Postmodern Openings
ISSN: 2068-0236 | e-ISSN: 2069-9387
Covered in: Web of Science (WOS); EBSCO; ERIH+; Google Scholar; Index Copernicus; Ideas RePeC; Econpapers; Socionet; CEEOL; Ulrich ProQuest; Cabell, Journalseek; Scipio; Philpapers; SHERPA/RoMEO repositories; KVK; WorldCat; CrossRef; CrossCheck

2021, Volume 12, Issue 4, pages: 89-103 | https://doi.org/10.18662/po/12.4/362

Influence of Social Networks on the Transformation of Youth Values in Social Isolation

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Abstract: The decline in live social contact during the Covid-19 pandemic is driving an increase in the demand for social media communication. This study is an in-depth continuation of an earlier study on the topic of self-esteem and value orientations of youth. A survey was conducted and helped to determine the values of life that are broadcast on social media profiles and are actively welcomed by students in Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tik Tok: independence, high aspirations, health and beauty, material values. The high level of activity of the respondents in social networks was investigated and the medium level of Internet addiction was determined. The respondents revealed the level of conformity and individual-typological personality traits. The students are characterized by a high level of anxiety and tension. The conformity level helps to identify the individuals who are most vulnerable to the effects of social media. The terminal and instrumental values of students are investigated: health and beauty, material values, entertainment, family life, self-confidence, love, freedom, rationalism, Irreconcilability to shortcomings, independence, self-control and high claims. Correlation links were found in the indicators of conformism / nonconformism / Internet addiction and value orientations of the individual. Work in groups was carried out with the aim of abandoning a set of social masks, selected taking into account the expectations of others. The work is based on the metaphor of diminution from Slavic myths and fairy tales.

Keywords: *terminal values; instrumental values; students; conformism; nonconformism; social media communication; internet addiction.*

How to cite: Myropoltseva, N., & Amplieieva, O. (2021). Influence of Social Networks on the Transformation of Youth Values in Social Isolation. *Postmodern Openings, 12*(4), 89-103. https://doi.org/10.18662/po/12.4/362

1. Introduction

In the context of the Covid 19 pandemic, the relevance of virtual communication is increasing. Indeed, in quarantine conditions, training is carried out in a distance form. The lack of live communication, a decrease in social contacts leads to the popularization and active use of social networks (Soroka et al., 2020). The main and most frequently used internet platforms are Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tik Tok, etc. For modern Ukrainian society, the problem of transforming value orientations during the Covid-19 pandemic is the most urgent. This is largely due to the fact that society is in such a state in which there is no clear understanding of the value system, people have a so-called spiritual crisis, because old values depart (due to numerous diseases and the struggle for life, high mortality among the population), and the new system has not yet formed (Shylova, 2016b, 2017).

One of the leading elements of influence on social networks is covert and overt advertising from influential and significant people (bloggers, stars, reference groups). Advertising acts as a representative of the current desires of society. A person always evaluates the world around him with the help of personal experience, creates his own systems and criteria for prioritizing values. The most striking differences can be seen between external actions and internal values: after all, the internal guides a person when choosing and buying goods and services, and this is what social networks are guided by. Our intrinsic values are responsible for unconscious reactions and instant reactions to an object (Shylova, 2016a).

2. Literature review

In modern psychological research, the influence of social networks on the formation of unrealistic ideas about one's own appearance and anxious attitude towards one's own body is noted. This is due to the modern idealization and social normalization of the bodily standard. A 2019 research conducted at the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University among students showed that photos of women that were edited and perfected on social networks increased the level of student dissatisfaction with their own bodies (Myropoltseva, 2019).

Researchers from the Royal Society for Public Health in the UK conducted a survey among people between the ages of 14 and 24. The results showed that Instagram had a big impact on their sleep rate, satisfaction with their appearance, and fear of missing out on news. The above aspects

contribute to an increase in the level of anxiety in the individual. In an anxious state of the individual, it is more difficult to differentiate information that comes to a person. Therefore, there is a great risk of acquiring imposed values (Allen et al., 2015).

A negative factor in the use of social networks by young people is the formation of destructive value orientations and preferences. Young men and adolescents, using the Internet excessively, may be exposed to unwanted promotion of the use of harmful substances (for example, alcohol, tobacco, etc.), as well as early onset of sexual activity. This poses a threat to face sex offenders who use social media to connect with minors (Bekh, 2018).

Photos posted on social networks also have a big impact on the child's mental health. Bloggers and famous people try to highlight information about themselves in a more favorable light, post the best photos and interesting information on social networks, which is often not noted for realism and truthfulness. As a result, active users get the impression that other people's lives are much more varied and more eventful than their own. This becomes a good basis for a decrease in self-esteem, the formation of various kinds of complexes and the so-called "Facebook depression" (Rad & Demeter, 2019). Irish researchers conducted a study in which it was proved that about 25% of users of social networks are susceptible to this kind of depression. A person who does not receive approval in the form of rewards (in social networks, it is expressed in the form of "likes"), from his or her photos or news, begins to doubt whether his/her "Internet friends" likes his/her, comparing himself/herself with other users (Sheldon, 2008).

Most people, especially young people who actively use social networks, assess their life negatively in comparison with the information that is published on the pages of their friends. Constantly comparing oneself to others, a person's self-esteem is lowered, which makes them feel insignificant and alone against the background of others (Yurkiv & Krasnova, 2021). This, in turn, leads to a reorientation of life values, goals and aspirations, which are no longer their own, but is the result of social impact on the consciousness of the individual. The process of life values transformation is dangerous for the individual, because in this case, other people's values are perceived as their own, which prevents such important processes of personality formation as identification and self-realization (Hewitt & Flett, 1991).

A lack of three important components can contribute to the deformation of self-esteem: the attention of others (this value in social networks is measured by the number of "likes" and comments, but such an assessment is not always objective) success (on the Internet it is quite easy to create the appearance of a bright and fulfilling life by creating a page with pho-

tos and information that is more beneficial for the subject; reviews of these online publications become the main source of positive emotions) the brightness of life in all its manifestations (people dependent on social networks do not enjoy life moments, because they constantly try to take a good photo and post it on the network, thereby proving what they have a busy life; however, this deprives them of the pleasure of life itself) (Oblaukhova, 2019).

Personal values are a guideline for a person, become a life motivator for him. Social values, on the other hand, express the opinion of the majority of people, which, in turn, shapes the advertising proposals on social networks. In the classification of the hierarchy of values according to A. Maslow, two categories are distinguished:

- the highest human values – being (B - values) - justice, truth, perfection, truth;
- the lowest human values - scarce (S - values) - satisfy the physical needs of a person. S - values provide a person with a normal existence, satisfy habitual needs, so that the highest values can ultimately be realized. At this level, a person is already a person and differs from the mass of people (Sibiryakov, 2013).

Advertising has become so ingrained in our lives that people do not understand whether they really need the thing that they buy and visually consume, or simply a manipulative technique has worked. Nowadays, advertising content on social networks offers not so much the product or service itself, but imposes a certain lifestyle, the status of a person who uses a certain product. Advertising on social networks confidently constructs a person's identity, forms his value orientations. It may seem that thanks to advertising, a person has a large choice, unlimited possibilities - but in fact it deprives a person of free choice and free thought (Zayko, 2016).

The hidden meaning of advertising is consumerism. Social identity depends on the style of consumption – "tell me where and what you buy, and I will tell you who you are". The idea is promoted on social media that everything from good looks and health to social status, recognition and fame can be purchased in our time (Ma Feng et al., 2020).

3. Research of methodology

The aim of this research was to identify the structure of value orientations that are influenced by social networks.

To achieve this goal, the following empirical research methods were used: content analysis of popular social networks (to identify the values that

are broadcast there), "Internet Addiction Test" Kimberley S. Young (to identify active users of social networks), multifactorial questionnaire R. Kettell (to identify the level of respondents' conformity, as well as to obtain individual psychological characteristics of a person), M. Rokeach's test (to determine value priorities), conversations with a psychologist.

In September 2020 (the beginning of the academic year), information about the conduct of scientific research among students was posted on the University's Telegram channel. The topic, purpose and timing of the experiment were indicated. Students wishing to take part in the experiment were offered a link to a Google form, where the participant's questionnaire was filled out and their consent to the processing and disclosure of data for scientific purposes was confirmed. The sampling lasted until November 2020. The sample of this research consisted of 325 students of the Petro Mohyla Black Sea National University aged 18 to 22: 149 males and 176 females. Later, a group was created in the Telegram channel for the participants of the experiment, with the help of which the students' actions were coordinated, further instructions were given, links to Google forms for collecting materials were posted, the division into groups for practical work with students was carried out and the schedule of visits to these groups was posted.

4. Results and discussions

At the first stage of the study (from early November to late December 2020), a survey was conducted, it helped to determine the life values that are broadcast on social pages and are actively welcomed by students. Content analysis and the established hierarchy of terminal and instrumental values presented in modern social networks (Facebook, YouTube, Twitter, Pinterest, Instagram, Tik Tok) determined 4 indicators of life values that held high positions: independence, high aspirations, health and beauty, material values. The indicator "health and beauty" consists of two components at once, not by chance. It is their youth that perceives as a holistic indicator, equating health with beauty, and beauty with health. Although this may have nothing to do with the realities of life.

At the second stage (second half of January 2021), the level of activity of the respondents in social networks was investigated. For this, Kimberley S. Young's "Internet Addiction Test" was selected. This test is a tool for self-diagnosis of pathological passion for the Internet, according to which there are three levels of addiction: ordinary users of the Internet, users who have some problems associated with excessive use of the network and Inter-

net addicted people. This test was developed and tested in 1994 by the Kimberley S. Young, professor of psychology at Pistburg University in Bradford (Daniel, 2000).

According to Kimberley S. Young, internet addictiveness is determined by three main factors:

- Availability of information, interactive zones and images.
- Personal control and anonymity of the transmitted information.
- Internal feelings, which on a subconscious level establish a greater level of trust in communication in the online space.

The survey results showed that 88 students (27.1%) are regular Internet users; 236 respondents (72.6%) have some problems associated with excessive hobby for the Internet; 1 student (0.3%) is an Internet addict. Moreover, 37 respondents showed a tendency towards the transition to Internet addiction, they have a critically high score for the second level (78-79 points). An amplifying factor is distance learning in the context of the Covid 19 pandemic. Indeed, most of the time during 2020-2021, educational activities took place online on a computer.

The third stage of the study lasted throughout the February 2021, his goal was to identify the level of conformity and individual-typological personality traits among the respondents, for which the method of multifactorial research of personality by R. Kettell was used. The conformity level helps to identify the individuals who are most vulnerable to the effects of social media. Conformity, as a quality of the personality of a young man, is characterized by a mechanism for reconciling the behavior and thoughts of an individual with the behavior presented in a blog, advertising, social groups, images, stereotyped and banal thinking.

The use of R. Kettell's test helped to determine the main personal constructs: scale A (isolation - sociability), scale B (intelligence), scale C (emotional instability - stability), scale E (subordination - dominance), scale F (restraint - expressiveness), scale G (low - high normality of behavior), scale H (timidity - courage), scale I (cruelty - sensitivity), scale L (gullibility - suspiciousness), scale M (practicality - dreaminess), scale N (straightforwardness - diplomacy), scale O (calmness - anxiety), scale Q1 (conservatism - radicalism), scale Q2 (conformism - nonconformism), Q3 scale (high - low self-control), Q4 scale (relaxation - tension). We were most interested in the results for factor Q2 (conformism / non-conformism). After carrying out the Cattell method, we identified individuals by factor Q2 (degree of conformity). Persons with a high degree of Q2 (+) were classified as noncon-

formists, with a low degree of Q2 (-) - to conformists. The averaged indicators of the results of the performed methodology are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Average results of the multivariate Cattell test (n = 325)
Source: Authors' own conception

	A	B	C	E	F	G	H	I	L	M	N	O	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
M	7,8	5,4	8,2	5,1	6,4	7,9	7,6	8,2	6,7	6,9	5,8	8,4	8,1	5,8	6,7	7,2
□	1,7	0,97	1,6	1,4	1,6	1,9	1,8	1,5	1,8	1,6	1,7	2,3	1,3	1,9	1,8	1,9

M – arithmetic mean

σ - standard deviation

From the table we see that the results of conformism and nonconformism were distributed approximately the same; the studied students are characterized by a high level of anxiety and tension.

The next stage of the study (March 2021) was the implementation of the methodology of M. Rokeach for the study of value orientations. It distinguishes two classes of value orientations:

- terminal - (values - goals) - the belief that the ultimate goal of individual existence is worth the effort spent on its achievement;

- instrumental - (values - means) - the belief that a certain type of action or personality traits are the best in a certain situation.

When analyzing the results according to the method of M. Rokich, it was found that the first place in the ranked lists of terminal values among persons with a high degree of Q2 is occupied by the value – "health"- 43.8% of the studied students. For persons with a low degree of Q2, the first place in the ranked lists is occupied by value - "material values" - 43.8%. The second place among students with Q2 (+) is taken by the value ""material values", the third place is "family", fourth – "entertainment", fifth – "freedom", sixth – "self-confidence". Among students with a low grade Q2, the second place is taken by the value of "entertainment", the third – "self-confidence", the fourth – "family", the fifth – "love", the sixth – "freedom". All other terminal values that were presented in the table, both for students - conformists and for nonconformists, turned out to be equally less significant. The results of the distribution of terminal values among students in relation to the conformity indicator are shown in Fig. 1.

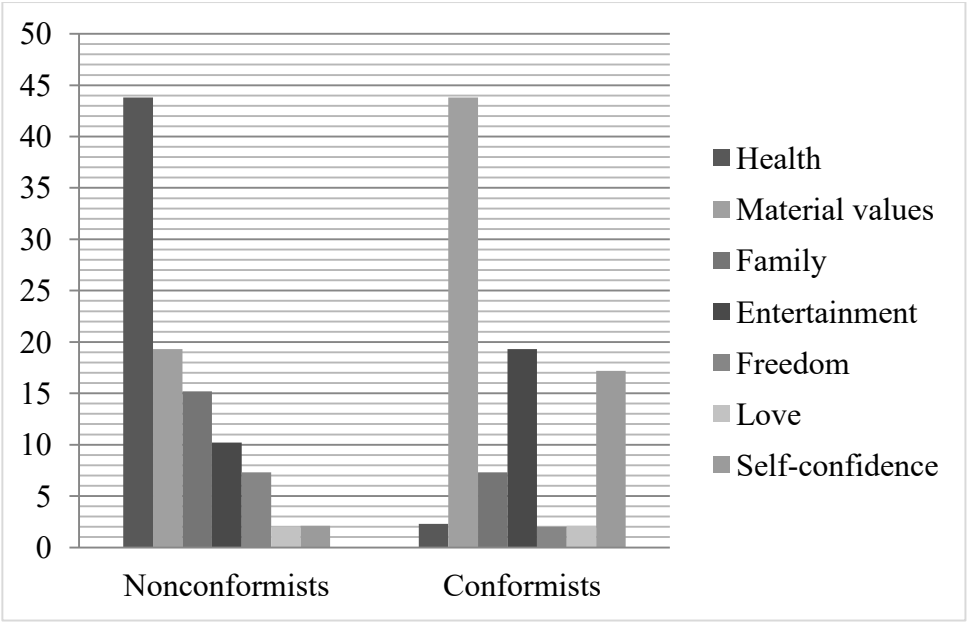


Fig. 1. General indicators of terminal values according to the test of M. Rokich
Source: Authors' own conception

According to the results of the study of instrumental values, students with a low degree Q2 (-) priority value is "high aspirations" - 21.4%, the second in rank value "defending one's own opinion" - 19.8%, the third – "intransigence to shortcomings" - 18.8%, the fourth value – "self-control" - 13.7%, values "rationalism" - 9.5%, and "rationalism" - 7.3% of students.

Students with a high degree of Q2 (+) prefer the following instrumental values: "independence" - 21.4%, "rationalism" - 19.8%, "high aspirations" - 13.7%, "Self-control" - 9.5%, "intransigence to shortcomings" - 7.3% of the subjects. All other instrumental values, as in the case of terminal values, turned out to be equally significant. The results of the distribution of instrumental values among students in relation to the conformity indicator are shown in Fig. 2.

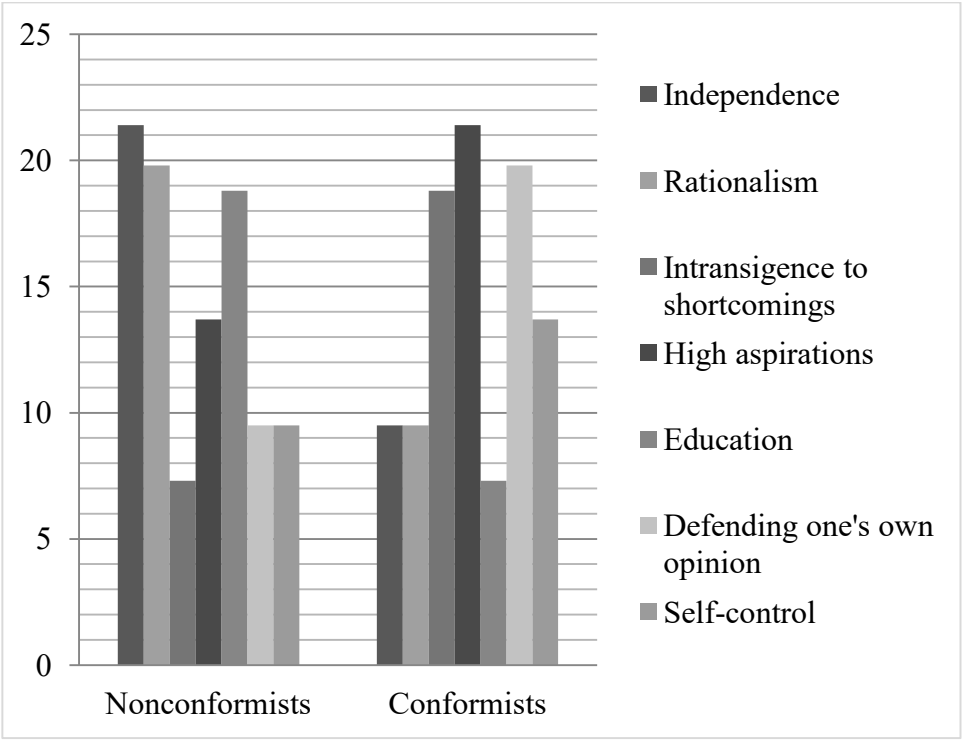


Fig. 2. General indicators of instrumental values according to the test of M. Rokich
Source: Authors' own conception

For the purposes of the study, the characteristics were determined, according to which the correlation was determined between persons with high results on the Q2 scale (non-conformism) of the Kettell test and their results on terminal and instrumental values (M. Rokeach's value orientations test). Then we determined the relationship between persons with low results on the Q2 scale (conformism) and their results on the table of terminal and instrumental values. We also analyzed the Internet addiction indicator (based on the results of the Kimberley S. Young "Internet Addiction" test) in relation to its correlation with terminal and instrumental values, as well as the results of content analysis values.

According to certain criteria of content analysis, the following four values were identified, which have equivalent results for both characteristics (conformism / non-conformism): "independence", "high aspirations", "health" and "material values". The value of the Pearson correlation criteri-

on relative to the level of conformism / non-conformism and subordination of the influence of social networks in terms of terminal and instrumental values, the results of content analysis, are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. The value of the Pearson correlation criterion on the significance of differences between conformists / non-conformists and subordination to social networks (n = 325)
Source: Authors' own conception

Characteristics	Terminal values	Instrumental values	Independence	High aspirations	Health	Material values
Conformists	0,311	0,307	0,58	0,193	0,71	0,325
Non-conformists	-0,242	-0,524	-0,874	-0,331	-0,896	-0,271
Internet addiction	-0, 381	-0,282	-0,479	-0,261	-0,428	0,461

For a given sample size and confidence level, 0.01 r = 0.15. From the table we see that all the results fell into the zone of significance of the relationship. The negative sign of the Pearson correlation criterion indicates that this position is inverse (negative), and this, in turn, indicates an increase in the causal factor, excluding a decrease in the investigative factor. So, analyzing the results of the data, we can say that there is a relationship between the level of conformity and subordination to social networks.

The last stage of the research is conducting a conversation with students. This stage was the most voluminous and time-consuming, therefore it lasted the greatest amount of time - from the beginning of April to the end of May 2021. During the conversation with the psychologist, the students' attitudes, values and goals were analyzed. Each person has his own unique innate psychological structure. And only by living life in accordance with this structure, it can become not just a static unit, but an original personality that has embodied its natural uniqueness. C. Jung called this process individua-

tion, which means indivisibility. As a result of this process, the very formation, self-development, self-knowledge takes place. A person who has gone through this transformation process acquires the ability to see the difference between ideas and values generated by his own "I" and social theses that he took from the world around him. The person begins to realize that he has his own values and needs. So, the goal of communicating with a psychologist was self-knowledge - understanding one's individuality, knowing one's own desires, goals and values, separating them from socially accepted ones. C. Jung called this phenomenon "self". According to him, the self is the life goal of the individual, since it is the complete expression of individuality. This is an image of a life goal, independent of the desires and fears of consciousness.

Social media calls for the opposite process of individuation - the prevalence of collective values. According to modern realities, human life is reduced to an endless race "no worse than everyone else." Internet platforms provide a person with the illusion that happiness is very close, all that remains is to buy a new phone, get married (get married), get an education, buy a car, travel, take a position, and so on. Each new acquisition (material, status), which is not an internal message of a person, but only an external directive to action, very quickly disappoints. But the mechanism of influence of social networks is triggered and a person is immediately presented with a new sacred goal, for the sake of which it is necessary to make even more efforts. This pursuit of happiness leads to physical and emotional exhaustion, emotional burnout occurs, anxiety, depression. Thus, internal discontent is ignored and perceived as a lack of something external. Self-knowledge allows a person to understand what his own "I" is; choose what corresponds to the desires of this "I": creativity, a way of earning money, a life partner, friends, leisure time, place of residence, and so on (Cushner, 2008).

The work with a psychologist was carried out in groups of 10 people. Their own feelings were analyzed - the rejection of a set of social masks, selected taking into account the expectations of others. A person ceased to be a daughter, a student, or an employee. She was just a collection of her own bodily sensations, feelings, desires and needs here and now. The work is based on the metaphor of diminution from Slavic myths and fairy tales: in order to grow up, to become a truly adult, independent, mature person, you first need to become small again.

According to A. Sergeeva, at the moment of giving up the archetypes of the Person, a person is able to fully perceive himself, acquires the ability to acutely feel life. Still, becoming small, according to A. Sergeeva, means returning to childhood, where patterns were laid, complexes were formed,

and insignificant, in the opinion of adults, griefs turned into mental traumas for life. The metaphor of diminution is defined by the researcher as a rejection of introjections - a rejection of those thoughts about oneself, self-definitions that are mistakenly perceived as their own, but in fact unconscious appropriation of other people's ideas, views and judgments. The idea that you need to shrink before you fully grow is reflected in the fairy tales and myths "Gulliver", "Alice in Wonderland", "Sivka-burka". In order to shrink to their natural size and get rid of social roles, A. Sergeeva offers the following exercise, which formed the basis of our research (the stage of a conversation with a psychologist). After discussing the content of the fairy tale "Sivka-burka", the following questions were brought up for discussion: "What your desires, skills, values, worldview should be discarded in order to fit into the ear of Sivka-burka? Which, on the other hand, must be left behind? What are you without?" (Sergeeva, 2016).

At first, not everyone can quickly answer these questions. As a rule, people think about such tasks for years. It is imperative to say the following point: if you draw up a strategic plan for your own life for too long, there is a risk that real life will pass by. Important and frank answers come in the form of feelings, impulses, emotions. At the end of the conversation, it is imperative to conduct reflection on determining the level of difficulty in answering the questions posed and determining the possible causes of such a complication. The following answers were received: 74% of students noted a high level of difficulty in the answers, 19% - a moderate level, 7% - a low level. After the selection of values and the main components of the worldview during communication, all students rejected the components that were highlighted as a result of Content Analysis (independence, high claims, health and beauty, material values). This indicates that these values are external to students and do not have an internal request for implementation.

It should also be noted that in social networks, a person accepts certain stereotypes and behavioral models, forming his social identity and self-esteem, is not always adequate. Social networks are becoming a means of human manipulation, socialization and education of children and youth. As a result of this impact, the lifestyle of the individual changes, in particular the sources of information, interpersonal relations, new models of interaction with the environment are formed. All this has negative consequences on the psychological health of people, especially adolescents.

5. Conclusions

Thus, social networks are the main means of communication of a person during quarantine, which fully satisfies his needs and interests, and also directly affects the psychological state of the person. Under this influence, social and individual consciousness, ideals, beliefs and value orientations are formed. The rapid development of the Internet space accelerates sociocultural dynamics, changes the human worldview, behavior, the way of accepting the world and thinking. Of course, this contributes to the transformation of the value orientations of the individual, changes the traditions and worldview.

The development of the life value orientations of a person in adolescence is a rather complex and multicomponent phenomenon. According to the results of the study, it can be argued that the values that were selected by a large number of respondents are broadcast by social networks in the most attractive form. So, people with a high level of conformity are more subject to the manipulative effects of social networks. Conformity activates the development of such life values as "health and beauty", "material values", "entertainment", "family life", "self-confidence", "love", "freedom", "rationalism", "Irreconcilability to shortcomings", "independence", "self-control" and "high claims".

A conversation with a psychologist showed that this issue requires further research with elements of a correctional program. In social networks, young men accept certain stereotypes and behavior patterns, forming their social identity. The life values of a personality in adolescence reflect the fact of its entry into social ties and relationships, inclusion in the general spiritual system of values of society, affect the self-determination of youth (including professional self-determination), act in the form of ideals, attitudes and internal position. Highlighting life values, which are not a manifestation of one's own "I", destru21q„q qwE hw jeoo8o609„2„trtctively affects the development of the personality, its orientation and perception of the world, its social integration, can lead to social maladjustment and disorganization of society. Thus, the development of corrective measures and programs will be the subject of further scientific research.

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