

## DISTINCTIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS OF PRESENT-DAY ADOLESCENTS –ACTIVE USERS OF SOCIAL MEDIA

Elena N. Tkach<sup>1\*</sup>, Elena V. Sitnikova<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Candidate of Psychological Sciences, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Psychology, Pacific National University, Khabarovsk, Russia, <sup>2</sup>Candidate of Psychological Sciences, Dean of the Faculty of Psychology and Humanitarian Technologies, Pacific National University, Khabarovsk, Russia.  
Email: <sup>1\*</sup>elenat3004@mail.ru, <sup>2</sup>safonova.4444@yandex.ru

Article History: Received on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019, Revised on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2019, Published on 25<sup>th</sup> December 2019

### Abstract

**Purpose of the study:** To Reveal and describe the distinctive personality traits of today's adolescents who are active users of social media.

**Methodology:** The major methods employed to explore the researched problem were the interview and testing which allowed revealing and scrutinizing the explored psychological and pedagogical phenomena.

**Main Findings:** It was revealed that today's adolescents who actively use social media have the proclivity for submission, rejection of responsibility and leadership, describe themselves as being selfish, self-centered, having an inclination towards rivalry and dominance, while their agemates perceive themselves as being friendlier and less inclined to dominance. This paper explains that the active use of social media by the adolescents today is driven by their need for communication, high levels of anxiety and determination to preserve their individuality. Teenagers who actively use social media are sensitive, impulsive, and expressive, have low self-control, maybe confrontational, tend to be self-indulgent and seek benefits in different life situations. The active use of social media is related to a strongly expressed keenness of the teenagers to communicate, while at the same time they have low motivation for spiritual self-fulfilment in the area of public activity.

**Applications of this study:** The applications are that the obtained results may be used in the psychological and pedagogical practice of work with adolescents, their parents, and teachers, as well as for professional training and qualification upgrade of teachers and psychologists.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** The novelty of this study is that it allows for a deep psychological analysis of determinants and predictors of problems and difficulties faced by today's teenagers.

**Keywords:** *Adolescents, Distinctive Personality Traits, Internet, Social Media, Communication.*

### INTRODUCTION

Today, the use of social media available on the web has become an integral part of the daily routine of a huge number of people, including teenagers. The study of the impact of social media on the personality is particularly important and relevant, especially in adolescence, as it is during this period that a person is most susceptible to the impact of information and communication technologies. The Internet has a huge impact on the values of young people and modifies their communication experiences. The rapid development of information technologies has led to the rise of social media which captures the attention of the overwhelming majority of today's teenagers. This exacerbates the problem of the influence of virtual communication on the ability to communicate effectively in real life and achieve self-fulfilment.

Adolescent children are active users of social media, and they are not protected from the effect of content due to their high emotional instability, infantilism, and personal immaturity.

Social media is a complex intricate system. Various virtual communities appear on social media platforms. In modern society, virtual social networks, in addition to their main function which is communication, also become a socializing link for modern teenagers with high Internet usage habits. The Internet becomes the reason for the emergence of a peculiar virtual culture.

The social network is an interactive multiuser website in which content is created by the network users themselves. It is an automated social environment that enables the communication between a group of users united by a commonality of their interests. There are social networks where one may not only search for people with the same interests, but also for the objects of interest: websites, music, etc. Usually, one may provide information about oneself (birth date, school, university, hobbies, etc.) on the social network site, which helps other users find this account. There are social networks of open and closed types. One of the common features of different social networks is the system of "friends" and "groups" (Voyskunsky, 2004; Kondrashkin, 2014).

The study of personal features of present-day teenagers who actively use social media in their daily life is intended to identify predictors and determinants of the implications of their virtual activity.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Adolescence is believed to be one of the most difficult and unstable periods in human life. During adolescence, each child faces a challenging task consisting in a need to adapt to a huge number of serious and multidirectional changes taking place in their body, psyche and changing social status ([Averin, 1998](#); [Baeva, 2001](#); [Burmenskaya et al., 2007](#); [Kolyabin, 2004](#); [Kondrashkin, 2014](#); [Chatsworth et al., 2006](#)).

The major psychological development in a period of adolescence is the adult identity ([Averin, 1998](#); [Baeva, 2001](#)). An adolescent wants to be autonomous, independent, self-worthy and self-sufficient for the surrounding people to perceive him/her as a strong personality. This issue of concern gives a spur to the conflict between parents and children that is quite well described and analyzed in psychological and pedagogical literature. Researchers note that if parents, teachers, and other important adults continue to treat an adolescent as a child, he/she will strongly protest, and as life has shown, this adolescent protest may take various forms ([Averin, 1998](#); [Kovalev, 2000](#); [Kolyabin, 2004](#)).

In adolescence, the highest mental functions of the psyche actively develop, in particular, theoretical thinking, arbitrary attention, and logical memory. The emotional-volitional sphere undergoes significant changes, but the teenager still remains quite impulsive. Gradually, the teenager's worldview, complex aesthetic and moral feelings, moral beliefs and life ideals get shaped, his/her character, self-concept, and personality orientation are actively framed.

A growing desire for self-knowledge, self-affirmation, self-expression, self-realization is intrinsic to adolescents entering adulthood.

Major changes occur in their motivational sphere ([Averin, 1998](#); [Baeva, 2001](#); [Kovalev, 2000](#); [Kolyabin, 2004](#)). By cognizing the world around them, teenagers become interested in different objects and activities. Gradually, in different circumstances of life, personal and professional interests of adolescents are developed.

Many adolescents grapple with such reflexive questions as "Who am I?", "How do others perceive me?", "What virtues do I have?", and "What may I rely on in my life"? When asking such questions, the adolescents unfold an existential plan of their own life, develop their self-identity and discover their potential.

It is important to understand that the teenagers' view of their own selves is a product of self-comparison with others which is constructed in response to various assessments provided by the surrounding people. Great interest in one's self and one's own lines of behavior contribute to the emergence and development of the teenager's own opinions, positions, judgments, and assessments.

This age is a period when self-attitude as a leading component in a structure of the teenager's self-consciousness actively develops.

Adolescents react to everything quite acutely and contradictorily. This is due to the fact that adolescence is a time of rapid puberty changes to the body and dynamic social processes.

The strongest need of a teenager is the need for detachment, separation, liberation from control and care of parents, teachers (all elders), as well as liberation from the rules, procedures, and regulations established and monitored by them. Adults are not always ready to perceive their growing child adequately and often notice negative aspects and manifestations. Gradually the communication between the teenager and its circle of elders (parents, teachers) is realigned to much or less equal statuses.

In adolescence, there is an acute need for interpersonal communication, which becomes an ultimate goal in itself and through which adolescents fulfill their interests, gain and enhance the view of themselves and of the surrounding world. Engagement in the communication process carries a special value and meaning for a teenager ([Averin, 1998](#); [Baeva, 2001](#); [Kovalev, 2000](#); [Kolyabin, 2004](#)).

Communication in adolescence may be enabled by social networks accessible to almost all modern teenagers, who are Internet users.

The features peculiar to social networks are as follows:

- The possibility to create personal accounts (public or semi-public), for which purpose it is often required to provide real personal data and other information about oneself (place of study and work, hobbies, life principles, etc.);
- A diverse range of possibilities for information exchange (posting various photos, videos, narratives (in the form of blogs or microblogs), establishing thematic communities, exchanging personal messages, etc.);
- The possibility to define and maintain a list of other users with whom the user has certain relationships (e.g., friendships, kinship, business and working relationships, etc.).

Social networks are an attractive communication space for today's teenagers. Many researchers draw attention to the resulting phenomena ([Asmolov&Asmolov, 2009](#); [Babaeva et al., 2000](#); [Burlakov, 2000](#); [Egorov, 2007](#); [Ivanov & Avilov, 2002](#)).

A large number of researchers have concerns related to the informational and psychological insecurity of the web environment ([Aivazova, 2003](#); [Baranova, 2012](#); [Bashkueva, 2007](#); [Burmenskaya et al., 2007](#); [Chigisheva, 2018](#)).

Currently, the problem of addicted behavior, including the phenomenon of Internet addiction ([Bartsalkina, 2010](#); [Bartsalkina, 2012](#); [Berezin et al., 2001](#); [Gogoleva, 2003](#); [Dowling, 2000](#); [Egorov, 2007](#); [Egorov et al., 2005](#); [Krasnova et al., 2008](#); [Loskutova, 2004](#); [Maksimova, 1996](#); [Shapira et al., 2000](#); [Young, 1998](#); [Young, 2000](#); [Varlamova et al., 2015](#)), is being actively explored, and possible ways are identified and described to optimize the life activity of teenagers who are going through the crisis and, therefore, are particularly vulnerable and in need of specific psychological and pedagogical assistance intended to facilitate coping behavior ([Bartsalkina, 2010](#); [Bechter&Filatova, 2018](#); [Dolya, 2010](#); [Krasnova et al., 2008](#); [Zhdanova, 2010](#)).

It should be noted that communication through social networks has its own distinctive features sufficient to distinguish this type of communication from all other types. Several important aspects of such communication should be highlighted.

One of the peculiarities of communication on social media is anonymity. Although it is sometimes possible to find some information about a questionnaire nature and even a photo of the person on the other end, it is not sufficient for a real and more or less adequate perception of this person. In addition, concealment of truth or presentation of false information is often observed. A person can and does show more freedom of expression online, as the risk of exposure and negative personal assessment by others is minimized.

What stands out is the peculiar process of interpersonal perception of communication partners in the social network in the absence of non-verbal information ([Babaeva et al., 2000](#); [Baranova, 2012](#); [Varlamova et al., 2015](#)).

A specific feature of communication in social networks is the voluntariness of contacts. The Internet user may voluntarily make or refuse to make contacts. One may interrupt the contact whenever wants so.

In communication through social networks, it is difficult to express the emotional component of interaction, but there is a strong desire of the contact parties to fill the message with emotional content, which finds its way out in the active use of special symbols to denote emotions, feelings, worries, mood or in the descriptive expression of emotions through words (in parentheses after the main text of the message).

Social networking often reflects an inclination towards atypical, non-standard behavior. Internet users may show themselves from a perspective different from what they are in the real conditions of social imperative, playing imaginary (virtual) roles, scenarios, variants, and forms that are perceived as abnormal and are not possible offline ([Varlamova et al., 2015](#)).

Self-representation of adolescents on the Internet also has its distinctive features. It is more loose, often more outrageous and less socially favorable compared to what a teenager's real nature is. This is explained by the developmental patterns specific to this age, and yet not shaped the identity of an adolescent, its special attitude to the world and determination to become an adult. This determination can be manifested in outrageous behavior both in real life and in the virtual and anonymous space of the Internet. Virtual self-presentation, which differs from the real image, is created by a teenager in order to gain new life experience. It is attributable to a desire to experience something new and is related to self-discovery ([Baranova, 2012](#); [Burlakov, 2000](#)).

Using the resources offered by social media and stepping into virtual interaction, a teenager finds, on the one hand, a possibility to be like everybody else due to the unified presentation of information (the same format of accounts in Vkontakte, Odnoklassniki and other social media), and, on the other hand, a possibility to be different from everybody else due to the variety of forms and content of the presented information (a wide choice of design styles, music and video content, photographs, avatars, size and color of letters, text content, games).

Contemporary researchers describe the reasons why modern teenagers so eagerly resort to the possibilities offered by the virtual world unfolding in the Internet space, in particular on social media ([Bashkueva, 2007](#); [Egorov et al., 2005](#); [Kondrashkin, 2014](#); [Varlamova et al., 2015](#)) to which they belong:

- The frustration of teenagers in the real world, in real relationships that fail to satisfy their current needs, and therefore, adherence to the rules, norms, and standards of the "new reality", rather than the real world;
- The impossibility for a teenager to achieve self-fulfillment, to find one's place in life, inability to find a proper application for own resources and potentials;
- Discovery by teenagers of unlimited possibilities available in virtual space (in the virtual world everyone is nominally equal, it offers the freedom of speech, one can be firm and courageous in expressing one's opinion and position, though in real life one's spirit is often not strong enough for that);
- Concerns of being not understood, of views being not shared, lack of a good (empathic, supportive, reflexive, understanding) communication partner, insufficient richness of communication in real contacts, giving rise to a need

in a communication companion who may improve the quality of life of a teenager suffering from the lack of productive communication;

- A teenager's lack of time for real communication;
- Inability and unwillingness of a teenager to communicate in real life, when the teenager has a possibility to engage in real communication, but intentionally rejects it, as a teenager does not want to make efforts to develop their own communicative qualities and communicative competence. This can also be observed in life: very often being among people, even acquaintances, a teenager takes his/her gadget (phone, tablet) and goes online, giving preference to virtual communication;
- The inability of adolescents to properly plan their free time, to find an occupation; many young people go online when they have nothing to do, to make time go faster; this can be seen as a sign of a wrong time-planning.

The Internet and social media certainly constitute an important aspect of the lives of today's adolescents. But it should be realized that excessive hypertrophied use of the Internet may have very sad implications, such as Internet addiction ([Voyskunsky, 2004](#); [Gogoleva, 2003](#); [Dowling, 2000](#); [Egorov, 2007](#); [Loskutova, 2004](#); [Shapira et al., 2000](#); [Young, 1998](#)). The contributing factors are as follows:

- Low social activity of teenagers, their general unwillingness and lack of keenness to take part in producing socially useful and valuable activities,
- Parental inattention to the development of their own children, lack of understanding on behalf of parents of the nature of the transition from adolescence to adulthood,
- No effective psychological and pedagogical support for teenagers prone to risky, self-destructive behavior, etc.

Adolescents receive a possibility to express certain personal qualities, play important roles, and experience strong emotions that for different reasons is not feasible in real life, through interaction on social media via Internet and the use of Internet resources implies voluntariness, anonymity, lax standards, and the peculiar interpersonal perception ([Babaeva et al., 2000](#)).

It is vital to understand that social media is a high-risk space for adolescents. The use of social media resources may have a significant impact on the growing addiction, specifically among adolescents, since they are facing an acute crisis of transition from adolescence to adulthood, many of them lack confidence and psycho-emotional stability, are ready to trust everybody, while not having sufficient criticality ([Averin, 1998](#); [Baeva, 2001](#); [Dolya, 2010](#); [Burmenskaya et al., 2007](#); [Kolyabin, 2004](#); [Bender et al., 2007](#)).

## METHODOLOGY

The research purpose is to reveal by empirical methods and describe distinctive personality traits of adolescents who are active users of social media.

The research tasks are as follows:

- Select diagnostic tools appropriate for empirical research;
- Conduct empirical research;
- Analyze the obtained results.

Empirical research methods: survey, testing.

The empirical research employed the following psychodiagnostic methods:

1. The method for diagnosing interpersonal relations by T. Liri ([Balin et al., 2000](#)). This method was used to study the perceptions of adolescents about themselves, their ideal "I" and prevailing type of relationship to people in self-esteem.
2. Morphological test of life values by V.F. Sopov and L.V. Karpushina ([2001](#)). The diagnostic technique was used to determine the motivation and value structure of adolescents' personality and identify preferred values and spheres of life.
3. Cattell's multifactor questionnaire ([Kapustina, 2001](#)). The questionnaire was used to identify the individual psychological characteristics of adolescents.
4. The questionnaire "Rate of use of social networks" developed by authors. The questionnaire contained the main questions that reflected the time spent by adolescents in social networks per day; number of visits to social networks; the main type of activity; reasons for registration; whether respondents experience physical inconvenience while spending time in the Internet, which could affect the removal of the account from the social networks; how active they are in social networks and whether teenagers are distracted by virtual communication during real-life dialogue.

The empirical research was conducted in the Multidisciplinary Lyceum named after the 202nd Airborne Brigade, Municipal Autonomous Educational Institution of Khabarovsk. The empirical research covered 63 adolescents aged 14 to 17 from conditionally prosperous families. All of them study in the same educational institution. Data analysis revealed that out of 63 respondents, 37 teenagers are active users of social networks, which makes 58.7% of the respondents.

The sample is representative. The representativeness of the sample is due to the normal distribution of the studied variables. The representativeness of the sample was also ensured by observing the following conditions: following the proportions of the age and sex structure; non-bias of the mathematical expectation of the estimate; consistency of the sample as an approximation indicator to the appropriate parameter of the general share; accuracy determined by the evaluation dispersion; confidence interval calculation. The distribution normality of the effective sign was checked by calculating the asymmetry and excess indicators and comparing them with critical values.

The empirical research was conducted over a time span from January to May 2019.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The analysis of the received data revealed that 66% of adolescents who actively use social media have the proclivity for submission, rejection of responsibility and leadership, describe themselves as being selfish, self-centered, having an inclination towards rivalry and dominance, while their agemates perceive themselves as being friendlier and less inclined to dominance.

Teenagers actively using social media, who participated in the research, are characterized by a high degree of possessiveness, which means a strong urge to control and "possess" the situation and other objects, as well as an urge to dominate others in interpersonal relationships. In interpersonal relationships, they seek independence, which is combined with aggressiveness and the desire to blame their problems and failures on the others. They are also prone to suspicion, hostility, and deception. It may be assumed that this type of behavior is protective in nature and reflects emotional unwellness, which is compensated by teenagers' plunging into virtual reality, where they find a more comfortable and safe environment conducive to satisfaction of their need for communication and self-fulfilment.

Adolescents who are inactive on social media are more likely to perceive themselves as carriers of positive and socially favorable characteristics. They assess themselves as more good-minded, conscientious and responsive.

Active users of social networks are more sociable, open and natural, easy to establish interpersonal contacts, sufficiently oriented to obtain social approval. They are active in communication. They have a fairly developed abstract thinking. They are not conservative; they are prone to experimentation, and resistant to change. Such teenagers are sensitive, emotionally less stable, easily get upset, are impulsive, and expressive. They have poor control over their emotions and low self-control and may be confrontational. These young people are self-asserting and cheerful, prone to anxiety and a sense of concern. They are submissive and malleable, adaptable, prefer following rather than leading and are dependent on the group's opinion, have low autonomy, and are not strong-minded enough to make decisions. These teenagers have a poor sense of obligations and are non-persistent, tend to be self-indulgent and seek benefits in different situations (Table 1).

**Table 1:** Study results of the adolescents' personality (according to Cattell's questionnaire)

Block	Pairs of factors	Inactive users	Sten*	Highly active users	Sten
Communicative	A-H	11,8- 12,9	6-5	8,11-12,63	4-5
	L-N	11,110-10,27	7-5	11,72-11,08	7-6
	E-Q2	10,85-8,76	7-6	13,22-12,83	7-6
	H-F	12,68- 11,19	5-5	11,71-11,06	4-5
Intellectual	B-M	6,68-9,73	5-7	12,01-8,42	7-5
	N-Q1	10,24-9,54	5-3	11,83-7,49	6-6
Emotional and strong-willed	C-I	13,25-9,41	5-6	15,61-5,07	6-3
	O-Q4	12,90-10,57	6-5	10,55-9,71	5-5
Regulatory qualities	Q3-G	11,98-12,41	7-5	8,51-14,47	4-6

\*Note. Sten (from the English standard ten, "standard ten") - the standard scale of test points from 1 to 10 with the following parameters: average = 5.5, standard deviation = 2. When translating raw points into the sten scale, the formula  $2*(X - M) / S + 5.5$  is used, where X is the raw score, M and S are the mean and standard deviation values obtained from the standardization sample.

Teenagers with low activity in social media demonstrate higher scores for C, E, G, N, Q2, Q3 factors and lower scores for H, I, O, Q1 factors as compared to the teenagers who are active users of social media. They tend to be isolated from



the group, calm and restrained in relationships with others, confident in themselves and their abilities, stubborn in relationships with others, tend to show dominance of behavior, are able to oppose themselves to the group, are full of initiative and independence in decision-making, may ignore the opinion and expectations of others, thereby demonstrating independence from the group. These adolescents are emotionally stable and resilient and tend to soberly assess reality. They have a strong will, are socially accurate, and try to follow their own self-image (have high integration). Such teenagers are more conscious and persistent, diligent and responsible, capable to inspire trust. They are conservative, principled, tolerant of traditions and tend to resist change (Table 2).

**Table 2:** Diagnostic results of adolescents' life values (according to V.F. Sopov and L.V. Karpushina method)

Block	Factors	Inactive users	Sten	Highly active users	Sten
Spiritual and moral values	Self-development	42,75	6	25,97	3
	Spiritual satisfaction	48,56	7	28,47	3
	Creativity	22,57	3	42,75	6
	Active social contacts	43,53	6	39,99	5
Selfishly-prestigious values	Own prestige	46,93	7	42,98	6
	Financial situation	35,07	5	33,08	4
	Achievements	32,61	5	36,12	4
	Preservation of own individuality	29,06	4	54,97	7

In an empirical study of the personality traits of modern-day teenagers who actively use social media, a correlation was found between the scale of "aggressive" behavior and the terminal value "preservation of own individuality" (dependence of attributes is statistically significant ( $r = 0.640$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )). The data obtained may indicate that adolescents show aggression as a means of self-defence in order to preserve their own individuality. In this way, they defend their boundaries, views and beliefs. Since social media allows for distanced communication and provides a possibility to avoid conflict situations, active social media users are less aggressive than their peers who do not use the Internet so often.

The research has revealed a correlation between the scale "submissive" behavior and the value "spiritual satisfaction" (dependence of attributes is statistically significant ( $r = 0.970$ ,  $p < 0.05$ )). Apparently, the observed correlation shows that active social media users are seeking contact with stronger, leading personalities, communication with whom will yield them more benefits.

The found correlation between the factor "sociability" and "spiritual satisfaction" ( $r = 0.73$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) indicates the ambition of adolescents to communicate with benefits for themselves. Factor A aims to measure the person's sociability in small groups and the ability to establish direct interpersonal contacts.

High score characterizes the teenager as easy going, ready to cooperate, attentive to people and adaptable. Such a person gives preference to activities through which he engages with people and to situations of social significance. This person easily gets integrated into groups of activists. The score for "spiritual satisfaction", on the contrary, is low. This terminal value is manifested in the search for specific benefits from mutual relations, neglect of public opinion and social norms. Active user of social media is hard to control, careless, inaccurate, follow his motives, pays no regard to the social rules, is inattentive and indelicate, undisciplined. There are signs of internal conflict between the views of one's self. The pursuit of certain goals and benefits through communication.

Anxiety, depression, low spirits, vulnerability, sensitivity to reactions of others are common to the teenagers who actively use social media. The symptoms of fear, immersion in gloomy thoughts are observed. It can be assumed that adolescents feel the need to communicate, but because of anxiety, vulnerability, and insecurity, they avoid communication in reality.

It is more likely that teenager with low self-esteem plunge ("escape") into the Internet space to find respect and love, to get confirmation of their own importance. The Internet helps to get rid of bad moods, feelings of pain and humiliation, problems, anxiety, insecurities. Victories in the virtual world compensate for failures in real life. On the Internet a person may express such thoughts, feelings and emotions, as would never be expressed in real life, most often these are aggressive statements and emotions.

It is important to emphasize that Internet engagement provides an opportunity to get help, support, sympathy, empathy, and understanding.

In contrast to real life, communication on the Internet is more confidential, with diverse problems open to discussion. Social media gives the teenager an opportunity to release psychological tension.

All of the above features of virtual communication contribute to the keenness of adolescents to communicate in a comfortable environment, which emerges and is sustained in the virtual Internet space.

Active social media users are characterized by a high degree of possessiveness, which means a strong urge to control and "possess" the situation and other objects, as well as an urge to dominate others in interpersonal relationships. In interpersonal relationships, they seek independence, which is combined with aggressiveness and the desire to blame their problems and failures on the others. They are also prone to suspicion, hostility, and deception. They demonstrate a propensity for giving an active role in the achievement of results to other people, other family members.

The teenagers belonging to the category under study are pursuing success in communication by minimizing costs and efforts on their part. Their common feature is to expect respect simply for who they are. Such adolescents believe that their task is to adapt to circumstances rather than spend time on their improvement.

## CONCLUSION, LIMITATION, AND IMPLICATION

The conducted research of distinctive personality traits of today's adolescents who are active users of social media revealed that the active use of social media by them is driven by their need in communication, high levels of anxiety and determination to preserve their individuality. Such teenagers are sensitive, emotionally less stable, easily get upset, are impulsive, and expressive. They have poor control over their emotions and low self-control and may be confrontational. These young people are self-asserting and cheerful, prone to anxiety. They are submissive and malleable, adaptable, prefer following rather than leading and are dependent on the group's opinion, have low autonomy, and are not strong-minded enough to make decisions. These teenagers have a poor sense of obligations and are non-persistent, tend to be self-indulgent and seek benefits in different situations. The active use of social media is related to a strongly expressed keenness of the teenagers to communicate, while at the same time they have low motivation for spiritual self-fulfillment in the area of public activity.

In adolescence, communication becomes a leading activity and plays an important role in the self-fulfilment of a person entering adulthood. However, the lack of effective communication skills causes gloominess and frustration with own self among many teenagers. Such adolescents often lag behind in their studies; quite often get in a confrontation with adults and peers. Failure to communicate with peers, parents, and teachers often leads to painful experiences and suffering. The avoidance of problems may be viewed as a desire to run away from difficulties, get rid of psycho-emotional discomfort, escape from the difficulties associated with becoming an adult, the burden of responsibility, boredom, depression. The Internet offers today's teenagers a lot of entertainment, which causes pleasant emotions and weakens the feelings of guilt, fear and shame. However, when avoiding responsibility and difficult decisions, running away to the virtual world, a teenager can become addicted to communication on social media, which will contribute to his/her maladaptation.

As a limitation, it is worth noting that the study was conducted on the basis of only one educational institution, which did not allow a large coverage by the experiment, but it did not affect the representativeness of the sample, which was followed due to the normal distribution of the studied variables.

The outcomes of this study may have wide practical implications for the prevention and mitigation of such negative effects due to the efficient psychological support of modern teenagers during their self-realization. Pedagogical support implying the use of effective social and humanitarian technologies intended to develop assertiveness; resilience, communicative competence, reflexive abilities and leadership skills could be in the focus of further research.

## REFERENCES

1. Aivazova, A.E. (2003). *Psychological aspects of addiction*. St. Petersburg: Rech.
2. Asmolov, A.G., & Asmolov, G.A. (2009). From We-Media to I-Media: The Transformation of Identity in the Virtual World. *Psychology Issues*, 3, 3–16. <https://doi.org/10.11621/pir.2009.0006>
3. Averin, V.A. (1998). *Psychology of children and adolescents*. St. Petersburg: Publishing House Mikhailova V.A..
4. Babaeva, J.D., Voyskunsky, A.E., & Smyslova, O.V. (2000). Internet: Impact on personality. In *Humanitarian research on the Internet* (pp. 11–39). Moscow: Publishing House "Terra Mozhaisk".
5. Baeva, I.A. (2001). Problems of communication with peers: risk and risk prospects. In *Our troublesome teenager: how to understand and reach agreement* (pp. 127–147). St. Petersburg: Publishing House of Herzen State Pedagogical University of Russia
6. Balin, V. D., Gaida, V. K. Gorbachevsky, V. K. (2000). *Practice studies of general, experimental and applied psychology*. St. Petersburg: Piter.
7. Baranova, Yu.M. (2012). To the question of information and psychological security of children and adolescents on the Internet. *Social Psychology and Society*, 4, 122–129.
8. Bartsalkina, V. V. (2012). Parental co-addiction as a risk factor for the development of addictions in children. *Psychological Science and Education*, 4, 18–25.
9. Bartsalkina, V. V. (2010). Prevention of addictive behavior in the educational environment. In *Psychological and educational support of the National Educational Initiative "Our New School"* (pp. 116–127). Moscow: Moscow State University of Psychology and Education.
10. Bashkueva, M.D. (2007). *Games that ruin you*. Moscow: Veche.
11. Bechter, A.A., & Filatova, O.A. (2018). Subject activity in the coping behavior of the individual. *Acmeology*, 65(1), 21–26.

12. Bender, H. L., Allen, J. P., McElhaney, K. B., Antonishak, J., Moore, C. M., O'Beirne Kelly, H., & Davis, S. M. (2007). Use of harsh discipline and developmental outcomes in adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology*, 19, 227–242. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0954579407070125>
13. Berezin, S.V., Lisetsky, K.S., & Nazarov, E.A. (2001). *The psychology of drug addiction and co-addiction*. Moscow: MPA.
14. Burlakov, I. V. (2000). *Homo Gamer: Psychology of computer games*. Moscow: Independent Firm "Class".
15. Burmenskaya, G. V., Zakharova, E.I., Karabanova, O. A., & Lidars, A. G. (2007). *Age-specific psychological approach in counseling children and adolescents*. Moscow: Academy.
16. Chatsworth, J.D., Paien, L.A, Sharp, E.H., & Ferrer-Wreder, L. (2006). Self-defining activities, expressive identity and adolescent wellness. *Applied Developmental Science*, 10(3), 157–170. [https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532480xads1003\\_5](https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532480xads1003_5)
17. Chigisheva, O. (2018). Functional literacy: Terminological ambiguity in the worldwide educational context. *Astra Salvensis*, 6, 963-970.
18. Dolya, A.A. (2010). *Social and psychological aspects of the life prospects of neglected teenagers with different value-meaning orientations*: Ph.D thesis. Moscow.
19. Dowling, S. (2000). *Psychology and therapy of addicted behavior*. Moscow: Independent Firm "Class".
20. Egorov, A.Yu. (2007). *Non-chemical addictions*. St. Petersburg: Rech.
21. Egorov, A.Yu., Kuznetsova, N.A., & Petrova, E.A. (2005). Distinctive personality traits of Internet addicted adolescents/ Features of the personality of teenagers with Internet addiction. *Issues of Mental Health of Children and Adolescents*, 5(2), 20–27.
22. Gogoleva, A.V. (2003). *Addictive behavior and its prevention*. Moscow: PublishingHouse "Modek".
23. Ivanov, M.S., & Avilov, G.M. (2002). Psychological characteristic of role-playing computer play as a special activity. In *Siberian Psychology Today* (pp. 41–55). Kemerovo: Kuzbassvuzizdat.
24. Kapustina, A.N. (2001). *Kettle's multifactor personality measurement*. St. Petersburg: Rech.
25. Kolyabin, S.V. (2004). *Features peculiar to the motivational-meaning sphere of the personality of teenagers with character accentuations*: Ph.D thesis. Moscow.
26. Kondrashkin, A. V. (2014). Effects of Internet on the development of modern-day teenagers. *Psychological Science and Education*, 2, 114–134.
27. Kovalev, A. E. (2000). Personal motivation in crisis. In *Psychology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (pp. 88–90). St. Petersburg :PublishingHouse of St Petersburg University.
28. Krasnova, S.V., Kazaryan, S.V., Tundaleva, V.S., Bykovskaya, E.V., Chapova, O.E., & Nosatova, M.O. (2008). *How to overcome the computer addiction*. Moscow: Eksmo.
29. Loskutova, V.A. (2004). *Internet addiction as a form of non-chemical addictive disorders*: Ph.D thesis. Novosibirsk.
30. Maksimova, N. Yu. (1996). On proneness of teenagers to addictive behavior. *Psychological Journal*, 17(3), 149–153.
31. Shapira, N. A., Goldsmith, T.D., Keck, Jr. P. E., Khosla, U. M., & McElroy, S. L. (2000). Psychiatric features of individuals with problematic internet use. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 57(1–3), 267–272. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-0327\(99\)00107-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0165-0327(99)00107-X)
32. Sopov, V.F., & Karpushina L.V. (2001). Morphological Test of Life Values. *Applied Psychology*, 4, 9–30.
33. Varlamova, S.N., Goncharova, E.R., & Sokolova, I.V. (2015). Internet addiction among youth in megapolises: Criteria and typology. *Public Opinion Monitoring*, 2, 165–182.
34. Voyskunsky, A.E. (2004). Relevant issues of psychology of Internet addiction. *Psychological Journal*, 25(1), 90–100.
35. Young, K. S. (2000). Diagnosis – Internet-addiction. *World of Internet*, 2, 24–29.
36. Young, K. S. (1998). Internet addiction: The emergence of a new clinical disorder. *Cyber Psychology and Behavior*, 1, 237–244. <https://doi.org/10.1089/cpb.1998.1.237>
37. Zhdanova, N.A. (2010). *The influence of intra-family relationships on the construction of personal meanings of adolescents*: Ph.D thesis. Voronezh.