

## **ABSTRACT**

**of Doctoral Dissertation (PhD) on "6D020400-Cultural Studies"**

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### **Cultural Space of Digital Generation**

#### **Relevance of dissertation research**

Modern society has significantly changed, valuable and digital gap has scattered society in different directions. Technological innovations have brought a new reality to the anthropology of everyday life - digital, virtual reality is developing at a rapid pace. Henri Bergson also wrote about the essence of the concept "virtual," drawing a careful distinction between the classical Aristotelian opposition to the potential and current, on the one hand, and the so-called "plugged" (or virtual) reality, on the other. H. Bergson, and after him G. Deleuze, anticipated the modern situation that arose as a result of the explosive development of digital technologies, particularly the emergence of a specific kind of reality, sometimes called virtual reality, sometimes digital space, the space of digital communications. In this space of digital communications, the original, "actual" (synonym for "analog," "face-to-face") relationships of people between themselves and the world take a different form, social relations gain a different speed, and the processes taking place in society accelerate after them. In particular, this process concerns the real world and its modern continuation - new information technologies. The phenomenon described by us also gives rise to a specifically new type of culture - so-called "digital" culture. Digital culture arises in digital space and has its features: it is virtual, communication processes in it speed up at times, the time of information exchange in it is reduced to minutes, sometimes seconds, but it is also superficial. Despite the fact that digital culture involves the transition of a person to a new level of knowledge of the world through all-leading digital technologies and methods of communication and owing to universally accessible information, in fact, a person is depersonalized and becomes a consumer of impersonal, anonymously created digital content, the object of all kinds of manipulations. The amazing paradox of digital culture lies in its two-facedness: on the one hand, the living world, on the other, the technological world. Under these conditions, attention is drawn to the condition of young people born and formed in the era of the information revolution and the active development of communication technologies. People born during the development and prosperity of Internet technologies are called the digital generation. In Western sources, it is called Next Generation, Z Generation, Network Generation, Facebook Generation, iPod, etc. They can be identified by key parameters such as: passion for virtual space and excellent orientation in the world of digital information, social networks and virtual communications.

In the context of globalization, changing values, pandemics and other challenges to humanity, society is developing new behavioral strategies for survival. The content of adaptation practices has many details and depends on the value-generational

landmarks that directly or indirectly depend on the environment. The new 21st century cut off the concept of spirituality and morality, putting the priorities of materiality and cynicism at the forefront. Virtual aggression, imaginary world feeling, moving into the real world, caused a surge of aggression, suicides, and other inadequate behavioral reactions. The influx of information is riddled with stereotypes of the consular society, emphasizing the widespread consumption of material values and the objectification of the individual and relations, which wash out simple concepts of honor, responsibility, goodness and generosity and other recognized universal human values. In the 21st century, such concepts as "cyber terrorism," "cyber bullying," "trolling," "digital fraud," etc. have come into everyday life. All these phenomena are negative, lead to instability in society, and sometimes endanger physical and mental health and even the life of individuals. In the youth environment, there are also undesirable manifestations of the consequences of widespread digitalization. A high percentage of the aggressiveness of modern teenagers, teenage suicides and so-called "groups of death" on social networks like the infamous Blue Whale are associated with the influence of digital technologies. Here, under-age boys and girls have access to virtual games, often aggressive and cruel, and many games are provocative, incite children and adolescents to perform life-threatening tasks in real life ("Granny Grandmother", already mentioned "Blue Whale" and other). A large number of entertainment applications, as well as social networks, urge children and adolescents, who are not strong in their psyche, to follow modern trends. The setting for hedonism and passion for life on the screen at the expense of real life forms a modern picture of the teenager's world. This life space in its electronic-digital and network (information) dimension carries with it both positive and negative consequences for young people and, accordingly, require a deep analysis and a sociocultural image of the digital generation emerging in its space. This image consists of contradictory, but at the same time being stacked into the framework of a globalized culture (the individual exists simultaneously in two dimensions - global and local) and the behavior strategy "Generation Me-Generation We." Considering the above, we believe that the need for a conceptual analysis of the digital generation of Kazakhstan in terms of strategic tasks of the state aimed at studying, analytics, research of the new generation of youth.

The level of prior studies of the digital generation problem in philosophy, cultural studies and even psychology or anthropology is relatively small compared to the field of marketing research. It was marketers who were among the first to talk about the distinctive features of digital Y, Z Generations. However, a marketer is, by definition, a profession whose ultimate goal is to study the market in order to effectively market products; this is an applied discipline, unable to fully study its object due to the lack of necessary theoretical tools. Thus, the relevance of the study is associated with the absence in domestic and world science of extensive full-fledged fundamental studies of the cultural space of the digital generation. Theoretical, applied research on this topic is designed to fill the existing gap in Kazakhstani science. The focus on the development of the digital economy, as well as the year of youth, the year of volunteering 2020, announced after 2019, determine the socio-

cultural significance of studying the Kazakhstani digital generation, its image, problems, value settings, and life trajectories of development, formation and forecasts of its further development. Of course, young people are seen as the intellectual, creative potential of independent Kazakhstan in the context of global processes, the key to a successful future of the country. The relevance of the topic of research is determined by its creative orientation, because the future of the country is always associated with the younger generation.

**The main goal of the research** is a theoretical study of a new term - the cultural space of the digital generation of Kazakhstan in the conditions of modern digital reality. In accordance with the objective of the study, the following objectives were identified:

- to carry out historical and cultural analysis of the genesis of the concept "cultural space";

- to study the phenomenon of the digital generation through the prism of real and virtual world being;

- to carry out methodological analysis of criteria of digital generation cultural space on the example of Western studies;

- to open modern trends of the cultural changes of digital generation;

- to make a portrait of Kazakhstani digital generation;

- to define prospects for the formation of a new paradigm for working with the digital generation, building a culture of communications.

**The object of the research** is Kazakhstani digital generation of 14-18 years old (Generation Z).

**Subject of the research:** valuable orientations and sociocultural characteristics as constituting image of digital generation of modern Kazakhstan.

### **Methodological and theoretical basis of the dissertation.**

The basis of the methodology of dissertation research was the provisions of structuralistic constructionism by P. Bourdieu. The principle of double structuring of social reality and constructionism make it possible to establish cause consequence relations between social phenomena in space and time, respectively, to determine social practices in the context of digital space. The dissertation applied the theory of information, network, virtual digital society, the theory of postmodernism, the generational approach, the Generation Me-Generation We strategy, the theory of social networks, the axiological, socio-cultural approach, as well as the concept of mixed reality. Included observation and survey method (working with focus groups), questionnaires are important for obtaining empirical data on the values and behaviors of digital youth. The methods of philosophical, psychological, structural and functional approaches, the method of analysis, synthesis, scientific generalization were also used in the work.

**The scientific novelty of the dissertation research is that it:**

- revealed genesis changes of the concept of "cultural space" in the conditions of a single information and communication digital field;

- methodological problems of the digital generation research are considered and the essence of this phenomenon is determined, which lives in the plane of two worlds: virtual and real with an influence on the formation of worldview and value orientations during the period of socialization and growing up;

- methodological analysis of the criteria of the cultural space of the digital generation was carried out on the example of Western studies

- modern trends of cultural changes of the digital generation are defined;

- a portrait of the digital generation of Kazakhstan;

- prospects of development of youth policy of Kazakhstan in conditions of digitization of society and model of building communication with the new generation are defined as a condition of harmonious formation and education of personality.

### **Main fundamental principles for defense of the dissertation:**

1. According to the historical and cultural analysis, the author's analysis of the concept "cultural space of Kazakhstani digital generation" was carried out. Kazakhstan is involved in the world web of the Internet, due to which a picture of the world of the younger generation is formed under the influence of digitalization of all spheres of activity. The cultural space of Kazakhstani youth is an environment that forms the assessment and behavioral guidelines of a person, his values and norms, creating a new type of consciousness.

2. The cultural space of the digital generation is characterized by its spatial and temporal discourse, digital identity, and a special form of communication.

3. The phenomenon of the digital generation, which is relatively recently in the CIS, has become the subject of scientific discussion from the point of view of different methodological approaches (generational, network, psychological), has a different number of formulations and does not have clear age boundaries. Considering slightly late arrival of the Internet and the active use of digital products in the CIS, in particular Kazakhstan, the years of birth, the formation of the digital generation accrue to 1985-2002 (millenniums or Y) and 2003-2023 (home landers or (buzzers (Z))). Moreover, home landers are considered a typical digital generation, since they did not know life without smartphones and the Internet. The digital generation of Kazakhstan is a generation formed under the influence of information and digital technologies, which have determined the features of value orientations and socio-cultural image;

4. The cultural space of the digital generation is represented by the concept "Generation Me-Generation We," according to which the valuable guidelines and behavior model of modern youth are contradictory and explained by the paradox of pre-figurative culture in society (space glocally and timelessly). The model of behavior of Generation Z, the socialization of which takes place in an era of rapid consumption of digital technologies in all spheres of life, is characterized by the search for truth, cause and meaning of actions. A pragmatic individualistic generation, without authority and subjecting all information to verification, lives in a mixed reality and thinks in numbers, expressed by signs, memes in a virtual conversation.

5. The given residence of buzzers generation in a mixed reality determines cultural shifts in communication, the ways of constructing everyday life change:

- routine takes on the character of a visual representation of a life understanding,

-the values are individualistic in nature with a hedonistic incline. Such values include orientation to independence, freedom of movement, freedom of thought, speech, and activity. Information literacy and constant inclusion in network communication led to a new type of communication that has a sign form (memes, word shortening, pictures, emoticons).

6. The valuable dynamics in generational continuity allows us to characterize the digital generation as a special group of people with a set of values of two worlds: real and virtual. This is expressed in communication: a high level of virtual relationships in the virtual plane and a low level of communication in the real world. There are such specific signs of the lifestyle of modern youth as an accelerated pace of life, short life projects. A model and example in this case can be the high popularity of bloggers (and influencers) on social networks, as a marker of a successful new life. Human behavior in digital society is explained by the paradox of pre-figurative culture. It suggests the existence of an inherent conflict between, on the one hand, fundamental concepts, categories that have long been used to characterize the human being in all its manifestations and, on the other hand, the claim of a new cyber culture to create a new person, whose everyday characteristics will radically change owing to new digital technologies.

7. For building communication and dialogue with the digital Generation Z and post-digital alpha, the communication model is proposed by the author. The proposed model consists of a culture of participationism and digital literacy (digital competence), designed to create comfortable conditions for the successful socialization of the digital generation and building a new dialogue with the future generation. These two generations did not know the world without digital products, because there is a risk with the definition of their creative way, which is the need for an active life strategy. The purpose of the model is to humanize the cultural space of the digital generation: the realization of the creative beginning of a person through involving him in active activity with the achievement of a specific result, taking into account his characteristics.

8. The formation of the cultural space of a modern teenager is a symbiosis of socio-cultural problems that arose as a result of globalization and informatization, but at the same time it is a new value, ethnic, economic potential that contributes to the socio-cultural development of man and society as a whole. After all, the new generation has more opportunities to change society, they are open, ambitious, they own a "figure," algorithms and they know how to design the future.

### **Testing the results of research**

The main results of the dissertation research were presented in 19 publications of the author, including 1 article in a scientific journal indexed in the Scopus database, 4 articles in scientific journals recommended by the Committee for Control in the Field of Education and Science of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan, 3 articles in collections of materials of international conferences abroad, 11 articles in scientific collections and materials of international, republican scientific and methodological conferences.

**The volume and structure of the dissertation** is under the orders of logic of revealing the topic, the goals and objectives of the study defined in it. The work consists of an introduction, three sections, consisting of 8 subsections, a conclusion, a list of sources used and annexes. The total volume of the dissertation: 139 pages of computer text. Number of used sources is 167. The dissertation is illustrated by 9 tables, 23 figures.