

**MEDIA CULTURE OF UZBEKISTAN YOUTH: DIGITAL LITERACY,  
CONSUMPTION MODELS AND TRANSFORMATION TRENDS**

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**Abstract** The article analyzes the media culture of Uzbek youth from the perspective of digital literacy, media consumption and transformational trends. It is shown that the activities of young people on the mobile Internet, social networks, video platforms and messengers affect their way of receiving information, communicative habits, value orientation and identity. The importance of critical thinking, source verification, information security and ethical communication competencies as structural elements of media culture is substantiated. Finally, recommendations are given to strengthen the media literacy of young people in cooperation with education, family and media.

**Keywords:** media culture; youth of Uzbekistan; digital literacy; media consumption; social networks; media literacy.

**Login**

As a result of the popularization of digital technologies and mobile Internet, the media space has become an everyday component of young people's lives. Modern youth is being formed not only as a receiver of information, but also as an audience that creates and distributes content. Therefore, media culture is a multifaceted phenomenon that includes not only the use of media, but also the methods of selecting, interpreting, evaluating and responsibly distributing information [1], [2].

In Uzbekistan, the significant share of young people, the expansion of digital infrastructure and the strengthening of global media flows make this topic even more relevant. Social networks, video hosting, blogs and messengers have a direct impact on the language style, aesthetic taste, communication habits and values of young people [3], [4]. In particular, the popularity of short-form content is strengthening the model of rapid and fragmented information reception [5].

The purpose of the article is to analyze the media culture of Uzbek youth in terms of digital literacy, media consumption models, and transformational trends, and to develop scientific and practical recommendations for the development of media literacy.

**Analysis of literature on the topic**

The issue of media and youth has been studied by many scholars based on different theoretical approaches. M. McLuhan interprets media as a factor that changes the thinking of society [1]. M. Castells shows that in the conditions of a network society, the flow of information has become the center of social relations [2]. H. Jenkins argues that the user is no longer a passive audience, but a participating subject [6].

S. Livingstone and D. Buckingham, studying the issues of media education and youth media literacy, highlight the pedagogical dimension of media culture [7], [8]. N. Postman analyzes the pressure that mass media exert on consciousness and taste [9].

Among Uzbek scholars, B. Khodjayev shows the place of information skills in modern education based on a competency-based approach [10]. O. Musurmonova and M. Kuronov highlight the value influence of youth spirituality, family upbringing, and the information environment [11], [14]. D. Yusupova and A. Ismoilov analyze the theoretical and pedagogical aspects of media literacy [12], [13]. These works serve as an important theoretical basis for this article.

### **Research methodology**

The article was prepared in a theoretical-analytical direction. Based on a systematic approach, media culture was considered as an interconnected field between the individual, education, family and digital platforms. Using comparative analysis, the differences between traditional media consumption and digital media consumption were shown [3], [6].

Discourse analysis has examined how concepts such as “trend”, “fame”, “success” and “modernity” are constructed in media texts for young people [4], [7]. The functional approach has served to illuminate the informational, socializing, entertaining, normative and manipulative functions of media culture [1], [8].

Based on an analysis of pedagogical literature, the components of digital literacy were summarized: information search, source evaluation, fact checking, cybersecurity, and ethical communication skills [10], [12], [13].

**Media consumption patterns of Uzbek youth** Today's youth use smartphones as their primary means of media consumption. This has brought together information, communication, entertainment, and self-expression practices on a single device. As a result, media consumption has become individualized, portable, and seamless [2], [5].

The rise of social media and video platforms among young audiences is increasing the visual and fast-paced nature of information consumption. There is a growing interest in short videos, stories, infographics, and memes over textual sources [6], [8]. In such an environment, the attractiveness of content often outweighs its scientific or credible nature.

Another important aspect of the media consumption model is algorithmic recommendation systems. Platforms sort content based on user interest and response, which can increase information bubble and selective reception [4], [15]. At the same time, the increasing trend of content creation among young people is turning them into both consumers and content creators [6].

**Digital literacy and media culture** Digital literacy is a key determinant of youth media literacy. It includes, in addition to technical skills, the skills to search, analyze, verify, store, and distribute information responsibly [7], [12]. Young people with high media literacy are more likely to critically evaluate information sources, distinguish manipulative content, and identify fake news.

The development of digital literacy is influenced by media education in educational institutions, the communicative environment in the family, and the experience of independent

self-development [10], [11], [13]. In this sense, media literacy is not only a technical, but also a social and educational competence.

In addition, the ethical dimension of media culture is also important. Issues related to hate speech, plagiarism, cyberbullying, disclosure of personal information, and discriminatory speech reinforce the need to form digital ethics among young people [9], [15].

**Transformational trends** Under the influence of the digital environment, a number of transformational trends are observed in youth media culture. The first trend is the visualization of communication. Textual communication is increasingly being replaced by short videos, emojis, gifs, and visual forms of expression [5], [8].

The second trend is branded forms of self-expression. Social media profiles, content, and engagement with audiences shape an individual's "digital identity" [4], [15]. While this can foster creativity and initiative, it can also increase the pressure of comparison and superficial popularity.

The third trend is the convergence of global and local media flows. On the one hand, young people quickly absorb global trends, and on the other hand, they re-express local language, values, and cultural symbols in new formats. As a result, a glocal media culture is formed [14], [16].

The fourth trend is the growing tension between critical reception and emotional consumption. In an environment of low media literacy, rapid and emotional content increases the risk of manipulation [7], [9].

### **Analysis and results**

The analysis shows that the media culture of Uzbek youth is shifting from traditional information consumption to a digital, interactive, and algorithm-driven model. First, media consumption has become more mobile and personal. Second, young people are actively participating not only as recipients of content, but also as creators and evaluators [2], [6].

Third, while young people's technical skills are relatively advanced, their critical analysis, source verification, and media manipulation detection skills are not the same across all strata [12], [13]. Fourth, the dominance of short-form content is putting pressure on a culture of deep reading and coherent thinking [8], [9].

Fifth, transformational trends are having a two-way impact on youth identity: on the one hand, they are fostering creativity and openness, and on the other, they are fostering imitiveness, information bubbles, and social comparison [14], [15].

### **Conclusion and suggestions**

In conclusion, the media culture of Uzbek youth is actively changing under the influence of digital technologies, global information flows, and local socio-cultural factors. Media culture has become a means of identity construction, communication, and self-expression for today's youth, along with information consumption. Therefore, it is necessary to develop digital literacy as the main pillar of media culture.

The following recommendations are appropriate: widely introducing media and information literacy modules in the education system; preparing methodological materials for parents and

educators on fact-checking, digital safety, and ethical communication; increasing quality local content that combines national values and a modern format; and strengthening advocacy among young people on critical thinking and cybersecurity.

Therefore, the most effective way to develop youth media culture is to strengthen media literacy and harmonize national and cultural stability with the modern media environment in cooperation with education, family, and media institutions.

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