

The Study of the Communicative Features of Virtual Communication as a Factor in the Formation of the Personal Identity of Student Youth in Late Adolescence

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Abstract This study investigated the communicative features of virtual communication as a factor in the formation of the personal identity of student youth in late adolescence. The study was conducted with 326 students of a higher educational institution in the Republic of Uzbekistan. The results of the study showed that the majority of students have an average level of communicative features of virtual communication. However, a significant number of students also have problematic levels of emotional intelligence, communicative tolerance, communicative control, and communicative motivation. In addition, the study found that a high level of Internet addiction is present in 9.51% of the students. This suggests that virtual communication can have a negative impact on the development of personal identity in student youth. The results of this study highlight the need for further research into the communicative features of virtual communication and their impact on personal identity.

1 INTRODUCTION

Today, in the era of the rapid development of information technology, virtual space is becoming increasingly important in the life of every modern person. The global network, the Internet, has acquired a large-scale significance. According to data cited by UNESCO in the aspect of communication and information, the number of Internet users in the world has already exceeded 2.1 billion, and about 45% of these users are under 25 years old. These numbers are not final; they are growing daily due to the rapid increase in the volume of various user-generated content and the corresponding platforms for hosting them.

Despite the increased interest in the influence of information technologies on a person, scientists have not yet fully explored the specific signs of this influence, or the connection between the communicative features of virtual communication and personal identity.

Based on the foregoing, it seems appropriate to conclude that the study of virtual communication is distinguished by its undeniable relevance and practical significance. This is evidenced by the

ongoing dynamic changes in modern society, in which various rapidly developing information and communication technologies for disseminating and receiving information are becoming increasingly popular. These technologies have become the source and carrier of our knowledge about the ongoing

changes and about the world as a whole. This complex process has become an integral part of our life, predetermining its quality. Based on this, a lot of modern research is devoted to the study of the problem of virtual communication, the number of which is growing from year to year.

Therefore, we set the following goal: to study the communicative features of virtual communication as a factor in the formation of the personal identity of student youth in late adolescence.

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Methods: In accordance with the goal and objectives of this dissertation research, an empirical study was organized and conducted. As shown in fig.1. In the survey, 326 students of a higher educational institution in the Republic of Uzbekistan, aged 18 to 21 years (late adolescence), both female and male, took part.

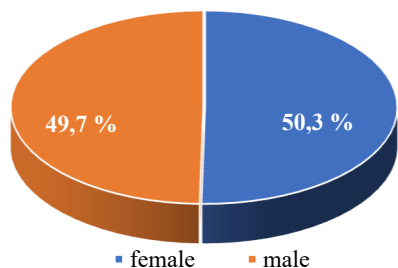


Figure 1: Characteristics of the Empirical Study Sample by gender (n=326)

The entire sample of the empirical study was examined using the following psychodiagnostic complex:

Methodology for studying personal identity L.B. Schneider (MILI as amended in 2018) [6, p. 250-252.];

- N. Hall's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire [Ilyin E.P. (2001)];

- Questionnaire for the diagnosis of general communicative tolerance V.V. Boyko [Boyko V.V. (1996)];

- Questionnaire of the motivational structure of information activity Yu.N. Dolgova, A.S. Kopova, G.N. Malyuchenko, V.M. Smirnova (MSIA) [Smirnov V.M., Kopovoy A.S. (2012)];

- Questionnaire for assessing self-control in communication by M. Snyder [Karelin A. (2007)];

- Internet addiction test K. Yang (Internet Addiction Test, IAT) [Burova V.A. (2000)].

2 RESULTS

The first applied psychometric toolkit, the Methodology for the Study of Personal Identity (MILI), was developed by L.B. Schneider [Schneider L.B. (2019)]. It is designed to diagnose personal identity. The author understands personal identity as the self-reference of the individual, that is, the feeling and recognition of the uniqueness of the Self in its existence and the uniqueness of personal qualities, in the presence of its belonging to social reality.

The results of the application of the MILI by L.B. Schneider made it possible to explore the current state of the formation of personal identity among student youth. The majority of surveyed respondents (24.5%, 80 people) have a low level (from 20 to 40 points) of personal identity formation. According to the author's interpretation, this is interpreted as premature identity (the status of personal identity) or as a passive type of personal identity. This level is due to the fact that the respondent has not experienced the corresponding identity crisis, but has mainly a borrowed system of views, values, and attitudes. As a rule, this happens under the influence of other people and, thus, is a reflection of other people's expectations and goals. At this level of personal identity, the highest indicators for authoritarianism and the lowest for independence can also be observed [6, p.246] (Figure 2).

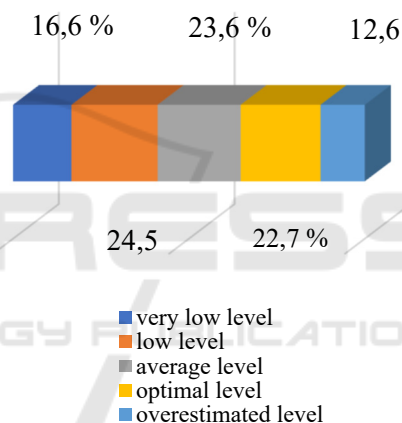


Figure 2. The current state of formation of the personal identity of student youth (n=326)

The smallest number of respondents are owners of:

An overestimated level (from 80 to 100 points) of the formation of personal identity (12.6%, 41 people).

A very low level (from 0 to 20 points) of the formation of personal identity (16.6%, 54 people).

Accordingly, 23.6% (77 people) and 22.7% (74 people) are the owners of the average and optimal levels of personal identity formation.

According to the author's interpretation, the average level of personal identity is interpreted as a moratorium (status of personal identity) or as a pronounced active type of personal identity. At this level of the diagnosed trait, the respondent is in a state

of identity crisis and is actively trying to resolve it by trying different options [6, p.246].

In turn, the optimal level of formation of personal identity, according to the author's interpretation, is interpreted as an achieved identity (the status of personal identity) or as a stable type of personal identity. This level is typical for respondents who have already gone through a period of crisis, understand what they want, have a formed system of values, their own ideas, and an optimistic view of the future. Students with this status have formed a set of personally significant goals, beliefs that provide a sense of direction and meaningfulness of life. They adapt well to new situations, are independent, behave confidently. As a rule, they can also have a fairly developed level of creativity, self-esteem, and the ability to reflect.

Correlation analysis of the results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the Methodology for studying personal identity by L.B. Schneider, according to the non-parametric Spearman test in the SPSS program, revealed a statistically significant relationship (Table 1).

Table 1: Correlation analysis of the results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the Study Method personal identity of L.B. Schneider according to Spearman's non-parametric test (n=326)

No	Names comparable features	Spearman's correlation coefficient at p<0.010
1	Gender of respondents & Results of the survey of respondents according to the Methodology for studying personal identity L.B. Schneider	-0,194
2	Age of respondents & Results of the survey of respondents according to the Methodology for studying personal identity L.B. Schneider	0,520
3	Gender of respondents & Age of respondents	-0,027

Thus, a significant positive correlation was found ($r = 0.520, p < 0.01$) between the age of the respondents and the level of personal identity diagnosed using the L.B. Schneider method. This statistically significant correlation clearly demonstrates the nature of the development of

personal identity in student age, namely, with increasing age, the level of personal identity in students also increases.

Based on the above, we can conclude that the organized and conducted empirical study ($n = 326$) made it possible to identify the current state of the formation of personal identity in student youth. Thus, the use of the L.B. Schneider method showed that on average, every fourth student (24.5%, 80 people) has a low level of personal identity formation, which corresponds to the premature status of personal identity or the passive type of personal identity. At the same time, only 22.7% (74 people) of the surveyed students have the desired level of development of the trait under study (optimal level, achieved status of personal identity, stable type). In addition, a correlation analysis of the results of an empirical study ($n = 326$) using the non-parametric Spearman test made it possible to establish that with age, the level of personal identity in students increases ($r = 0.520, p < 0.01$). The results obtained, on the one hand, highlight the problem of developing personal identity in students, and on the other hand, confirm that the late adolescence of students is a sensitive period for the development of this phenomenon.

The results of a psychodiagnostic examination using the N. Hall Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire ($n = 326$) show that the majority of respondents (42%, 137 people) have an average level of emotional intelligence development (Figure 3).

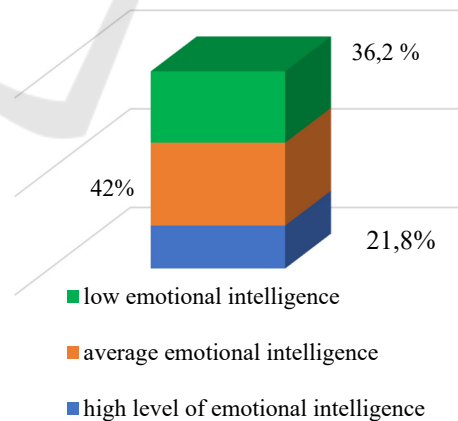


Figure 3. The results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the N. Hall Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (n=326)

This category of surveyed students is characterized by a positive assessment of their own social position (an obvious sign), a relatively high

level of self-esteem and self-control in terms of their emotional state, as well as by the ease of communication with people around them without exerting volitional effort.

In 36.2% (118 people) of the surveyed students, the diagnosed trait is developed at a low level, and in 21.8% (71 people) at a high level, respectively.

The category of students with a low level of emotional intelligence is typically characterized by low self-esteem, low levels of self-control and awareness of their own emotional state, weak influence and control over situations (events affect them, not the other way around), the inability or low ability to recognize the emotions and feelings of others, some stubbornness in appropriate situations, sometimes strong emotional reactions (rudeness, insults), and a tendency to conflict. Conversely, students with a high level of emotional intelligence are characterized by a certain harmony with the outside world, an individually developed system of values that does not actually harm those around them, the ability to change their opinions (if they turn out to be erroneous, and admit their mistakes), a good ability to withstand stress, a desire to develop and help others in this, and a lack of fear of taking responsibility.

The results of a psychodiagnostic examination using the Questionnaire for the diagnosis of general communicative tolerance by V.V. Boyko show that the majority of surveyed students (39%, 127 people) have an average level of development of communicative tolerance (Figure 4).

The smallest number of students (16.6%, or 54 people) have a very low degree of communicative tolerance. In the author's interpretation, this is revealed as "complete rejection of others." This category of students, as a rule, is a source of negative emotional energy, which is transferred to their interlocutors during communication.

Correspondingly, the rest of the surveyed respondents had:

- A high degree of communicative tolerance: 20.2% (or 66 people).
- A low degree of communicative tolerance: 24.2% (or 79 people).

Students with a high degree of communicative tolerance are characterized as being quite balanced, predictable in their relationships, and compatible with a wide range of people. Thanks to these

characteristics, they create a psychologically comfortable environment for joint activities and achieve a synergistic effect (pleasure from interaction at the level of cooperation).

In turn, students with a low degree of communicative tolerance typically experience negative reactions to the differences they find between the substructures of their personality and the personality of a communication partner. The more distinct a student's negative feelings about the originality of the other person, the lower their level of tolerance. This makes it more difficult for them to demonstrate goodwill towards a partner, accept examination according to the Questionnaire for the diagnosis of general communicative tolerance V.V. Boyko (n=326)

them in all or some of their manifestations, and restrain their dissatisfaction.

The results of a psychodiagnostic examination using the Questionnaire of the Motivational Structure of Information Activity by Yu.N. Dolgova, A.S. Kopova, G.N. Malyuchenko, and V.M. Smirnova show that the largest number of surveyed students (39.9%, or 130 people) have a predominance of communicative motivation (Figure 5).

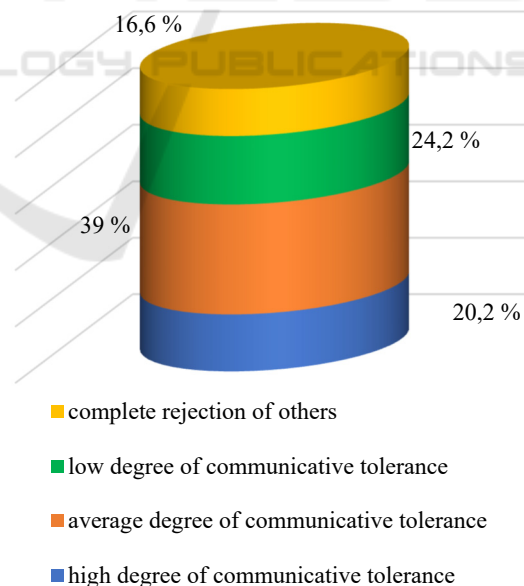


Figure 4: The results of a psychodiagnosics.

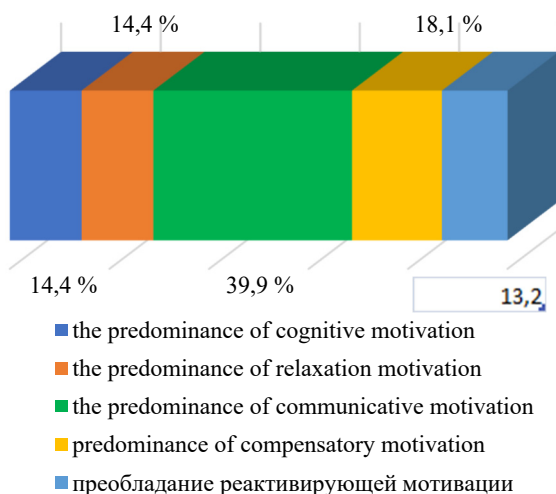


Figure 5: The results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the Questionnaire of the motivational structure of information activity Yu.N. Dolgova, A.S. Kopova, G.N. Malyuchenko, V.M. Smirnova (n=326).

Sure, here is the revised text:

For this category of respondents, consuming media information is a process that inevitably accompanies interpersonal and intergroup communication. The main topics for communication and social interaction are determined by events taking place in both the real daily lives of media consumers and the media space, on the internet, on TV channels, etc. There is no main criterion for evaluating information/media products when the communicative motivation is dominant. As a rule, preference is given not to any specific types of information/media products, but to a particular source/communicator. If the predominance of communicative motivation is expressed in a clear preference for virtual communication over direct interpersonal contacts, then this is a factor that can provoke the emergence and development of media addiction.

The next quantitative value is the predominance of compensatory motivation in 18.1% (59 people) of the students surveyed. In this case, media consumption is a way of escaping from the gray routine, monotonous reality into the virtual world. Various kinds of media products are used as a means of compensating for states or achievements that are absent in real life, as a means of virtually simulating desired experiences. The most striking example of such products are computer games. The main criterion for evaluating information/media products is the compensatory and simulating opportunities that it

provides. The compensatory motive is often not recognized or is not consciously acknowledged by the individual. The compensatory motivation for media consumption is the most predisposing factor to the emergence of media addiction (Internet addiction).

In turn, 14.4% (47 people) of the surveyed students have a predominance of cognitive motivation. In this case, media information is consumed in order to enrich the stock of knowledge, for general intellectual development, personal/professional growth, and spiritual self-improvement. A person evaluates incoming messages, information, and media products of an artistic or documentary format, relying primarily on such criteria as novelty, the possibility of broadening one's horizons, potential benefits in everyday life, actual practical value, scientific validity, and the degree of satisfaction of specific cognitive interests. Although the information activity of the cognizing subject can be quite high at times, the probability of forming media addiction (including Internet addiction) is relatively low. However, in some cases, cognitive activity may be accompanied by a reluctance (fear) to miss any important, objectively significant information, which can provoke excessive media consumption.

Identical to the previous number (14.4%, 47 people) of the examined students, the predominance of relaxation motivation was also revealed. Media information/media products are used as a means of achieving relaxation after stress or tension caused by previous activity. The main motive for consuming media products in this case is the desire to switch to information that does not require intellectual costs and causes positive emotions. Preference is given to such media products that distract from current problems, do not cause negative feelings, and do not provoke long reflections. The dominance of relaxation motivation can provoke the formation of a habit of pathological "freezing" in the media space, the formation of attitudes that predispose to a passive perception of reality and not a critical absorption (introjection) of media products. As these habits and attitudes form, the subject relaxing in the virtual world begins to subconsciously or quite consciously delay the return to active activity in real life.

The smallest number of surveyed students (13.2%, or 43 people) have a predominance of reactivating motivation. They use various media information/media products primarily to quickly enter the mode of active actions, achieve an emotional upsurge, and gain the desired physical tone and

vivacity. The main criterion for evaluating media products is their saturation with relevant stimulating qualities that provide the opportunity to receive emotional and physical recharging. In this case, the media space plays a purely service role, as it is used as a source of incentives and guiding stimuli to achieve any socially significant goals that are outside of it. Since non-informational activity is prioritized, any kind of media production is not considered by a person to be some kind of absolute, self-sufficient value, but only as a kind of external entourage of their life. The predominance of this motivation does not usually carry the risk of media addiction, as the individual's priority goals and values are outside the media space.

The results of a psychodiagnostic examination using the Questionnaire for Assessing Self-Control in Communication by M. Snyder show that the largest number of respondents (41.4%, or 135 people) have an average level of communicative control (Figure 6).

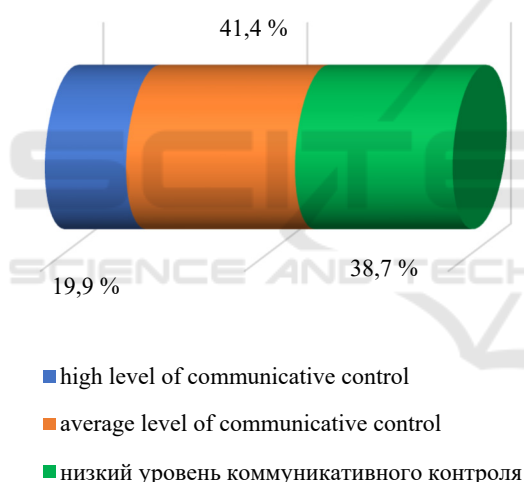


Figure 6: The results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the Questionnaire for assessing self-control in communication by M. Snyder (n=326).

This category of students is usually sincere in communication, but relatively unrestrained in their emotional expressions. However, they try to build their behavior in relation to the people around them. 38.7% (or 126 people) of respondents showed a low level of communicative control. This category of respondents has relatively stable behavior and does not consider it necessary to change depending on the emerging communicative situation. They are also capable of sincere self-disclosure in communication. However, some people around them may find them

"uncomfortable" in communication due to their straightforwardness.

The smallest number of respondents (19.9%, or 65 people) have a high level of communicative control. This category of students can relatively easily enter into almost any role, respond flexibly to changes in the situation, and even anticipate the impression that they make on others during communicative interaction. The results of applying the K. Young Internet Addiction Test show that the largest number of surveyed students (72.1%, or 235 people) have an average level of Internet addiction. Only 18.4% (or 60 people) of the surveyed students have a low level of Internet addiction (Figure 7).

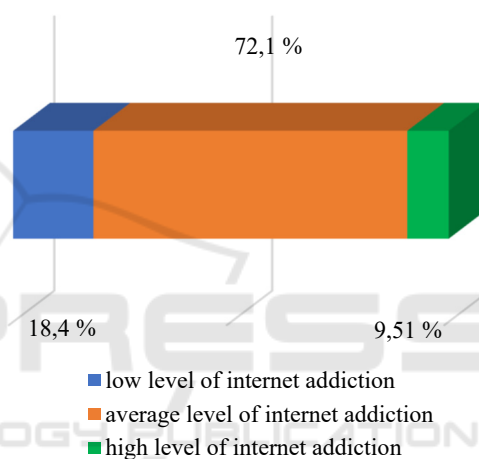


Figure 7: The results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the K. Young Internet Addiction Test (n=326)

In turn, it is alarming that 9.51% (or 31 people) of the surveyed students have a high level of Internet addiction. This category of respondents, as a rule, feels an urgent need to check their email every morning, access social media, etc., a certain euphoria while they are at a computer or phone, and anger at those who try to distract them while they are online. In addition, these students often suffer from insomnia due to the constant desire to go online, often do not have a clear goal for being in the virtual space, and experience irritability, anxiety, excitement, apathy, etc. when they are offline. This category of students significantly reduces (up to a complete cessation) the frequency and duration of communication and communicative contacts with relatives, family members, and friends in everyday life (outside the network).

3 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The study of the current state of development of the communicative features of virtual communication and personal identity of student youth allows us to formulate the following conclusions: The application of N. Hall's Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire, V.V. Boyko's Questionnaire of the Motivational Structure of Information Activity (MSIA), and M. Snyder's Questionnaire for Assessing Self-Control in Communication (n = 326) clarified the state of development of communicative features of virtual communication. Despite the fact that the prevailing part of the total number of students surveyed (on average, 40.6%, or 132.3 people) have an average level of development of communicative features of virtual communication, a significant part of the respondents was identified, in whom the diagnosed signs are formed at rather problematic levels:

- 36.2% (or 118 people) of the surveyed students have a low level of emotional intelligence;
- 24.2% (or 79 people) of the surveyed students have a low degree of communicative tolerance;
- 38.7% (or 126 people) of the surveyed students have a low level of communicative control.

In addition, 39.9% (or 130 people) of students showed a predominance of communicative motivation in terms of information activity. The obtained psychodiagnostic data as a whole indicate that in everyday life (at least) every third surveyed student has a clear preference for virtual communication over direct interpersonal contacts, rather weak awareness of their own emotional state, inability to influence and control emerging situations, regular experience of negative reactions regarding the detection of differences between the substructures of their personality and the personality of a communication partner, and a certain straightforwardness, which is an important factor provoking the emergence and development of media addiction, as well as significant difficulties in everyday communication interaction. This is confirmed by the results of a psychodiagnostic survey according to the K. Young Internet Addiction Test, where a high level of Internet addiction was found in 9.51% (or 31 people) of the surveyed students. This fact clearly demonstrates the problematic aspects of the communicative features of the virtual communication of students in late adolescence,

reveals the modern nature of the studied phenomena, and their features, which allows us to explore specific ways of psychological optimization of this important problem.

The results obtained, on the one hand, very actualize the problem of the development of student personal identity, and on the other hand, confirm that late adolescence is sensitive for the development of the phenomenon under study. The psychodiagnostic data obtained in general (n = 326) indicate that in everyday life (at least) every third student surveyed has a clear preference for virtual communication over direct interpersonal contacts, rather weak awareness of their own emotional state, inability to influence and control emerging situations, regular experience of negative reactions regarding the discovery of differences between the substructures of their personality and the personality of a communication partner, a certain straightforwardness, which is an important factor provoking the emergence and development of media addiction, as well as significant difficulties in daily communication interaction.

This is also confirmed by the results of a psychodiagnostic examination according to the K. Young Internet Addiction Test, where a high level of Internet addiction was found in 9.51% (or 31 people) of the surveyed students. This fact clearly demonstrates the problematic aspects of the communicative features of the virtual communication of students in late adolescence, reveals the modern nature of the studied phenomena, and their features, which allows us to explore specific ways of psychological optimization of this important problem.

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