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CHANGES IN SOCIAL RELATIONS IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

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Abstract: This article analyzes the transformation of social relations in the context of the information society and examines the impact of digital technologies on communication, cooperation, and the functioning of social institutions. It also highlights the positive and negative aspects of the informatization process and explores the changes occurring in the relationship between the individual and society from a philosophical perspective.

Keywords: information society, social relations, digitalization, communication, globalization, Internet, social networks.

In the 21st century, information and communication technologies play a decisive role in the development of humanity. As computer technologies, the Internet, and digital platforms become increasingly widespread, profound changes are taking place in almost all spheres of social life. This process is referred to by many scholars as the “information society.” In the information society, knowledge and information emerge as key strategic resources that significantly influence the content and forms of social relations [1].

Today, information has become not only an important factor of economic development but also one of the main tools for organizing social life. The introduction of digital technologies in public administration, education, the economy, healthcare, and culture has initiated a new stage of social development. As a result, significant changes are being observed in people's lifestyles, worldviews, and interpersonal relations.

In modern society, relationships among individuals are formed not only through traditional means of communication but also within the digital environment. This situation creates new forms of social interaction and redefines the position and role of individuals in society. In particular, social networks, messengers, and other online platforms have become essential tools of everyday communication, reducing limitations related to time and space. Consequently, opportunities for information exchange, expression of opinions, and social cooperation on a global scale have significantly expanded.

At the same time, the rapid development of digital technologies is affecting the content and nature of social relations. Human labor activities, education, leisure, and even personal relationships are becoming increasingly connected with the virtual environment. This situation not only generates new forms of social relations but also makes their philosophical analysis a highly relevant issue.

The problem of the information society and the transformation of social relations within it has been widely studied by both foreign and domestic scholars.



The scientific works of researchers who developed the concepts of post-industrial and information society are particularly important for understanding the theoretical foundations of this issue. American sociologist and futurist Daniel Bell, in his theory of the post-industrial society, substantiated the idea that knowledge and information are becoming decisive factors in economic and social development. According to Bell, during the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial society, the service sector, scientific knowledge, and information resources occupy a central position [2].

Issues related to the transformation of social relations have also been thoroughly analyzed in the works of Anthony Giddens. He emphasizes that globalization processes and modern communication technologies have a strong influence on people's social activity and everyday lifestyles.

Uzbek scholars have also conducted numerous studies on the information society, globalization, and digital culture. In particular, N. Hakimov examined the formation of information culture and the preservation of national values under conditions of globalization [3]. M. Quronov, in his socio-philosophical studies, analyzed the impact of informatization on social development and human consciousness [4].

The concept of the information society emerged in the second half of the twentieth century, and its theoretical foundations were developed by a number of scholars. In particular, Daniel Bell analyzed the transition from an industrial to a post-industrial society and emphasized that knowledge and information were becoming the primary factors of economic development [5].

Manuel Castells, in turn, described the information society as a “network society,” in which social relations are carried out through global information networks [6]. According to him, digital technologies reduce temporal and spatial barriers between individuals and contribute to the formation of a new social space.

The main characteristics of the information society include:

- Information becoming a strategic resource;
- The development of the knowledge economy;
- The increasing importance of digital communication;
- The expansion of global information networks;
- The virtualization of social relations.

The process of informatization is bringing significant changes to both the content and forms of social relations. Whereas interpersonal relations were previously formed mainly within local communities, today the Internet provides opportunities for communication on a global scale.

Social networks have become an integral part of everyday life. They enable individuals to exchange information, express opinions, join various communities, and demonstrate social activity. As a result, virtual forms of social relations have significantly developed [7].



Today, individuals simultaneously participate in multiple social environments, including family, work collectives, educational institutions, and virtual communities. This phenomenon gives new meaning to personal social identity.

At the same time, information technologies are transforming labor relations. The growing popularity of remote work, online education, and electronic services is shifting interpersonal interactions into new formats. During the COVID-19 pandemic in particular, digital communication tools emerged as an essential element of social life.

The development of the information society has a number of positive effects on social relations.

First, opportunities for access to information have expanded considerably. Through the Internet, people can obtain large volumes of information within a short period of time.

Second, communication processes have accelerated. Through e-mail, instant messaging applications, and social networking platforms, individuals can communicate with people in any part of the world.

Third, citizens' social and political participation is increasing. Digital platforms play an important role in shaping public opinion and supporting civic initiatives [8].

Fourth, new opportunities are emerging in the fields of education and science. Online courses, electronic libraries, and digital learning platforms are simplifying the process of acquiring knowledge.

At the same time, the process of informatization creates certain challenges alongside its positive effects.

First, the growth of virtual communication may lead to a decline in direct interpersonal interactions. This tendency is particularly evident among young people.

Second, information security has become a pressing issue. The dissemination of personal data, cybercrime, and information manipulation pose serious threats to society [9].

Third, the problem of the digital divide remains significant. Not all segments of the population have equal access to information technologies, which may generate new forms of social inequality.

Fourth, information overload can exert psychological pressure on individuals, resulting in stress and information fatigue.

The information society represents an important stage in the development of modern civilization. In this society, information and knowledge serve as key resources, transforming the content and forms of social relations. Digital technologies expand human interactions and create new opportunities for communication. However, the process of informatization also generates challenges such as information security risks, virtualization, and digital inequality.



Therefore, under the conditions of the information society, it is of great importance to protect human interests, promote digital culture, and ensure the rational use of information technologies.

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