.

Thus, the philosophical implications of studying the formation of the networked “Self” may be formulated as follows:

1. Reconsideration of identity: The research helps to reveal how the digital environment transforms traditional understandings of personal identity, leading to a multilayered and dynamic conception of the “Self.”
2. Questions of authenticity: There arises a need to discuss the authenticity of self-presentation in online spaces, where the boundaries between the authentic “Self” and constructed identity are blurred.
3. Ethics of digital self-expression: The research raises questions of ethics and responsibility in interaction with digital algorithms and participatory culture, calling into question freedom of choice and personal autonomy.
4. Collective consciousness: The analysis of emerging forms of networked identity contributes to understanding how digital culture shapes a new collective consciousness and influences processes of socialization.
5. Metaphysical aspects: Issues of existence, self-awareness, and the perception of masks in digital spaces provoke philosophical reflection on the essence of the “Self” in the context of virtual reality.

These implications emphasize not only the influence of digital culture on youth, but also propose new approaches to rethinking philosophical questions about the human beings in the technological age. Thus, the analysis demonstrates that the formation of youth identity in the digital environment is a multi-level process. It is connected both with individual experiences and with collective practices, both with psychological mechanisms and with algorithmic structures.

Discussion

In this section, the focus is directed toward interpreting the results of the analysis of contemporary academic literature on youth identity in the digital environment. Whereas the previous section examined individual themes based on specific sources, here the attention shifts to the overall meaning of the transformations taking place, the internal connections between factors, and the cultural, psychological, and social consequences of these processes. The purpose of the discussion is to provide a holistic understanding of how digital culture transforms youth identity, what underlies this process, and what challenges and opportunities arise for youth and society. Digital culture as a new social reality of youth. The analysis of the literature shows that digital culture becomes the primary environment in which young people learn to understand themselves and others. It is not an addition to real life, but an expansion of familiar reality in which new modes of communication, self-expression, and self-analysis are formed. What previously occurred within local communities — in school, in the family, in clubs, among friends — now actively develops online. Moreover, digital connections often prove to be more significant than offline relationships. Young people enter the network not as observers but as active participants, creating content, communicating, and engaging in the dynamics of public expression of emotions, opinions, and experiences. Digital culture becomes a space of socialization, psychological adaptation, and the construction of one’s life trajectory. It determines what is considered normal, beautiful, successful, and desirable. Youth internalize these norms through visual images, algorithmically curated content, circulating trends, and mass cultural codes. Thus, digital culture creates the conditions that shape the everyday practices of young people. It becomes a new society in which values, habits, and self-perception are formed.

The networked “Self” as a new form of identity. One of the key conclusions of the analysis is the emergence of a new form of identity that may be called the networked “Self.” This form differs from traditional understandings of personality because it is distributed across several platforms; it relies not only on self-perception but also on audience reactions; it changes depending on mood, purpose, and context; it is constantly updated through content; and it exists simultaneously in multiple versions. The networked “Self” is flexible, dynamic, and subject to external influence. It is not a stable structure but a process. It is important to understand that youth perceive such a process as normal. Unlike older generations, for whom identity was associated with permanence, young people consider it natural to change their images, roles, and behavioral styles. This is confirmed by the studies of Soh [1], Pérez-Torres [9], and Avci et al. [8], which show that the process of self-presentation online becomes a way of reflecting upon one’s own personality. Young people do not simply create images; they try on different versions of themselves: activist, expert, humorist, blogger, creator, observer. They experiment with different styles, testing which one receives greater support. Thus, the networked “Self” is a space for experimentation. At the same time, it is also a source of pressure, because youth are expected to constantly update themselves and conform to digital norms. In the process of self-identification in the digital environment, a duality of self-presentation is formed: self-expression and pres-

sure. Self-presentation in the digital environment has a dual nature. On the one hand, it opens opportunities for self-expression. Young people can create images that are inaccessible in the offline environment, try themselves in new roles, and find support and recognition. On the other hand, self-presentation becomes a source of psychological pressure. Young people worry about the number of likes, comments, visibility, and conformity to trends. This creates an internal conflict between the desire to be oneself and the desire to appear as what is accepted online. According to Pérez-Torres [9], adolescents often describe digital self-presentation as an obligation; if there is no certain level of activity or a certain visual quality of content, a feeling of inadequacy arises, and this generates anxiety. Amaral & Ventura [3] show that even youth activism is accompanied by tension; its maintenance requires emotional investment and energy. This leads to the situation in which youth begin to perceive their digital version as more significant than the real one. Sometimes the digital image becomes a standard, while reality appears insufficient in comparison with it. Ultimately, this brings us closer to psychological problems. Psychological consequences of networked life and the ambivalence of its influence. Most researchers agree that the digital environment exerts a complex and ambiguous influence on the psyche of youth. This influence is rarely unequivocally negative or positive; most often it depends on context, the purpose of platform use, the level of supportive relationships, and the personal characteristics of the young individual. The positive side includes increased confidence through the support of online friends, the possibility of belonging to communities, access to education and professional development, support in crisis situations, and opportunities for creative self-realization. Many young people find online what they do not receive offline: understanding, emotional closeness, and recognition. The negative side manifests in constant comparison with idealized images, the risk of dependence on external evaluation, emotional exhaustion due to high visibility, anxiety related to audience reaction, and the fear of digital silence. Avci et al. [8] emphasize that constant observation of oneself and others increases the level of self-criticism. Youth develop expectations that cannot be fully realized. Kochetova and Klimakova [10] show that within the context of cultural traditions such pressure may be even greater, because the digital environment promotes more open and individualistic models of behavior that do not always coincide with cultural norms. All these factors construct new forms of dependence, which in turn are connected with hidden algorithms within networks.

Let us examine algorithms as a hidden force in the formation of identity. One of the key factors influencing youth in the digital environment is network algorithms. Many researchers emphasize that it is precisely algorithms that create the conditions within which the networked “Self” is formed. Chung [4] draws an important conclusion: young people influence platforms, but platforms influence youth more strongly. Algorithms determine what content young people will see, what becomes popular, which trends emerge, which topics enter the field of attention, and which images are perceived as normative. Milan [5] describes this as a form of soft control that subtly shapes tastes, preferences, and self-perceptions. Youth often perceive algorithmic content as a natural choice and experience a sense of personal relevance, as if the content were individually tailored to them, although it is in fact the result of mathematical recommendations. Brites et al. [7] demonstrate that the level of understanding of algorithms affects youth’s behavior. Informed users are able to avoid overload, as they consciously monitor the flow of information they consume, regulate their time online, and ignore manipulative content. Thus, algorithms become part of the system shaping digital subjectivity. Young people begin to think not only about who they are, but also about how they appear in the eyes of algorithms. All of this constitutes a mechanism for the formation of identity not only at the individual level but also at the collective level.

It is also necessary to address the problem of participatory culture as a mechanism for the formation of collective identity. Participatory culture is one of the defining features of the digital environment. Research shows that involvement in shared practices such as meme creation, participation in challenges, digital activism, and collective creativity helps youth develop a sense of belonging and significance. Gitomer [2] emphasizes that participation in remix culture fosters collaborative skills and contributes to the formation of group identity. Young people experience themselves as part of a common process in which each participant contributes. Amaral and Ventura [3] demonstrate that participation in activist movements is not only the expression of an opinion but also the creation of group solidarity. Soh [1] underlines that participation enables youth to understand that identity is formed not in isolation but through interaction with other users. Within this process, youth acquire a sense of wholeness, necessity, and recognition, which in turn contributes to the emergence of digital citizenship as a new socio-cultural phenomenon.

Digital citizenship is not merely a set of digital skills possessed by citizens, but also an awareness of one’s role within the digital environment and a sense of unity with others in that space. As Milan [5] and

Brites et al. [7] demonstrate, young people become active participants in public processes by expressing their opinions, supporting initiatives, and criticizing injustice. This indicates that youth are becoming more politically and socially engaged precisely through the digital environment. At the same time, such engagement may contribute to the formation of a shared consciousness, which can be described as a form of mass consciousness and collective action that unites individuals across platforms.

Taken together, the results show that digital culture creates a new form of identity that is flexible, dynamic, collective, and networked, shaped by platforms, algorithms, and social groups, and which, in turn, gives rise to digital identity. Ultimately, youth digital identity is a process rather than a fixed characteristic. It is relational rather than inherent. It is continuous participation rather than a stable structure.

The theoretical contribution of this article lies in the formation of a holistic and multilayered conceptual framework for understanding how youth identity is shaped within the space of digital culture. One of the key results of this work is the substantiation of the concept of the networked “Self” as a new digital form of identity. Based on the analysis of the works of Soh [1], Pérez-Torres [9], Avci et al. [8], and other authors, it is demonstrated that contemporary youth identity is formed not only within social relations but also within technologically organized platforms. The concept of the networked “Self” can be described through several characteristics that are systematized in this study as dynamic and changeable. The networked “Self” exists as a constantly updated structure: each new post, story, reel, comment, or remix becomes an element of this dynamic structure. Identity develops through continuous participation in a fluid digital environment. The research also reveals the distributed nature of youth identity across platforms. A young person does not exist in a single digital version. Identity is dispersed across multiple platforms, each with its own rules, audiences, forms of expression, and limitations. Within each platform, the individual may present themselves differently depending on interests, preferences, or mood, while remaining attached to the audience through dependence on reactions such as likes and comments.

The article makes a significant contribution to understanding how algorithms influence the formation of youth subjectivity. Drawing on the works of Chung [4], Milan [5], and Brites et al. [7], the study proposes an interpretation of algorithms as regulators of digital behavior, distributors of visibility, creators of digital norms, and structuring conditions for identity formation. This perspective moves beyond traditional theories in which algorithms were viewed merely as technical functions. In the present article, algorithms are considered part of a cultural process that shapes self-perception, behavior, emotions, and choices of young people. Such an approach integrates technical and social explanations and represents a new contribution to digital anthropology and media studies.

The analytical contribution of the work consists in the interpretation of self-presentation, participation, and observation as interconnected mechanisms of identity formation. The article substantiates that youth identity is constructed through three key mechanisms of digital activity. The first mechanism is self-presentation. Self-presentation is understood as an active process of creating and continuously updating a digital image that corresponds to platform norms. It is not only a visual or aesthetic act, but also a form of social interaction. The second mechanism is participation. Participation in trends, challenges, activist movements, discussions, and collective creative practices fosters a sense of belonging and thus contributes to collective identity. The third mechanism is observation and comparison. Feeds, recommendations, and popular images are algorithmically selected and influence self-esteem, self-presentation, expectations, and behavioral patterns. This mechanism often operates invisibly; many young people are not fully aware of it, although some understand these processes and are not intimidated by them. Regardless, its significant role in identity formation cannot be denied. The article emphasizes that these mechanisms are interconnected: self-presentation influences participation; participation generates new expectations for self-presentation; algorithmic observation intensifies both processes. Until now, these mechanisms have largely been examined separately in different studies. The contribution of this article lies in demonstrating their interdependence and in presenting them as components of a unified process of digital identity formation. The interdisciplinary contribution of this article lies in the integration of cultural, psychological, and media approaches. Most studies examine youth identity in the digital environment within the framework of a single discipline such as sociology, philosophy, psychology, cultural studies, or media studies. However, digital identity is too complex to be fully explained within the boundaries of one field. For this reason, it is necessary to continue research in this area through an interdisciplinary perspective that allows for a more comprehensive understanding of the processes shaping youth identity in digital culture.

Conclusions

This study demonstrates that digital culture has become the central environment in which youth identity is formed. Processes of self-knowledge, social interaction, and self-affirmation now unfold through continuous engagement with platforms and algorithms. The networked “Self” that emerges in this context is flexible, dynamic, and distributed across multiple digital spaces. Identity is no longer stable and singular; it is multi-layered and constantly updated through self-presentation and audience feedback. While this creates opportunities for expression and participation, it also generates emotional pressure and the need to meet digital expectations. The psychological impact of networked life is ambivalent. Digital environments offer creativity, support, and belonging, yet they may also produce anxiety, unstable self-esteem, and dependence on visibility metrics. Algorithms function as powerful structuring forces, regulating visibility and shaping norms, values, and behavioral models. At the same time, youth participation in online communities and collective practices fosters new forms of digital citizenship based on symbolic connectivity. The research highlights that digital culture is not merely a tool but a living environment shaping values, emotions, and modes of thinking. It forms a networked, visual, and dynamic type of subjectivity sensitive to platform structures and audience reactions. Practically, this requires the development of critical digital literacy and educational approaches that strengthen autonomy rather than restrict digital engagement. Future research should explore cultural differences in digital identity formation, particularly in Kazakhstani and post-Soviet contexts, examine every day digital practices, and analyze the long-term psychological and social effects of algorithmic influence. Ultimately, youth digital identity must be understood not as a fixed characteristic but as an ongoing relational process shaped by cultural, technological, and social conditions.

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А.Н. Кудерина, В.Н. Бадмаев, З.Н. Исмагамбетова

Цифрлық медиадағы жастар: желідегі «Меннің» қалыптасуы

Мақалада қазіргі цифрлық мәдениет жағдайында жастардың желілік «Меннің» қалыптасуы философиялық және мәдени-философиялық тұрғыдан талданды. Зерттеудің мақсаты — жаһандық цифрлық орта өзін-өзі сәйкестендіру, өзін-өзі таныстыру және әлеуметтік өзара әрекет процестеріне әсер ететін механизмдерді анықтау. Әдіснамалық негізін ғылыми әдебиеттерді сапалық талдау, салыстырмалы-аналитикалық тәсіл және қазіргі философия, әлеуметтану, мәдениеттану мен медиа зерттеулерде ұсынылған теориялық тұжырымдамалардың пәнаралық синтезі құрайды. Әлеуметтік медиа, алгоритмдік жүйелер және қатысу мәдениетінің жаңа цифрлық субъективтілікті қалыптастырудағы негізгі факторлар ретіндегі рөліне ерекше назар аударылады. Зерттеу нәтижесінде желілік «Меннің» цифрлық платформалармен, елестетілетін аудиториямен және алгоритмдік ұйымдастырылған ортамен үздіксіз өзара әрекет барысында қалыптасатын динамикалық, көпқатпарлы және таралған бірегейлік форма екендігі анықталды. Өзін-өзі таныстыру, онлайн-қауымдастықтарға белсенді қатысу және қатаң алгоритмдік реттеу бірегейлікті құрастырудың өзара байланысты

механизмдері ретінде айқындалды. Цифрлық орта бір жағынан өзін-өзі көрсету мүмкіндіктерін кеңейтсе, екінші жағынан субъектінің сыртқы бағаларға, көріну метрикаларына және платформалық мәдениет нормаларына тәуелділігін күшейтетіні көрсетілді. Бұл үрдістер цифрлық шындық жағдайында мінез-құлықтың, коммуникацияның, мәдени рефлексияның, әлеуметтік өзара әрекет пен символдық өндірістің жаңа үлгілерін қалыптастырады. Алынған нәтижелер ақпараттық қоғам жағдайындағы тұлға трансформациясының ерекшеліктерін тереңірек түсінуге мүмкіндік береді және цифрлық сауаттылыққа қатысты білім беру стратегиялары мен бағдарламаларын әзірлеуде қолданылуы мүмкін. Бұл жұмыс қазіргі адамның өмірлік кеңістігінің жедел технологиялануымен байланысты антропологиялық өзгерістерді теориялық тұрғыдан ұғынуға үлес қосады.

Кілт сөздер: цифрлық мәдениет, жастар, желілік «Мен», бірегейлік, өзін-өзі таныту, алгоритм, әлеуметтік медиа, цифрлық азаматтық, қатысу мәдениеті, онлайн-қоғамдастық.

А.Н. Кудерина, В.Н. Бадмаев, З.Н. Исмагамбетова

Молодежь в цифровой медиа: формирование сетевого «Я».

В статье осуществляется философский и культурфилософский анализ формирования сетевого «Я» молодежи в условиях современной цифровой культуры. Цель исследования заключается в выявлении механизмов, посредством которых глобальная цифровая среда влияет на процессы самоидентификации, самопрезентации и социального взаимодействия. Методологическую основу составляют качественный анализ научной литературы, сравнительно-аналитический подход и междисциплинарный синтез теоретических концепций, представленных в современной философии, социологии, культурологии и медиаисследованиях. Особое внимание уделяется роли социальных медиа, алгоритмических систем и культуры участия как ключевых факторов формирования новой цифровой субъективности. В результате исследования установлено, что сетевое «Я» представляет собой динамичную, многослойную и распределённую форму идентичности, формирующуюся в процессе постоянного взаимодействия субъекта с цифровыми платформами, воображаемой аудиторией и алгоритмически организованной средой. Выявлено, что самопрезентация, активное участие в онлайн-сообществах и жесткое алгоритмическое регулирование выступают взаимосвязанными механизмами конструирования идентичности. Показано, что цифровая среда одновременно расширяет возможности самовыражения и усиливает зависимость субъекта от внешних оценок, метрик видимости и норм платформенной культуры, формируя новые модели поведения, коммуникации, культурной рефлексии, социального взаимодействия и символического производства в условиях цифровой реальности. Полученные выводы позволяют глубже понять специфику трансформации личности в информационном обществе и могут быть использованы при разработке образовательных стратегий и программ по цифровой грамотности. Данная работа вносит вклад в теоретическое осмысление антропологических сдвигов, вызванных стремительной технологизацией жизненного пространства современного человека.

Ключевые слова: цифровая культура, молодёжь, сетевое «Я», идентичность, самопрезентация, алгоритмы, социальные медиа, цифровое гражданство, культура участия, онлайн-сообщества.

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