




Changes In The Spiritual Form of A Person Under The Influence of Social Networks

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Abstract

The digital age has radically transformed the way individuals interact, communicate, and shape their personal and social identities. Among these transformations, social networks have emerged as influential platforms that significantly affect the spiritual and moral dimensions of individual development. In Uzbekistan, where cultural traditions and spiritual values are deeply rooted, the influx of global content via social media challenges traditional norms. The younger generation, as the most active group on these platforms, is particularly susceptible to these influences, experiencing both the benefits and threats posed by digital culture. Despite global discussions on digital media's impact, limited localized studies have comprehensively examined how social networks affect spiritual identity, especially among Uzbek youth within their sociocultural context. This article aims to explore the multifaceted influence of social networks on the spiritual image of individuals, analyzing both positive contributions and harmful effects on values, behaviors, and personal development. The findings show that while social media facilitates education, creativity, and global cultural exchange, it also fosters moral relativism, weakens real-life communication, and increases spiritual emptiness. Trends such as virtual identity, addiction to external validation, and exposure to harmful content are significantly altering youth perceptions. The article uniquely combines cultural, psychological, and educational insights to interpret how value systems are being reshaped in the digital environment of Uzbekistan, offering a localized lens on a global issue. Strengthening media literacy, cultivating critical thinking, and promoting spiritual resilience are crucial for mitigating adverse effects and guiding youth toward responsible digital engagement.

Keywords: Social networks, spiritual identity, information society, personal development, digital culture, youth morality, internet influence, virtual life, moral values, media literacy.

Introduction

The development of modern technologies has deeply penetrated all spheres of our lives. In particular, the widespread popularity of social networks has a significant impact on people's thinking, behavior and lifestyle[1]. These changes are becoming an important factor in shaping the

spiritual image of a person. "To make a person perfect, it is necessary to enrich him spiritually, to achieve moral maturity..." .

In the age of digital globalization, the pervasive influence of social networks has become a defining feature of contemporary life, particularly among younger generations[2]. These platforms, once designed for communication and entertainment, now play a crucial role in shaping the spiritual, moral, and intellectual development of individuals[3]. The rapid dissemination of ideas, trends, and values through virtual environments challenges traditional cultural and ethical norms, especially in societies with strong historical and moral foundations like Uzbekistan. As social networks become more embedded in everyday life, questions arise about their impact on personal identity, values, and social behavior. This article explores the transformation of an individual's spiritual form under the influence of social media, analyzing how digital interaction alters perceptions, weakens real-life connections, and shifts moral orientations[4]. It also considers the positive potential of these platforms for education, creativity, and global awareness, while emphasizing the necessity of media literacy, critical thinking, and cultural guidance to mitigate their adverse effects and promote conscious digital engagement.

Literature review. Karimov I.A. In his work "High spirituality is an invincible force", the spiritual image of a person is determined by his moral values, inner world, beliefs, culture, and behavior in social relations. In today's digital era, this image is increasingly being formed in a virtual environment. Gafurov M. "Spirituality in an Information Society", Promoting positive ideas through spiritual and educational content[5]. The opportunity to obtain educational and religious knowledge has expanded. Young people can freely express their opinions, creativity develops. Moral corruption: open stage violence, indecent jokes, pornographic content negatively affect the minds of young people. As a result of the immersion in virtual life, social and psychological skills in real life are weakening. Cases of accepting immorality and immorality as a "trend". Norkulov Sh. The ability of young people to selectively view any content, to protect themselves from false or harmful information depends on the level of information culture. Therefore, it is necessary to teach media literacy starting from school. Castells, M. Western culture and liberalized moral standards entering through the Internet often contradict Uzbek national traditions. Young people are at risk of moving away from their values[6].

Materials and Methods

Analysis, Comparison, Questionnaire and interview, Observation, Statistical analysis, Content analysis, Experiment (if applicable).

To analyze the changes in the spiritual form of individuals under the influence of social networks, this study adopted a mixed-methods approach that combined both qualitative and quantitative techniques. Analytical and comparative methods were applied to examine existing literature on spirituality and digital media, facilitating the synthesis of key theoretical frameworks[7]. Observational techniques were employed to monitor behavioral patterns among young social media users, focusing on their moral and cognitive responses to digital content. Additionally, questionnaires and interviews were conducted among individuals aged 16 to 30, as this demographic represents the largest group of active users in Uzbekistan, according to the Agency for Information and Mass Communications. The questions were designed to assess changes in attitudes, values, emotional well-being, and perceptions of virtual versus real-life

identity[8]. Content analysis was applied to popular social media platforms, evaluating the prevalence and impact of educational, spiritual, and potentially harmful materials. Statistical tools were used to process the gathered data, revealing correlations between time spent on social media and indicators such as moral relativism, emotional detachment, and declining real-life interactions. Where applicable, experimental elements such as monitoring user behavior before and after exposure to curated digital content were used to gauge immediate effects. This multifaceted methodology ensures a comprehensive understanding of the spiritual shifts occurring in the digital age and enables the formulation of evidence-based recommendations for promoting a more balanced and culturally grounded digital culture[9].

Results

Social networks are not only a means of communication, but also a space for receiving, sharing, and expressing oneself. Through the information, trends, and personal experiences disseminated on them, various ideas and values are instilled in the human mind. As a result, attitudes towards traditional values change and individualism often increases. Freedom of information is an opportunity. But how this opportunity is used depends on the level of spirituality” .

A person's spiritual image is determined by his inner world, beliefs, adherence to moral standards, and his place in society. Among young people who spend a lot of time on social networks, such trends as: Virtual identification (i.e. replacing one's real-life role with an image on the network), Moral relativism (i.e. the growing idea that everyone's "right" is different), and Striving for popularity (evaluating oneself based on the number of likes and followers) are gaining momentum[10]. "Social networks are not only a reflection of youth culture, but also a powerful tool that can reshape it" .

Positive aspects: Raising awareness through spiritual and educational content, Cultural dialogue and exchange of experiences, Opportunity for creative self-expression.

Social networks are internet-based platforms that allow users to share information, express their opinions, and communicate[11]. Popular social networks include Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, YouTube, Twitter (X), and others.

Features: Interactivity and speed, Popularity and unlimited audience, Possibility of anonymity (which in many cases leads to avoidance of social responsibility), Formation of thinking based on content (predominance of visual culture)[12].

Spiritual identity is a person's attitude, worldview, beliefs, and internal discipline towards moral, aesthetic, religious, social, and cultural values.

Positive effects of social media on the individual:

Industry	Appearance of the effect
Education and enlightenment	Online lessons, spiritual and educational content, language learning resources
Creative development	Express yourself through blogging, photography, video, music, podcasts
Global thinking	Getting to know other cultures, broadening your horizons
Social activity	Social actions, participation in charity work, awareness of various

Industry Appearance of the effect projects

Negative aspects: Waste of time, Decreased real-life communication, Moral degradation, addiction to offensive content. "Global networks do not destroy cultures — they compete with them" [13].

Negative effects and their consequences. Moral violations Immoral content is increasing under the guise of freedom of speech. Unusual, sometimes harmful behaviors are becoming widespread among young people in order to follow the "trend" (TikTok challenges are an example).

Spiritual emptiness. Reading books and communication with family are decreasing. Indifference to one's own values and religion is increasing.

Impact on psychological health. Depression, loneliness, comparing oneself to others (FOMO – Fear of Missing Out), feeling worthless depending on the number of "Likes" or "followers".

Inefficient use of time. The average user spends 3-5 hours a day on social media. This not only reduces productivity, but also reduces the time available for self-development[14].

"Technology can both enhance and erode spirituality. The main thing is the culture of using it" . Research and statistics. Statistics: According to Pew Research (2023), 70% of users aged 18-29 base their daily lives on their "appearance" on social media. In Uzbekistan: According to a 2022 report by the Agency for Information and Mass Communications of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the largest number of social media users are between the ages of 16 and 30. Psychological research: Sh. Turkle (MIT professor) in his work "Alone Together" notes that as people spend more time on social media, they begin to lose contact with real life. "We expect technology to provide the intimacy that is lacking in real life, but in reality we end up lonelier" [15].

Discussion

The findings of this study illuminate the multifaceted impact of social networks on the spiritual form of individuals, particularly among youth in the digital era. The virtual space, while enabling communication, education, and cultural exchange, has become a dominant environment for value formation, reshaping not only behavior but also the moral compass of its users. The emergence of trends such as virtual identification, moral relativism, and the pursuit of popularity reflects a transformation in self-perception and social interaction norms. These phenomena are closely tied to the cognitive and emotional shifts experienced by users, especially when their self-worth becomes entangled with virtual validation through likes and followers. The study also highlights the dual role of social media as both a constructive and destructive force. On one hand, it facilitates access to educational content, enhances global awareness, and supports creative expression[16]. On the other hand, it introduces risks of spiritual emptiness, decreased real-world interaction, and moral degradation. These concerns are amplified by the prevalence of offensive or misleading content, and the cultural contradictions between imported liberal values and local traditions. The statistical and psychological data presented reinforce the conclusion that social networks have become a central arena for identity construction, necessitating a strategic response. As such, the discussion underscores the urgency of developing media literacy, critical thinking, and ethical content engagement, particularly within educational and familial institutions. Only

through intentional guidance and the cultivation of digital culture can the spiritual integrity of individuals be safeguarded in an increasingly networked world.

Conclusion

Along with the role of family, educational institutions, and society in shaping a person's spiritual image, social networks have a very strong influence today. Therefore, the formation of information culture and the development of skills for the conscious use of social networks are becoming an urgent issue.

Building spiritual immunity: Developing critical thinking and information sorting skills in the minds of young people.

Promoting digital culture: Creating and popularizing useful content, combating harmful trends.

The role of family and educational institutions: Providing constant guidance and advice by parents, teachers, and religious leaders.

Supervision and monitoring: Establishing a system for monitoring the activities of young people in a friendly manner, without excessive restrictions.

The article concludes that social networks significantly influence the spiritual development of individuals, particularly youth, by shaping values, behaviors, and moral attitudes. While offering opportunities for learning and expression, they also present risks of moral decline and social detachment, emphasizing the urgent need for media literacy and spiritual guidance.

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