

Network Communities of Destructive Direction in Social Networks of Runet

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to identify the place and role of youth online communities in the design of ultra-radical concepts of social networks. Some characteristics, aspects and trends of youth of destructive communication in the social network Vkontakte are given. Virtual communication is seen as a special form of social interaction on the Internet. The study is interdisciplinary. When studying the network virtual space, the authors used the structural-functional and social-cultural approach.

The term "new media", which is regarded as an integral part of the Internet space was updated. Technological features of new media give the opportunity to effectively mobilize the people for any constructive or destructive actions.

Social networks and media hosting are the main venue for the ultra-radical organizations, which use the technologies of information warfare, especially against young people, in the virtual space. Internet communication has some basic characteristics as interactivity, multimedia and autonomy.

Not only conformal or non-political structures are the examples of social self-organization of young people, but also destructive communication strategy and communities in the network space. Destructive network type of communication goes from virtual reality to objective reality, which allows ultra-radical groups to begin asserting themselves in the Internet, and then to go beyond virtual reality and transform into various forms of extremist behavior of young people in real space.

Ultra-radical content in the online space is destructive ideological concept, which lays the motives of political, ideological, racial, national, religious hatred, xenophobia or hatred against any ethnic, religious or social group.

Keywords: Internet, Social Networking, Networking Community, Youth, Virtuality, Communication, Extremism.

Introduction

The virtual network space is becoming a key platform for running a variety of positive technologies, but also for the formation of destructive youth environment through the introduction of ultra-radical concepts of various political forces.

The revolutionary process of a qualitative change in the information environment is the main vector of development of modern Russian society and the world [1], that is a blessing itself, but sometimes also leads to the emergence of new forms of distribution of virtual extremism in the youth environment on various Internet sites.

A theoretical understanding of the characteristics of the application of communicative strategies in the dissemination of ultra-radical concepts of social networks [2] among young people, as a factor of formation of the destructive manifestations in the environment is required

Methods

The study is interdisciplinary by its nature and is in the problematic fields of political science, conflictology, sociology, philosophy, media-journalism, culture and psychology. To analyze the application of communicative strategies in the dissemination of ultra-radical concepts of social networks among young people, the authors used the structural-functional approach, which allows to describe the functions, dysfunctions and latent functions of social institutions related to the process of inculturation and socialization of youth.

In order to study the effect of virtual environment on the Russian youth, the authors used socio-cultural approach that allows to characterize the complex of factors related to the functioning in the information society youth communities.

To study the factors determining the inclusion of youth in the virtual space of the Internet, namely in associations of an extremist orientation, the authors use phenomenological methodology, which allows to fully describe the virtual world of the young people under the influence of ultra-radical concepts.

The empirical base of the study is the statistical data of the company "Brand Analytics" [3]. In addition, in the course of work the statistical data and information materials from the Internet sites and accounts in social network "Vkontakte" were used.

Result and Discussion

The concept of "community" is the base for this study. The concept of "community" has undergone considerable evolution in the social science of XIX–XXI centuries. First, the "community" was defined as territorial-geographical proximity, family relationships. It should be admitted that the concept of "community" is one of the vaguest sociological terms, which are interpreted quite diverse in scientific papers. The use of the specified definition is possible, especially if the study stipulates what it means.

Gradually, the "community" became to be understood as a structural community of individuals communicating in the social networks [4]. This position is shared by the authors. Now virtual communication has become a fundamental phenomenon of human life.

According to anthropologist Brian Pfaffenberger virtuality is not the "new reality", but a part of everyday human life. Virtuality is social, so it is correct to use the term "social virtuality" [5].

The expansion of information space and new information technologies are becoming a major stressor in the transformation of Russian society. These processes do not always positively influence young people. Unformed, forming and deformed minds of the individuals find a nutrient medium in the information flow in uncontrolled global networks where the communicative strategies to promote the ultra-radical concepts are increasingly used. This is the reason for the appearance of new sites of youth extremism and their growth [6].

The term "new media" was also updated. It was used in the late twentieth century to denote interactive electronic publications alternative to traditional media [7].

Technological features of new media can not only inform the public but effectively mobilize people for any action or inaction. On the other hand, virtual communities are trying to influence participation in making socio-political decisions. These online communities are constructing new forms of social space. Using social networks, different ways of electronic civil disobedience are practiced.

New media are leading to the creation of the mobilization technology. Their role is considerably increasing in connection with the complexity of social relations and the increasing dynamism of

political processes in the society, when the requirements for improvement of social manipulation and control increase.

The information revolution and fast development of communication technologies determine the life of society. These processes trigger both positive and negative social consequences, but it is difficult to speak unequivocally about the nature of these effects. Global penetration of the Internet into all spheres of life leads to the formation of new forms of social space and social structures. Modern society is experiencing significant social impact of virtualization of the social environment and virtualization of thinking [8].

Social networks and media hosting are the main venue for various kinds of ultra-radical organizations, which in the virtual space use the effective technologies of the information war, especially against young people.

In the course of the information revolution, virtual space has become the major market for broadcasting ultra-radical concepts of various destructive groups in Russian society. The relative anonymity of Internet communications, rapid and economical method of disseminating information, as well as virtual clenching of the territorial and geographical borders are of importance for such destructive forces.

Internet communication as a new type of social communication has basic features - it's interactivity, multimedia and autonomy, where the social hierarchy of users is graded, which pushes an increase in the activity of actors.

The Internet can be viewed from two positions. First, the Internet is a global network environment in which the interests and needs of individuals and groups are satisfied. Secondly, the Internet is understood as a global social communications network, which provides new tools for both constructive and destructive effects on users, especially young people. That is because young people are potential mobile class for social unrest due to their age-specific psychological characteristics and hypercritical assessment of the "adult" world and a keen sense of social justice that destructive currents can manipulate.

Along with electronic media, social networks become the object of attention of extremist and terrorist organizations who not only promote their views, but recruit at these sites. To effectively combat extremism it is necessary to understand the peculiarities of the functioning of social networks in Russia and the characteristics of virtual perception of the information by a young man [9].

Social network is an effective platform for constructing destructive communities having the opportunity to continue to transform into organizations and movements in real space. To obtain such results, leaders need a well-planned mechanism of actions for the development of small social groups into an organized extremist community. The work is usually conducted in the direction of expand the audience and registration information the ideological content, is able to consolidate the participants. Among such materials it is possible to classify the anti-government, ethnological publications that define the image of the enemy that must be confronted. The clear structure and hierarchy of relationships create the appearance of power, which is positively displayed in the formation of such communities.

Thus, the conflict potential of the virtual space is much more evident in social networks as they become a kind of projection of a real communication, socio-economic and political realities in the society. The simplicity and accessibility of the technical design of social networking offer new opportunities for mass unification of people in the whole community. They form a unity of ideas and opinions, for whatever reason, not always legal and constructive. Such forms of collectivism contribute to the appearance of actual sites for implementation of virtual conflict among young people. The vastness of the Internet audience is of interest to administrators of most aggressive or prohibited communities from the point of view of attracting new supporters and capabilities of searching the "enemy of the community".

The operation of virtual network communities is in social and technical environment or cyberspace. This environment has serious differences from the everyday physical environment. When considering the social structure of virtual network communities the description of the environment in which social interactions occur is required.

We can state the rapid evolution of media from being a tool to netocracy (net - eng. language) elite (prominent bloggers, charismatic public persons and people with high ratings in social networks, etc.) to the massive use of communicative strategies in the dissemination of different concepts for the ordinary users and their anonymous virtual leaders for the information defeat of virtual opponents or even in order to master the institutions of public authority.

The phenomenon of the net-sociality gives you the opportunity to come up with their identity. It is the realization of what individuals think about themselves and not what they are in reality. Virtual

masks-avatars replace the physics of the face, "nicknames" signal of the internal content, which the subject of the network attributes, the inner world is filled with a network of information exchange. Identity can be continually supplemented and changed in the virtual space. Age, gender, social position, beliefs which the individual can't transform every day in real space, are constantly constructed in the virtual space. Virtual consciousness begins to exist only in the present and in this parallel world it is non-reflexive, it is always urgent. The consciousness of the average user of social networking is video thinking, which doesn't want to bore itself by long texts and trying to shape the ideological setting through vivid visuals, slogans, demotivators and memes that are emotionally charged and through constant reference to them create stable stereotypes. Network community, in our opinion, have the following characteristics:

- network virtual community are cross-border from spatial, temporal and organizational positions;
- they can implement communication in both synchronous and asynchronous range;
- there is no limit on the maximum number of participants in network communities. Unlimited number of users, geographically located in different locations, can participate in virtual communication;
- in network groups, participants have not only a role but a status, namely there is a certain hierarchy that provides different possibilities to access the content.

The formation of negative attitudes of communicative behavior relative to other participants in virtual communities leads to increased feelings of group identity. It is typical for the virtual network communities of ultra-radical orientation. Today it is possible to observe the strong relationship of extremism, radicalism and virtual space [10].

First, the number of information and technical possibilities offered by the Internet space, among which are the mechanisms of anonymization of the individual, the transmission rate of the content, one billion user audience and the others, lead to the actualization of network resources in the sphere of extremist movements.

Second, the versatility of extremism and the variability of its manifestation, cleverly made extremist concepts lead to its popularity in social networks. All of this causes discussion and debate about the illegal nature of the activity, and creates a platform for the virtual manifestations of social conflict.

On the other hand, the nature of the relationship determines the complex process of combating extremism in the virtual space and the prevention of

its manifestations, expressed in the lack of rigidity of the legislative framework of the Russian Federation.

Summary

In the beginning of XXI century there have been significant changes in information and communication environment as a form of social space. Data socio-communicative transformations have led to the emergence of other forms of social organization that emerged on the basis of extensive spread of the global computer network. These trends have both positive and negative social consequences, many of which have yet to comprehend the scientific community. But now it is obvious: the progress of communication technologies and the information revolution changed the society.

Destructive communication strategies in the network space became a means of social and group self-organization of youth. The type of communication goes from virtual reality to objective reality, which allows ultra-radical manifestations first to express themselves on the Internet, and then to go beyond virtual reality and transform into various forms of extremist behavior of young people in real space. Socio-psychological features of youth, and extreme consciousness and largely marginalized social status of youth in conditions of modern informational changes contribute to the emergence of destructive communication strategies.

Youth ultra-radicalism had an opportunity to grow, thanks to the globalization and informatization of the society. It is influenced by information inequality, virtualization, social practices, domination of the Internet and social networking over the youth. The potential audience of young people in contact with the ultra-radical concepts of social networks increases. Youth extremism is becoming "virtual", which complicates the prevention of this anti-social phenomenon.

Ultra-radical content in social media is a powerful ideological concept that is hidden within the social practices lays the motives of political, ideological, racial, national or religious hatred or xenophobia or hostility toward any ethnic or social group.

Conclusion

In the modern network space extremist manifestations may find their expression in the organization of online communities in social networks, which reach audiences of tens of millions of citizens. "VKontakte" is the most popular social Internet resource for the young generation in the Russian Federation. On this resource you can find a huge number of different radical movements, the

number of which reaches from a few people to tens of thousands of users.

Among the fundamental factors of the evolution of youth extremism it is possible to note the virtual socio-communicative change and growth of the global information society, the rapid development of innovative means of mass communication, primarily the Internet. The modern Russian lives this way, and it would be a great mistake to think that this virtual context doesn't have a major impact on it.

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