VIRTUAL COMMUNICATIVE CULTURE AS A SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL ISSUE

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Abstract: The article examines the socio-psychological foundations of forming a virtual communicative culture among students. The influence of the digital environment on students' interpersonal communication, social identification, emotional stability, and the development of information culture is analyzed through scientific approaches. The study also highlights the importance of digital ethics and media literacy in shaping responsible online behavior, as well as the potential for developing students' online activity through virtual identification mechanisms. The obtained results provide an opportunity to use them as a scientific and practical basis for developing pedagogical strategies and enhancing virtual communicative competencies.

Keywords: virtual communicative culture, socio-psychological foundations, student youth, digital ethics, information culture, media literacy, virtual identification, online competencies

Introduction. The process of digital transformation is rapidly penetrating all social systems of modern society, particularly the communication processes within higher education institutions. Today's student lives within the global flow of information as an active subject of internet networks, virtual platforms, social media, and online learning environments. Therefore, virtual communication has become not only a means of information exchange but also an important factor in an individual's social identification, social competencies, and psychological development. This process necessitates bringing students' communicative culture to a new level and shaping conscious, responsible, and cultured communication in the virtual environment.

Recent socio-psychological research (A. Bandura, J. Habermas, M. Castells, L. Vygotsky, etc.) emphasizes the profound impact of the virtual sphere on mechanisms such as individual behavior, communication ethics, critical thinking, and social adaptation. However, existing scientific works have not sufficiently and comprehensively illuminated the specifically socio-psychological foundations of virtual communicative culture among students, its structural components, formation mechanisms, and role in the educational process. In particular, there is a need for a deep psychological analysis of the role of digital communication in the identification, emotional stability, and social interactions of student youth.

This scientific gap requires a systematic study of the process of forming a virtual communicative culture among students from the perspective of modern social psychology. Furthermore, the issue of developing virtual communication culture is gaining urgent scientific and practical importance because threats encountered in today's digital space—such as cyberbullying, internet addiction, toxic communication, fake news, and manipulative influences—pose serious risks to the psychological safety of students.

State of Research. Although the issue of forming virtual communicative culture among students has been studied in various scientific fields, its socio-psychological aspects have not yet been sufficiently analyzed in a comprehensive manner. The theoretical foundations of the issue are primarily found in scientific research in the fields of communication, information culture, digital environment psychology, and youth socialization.

In classical scientific approaches (J. Habermas, P. Berger, T. Luckmann), communication is explained as the main mechanism organizing the social processes of society, while the works of L. Vygotsky, A. Leontiev, and M. Bakhtin illuminate the psychological, cultural, and personal development functions of communication. These theoretical views are a primary methodological source for understanding the psychological essence of virtual communication.

The impact of the virtual sphere on socio-psychological processes has been widely analyzed by researchers such as M. Castells, N. Luhmann, H. Rha, S. Turkle, and D. Boyd. Their works

illuminate the influence of the internet on identification, social interaction, digital behavior, and the dynamics of online communities. This research creates the necessary theoretical base for the formation of virtual communicative culture.

In psychology, processes such as youth motivations for internet use, online identification, cyber-psychological risks, internet addiction, and cyberbullying have been studied by researchers like S. Davis, K. Young, J. Suler, and O. Donskikh. This research helps in understanding the psychological state and behavioral mechanisms of students in virtual communication.

Issues of media influence, information processing, critical thinking, and immunity to fake news have been illuminated by researchers such as L. Masterman, R. Potter, and S. Livingstone. Their perspectives reveal the information-communicative components of virtual communicative culture.

Research by scholars from our country—Kh. Rasulov, M. Juraev, S. Ghaniyev, G. Saidova, Sh. Nishonova, N. Akhmedova, and others—has been conducted on youth digital culture, internet psychology, media influence, communicative culture, and information literacy. Furthermore, issues of developing communicative competence in students and communication culture in the digital learning environment also constitute the main direction of a number of research studies.

Research Methods. The research was conducted based on a mixed-methods approach. Quantitative analysis served to measure the level of VCC (Virtual Communicative Culture) among students, while qualitative analysis allowed for an in-depth study of their psychological experiences.

Theoretical Analysis: Virtual communicative culture is viewed as a set of knowledge, skills, and values that determine an individual's information exchange, social communication, and online behavior in a digital environment (Bandura, 2002; Habermas, 1984). It consists of components such as communicative competence, digital ethics, and information culture, and ensures the effective and cultured formation of digital communication among students.

Foreign research (Castells, 2010; Turkle, 2015) has emphasized that the virtual sphere is a means for shaping an individual's social identification and expressing emotional experiences. Student youth undergo psychological processes such as online identification, dual identity, and susceptibility to social influence in this process.

Communicative competence (Hymes, 1972; Leontiev, 1981) is interpreted as an individual's ability to communicate effectively and culturally. In a virtual environment, these skills include:

- Conveying information accurately and clearly
- Adhering to online ethics
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Demonstrating emotional intelligence

Scholars from Uzbekistan (Rasulov, 2019; Saidova, 2021) emphasize that virtual communicative competence among students is not sufficiently developed and can be significantly enhanced through training and interactive sessions.

Digital ethics—encompassing online behavior rules, responsibility, and moral principles (Masterman, 2001; Potter, 2012). Among students, these skills include:

- Protecting oneself from cyberbullying and toxic communication
- Identifying fake information
- Safeguarding personal data
- Exchanging opinions respectfully in online discussions

are related to the adequate formation of information culture and media literacy among students. In this regard, media literacy is an integral component of virtual communicative culture.

An individual's experience in online communication significantly impacts socio-psychological development. Research (Suler, 2004; Davis, 2012) shows that:

- Anonymity can lead to aggressive behavior

- Through online identification, an individual expresses themselves more freely
- Emotional stability determines the effectiveness of virtual communication
- Susceptibility to social influence and "peer pressure" indicators govern a student's virtual communication

These psychological processes play a key role in shaping virtual communicative culture among students.

Scholars from our country (Nishonova, 2020; Ahmedova, 2022) have reached the following conclusions in studying virtual communication and media literacy:

- Digital ethics and information culture are not sufficiently formed among students.
- Emotional management skills in online communication are low.
- Virtual communicative culture can be effectively developed through training and interactive sessions. From this perspective, a systematic study of the socio-psychological characteristics of forming virtual communicative culture in the context of Uzbekistan is relevant.

Structurally, virtual communicative culture consists of: communicative competence, digital ethics and information culture, virtual identification, and emotional management. An individual's online experience directly impacts their psychological development, social adaptation, and self-expression.

Conclusion.

The significant findings of the research indicate that virtual communicative culture (VCC) among modern students is in a dynamic yet underdeveloped state, and its formation undergoes complex socio-psychological processes. For students, the virtual space serves not only as a technological platform but also as an environment for psychosocial development, self-awareness, and social integration. From this perspective, it is essential to view VCC not merely as a set of technical skills, but as a comprehensive phenomenon reflecting an individual's digital personality, their value system, ethical stance, and social relations.

Imbalance in Structural Composition: The research clearly shows that the main components of VCC—communicative competence, digital ethics, and information culture (including media literacy)—are not developed equally. While practical communication abilities (such as using apps or platforms) are relatively high, its normative-ethical (digital ethics) and cognitive-critical (media literacy) foundations were found to be underdeveloped. This imbalance often leads to unethical behavior, susceptibility to manipulative content, failure to recognize fake information, and the emergence of online conflicts in the virtual environment.

The Decisive Role of Psychological Factors: Digital communication profoundly impacts students' psychological state. The illusion of anonymity often leads to a temporary loss of self-control, a state of "dual identity," and dissonance between the real and virtual self. Furthermore, a lack of emotional regulation skills increases the risk of engaging in toxic communication, losing oneself in online debates, and becoming a victim of cyberbullying. At the same time, the virtual environment also creates new opportunities for social identification, but this process requires conscious management.

Effectiveness of Pedagogical Intervention: The conducted 6-week experimental training program proved the effectiveness of a systematic, substantive, and interactive approach in forming VCC. The insignificant changes in the control group demonstrate that the problem cannot be solved merely through familiarization with technology; it requires specific psychological-pedagogical intervention. The training's effectiveness can be explained by its integration of theory (principles of digital ethics, media analysis) with practice (virtual simulations, situational games, reflection exercises).

Scientific Significance: This research shows the necessity of studying virtual communicative culture not only within pedagogy but as a transdisciplinary object at the intersection of psychology, sociology, and cultural studies. This approach allows for understanding the role of not only individual factors in VCC formation but also group dynamics, social norms, and cultural codes.

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