Media activity of modern Russian youth in the context of value systems[1]

Anna Gureeva[2]
Maria Anikina
Olga Muronets
Elina Samorodova
Polina Bakalyuk
Faculty of Journalism, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Russia

Abstract

The socio-political system of Russian society is currently functioning in relatively stable way, with the normative and informal practices of interaction between political and public institutions and actors being largely established and worked out. The situation in the non-institutional segment of the sociopolitical sphere is somewhat different: social media provide the public with new opportunities to express their perceptions and opinions about sociopolitical events based on the value systems of a specific social group. These contradictions make it important to study and analyze the current system of socio-political values of specific groups in order to understand the specifics of the political consciousness and behavior of different groups in society and to reach a consensus of values that is an important factor in the sustainability of Russian society as a whole. Modern Russian youth is, on the one hand, the most active in terms of media expression of their opinions on all socio-political issues and, on the other hand, the most vulnerable part of Russian society in terms of the level of influence of various external and internal threats. This article describes the first results obtained in the course of the project 'Socio-political values of modern Russian youth in the social media discourse' (project number 21-011-31701).

[2] **Corresponding author:**
Anna Gureeva, Lomonosov Moscow State University, Faculty of Journalism, 9, Mokhovaya st, Moscow, Russia.
Email: gureevaan@gmail.com

Anna Gureeva, Maria Anikina, Olga Muronets,
Elina Samorodova, Polina Bakalyuk

Keywords

Introduction

Political, economic, spiritual and cultural transformations taking place in our country and the rest of the world have a powerful impact on the development of a young citizen's personality and the formation of their value orientations. Social and political values of youth and society as a whole have been studied by Russian and foreign science for quite a long time from different theoretical and methodological viewpoints, including philosophical, cultural, sociological, politological, and psychological ones (Chuev, 2017; Tsygankov, 2012). However, recent research in political science, psychology, and media communication has revealed that the younger generation is guided by the values of self-expression and self-actualization, mainly using the media communication space rather than the real space of communication (Vartanova & Gladkova, 2020).

As the key platform for political socialization of today's youth, the media have obvious value-generation potential and a significant impact on the forms and tendencies of integrative behavior and the lifestyles of the rising generation. Young people form a life and activity space around themselves based on a sophisticated system of values, taking into account individual preferences, ideals, symbols, and objectives; at the same time, they connect this space to the global sociopolitical field and often localize it in the media communication space, primarily in the space of social media (Gorshkov, Sheregi, 2010; Zubok, Chuprov, 2020; Arif, 2019; Gureeva & Samorodova, 2021; Ugwuoke & Erubami, 2021). The ongoing transformations give us reason to believe that studying socio-political values of Russian youth within the media-centric paradigm is high on the agenda (Vartanova, 2015; Dunas, 2013).

It is important to note that studying social and political values of young adults through the prism of their media communication activity on social media requires a multidisciplinary approach. The sociocultural determinacy in the formation of Russian youth's political values makes it necessary to employ the methodology and conceptual/theoretical foundations of several subject areas of science, such as political science, sociology, psychology, and philology (media research) (Vartanova, 2015; Vartanova, Cherevko, Tolokonnikova & Dunas, 2019; Bodrunova, 2014; Rakityansky, 2008; Rokeach, 1972; Ross, 2018). This article describes the first results obtained in the course of the project "Socio-political values of modern Russian youth in the social media discourse" (project number 21-011-31701). The project includes three areas of research:

conceptual/theoretical area (Gureeva, Anikina, Muronets & Samorodova, 2021; Gureeva, 2021), a series of expert interviews describing youth's value models, and an analysis of young people's media activity in social networking services (quantitative and qualitative aspects).

Literature review

Studying the system of social and political attitudes is becoming one of the topical tasks of modern academic research (psychology, political science, philosophy, sociology, philology (media research), etc.). The study of the social and political values of society in general and of its individual groups is of burgeoning interest to both foreign (Tomas & Znanecki, 1918; Allport, Vernon & Lindzey, 1960; Rokeach, 1972; Hofstede, 1984; Hall, 1990; Inglehart, 1997) and Russian (Popov, 2001; Yakunin, 2007; Shestopal, 2011; Stepanishchenko, 2011; Gutorov, 2013; Galkin, 2016; Selezneva, 2019) researchers.

Since the second half of the nineteenth century, the topic of values has gradually entered the range of research interests of sociology, political science, and psychology. Later, the study of human values has been predominantly seen in the context of social psychology (Rokeach, 1972; Hofstede, 1984; Schwartz, 2012). Since the second half of the twentieth century, scholars have increasingly begun to address the relationship between the value orientations of the individual and the state in their research. In the context of the concept of political culture, Almond and Verba identified political values as the main component that determines the behavior of actors (Almond & Verba, 1989). Other studies (Durkheim, 1933; Merton, 1938; Lipset & Rokkan, 1967; Pantich, 1997; Fedotova, 2011; Mikeshina, 2007; Popova, 2002) examine the dynamic aspects of society's system of political values, the directions and forms of value change, and the psychological features of value formation.

Russian researchers have defined political values as the "stable, implicit semantic dominants of an individual, social group or society in general, which determine ideological priorities and political principles of social relations" (Selezneva, 2019). The most relevant political values for Russian youth – peace, human rights, security, justice, and freedom – are universal in terms of political science, although, no one can give an explanation as to why they are universal and binding on people (Rakityansky, 2008).

Modern researchers have noted that in the process of mediatization of politics, the system of the formation of the individual's socio-political values is changing (Andrianova, Rakitov, 1991; Krotz, 2008; Hepp, 2013; Deacon & Stanyer, 2014; Labush & Puyu, 2019). The media are becoming a factor in shaping

a new system of values and attitudes among young people, as well as the main platform for young people's self-actualization (Castells, 2007; Lippman, 2004; Gold, 2013; Huss & Magos, 2014). The importance of youth in the development of society determines the sustained interest of researchers in the representatives of the youth community (Il'inskij, 2001; Gorshkov & Sheregi, 2010; Lukov & Pogorskij, 2014; Konstantinovskij, 2014; Zubok & Chuprov, 2020), and requires further study, considering different aspects and scientific paradigms.

Social media activism of todays' youth: expert opinion

As part of this project, a qualitative research strategy was implemented and a number of in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted with various expert groups to accurately describe Russian youth and obtain extra information required for data interpretation. The purpose of this research procedure was to identify the causes and effects of the relationships in the social and communication activity of young adults in the context of value models existing in our society. The selected qualitative research strategy provided an opportunity to discuss the appropriate range of topics with the informants in line with the research program and also left open the possibility to expand the discussion field in accordance with the informants' status and experience. The first part of the discussion referred to youth as a social and psychological group and its characteristic features shaped by the system of values existing in society. The second content-related part of the interviews focused on young people as the audience and media users. The third part of the discussion was structured according to the informants' field of expertise and provided information on case studies regarding various initiatives with the participation of Russian young people. The selection included experts professionally involved in the studies of young adults as part of the Russian society, people who build a system of communication for the youth community and teach young people the principles of balanced existence in the media communication space, and political actors responsible for implementing various public initiatives involving youth at the federal and regional levels.

Our findings allow us to point out several characteristics of Russian youth important for the topic of our research. The current value models of young people contain fundamental and transformational elements. Along with the core values that are passed down from generation to generation in the minds of young people, today experts often identify elements of new sets of values associated with the changing sociopolitical and economic conditions of life in Russia. *"I think core human values still exist: human life, health, socialization,*

justice. They are still preserved. I think justice has even intensified among young people" (IE-8).

If we review the relationship between the external context for personality formation and the personal system of values, we will see certain development: *"When our parents' generation was young, they lived in an atmosphere of collectivism. Now young people are more individualistic in the way they look at the world. <…> … there has been some shift in values. Young people are looking for a place where they feel more comfortable" <…> this is a more cynical and pragmatic view of the world"* (IE-2).

A shift in values is governed by the desire for a tangible result of efforts and the awareness of the importance of meaningful action taken: *Compared to other generations, they are clearly focused on the outcome, maybe even expressed in material terms; it does matter to them"* (IE-8).

Today, the general profile of youth is supplemented by individualistic strategies: *"Young people are characterized by individualistic values related to personal freedom and personal fulfillment. These things are best expressed in young people who are not burdened by family, work or other responsibilities…"* (IE-3). Interestingly, public discourse and various social transformations influence the views of young people, their value orientations, and behavioral patterns in a certain way: *"… in the surveys, we note great environmental friendliness in the broad sense of the word, that is, a desire to be more aware of what we consume"* (IE-3); *"…young people are proactive. We will change our consumption to save nature, rather than wait for someone to come along and do it"* (IE-7). It is fair to assume that such distinctive features of modern youth's consciousness partly determine the potential involvement of young people in a number of public (in particular, environmental) initiatives, complementing their traditional qualities such as activism, a high degree of motivation in various types of activity, and experimentation.

For centuries, a combination of the above features has maintained the role of youth as a major force for the development of society: *"Youth have at all times had a passionate challenge. It is young people who change the world <…>. Young people are ready and able to change the world, this is their challenge"* (IE-5), *"… they are the reproducing part of society, its driving force"* (IE-2).

The mediatization of all sectors of public life in Russia affects the ways of development of value models currently existing among young people and also explains the perception of social media, and in particular social networking services, as a key space for debating the most important issues for youth and society (Strо mba ck, 2008). Such influence is felt both at the level of actualization

of certain values (*"... the example of patriotism and youth: the environment is what matters here. The Internet is an environment. The communities to which a young person belongs have an impact on his or her worldview and values"* (IE-1), and on the process of perception of values as a whole in modern media communication space (in terms of values, young people *"are characterized by who they look up to when they decide for themselves what is valuable and what is not. Macro-influencers, who don't have such a strong impact on adults, are very important for the younger generation; what is valuable and what is not, they very quickly take it from these people, read it from them"* (IE-8).

Given the above characteristics, it is crucial to see the differentiation of this part of society and use it in different interactions: *"...these teenagers and young people are very different. You don't even need to compare the urban and rural populations; we can compare different cities and there will be completely different youth dialogs, and youth myths, and pastime, so they are all very different. In general, I consider young people to be really active, progressive, tolerant, and nonjudgmental towards something new"* (IE-6).

Young people continue to be a significant part of Russian society, with certain age-specific and social psychological characteristics, and they are quite actively involved in volunteer initiatives. In this respect, it must be noted that the involvement of young people in volunteering at the beginning of the 21st century is driven by several factors.

The first group of factors that prompt young people's desire to participate in various socially important projects is associated with psychological traits of the community's representatives. Leadership skills and experimentation with the status of a leader bring a young person to more active participation: *"Today, a young person wants to feel like a leader in some kind of communication. This person is interested in the communication where he or she is in charge, where he or she can lead, so they are ready to participate in this communication, to prove their worth. Elements of charity and co-participation practices should act on this aspect in the qualities of a modern young person, the desire to be a leader"* (IE-8); *"for teenagers and young adults in general, it is typical to compare themselves with others, to position themselves in society. It is very important how they are perceived by their peers in particular"* (IE-6). The understanding of the symbolic meaning of activities and psychological satisfaction with participation also explain why volunteer initiatives are so popular among young people: *"When we created Molodezhka ONF (youth division of the All-Russia People's Front), the motto was "for reasons of conscience" and also "after one's own heart". There are some professions that cannot be classified as services, because it is a mission,*

allegiance <…>. *Our teams are also formed from those who come answering the call of the heart, who cannot imagine their life without helping others*" (IE-4). In some cases, the need for involvement among young people is met through a passion for game formats of communication, which allow for a more diverse self-realization and new experiences: "*… our mission is to bring people to our team through 'hype' formats. And it's amazing that a person who came just to play quest begins to help veterans six months later… It's exciting when a person gets involved in our team through a game…*" (IE-1).

The second group of factors is clearly related to the pragmatic segment of value models prevalent among young people. At the beginning of the 21st century, it becomes more and more common to discuss the directions and ways of implementation of personal life strategies (including career strategies) and evaluate planning horizons. In these discussions, the interpretation of volunteering as a way to use means of social mobility attains its proper position: "*Young people see opportunities in volunteering, including career prospects. That is, it is an opportunity to get a foothold in a particular company or organization without experience and generally an opportunity to see some new places. Although the idea of volunteering as a way to help is definitely there, too*" (IE-3); "*There is a large-scale campaign… and then there is a local story. It seems to me that committed people would participate in anything if they see value for themselves. Social mobility, networking, commendation, etc. It's the profit that matters to young people. <…> Volunteering has transformed; being a volunteer is prestigious…*" (IE-7).

It is already a common thing that the formation of modern teenagers and young adults takes place in a mediatized environment, so various forms of activity of those who represent the coming generations are realized in the information and communication space and are governed by its parameters.

It is important to remember that at the beginning of the 21st century it is quite difficult, and sometimes impossible, to clearly distinguish between traditional and new, real and virtual fields of young people's lives: "*With the advent of social media and alternative communication platforms, young people today live in two formats that are inextricably linked: offline and online*" (IE-4). It is essential that new, virtual formats are attractive, e.g. that they include game elements and take into account the content gamification trend: "*… it is very important to find some interesting format online as well, which would be understandable*" (IE-1). However, it should be remembered that media socialization follows its own trajectories and differs from the usual, traditional socialization, which leads to certain traits being ingrained in the behavior, reactions, and thinking

of representatives of the coming generations: *"… the more a person is socialized through the media, the slower he or she undergoes the processes of transformation and transition to adulthood; such people remain very young in spirit…"* (IE-8).

The data on Russian youth's presence in the media space confirms that they are very much familiar with social media and reinforces the trend of visualizing communication and the growing popularity of short formats: *"first of all, this is the consumption of visual content, this is YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, this is the consumption of short content, of course, based on the format of social networking sites, and this is being interested in what is trending now … This is what is now the key for young people in media consumption"* (IE-3). Moreover, the inclusion in the functioning of resources and specific groups in the online environment turns out to be a factor potentially limiting communication that must be taken into account: *"Media consumption most likely takes place via social networking sites, which build a different way of presenting information for everyone, and this information is sorted by interests. On the one hand, it is convenient; on the other hand, it limits the field of vision for young people"* (IE-5). At the same time, the potential advantage in young people's presence on social media is the guarantee of choice and the opportunity to take an active part in communication: *"Social media allow you to choose the content you consume… Content on social media is systematized. It is important for young people that it is they who choose what content to consume. Young people are willing to create content and to publish posts that someone needs"* (IE-7); *"Today's youth feel more comfortable on the Internet because there is an illusion of detachment… The first part of young people is definitely comfortable virtually; the second part, those who are closer to   (years old – author), still feels the need to go out and speak in public. It is clear that for the first group that does not go out and avoids social interaction, it is essential to go online and communicate there through the resources that they read. For the older group, a platform for discussion has to be created"* (IE-2).

The profile of young people based of the available expert opinions allows us to knowingly rely on the study of specific patterns in the behavior and communication of young people in the social media space related to the implementation of important social and political actions and initiatives.

Communication activity of Russian youth on social media with regard to topics related to social and political events

The review of communication platforms such as social networking services seems essential in the context of studying the social and political values of contemporary youth. Young people who are in the process of developing a

system of values act as one of the most vulnerable social groups (Shapoval, p.171-172). Social networks give this group an opportunity to speak out, participate in the country's social and political life, and put their initiatives into action. Thus, one of the lines of this study was to describe the nature of communication interaction of young people in the social media space using the discussion of the country's social, political and cultural life in the comments on official accounts. The study used frequency analysis and analysis of the content of comments, which are convenient methods to identify and analyze the actual value models of young people.

Official accounts of the national social movements *Volontery Pobedy (Victory Volunteers)* and *My vmeste (We Are Together)* in the social media VK and Instagram and their publication activities in August 2021 were selected for the analysis. Comments by registered users were analyzed by certain criteria to draw conclusions about the sentiment of reactions, involvement in the discussion, the level of consideration of the topic, etc. The total number of comments was 763. The sample did not include comments in the form of smiley emoji, stickers, images or videos, as well as response comments to SMM strategy CTA (Call to Action) applied to increase user interaction with the account. Therefore, 183 comments were selected for this study (VK: 22 – *My vmeste*, 137 – *Volontery Pobedy*, Instagram: 13 – *My vmeste*, 11 – *Volontery Pobedy*).

Most of the users' comments on the *Volontery Pobedy* accounts are about values (55% of the total number of comments in the VK group and 54% on Instagram); the users share their family stories and advocate the preservation of the historical memory and historical truth. On the contrary, in the *My vmeste* campaign accounts, comments from the registered users are about getting more information on organizational issues (68% of the total number of comments in the VK group and 70% on Instagram). The users ask how to register for local campaign projects, get a certificate of participation, etc. Based on the fact that comments more often focus on personal stories or organizational issues, the topic or problem is explored mostly on a personal level (VK: 73% – *My vmeste*, Instagram: 73% – *Volontery Pobedy*, 92% – #мывместе (#wearetogether)). It is worth pointing out that in the *Volontery Pobedy* group in VK the topic is discussed by the followers at the public and national levels (72% of the total number of comments), and the comments refer to topics of importance for the entire country, such as patriotism, volunteering, and heroic deeds of veterans. When the users registered in the *Volontery Pobedy* group in VK voice their opinion in comments or get into a discussion, they give reasons for their viewpoint, mostly appealing to emotions and feelings (50% appeal to feelings;

33% appeal to reason and logic; 17% appeal to values), and add smiley emoji to their responses (Russian flag, white dove, etc.). Followers in other groups appeal to logic and reason (VK: *My vmeste* – 68%, Instagram: *Volontery Pobedy* – 67%, *My vmeste* – 62%). To support their viewpoint in a discussion, followers cite personal experience (VK: *Volontery Pobedy* – 66%, *My vmeste* – 71%, Instagram: *Volontery Pobedy* – 91%, *My vmeste* – 100%). In terms of sentiment, comments are predominantly positive (VK: *Volontery Pobedy* – 66%, *My vmeste* – 54%, Instagram: *My vmeste* – 55%); the sentiment in the *My vmeste* account in VK is predominantly neutral (59%).

As part of the project, an empirical procedure implied refining and expanding the information obtained through the quantitative analysis of posts on social media accounts. Given the applicability of a comprehensive research methodology at the program stage, it was decided to implement a qualitative strategy and conduct a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with representatives of the youth community who took part in two selected campaigns both in online and offline formats, after the completion of the content analysis study and the frequency analysis of youth communication in the social media (social network) space.

To achieve this, an interview guide was compiled to develop conversations from comprehending the motivation for participation in social projects to reflecting on the informants' communication activity on social media. The informants provided information about specific aspects of their participation in the two selected projects, their status in the projects, difficulties in the implementation of the projects and interaction with various social actors, and the effects of participation in social and political initiatives. As part of this procedure, significant age differentiation seemed meaningless; a more important characteristic of the informants were status parameters related to the experience of participation in projects or online communities supporting the projects (these factors are highlighted in the relevant fragments at the stage of presentation, analysis and interpretation of empirical research data). The sample included 11 *My vmeste* project volunteers and 5 *Volontery Pobedy* representatives.

For easier analysis of responses, the informants representing the *My vmeste* project are designated as IM-1, IM-2, etc.; the informants from *Volontery Pobedy,* as IP-1, IP-2, etc. Notably, some of the respondents from *My vmeste* first joined online volunteering activities. This is how the respondents answered the question "In your case, what came first – participation in online or offline activities?": *[IM-1]" "My very first activity was giving an online lecture. We told*

people about myths, benefits and harms of blood donation"; [IM-2] "The first one was participation in online activity"; [IP-2] "That day I was preparing for the Victory Dictation, which was postponed to early September because of COVID-19 measures. I saw the Become a Volunteer button on the dictation website, and I clicked, because I was curious to know what volunteers do"; [IP-3] "The first one was participation in online activity, when I was invited to take part in creating social media content." However, personal meetings with active volunteers proved to be an equally important channel of influence at the start stage: *[IM-3] "Representatives of Medical Volunteers came to us, then the first-year students, and told us about what they did in such an interesting way that I wanted to take part in their activities"; [IM-4] "I got involved in projects through my friends; the topic was interesting, and my friends invited me – it was the Vsmysle forum in 2018"; [IM-5] "I had my first volunteering experience when I studied at the medical institute, and it was the Day of Health campaign initiated by the Institute"; [IM-9] "I began to participate in volunteer projects as part of my work for Dobro.Magazine published by the Association of Volunteer Centers"; [IP-4] "It just so happened that I got into this circle of people who are engaged in such activities. As someone who was skeptical about it all, without even understanding it, I just got involved in the whole thing."*

Young people form a life and activity space around themselves based on a sophisticated system of values, taking into account individual preferences, ideals, symbols, and objectives; at the same time, they connect this space to the global sociopolitical field and often localize it in the media communication space, primarily in the space of social media (Gureeva, Anikina, Muronets & Samorodova, 2021). All the informants note that social media publications are important for the development of the volunteer movement. Respondents emphasized that discussions on social media have a positive effect on project implementation: *"Thanks to social networking sites, people can learn more about volunteering and get involved" [IM-1]; "Thanks to social networks, a large number of people are involved. You can find a lot of useful information in the communities." [IM-2].* In addition, they pointed to the need to use social media to ensure full coverage of projects and cultivate a good image: *"Contemporary realities dictate that if an event is not covered on social media or in the Internet, then it did not happen. The higher the level of coverage, the more trust people will have" [IM-5].* Volunteers also acknowledge both the outreach and the practical effect of social media posts and give recommendations for the content: *"It seems to me that there's a better chance that people who don't care at first will come across a post on social media and get interested. But here, the format is what matters: posts*

about the results of an activity are not that interesting. What's important are some infographics and cards about the challenges the organization is facing" [IM-9]; *"Any movement needs support. Thanks to the Internet, any movement gives the knowledge that a volunteer or an ordinary person who is concerned about the issue needs. Through the text and video, there is involvement and so people get involved in socially useful work"* [IP-2].

Volunteers say that the formation of patriotic values and moral attitudes of modern youth becomes a key focus for most volunteer projects: *"As press secretary of the local headquarters and the person whose primary job is to establish contact with the local media, I can say that this is the second most important reason for our activities. The first is to help veterans, and the second is to educate the younger generation and teach them moral values, so that they make the right choices in life at all times"* [IP-3]. Coverage of projects in the media space, particularly in social media, helps to support volunteer activity: *"Support and coverage are always important and needed. Thanks to this, more people will be able to learn about our movement and join us"* [IP-5].

Therefore, the need for social networking to support volunteer activity is fully confirmed by all informants, which proves the thesis about the mediatization of young people and their perception of virtual space as a natural part of everyday life. However, the interpenetration of virtual and real is not complete: media activism, i.e. online activity only, without stepping out into the real world, also exists in the volunteer environment (Omelchenko, 2005). So, we received contradictory answers to the question "How actively the participants of the project community on social media are involved in real-life activity": *[IM-1] "Based on my observations, all participants work actively and are ready to develop in this area of activity"; [IM-2] "Based on numerous publications and comments, we can conclude that the audience is fully involved in real activity"; [IM-3] "Unfortunately, [the participants are] not very active. Many are looking for benefits for themselves; some prioritize their studies, but there are active guys who are looking for new opportunities, knowledge and friends"; [IM-5] "Not everyone is involved, because everyone has a limited time resource, I think that after the activities are publicized, the community participants will develop an interest and take part, and the number of active volunteers will increase"; [IM-6] "Quite a few people are involved in real-life activity from social media, at least, based on my observations. That's what these social media communities are for"; [IM-9] "Quite often, especially when it's quite easy to take part, which suits busy people"; [IP-1] "It depends. All people are different. There are some people who find themselves both online and offline"; [IP-2] "Participants of our movement are very active and*

if possible, each of them does their best to take part in offline events"; [IP-4] "About 70-80% of those who are on social media are active volunteers who participate [in events] in real life"; [IP-5] "[The participants are] very active. They see who they can join and where they can help."

Thus, the thesis about the readiness of young people to participate in online projects and then proceed to real activities they are sincerely interested in, is confirmed. In this context, the significance of official accounts as "guides" that help young people get involved in full-fledged activities increases, which is important for volunteer projects.

It is common knowledge that for young people the support of their relatives and friends on important issues is essential; this position remains in the category of traditional values for many. Consequently, the general public is also a target audience for the communication activities of volunteer projects, although they may have indirect (and accordingly less or distorted) information about volunteering. The informants noted that the reaction of their family, friends, and colleagues to volunteer activities was most often positive.

The informants were asked about the reactions of their family, friends, and colleagues to volunteer activities: *"I have their full support" [IM-2]; "[The reaction is] very positive. They support me and are very happy that I have found something I like to do and something which is important for society"; I think they are used to my activities and trust the projects in which I take part, eventually approved it" [IM-]; "My relatives like my progress in this field. They responded positively to my participation in the projects" [IM-6].*

Promoting cultural and moral values becomes the focal point of the government youth policy (Gureeva, 2020). The main instruments for implementing this policy are developing volunteer activities and creating conditions for the successful functioning of youth public associations. At the same time, it should be recognized that in the current circumstances social media are turning into a natural environment for determining the value priorities of modern youth. In this regard, the coverage of volunteer initiatives on social media is of paramount importance not only to raise awareness about the ongoing projects, but also support volunteer activity, engage new participants, and provide patriotic and moral education for today's youth.

Values and social activity of Russian youth

Social and political values depend on the person's vital needs and are governed by them. Therefore, people value what they lack. Moreover, both social and political values have a regulatory nature with regard to the political behavior and

social activity of the individual. The relationship between values and behavior is manifested in the fact that values determine people's actions and are expressed in them. That is, values have a direct impact on political choice, political activity, and implementation of a certain range of social roles through them.

As noted above, the translation of meanings and the formation of values take place today in the context of the actualization of media logic as a factor that shapes the mutual influence of the media and other social actors. With respect to studying the process of shaping the values shared by Russian youth, it is important to realize that the opportunities for value dialog are expanding in parallel with the expansion of the set of communicative practices and social activity of the individual. This draws our attention to the media consumption characteristics of young people. If we analyze specific information and communication preferences of Russian youth, we will see that they are different from those of other age groups, which leads to a number of conclusions: the value models that exist today among young people contain fundamental and transformational elements; the involvement of young people in volunteering in the early 21st century is due to a mix of factors, and various forms of activity of the new generations are realized in the information and communication space and are governed by its parameters.

Discussion and conclusion

It can be concluded that the fundamental generational differences are associated with the widespread adoption of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) by young people, the changing picture of media consumption, and the transformation of the entire system of values.

The study confirmed the importance of the mediatization of social space as a factor determining not only the communicative practices of modern people, but also social transformations. Young people are becoming active participants in the technologically determined process of social development. The experts who took part in the study indicate that Russian young people have already successfully mastered the new media space, making it an integral part of their lives, and they are enthusiastic about the emergence of new communication platforms, quickly adapting new technologies to meet their own personal and professional needs. It is important to note that in the first decades of the 21st century the media remain a factor of age and socio-psychological differentiation of Russian society in general and its youth segment in particular. Therefore, they require special attention from the academic community. At the same time, the media play a significant role, often influencing the process of transforming

existing value models by promoting certain value orientations in specific age and/or social groups. The empirical material obtained during the project allows us to draw cautious conclusions regarding the persistence of traditional values among young people, while at the same time introducing transformational elements into the generalized value model. It is important to note that the recorded value shift is characterized by the desire of young people to increase the efficiency of their own activities, to achieve concrete results in various types of activity.

Summarizing the data obtained, the issue of media activism and the relationship between virtual and real practices among young people can be noted as an important problem from a scientific and practical point of view. In the current situation in Russia, due to a set of objective circumstances, an environment is taking shape that offers young people many opportunities to participate in a variety of both group and mass, formal and non-institutionalized initiatives. Young people's motivation to participate in specific initiative and in the functioning of certain communities is changing. For example, experts note a decline in the popularity of subcultural communities that have been widespread in past decades and, conversely, there is an increase in attention to socially oriented initiatives. However, the situation is difficult to call unambiguous, because interviews with different groups of informants allow us to identify factors that may affect young people and their willingness to participate in various initiatives. The first group can be conventionally called personal factors related to the young person's interest in the project idea. The second group can be described as socio-political, which is embodied in official support for projects involving young people.

Young people shape the space of life and activity around themselves based on a complexly organized system of values according to individual preferences, ideals, symbols, and reference points, at the same time linking it to the global socio-political field and localizing it in media and communication space, primarily in social networks. The role of youth as a key social actor in the development of Russian society is being realized in various ways, including accessible, actively developing formats of new media, as well as game formats of communication, which allow young people to gain new experiences and define their place in the social space more successfully.

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