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NEGATIVE SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE VIRTUALIZATION OF MODERN SOCIETY

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Abstract

The role of social networks on the development of current society and the educational environment is studied in the paper. In the second half of the 20th century, a new type of society – information society is being formed in connection with the growth of informatization and computerization. This is largely due to the development of telecommunication technologies. A number of philosophical problems that change the worldview of a modern person arise during the transition to an information society. Social networks are an integral part of contemporary society. Social networks serve as a means of message exchange, but today there are many not only cognitive, business resources, but also entertainment, social networks. Recently, many philosophers, psychologists and even psychiatrists have been talking about the excessive fascination of people with "social networks", which can lead to negative consequences for humanity. In fact, "social networks" is a relatively old form of organization that is experiencing its rebirth, as it claims to be able to unite into a coherent whole of present society. Therefore, contemporary society can be called an "online society", but this is "not a model of modernity success, but rather an extremely general characteristic of the emerging social structure". "Information" plays a major role in a post-industrial society. "Social networks" take on a special role in the information society. A social network is a way of organizing communication between people through various telecommunication technologies.

1. Introduction

The information society was studied by such philosophers of the 20th century as Bell (1999), Toffler (2001), Bzhezinskii (1993). They were convinced that the production development and the use of "information" are significant factors in the development of contemporary society.

The idea of information society was formulated in the late 60s – early 70s of the 20th century. Iu. Khaiashi, a professor at Tokyo Institute of Technology brought in the term of "information society". The researchers and developers of the theory of information society are: Kastels (2000), Uebster (2004), Toffler (2001), Bell (1999), Bzhezinskii (1993), Drucker (1985).

The philosophers of the 20th century presented social development as a "change of stages." The "fourth stage" of social development (post-industrial society) was associated with the development of "information and communication technologies".

2. Problem Statement

"Information" plays a major role in a post-industrial society. "Social networks" take on a special role in the information society. A social network is a way of organizing communication between people through various telecommunication technologies.

According to Masuda (1981), the development of "information and communication technologies" leads to the emergence of "socially undifferentiated" information communities" in modern society.

Researchers E. Toffler and Dzh. Martin claim that "information and communication technologies" will allow organizing the relationship between ordinary citizens of society and the government of the country, which makes it possible to take into consideration the opinion of almost every citizen on any social issues (as cited in Uebster, 2004).

Tapskott (1999) argues that not only some external manifestations, but also facts of social changes appear in the development of the information society. Thus, Tapskott summarizes that we can speak about the coming "information era" of all humanity.

"Information environment" has a number of advantages over conventional "physical environment": transformation of any familiar objects and things; the emergence of "online communities"; the system change of social communication between ordinary people (quite common phenomenon in the contemporary world communication with "bots", that is, computer programs "robots", for example, Yandex-Alice – an application of the official Internet provider Yandex); the problem of preserving cultural identity, the appearance of "electronic economy" and "electronic government".

3. Research Questions

The concept of information society development is often criticized in the contemporary world. Philosophers note, among other things, negative consequences of the computerization.

They point to the fact that the development of science and technology does not always have a positive effect on the modern society development (for instance, the consequences of the "atomic energy"

use for military purposes, etc.). They indicate the inconsistency of "technological determinism" in the contemporary world.

Various ways of communication between people are possible in a current information society, but often this leads to a decrease in personal contact and an expansion of the virtual space.

Modern information society forms a new image of current consumer and entertainment reality (supermarkets, hypermarkets, entertainment centers, electronic services, etc.), that is, the opportunity to gain any "service" for a person (Danilova et al., 2019).

Moreover, almost every sphere of person's life falls under the category of "service" in contemporary society. Any man at present is presented as a "consumer" when referring to almost every area of human activity: education, health care, tourism industry, etc.

The "spiritual values" of contemporary society have changed and transformed: friendship, love, mercy, compassion, empathy, etc. The modern world of consumer culture proclaims "material values" much more important than "spiritual values"; sometimes even the cultural relationship between generations is lost (Danilova & Nikitin, 2018).

The media have a significant impact on a person being a powerful tool for the purposeful construction of social orders. Social networks and electronic media are quite popular among citizens nowadays, as they are an effective means of communication between people and even an opportunity to appeal to government bodies.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the paper is to study the negative social consequences of virtualization of modern society.

5. Research Methods

In this article we use methods of analysis, synthesis, "philosophical comparative studies", which allow us to identify the general and specific items in the changing worldview of a man and society in the information technology era, to outline ways of solving the information society issues.

6. Findings

Negative social phenomena in the modern information society:

1. Insufficient "reflexivity". A modern person sometimes relies too much on "social networks", the Internet and "stops thinking independently". Floridi (1999) (Italian philosopher who studies the issues of the modern information society) writes that a person simply "copies" texts from the Internet, practically without thinking about the correct spelling of phrases and sentences.

2. Gnoseological (cognitive) attitude to the existence of nature and a man himself changes. The person is currently asking the only question: "Where to search?" information about any phenomenon or event, most often without even delving into the point of this information. Although he used to ask the question: "How to know?"

3. Virtualization of modern life. Many issues of contemporary society can be solved "practically without leaving home", that is, virtually (remotely). On the one hand, this simplifies life for a modern person, and, on the other, he ceases to develop in harmony with nature and other people. Some "gamers" are so "stuck" in computer games that they do not see the real events taking place in the world.

Current "social networks" give a person the opportunity to actively communicate, create a public or semi-public profile, operate content in profile, create various user groups, and upload computer applications.

"Social networks" help a person to express themselves, which is in many ways one of the important life needs of any individual. "Social networks" has a considerable impact on the modern person, because many people regard "time spent on the social network" the most interesting pastime. According to statistics, more than 78 % of modern people trust the information gained from "social networks", that is, do not take it critically.

Nowadays, many personal data of users are practically available for everyone in contemporary "social networks." That is to say, any user can "gather" information about each individual registered in the "social networks."

7. Conclusion

A modern person with the help of "social networks" in many ways creates specific images and ideas. Created images and representations do not need critical thinking. The person does not think, not doubt or compare, almost does not analyze.

The interaction between users and the authority of users in "social networks" have a sufficient impact on public consciousness. In any "social network" people are divided into friends (they are usually called "friends"), and those who are not included in the friend list (Clausen & Tække, 2018).

Any "social network" has personal news feed, in which some "information" is repeated with certain frequency. Therefore, "social networks" can influence the public opinion, that is, they can be some "communication platforms" where one can express a point of view, personal position and even participate in joint management (Hogan & Sweeney, 2013).

The information that a modern person gets through "social networks" is significant and symbolic. The given information is provided in short "phrases"; one might even say "doses". The fragmentation of information provided in "social networks" does not allow critically comprehending the events or news that are taking place, therefore, a modern person seems to be "watching a children's kaleidoscope" with changing pictures. We can even say that "social networks" form a "clip thinking" in a modern person (Seikkula et al., 2004).

Human dependence on "social networks" is expressed in the fact that he practically cannot imagine contemporary life outside of them. Skillful use of them assists in solving many social and economic issues, but negative consequences of the influence of "social networks" on the consciousness of a modern person should be kept in mind. Thus, only work on the intellectual improvement of the personality is able to resolve this dilemma.

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