



Particularities of social and political activity of Russian young people in virtual social environments

Peculiaridades de las actividades sociales políticas de la juventud rusa en los ambientes sociales virtuales

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ABSTRACT:

In the paper, particularities of social and political activity of the Russian youth are analyzed. The development of the Internet-technologies promotes the emergence of new social virtual environments influencing the Russian young people's social and political activity. As the empirical basis of the research, the authors' sociological survey was used. According to the research results, a generally positive attitude to the social and political segment of the Russian

RESUMEN:

En el artículo se analizan las peculiaridades de las actividades públicas y políticas de la juventud. El desarrollo de las tecnologías del Internet contribuye al surgimiento de ambientes sociales virtuales nuevos que influyen en las actividades públicas y políticas de la juventud rusa. En calidad de una base empírica de la investigación fue utilizado el estudio sociológico del autor. Según los resultados de la investigación, se destaca, en general, la actitud positiva al

society is stated. The basis for the young people's developing the motivation for getting engaged in public affairs is composed by their interest in politics and their confidence in the possibility to influence the political events. When evaluating the activism of the youth, one can note a clearly expressed passive stance associated with incredulity toward Russia's political segment. The materials of the paper are of interest for professionals dealing with problems of sociology of the young.

Keywords: youth, social and political socialization, virtual social environments, information and communication technologies, social networks

segmento social y político de la sociedad rusa. El fundamento de la formación de la motivación de la juventud con respecto a las actividades públicas y políticas radica en su interés en la política, la presencia de la confianza en la posibilidad de influir en los acontecimientos políticos.

Evaluando la actividad de la juventud, se puede destacar una posición pasiva acentuada relacionada con la falta de confianza en el segmento político en Rusia. Los materiales del artículo son de interés para los especialistas que se dedican a la sociología de la juventud.

Palabras clave: juventud, socialización pública y política, ambientes sociales virtuales, tecnologías de información y comunicación, ambientes sociales

1. Introduction

At present, people's social activism in the most diverse spheres increasingly moves to virtual social environments which in their functioning rely on the contemporary information and communication technologies in the Internet global network (Pronchev et al., 2016).

According to the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), at the end of 2018, 3,9 billion of people, or 51,2% of the population of the planets accessed the Internet global network (ITU, 2018). As per the results of all-Russian representative survey (telephone interviews, with 3200 respondents aged 18 and older) conducted by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Center (VCIOM) on September 24-25, 2018, the percentage of the Internet users in Russia amounts to 81% of the surveyed ones. Among them, 65% get online almost every day (VCIOM, 2018).

Both in Russia and in the Western countries, virtual social environments of the Internet have become convenient platforms for civic self-organization (Pronchev et al., 2018). O.A. Usachyova (2012) notes they "have an impact on the structure of public movements and individual citizens' communities rendering it more "horizontal" and eliminating the intermediaries. It is often the case that individual groups are formed around one or several leaders who coordinate their actions with leaders of other groups in order to achieve the common objective, creating a polycentric horizontal network. In other words, ... can be used efficiently for creating and maintaining strong and centralized organizations".

As of today, it is the youth who are one of the most active consumers of information and communication technologies (Osipova et al., 2018a). According to the VCIOM survey mentioned above, among the Russians aged 18 to 24, the Internet is used by 97%. For them, virtual social environments of the Internet are the main source of the latest news about the events both in the country and in the world. The percentage of social network users on the Internet aged from 18 to 24 is 95% (VCIOM,

2018). It should be pointed out that in the recent years the researchers have registered the reduced consumption of print news media against the growth of popularity of their online versions. In particular, according to the data of VCIOM, in 2014, it was 54% of the Russians who used the Internet-based sources while in 2017, their quantity was already 58%. As for the young people aged from 18 to 24, 80% of them make active use of the online mass media (VCIOM, 2017).

The authors believe that this kind of commitment in the youth is associated with social and mental qualities promoting the continuous active reappraisal by them of any values available in the society (Osipova et al., 2018b). Hence the social and political, economic processes occurring both within the country and on the global stage cannot but touch on the young people and contribute to actively engaging them into these processes.

The negative consequence of this is the arising opportunity for manipulating the youth (Osipova et al., 2018a) and involving them into the "information warfare" going on (Mikhailov et al., 2018; Petrov & Proncheva, 2018), as well as for manifesting aggression frequently (Vasenina et al., 2018; Galushkin et al., 2018). This is why studying the particularities of social and political activity of the Russian youth in virtual social environments is deemed by the authors to be an extremely important task.

2. Literature Review

The processes of globalization (Gavrilyuk et al., 2016; Samsonova & Titov, 2017) and dramatic social and economic transformations Russia saw in the late 20th century (Sushko et al., 2016; Tarman & Chigisheva, 2017) have resulted in disruption of the settled process of socialization of the youth and becoming it necessary to search for new mechanisms of achieving that (Osipova et al., 2018b).

Gaining a new social status implies mastering new social roles, acquiring a set of values and attitudes, getting rights and duties, which is what organizes an individual's behavior within the social environment, the individual's achieving any objectives set, and selecting the ways for self-fulfillment in the society (Elishev, 2015). So, two focus areas of political socialization are possible here: passing on the values- and norms-related basis of the political culture (any settled patterns of political culture and political behavior) from generation to generation, and learning the new political experience, gaining the previously unavailable political knowledge (Mel'nikov, 2016).

It has already been pointed out that the highest social and political activism takes place in the virtual social environment, which is currently associated with a simple access, a possibility of fast feedback, and a relative anonymity (Pronchev et al., 2016).

The forms of the Internet-based political exchange represented in virtual social environments can be subdivided into two main classes depending

on the goals pursued: the information ones and the interactive ones (Morozova, 2011). However, this does not mean the information forms have no interactivity attribute and, conversely, the interactive forms are not informative. Recently, new forms of the Internet-based political exchange have been created, too. These are personal websites of political parties and their representatives, as well as social network and online diaries (blogs) that have become quite widespread (Morozova, 2011). Owing to the new forms of exchange, a new reality is created which is identified with the daily interpersonal communication. Users are substantially involved in creating a virtual social reality and mass information shaping the social and political agenda.

The contemporary information and communication technologies developing and the Internet audience size growing steadily contribute to creation of the public-interest Internet communities. The participants of such communities consider the Internet to be the main channel for obtaining valid information (Petrov et al., 2018) and a tool for solving the problems arising. The Internet-based communities for political projects are founded as well. With the political Internet communities' supporting anonymity, everyone can voice their ideas and call for various social and political actions almost with impunity. As a result, a virtual political identity emerges which is characterized via "the marked dynamism, situational nature, dependence on the polycentric "virtual" agenda" (Samsonova & Titov, 2017). Using the contemporary social media, blogosphere and social networks, the protest communities being created can have an effective impact on the national political regimes (so-called "color revolutions") by provoking the population and certain social groups to walk the streets instead of staying in the virtual environments (Elishev, 2015).

According to the studies conducted by the colleagues of RUDN University-Peoples' Friendship University of Russia (Abramov et al., 2017), politicization of social networks affects the main resources popular with the young people. "Facebook" and "Twitter" are the most politicized communities, with political groups not less frequently being formed on the basis of such resources as VKontakte, Odnoklassniki, Instagram, and YouTube. Researchers point out not only the political charge of these social networks but also certain identities being shaped in them. "Against the background of atomization of the society and absenteeism, this kind of networks politicization unfolds fairly quickly, with erosion of the citizens' confidence in the traditional political institutions underlying it. Here the political life is dynamic, the access to vast quantities of information is unlimited, and one can communicate with the likeminded people in a swift and interactive manner. For the youth, these are serious "competitive advantages" over communication in the real life" (Abramov et al., 2017).

Thus, "the development of networks and cloud Internet technologies are the basis for creating the so-called "cloud democracy" in the measurable future which is a form of citizens' political nationwide self-government

with the all-round use of cloud Internet technologies. Certainly, this kind of technology penetration into the political process can be of interest for the young people as the main users of technological novelties" (Volkov & Krasheninnikov, 2013).

3. Methodological Framework

The objective of this research is to study the particularities of the Russian young people's manifestation of social and political activity.

The main tasks of the research are as follows:

- Analyzing the information communications of the contemporary Russian youth.
- Analyzing the factors of attracting the contemporary Russian youth to politics.
- Analyzing the political activism of the contemporary Russian youth.

In accordance with the objectives of the study, the following variables were identified. The variables of the social properties of the blogosphere (interactivity and hypertextuality): 1. Empirical manifestation of the significance of communication processes occurring in the blogs (availability of the personal web page; the presence of a photo, video and audio blog; running the online diary; visiting servers providing hosting services for the blogs, chats, forums and teleconferences); 2. Empirical manifestation of the "inclusion into the life of a political blog" (active participation in the political debates in the chats and forums; discussion of the politically significant themes in the chats and forums; private messages, comments to the posts). The variable mechanisms of the blogosphere influence the political attitudes of the youth: 1. Empirical manifestation of the "intensity of visiting the sites and blogs, discussing the political issues": visiting the websites of the public authorities; visiting the websites of political parties; visiting the websites of public organizations; visiting the websites of traditional QMS and Runet own information resources; visiting the websites of research organizations in politics, institutes and laboratories; visiting the personal websites of the politicians; visiting the personal websites and blogs of the political activists; 2. Empirical manifestation of the "consolidation and organization of the needed electorate": visiting the "elite" blogs, where attention is focused on certain stories and events; voting (electoral behavior) at the Internet elections, conferences, referenda; creation and circulation of the political information through the blogs, websites, online newspapers etc.; participation in fundraising in support of the parties or movements; participation in the discussion of political issues in the blogs, websites, teleconferences of the political parties (movements), virtual communities, government bodies. All these variables formed the basis of the authors' research tool (questionnaire).

In order to study the particularities of manifestation of the Russian young people's social and political activity, on March 24-28, 2018, an online survey was conducted based on Google Forms (Online. URL:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0>. Available: 24.03.2018.) with 412 people participating. The age of the respondents who took part in the survey ranged from 18 to 29. 38% of them were 18 – 23 years old and 62% were 24 – 29 years old. The gender ratio was 55% of men and 45% of women.

In computer data processing, the technique having a strict probabilistic mathematical justification was applied. The sample estimation methods were also used. The sample error amounts to not more than 5% for the total in general with probability $P = 0,95$. The quantitative data analysis was conducted using the SPSS specialized software package (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) which is the international standard for sociological information processing.

4. Results and Discussion

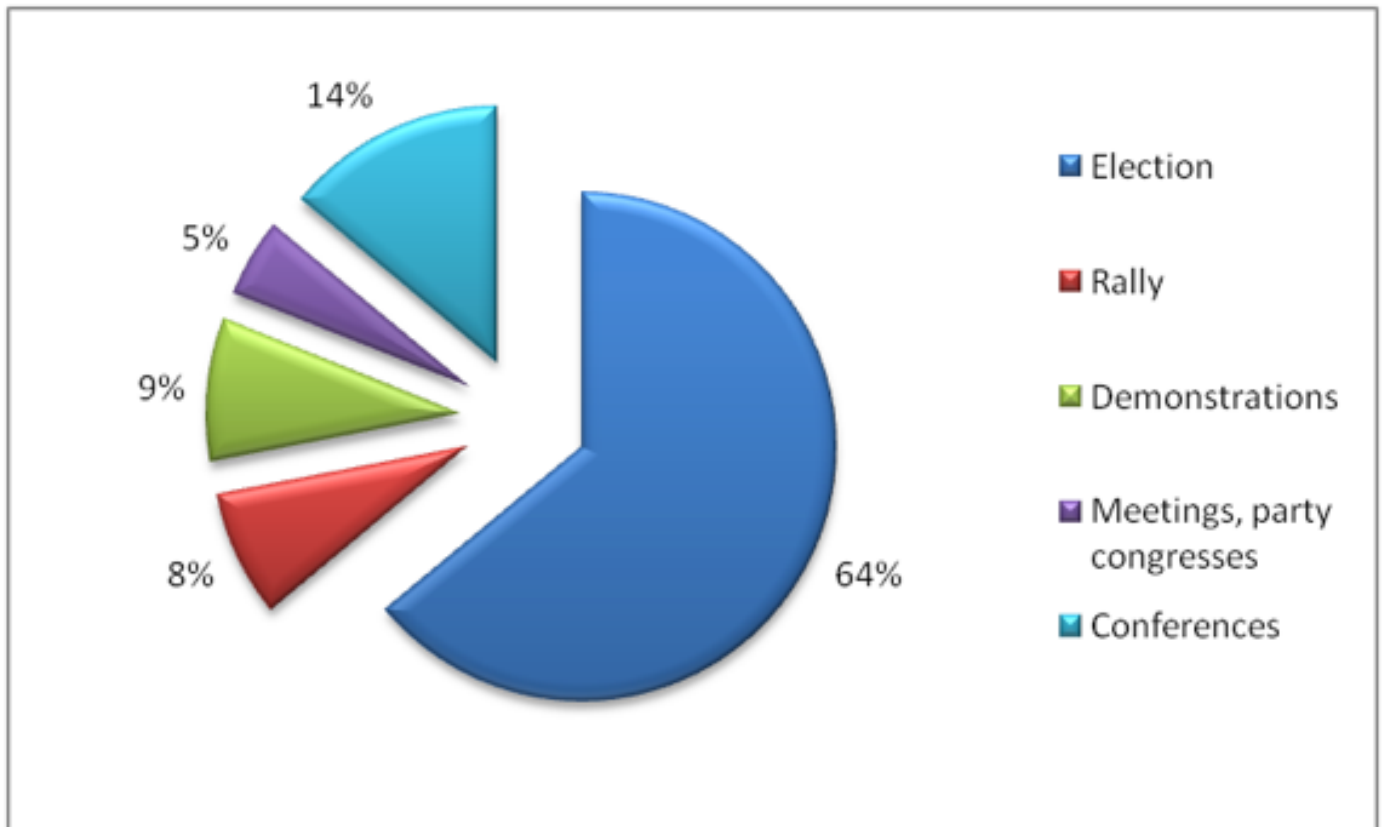
The research conducted by the authors has shown that generally the contemporary youth have a positive attitude toward the political segment of the public. However, estimating the young people's commitment in the aspect of their participating in the political life of the country, it can be stated that there is a passive standpoint with clearly pronounced features. Let the obtained results of the research conducted be analyzed and causes be identified due to which the youth of today are not eager to get actively involved into their country's political life.

When answering the question if they were interested in the way events unfolded in their country's political life, 63% of the respondents surveyed answered that *"Yes, I am, but not on an ongoing basis"*, and only 20% chose the answer option *"Yes, I am, consistently"*. The remaining respondents went for the answer options *"No, I am not interested in it"* (11%), and *"I am at a loss to answer"* (6% of the surveyed ones). If the obtained answers are estimated in terms of interest in the political life of the society, it is clear that it is the greater number of the surveyed who care about the political situation. Meanwhile, if the standpoint of estimation is the frequency of the young people's interest in politics, then it turns out that so few as 20% inquire about politics almost every day. It should be also borne in mind that this survey was conducted at the time when the events taking place in the world were closely associated with Russia and concerned its interests in various areas of both political and societal life (Syria, the Ukraine, the Crimea, Presidential elections). All these events could influence the fact that the youth boosted their interest in the country's political life. It is quite likely that during a calm period, as the mass media spare little coverage to the global and vital questions touching on everyone's interests, the young people are less interested in the political situation in the country.

When answering the next question, "Do you participate in the country's political life in any way?", 61% of the respondents replied in the positive and 39% - in the negative. Remarkably enough, all participants of the survey answering *"Yes, I do"* mentioned elections as the event in which they take part. Other variants of events scored the smallest quantity of

answers (see Figure 1).

Figure 1
Events Which the Youth Take Part in



Source: the authors

It was suggested to those respondents who had said they did not participate in the country's political life to choose an option from the list or to offer their own variants of answering the question about why they did not do so. The variant *"I have no time and opportunity"* turned out to be the most widespread one - 17%. The following three options *"This is not interesting for me"*, *"I think it is the professionals who have to engage in politics"* and *"I trust the president and I think he will do everything right"* were chosen by 48% of the surveyed, with their answers distributed equally between the options. Another variant to be paid attention to was the answer *"I am sure my participation will not get us anywhere"* – it was selected by 14% of the total quantity of the respondents.

If the reasons why the youth are not eager to get engaged in their country's political life are analyzed, it can be said that this is due to a special negative atmosphere having formed in the young people's environment which is associated with mistrust toward the political segment and identifying it as a standalone unit not depending on anyone. The above is also confirmed by the fact that when the question *"What is your opinion, for what purpose people participate in the country's social and political life?"* was dealt with, it was mainly the answers of a more pragmatic rather than patriotic nature that were opted for. Among the answers, the most frequently occurring are the following variants: *"career growth, the status in the society, success in life"*, *"money, material*

welfare", "aspiration for power", "personal benefit, and search for easy paths in life". The answer variants of "an active life stance", "patriotism, a wish to be useful for the country and the society", "aspiration for showing oneself and self-fulfillment" were less frequent. The following group of questions was aimed at finding out what political parties were preferred by the contemporary youth and what political parties the young people are the members of themselves. In the total quantity of the respondents surveyed, it was only 2 people who mentioned they were members of some political movements or organizations (United Russia and Communist Party of the Russian Federation).

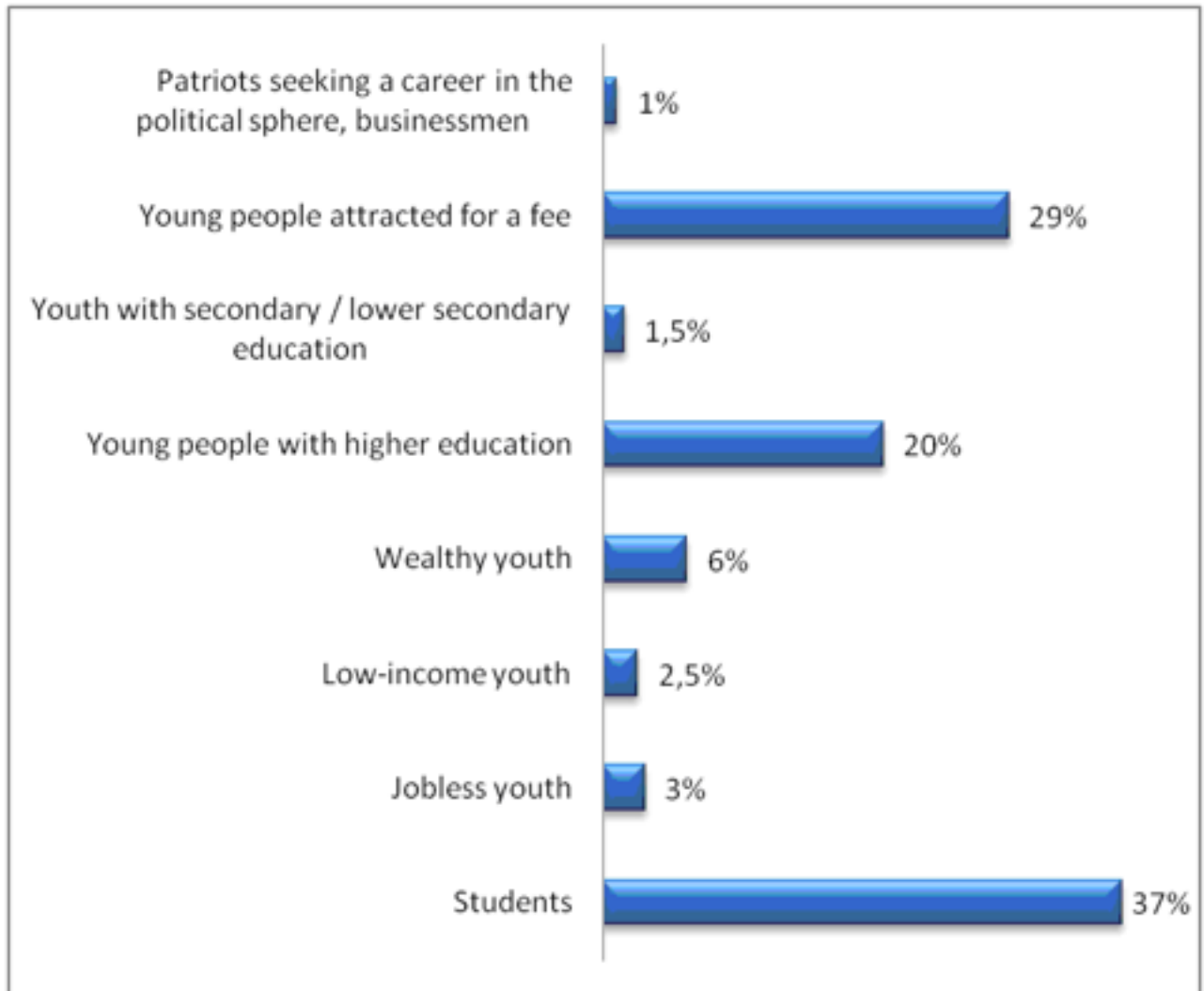
However, although it is so few as 0,5% of the surveyed young people who are members of political parties, those giving preference to a political party were much more numerous. In particular, the question "Do you prefer any political party?" was answered in the positive by 36%. Here are the first-choice parties of the respondents: United Russia (66%), CPRF (8%), LDPR (23%) and Just Russia (3%).

Earlier, the results of analyzing the respondents' answers to the question "Do you participate in the country's political life in any way?" were given. With the question, it has been found out that 61% of the respondents do. Meanwhile, when answering the following question, "Have you taken part in the elections of the RF President?", the higher quantity of the respondents gave the positive answer: 78% of the surveyed, respectively. This might be due to the fact that the respondents were not focused thoroughly when starting to answer the questionnaire and so at that point did not perceive their participation in elections as one in their country's political life.

The analysis of reasons behind the young people's failing to take part in elections and those behind their not getting engaged in the country's political life shows they are completely identical. So, 37% of the respondents answered they did not participate in elections as "nothing depended on" their opinion. 22% more chose the answer variant "did not want to", with 30% of the respondents answering they "had no opportunity". Two of the respondents surveyed suggested their own answer option running as follows: "the results of the elections are known initially". Anyway, even though the greater part of the surveyed young people participates in elections, most of them speak negatively about their peers' political activism. This is evident from the answers given to the next question, "How do you estimate the participation of the youth in Russia's political life?". So, there was an almost equal division of the opinions. Slightly more than a half (56%) of the young people replied "the youth take a passive part", a little fewer pointed out that "the young take an active part" (41,5%). The remaining 2,5% of the respondents suggested their options, among which "the youth are not engaged dynamically enough" and "the greater part of the young people are not involved in participation in the political life of the society due to the lack of ideologists". According to the respondents surveyed, it is students and those "invited to participate on a fee basis" (the option was suggested by

the very surveyed ones!) and *the young people having the higher education* who are the most actively involved in the country's political life (see Figure 2).

Figure 2
Groups of the Young People Who are the Most Active in the Country's Political Life, %



Source: the authors

If it is borne in mind that in the surveyed ones' opinion, it is the young people engaged in their country's political life for a fee that rank second, then, it is not surprising that when choosing the ways for attracting the youth to political involvement, the highest quantity of the respondents (47%) opted for the *"material support"* answer. *"Creating comfortable conditions"* was named the second in significance way for attracting the young people (19,5%). Equal quantity of the respondents chose the answer variants *"inviting celebrities"* (11%), and *"there is no way if there is no wish"* (11%, respectively), with 10% giving the *"mass media coverage"* option. The answers obtained during the sociological survey give evidence about the present-day young people's perceiving the political sector as a source for obtaining material benefits. This might be associated with the fact that the contemporary election process is perceived as a cynical one, where everything is known and paid for in advance. Hence the very process of voting is associated with a

candidate's receiving votes from people who initially have a material interest. What is especially important, too, the mass media keep publishing information about corruption and bribery, unfair law enforcement, commercial struggle between parties at times, which as well generates mistrust of the youth toward the current political system. The level of the young people's political activism analyzed, the following group of questions can be discussed which will allow identifying the main information sources used by the youth for obtaining political knowledge. As the answers to the question *"What information sources do you use for learning about the political events in progress?"* are analyzed, it can be stated that it is the Internet and television that are the major sources of information. Being the main source for obtaining the information, the Internet is used by the majority of the respondents surveyed. 54% of the respondents spoke for the fact that they *"use the Internet more frequently than other sources"*. 21% of the respondents said they *"only use the Internet"*. 19% of the survey participants opted for the "I do use it but rarely" answer.

Proceeding from the fact that the majority of the surveyed respondents use the Internet, it can be said that the Internet is currently becoming the principal information source from which the youth obtains information about the country's political leaders, social and political organizations and their programs. All this leads to the opportunities for information action on the young people get enhanced.

With regard to this, the Internet and television are leaders in the extent of confidence people have in information obtained from various sources. They are trusted by almost one third of the surveyed ones (36% for each, respectively). The second place belongs to the printed media – these are trusted by 14,5% of the respondents surveyed. Radio and one's acquaintances enjoy approximately equal trust, 6% and 5%, respectively. It is only 1,5% of the young people surveyed who specified they have no confidence in any of the above mentioned sources.

Next, let the news portals used by the young people the most frequently be analyzed. According to the results of the survey, it can be stated that for the youth, the most widespread source for obtaining information is Yandex.News (Online. URL: <https://news.yandex.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – they were selected by 27% of the surveyed people. The top two in popularity were news feeds in social networks – 22,5% of the respondents surveyed. The young ones also read such news portals as News@mail.ru (Online. URL: <https://news.mail.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 15% of the survey participants, RIA "Novosti" (Online. URL: <https://ria.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) - 14% of the people, and Vesti.ru (Online. URL: <http://www.vesti.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 9% of the respondents. As for the news on such portals as RosBusinessConsulting (Online. URL: <https://www.rbc.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 3%, Rambler news (Online. URL: <https://news.rambler.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 2,5%, and the Internet newspapers Lenta.ru (Online. URL: <https://lenta.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 2,5%, and

Gazeta.ru (Online. URL: <https://www.gazeta.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 3%, the youth read this less frequently. However, although the respondents cited such a lot of news portals, it is the political news that they read on the portals not all that frequently. The greater part of the respondents surveyed, 39% in particular, said they read the political news *"less frequently than once a week"*. Only 11% read it *"more frequently than once a week"*. Other 21% answered they read *"more frequently than once a week but not more than three or four times a week"*. 24%, which is a quarter of the respondents surveyed, opted for the answer that they read the political news *"more frequently than once a week"*. And it is only 5% who read the political news *"several times a day"*. This confirms the fact again that the interest of the youth in the events taking place in the country's political life is more passive rather than active.

While paying attention to the greater part of the young people's using the Internet as the source for obtaining political information, it makes sense to identify how objectively the Internet covers the events occurring in the country's political life. For this, the respondents were asked to select a 10-point scale variant to evaluate the most precisely in their opinion the objectivity of the information obtained. As the scoring scale is 10-point, it can be conventionally subdivided into two parts: the first one – scores 1 to 5 that define a low objectivity of the information and equal on the average 8,25, and the second section – figures from 6 to 10 to stand for a high objectivity (on the average 13,4). It follows from the answers that young people evaluate the information obtained from the Internet rather high and consider it objective.

A high level of objectivity of the information is also confirmed by the fact that the question "Have you faced false political information in the Internet?" was answered as *"never"* by 18% of the respondents and *"very rarely"* by 38%. Yet, the quantity of the respondents who have encountered false information *"repeatedly"* is quite high – 32% of the respondents surveyed. On top of that, there were 12% of ones who face untrustworthy information *"on an ongoing basis"*.

However, when the open question asking to give an example of false political information in the Internet was answered, the examples turned out to be very few. This can give evidence either of the inexactness of information being so minor that the respondent did not even remember it, or of the contemporary society being so used to not trusting the political segment that even correct information is now perceived as a hoax and feeding the bogus information to the public. Anyway, among the very few examples that were given, two focus areas of information can be singled out to which the young people trust the least: these are the events taking place in the Crimea and the Ukraine, and ones unfolding in Syria. The political information the young people obtain is discussed by them with their friends most frequently – 38% of the respondents. They discuss it with their families slightly less often – 29,5% of the respondents, – as well as with their co-workers – 27% of

the respondents. It is with their fellow students at the university that the young discuss political information the most rarely – 5%.

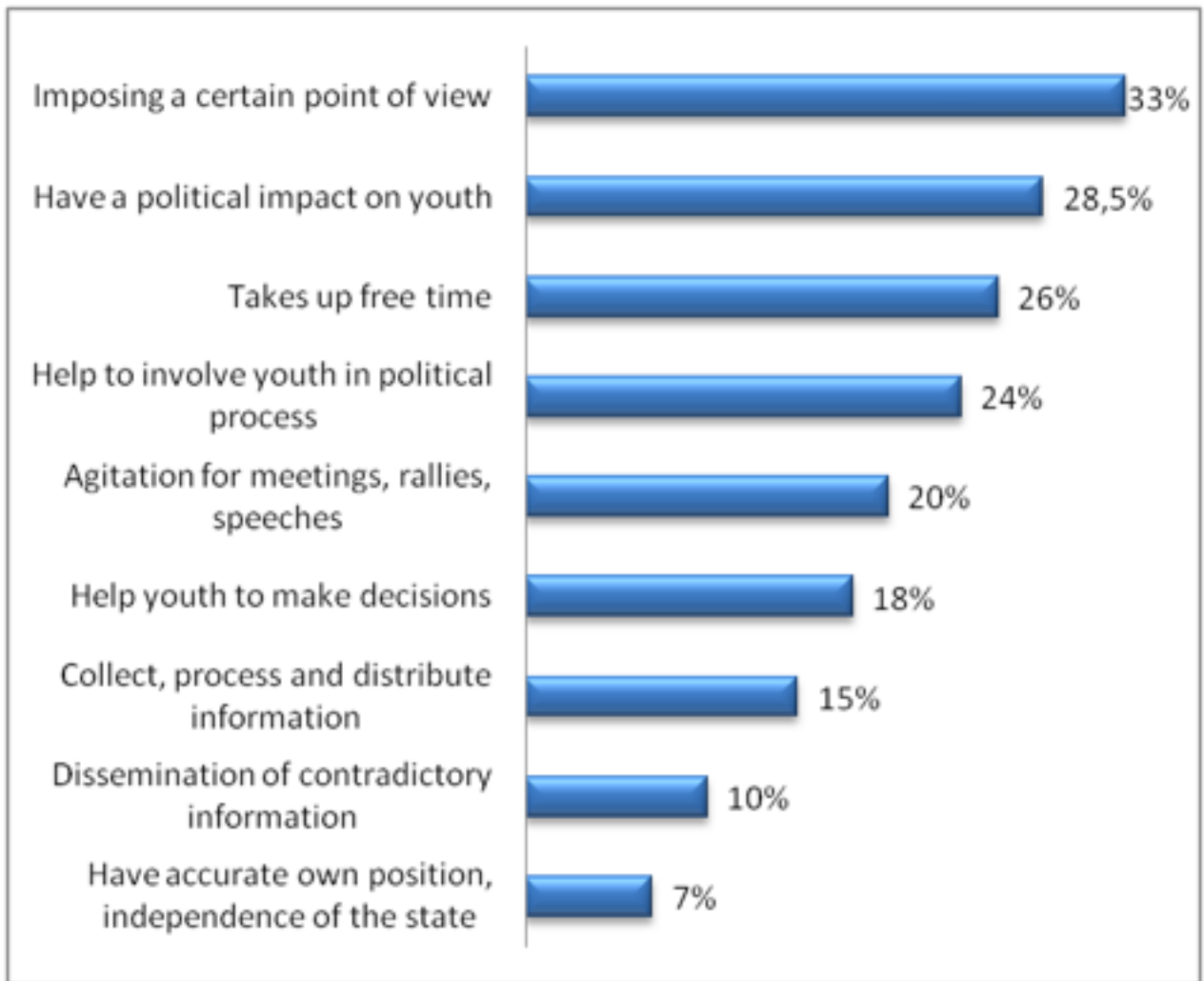
As for discussing the political information in blogs, chatrooms or forums, this attracts even smaller quantity of the respondents. So few as 3% of the total quantity of the surveyed ones answered they "have always taken an active part" in discussing the political news in the web. 16% of the respondents said they *"participate very rarely"*, 13% – *"join the discussion when there is an opportunity"*, with 10% more choosing "only the topics of interest for them". And a bit more of the surveyed, 58% of the respondents, said they *"never take part in discussing the political news in the Internet"*. Initially, it could be assumed that such a small quantity of people discussing the political news on the Internet might be associated with only some of the surveyed respondents' having registered pages in social networks. In order to rule out this assumption, the respondents were asked the following question: *"Have you got any registered pages in social networks?"*. 88% answered in the positive. It was VKontakte (Online. URL: <https://vk.com>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 51,5%, Odnoklassniki (Online. URL: <https://ok.ru>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 31%, and Facebook (Online. URL: <https://www.facebook.com>. Available: 24.03.2018) – 11% – that proved to be the most widespread social networks used by the young people. Meanwhile, only 15% of the respondents surveyed were subscribed to political figures, with most of them being V. V. Putin and D. A. Medvedev's subscribers. Several people mentioned V. V. Zhirinovskiy and S. S. Sobyenin, too. Using the Internet for promotion of one's political views, search for supporters and the likeminded people did not win a lot of positive answers either. Only 17% of the respondents of the total quantity of the surveyed ones use the Internet for the said purposes. The bulk of the young people surveyed do not apply the Internet for promoting their political views and opinions. In order to find out what the Internet currently is and how it is considered by the respondents, they were suggested to voice their opinions on the two following statements: *"The Internet is currently an important part of the contemporary society and ensures the dialogue of the citizens, the society and the state,"* and *"The Internet is currently viewed as a tool of publicity, openness, public sphere and the civic society"*. The first statement was supported by 87% of the respondents, the second one – by 65% of the respondents, with 35% expressing their disagreement.

The fact that the Internet is one of the major information sources as of today as well as it performs a kind of liaison role between the youth and the politicians, is also confirmed by the respondents' answers to the question *"can the Russian blogs be called a channel of exchange between political figures and the youth?"*. 32% of the surveyed respondents said that *"yes, they can, because a large information flow is transferred"*. Another 26% opted for the variant *"yes, they can, because this is a way of communicating and voicing one's opinion"*. However, there were a lot of negative answers, too. In particular, about one third (32%) of the respondents said no-one used political blogs as exchange channels, with

10% choosing the answer option "no, they cannot, as the information they carry is controversial or wrong".

In order to find out the role of blogosphere in shaping the youth's political attitudes, the respondents were suggested to identify what benefit and what harm the use of political blogs for the young people can do. Multiple answers could be selected in the survey (see Figure 3).

Figure 3
Evaluation of the Impact that Blogosphere has on the Youth, %



Source: the authors

Having analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of the influence of blogosphere on shaping the young people's political attitudes, one can point out that according to the very respondents surveyed, political blogosphere is a direct participant of the process of tailoring the political attitudes of the youth.

Thus, it is their interest in politics and confidence in the possibility of influencing the political events that make up the basis of building up the young people's motivation for social and political activity. However, social passivity of the youth is observed currently which is expressed in their unwillingness to take part in the country's political life.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

It follows from the results of the research conducted that as of now, virtual social environments are the public platform to unite the young people, to attract various social groups to creating coalitions, to coordinate the activity of the youth, to keep them updated and to influence their political world view.

In general, the contemporary youth has a positive attitude to the political segment of the public. The reasons why the young people do not aspire to show their political activism are associated with incredulity toward the political segment, with identifying it as a standalone unit not depending on anyone. These are elections that are the main event in which the youth take part. It should be noted that it is the young people born and living in Moscow and having the higher education who are the most active participants of the elections process.

According to the respondents surveyed, it is students, ones engaged on a fee basis, and the young people having the higher education that are the most active participants in the country's political life. This is why they also consider material support and comfortable conditions as the main ways of attracting the youth to politics. This gives evidence about the present-day young people's perceiving the political sector as a source for obtaining material benefits.

As the sources for obtaining information, it is the Internet and television that are in demand. Most participants of the survey associate the political blogosphere with the channel of communication between youth and political figures and point out the assistance in decision-making among its positive features.

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