

A Study of The Psychological Factors Influencing the Mental Health of Female Students and The Development of Deviant Behavior Under the Influence of Digital Environment

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Abstract: Organizing measures to promote the mental health of female students and prevent deviant behavior in the virtual environment—as a risk factor for psychological safety issues among students—is one of the priority tasks of the system for preventing neglect and delinquency.

Keywords: Mental health, student, deviant behavior, virtual space, imbalance of mental processes.

Introduction: Today's younger generation is a digital generation, whose socialization process is shaped by the widespread use of digital technologies and differs radically from that of the previous generation. The risk of developing deviant behavior is determined by changes in socialization mechanisms, where it is not the social institutions of the family and education that take center stage, but a new agent of socialization: The Internet. The relevance of the chosen research topic is confirmed by the fact that, over recent decades, the scope of deviant behavior has expanded significantly, with a rapid rise in addictive forms of behavior among young people. These have a devastating impact on the psychological and physiological health of young individuals, linked to the pervasive influence and expanding accessibility of the information environment.

Deviant behavior by learners in a virtual environment can have a negative impact on an individual's psychological well-being, as internet users frequently encounter online risks, and the virtual space is becoming a new arena for antisocial tendencies and various forms of deviant behavior. The rapid flow of information and the widespread use of mobile devices, the internet and social media have brought not only the rapid exchange of information and unlimited access to

vast amounts of data, but also various types of deviant behavior and online risks. Almost half (45%) of those surveyed in 2023 reported signs of addiction to gadgets and the internet. Younger respondents were more likely to report symptoms of digital addiction. Experts note that digital addiction is increasing year on year. The issue of aggressive behavior and cyberbullying is inextricably linked to the mental health of society. Its state first determines the frequency of such behavior, and then influences people's behavior itself – whether they attempt to copy such behavior, resist it, or shut themselves off from it.

Furthermore, it is important to note the significant rise in crimes committed using online resources: the number of such crimes has increased 7.5-fold over the past seven years. There has also been an increase in aggressive behavior online: according to data from the NAFI Analytical Centre for 2024, 63% of Russians have encountered insults and rudeness online, with one in five experiencing this frequently.

Thus, the relevance of this study stems from the growth and diversity of deviant behavior, as well as problematic internet use by students. The objectives of preventing deviant behavior online are to identify types of problematic activity in the virtual environment, to protect students from the destructive influence of

online content that is harmful to their health and their moral and spiritual development, and to develop measures to prevent the emergence of antisocial tendencies in the personality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Deviant human behavior can be defined as 'a pattern of actions or individual acts that contravene socially accepted norms and manifest themselves in an imbalance of mental processes, maladjustment, disruption of the process of self-actualization, and a departure from moral and aesthetic control over one's own behavior. According to a number of authors (Cheverikin, 2024; Edmondson, Bransby, 2023), with the development of the information society, the widespread use of mobile devices and easy access to various internet resources, the significance of the problem of deviant use of virtual space is increasing, particularly among children and adolescents, as this group is particularly vulnerable to the negative influence of this environment.

In the works of E.V. Zmanovskaya and V.Yu. Rybnikov, it was demonstrated that deviant social behavior can be categorized into real-world (chemical and non-chemical addiction, various forms of auto- and hetero-aggression, vagrancy, etc.) and virtual (cyberbullying, hate speech, online fraud, grooming, setting, internet addiction, etc.). A.A. includes: the use of cyberspace for financial gain, insults, slander, disclosure of information, the promotion of ideas of xenophobia and violence, accessing the virtual environment in inappropriate places, including at night, spending many hours browsing the internet without any specific purpose, and prolonged stays in online gaming environments. Abnormal behaviour can be real or virtual.

The mechanism by which deviant behavior shifts from the real world to the virtual world involves a 'loss of inhibition' online, resulting in a lowering of psychological barriers and negative changes in personality. The barriers and prohibitions that regulate a person's behavior in a similar situation in reality are eroded, and the reference points on which the individual usually relies when interacting directly with those around them are transformed. The transfer of problematic behavior from the virtual environment to the real world is driven by the 'priming' effect, whereby deviant behavior in the virtual environment contributes to similar destructive tendencies in reality, acting as a catalyst for behavioral deviations. Along with partnership relations in the game, conditions are created for the formation of positive personality traits. Such a mother may go to her friends, leave her young children alone, and not return until the next morning.

She always allows her child to try strong alcoholic beverages in the presence of her friends, finding it very amusing. By taking her children to dangerous places, she may encourage them to engage in behavior that could endanger their lives.

In other words, the psyche affects the production of neurotransmitters, and neurotransmitters control the life activities of the whole organism.

The main task of primary school educational activities is to teach students to learn. Under the influence of education, serious changes occur in the mental development of children of primary school age.

Anxiety about somatic disorders can lead to hypochondriacal feelings, which also contribute to malnutrition. Thus, a kind of vicious circle arises in the form of anorexic cycles, when chronic starvation causes changes in the internal organs, leading, in turn, to food restrictions. In some cases, patients begin to be actively examined by various specialists, exaggerating the severity of somatic disorders and avoiding consultation with a psychiatrist.

Furthermore, global digitalization and deviant behavior in the virtual environment have a destructive impact on human mental processes. For example, individuals develop a false sense of their own education; new ways of processing information give rise to fragmented thinking; on a social level, people prefer digital escapism and are reluctant to acquire effective interpersonal skills; and there is a decline in creativity, empathy and other qualities.

The consequences of online risks and deviant behavior in the virtual environment for the individual and their psychological well-being can be extremely serious: reduced self-esteem, loss of self-confidence, psycho-emotional instability, feelings of fear and vulnerability, a tendency towards aggressive behavior, and psychosomatic and mental disorders. To reduce the risks of deviant behavior developing among students, it is necessary to teach them safe behavior skills and effective skills for handling information online, to raise their level of critical thinking and awareness, and to foster a culture of communication and responsibility for one's actions in the virtual space.

CONCLUSION

The relevance and significance of research into antisocial tendencies and deviant behavior among today's youth stem, in part, from young people's lack of awareness regarding the causes of conflict, negative emotional reactions, inadequate patriotic education, and a breach of the population's psychological security. For many students, coming to terms with new realities will be accompanied by manifestations of socio-

psychological maladjustment and an increase in behavioral deviations. Psychologists and other specialists must be prepared for potential negative incidents and implement appropriate measures to minimize the adverse effects of restrictions. Therefore, studying the system of determinants of deviant behavior in real and virtual environments as a risk factor for the psychological well-being of modern students of various ages forms the basis for identifying psychological and pedagogical targets to prevent antisocial tendencies, research into resilience and coping, as well as the development of a set of psychotechnology's to support psychological safety at all stages of education.

In a digital society, a lack of attention to the younger generation as it enters adulthood turns it into a powerful factor destabilizing society; it is therefore this generation that requires targeted guidance, regulation and oversight of its development through socialization institutions, particularly via the global internet. One of the most effective models for addressing the aforementioned problems is the introduction of new digital practices and the use of the popularized online space for interaction among young people, with the aim of preventing and averting the development of deviant behavior.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The prevention of antisocial tendencies, deviant behavior and the promotion of students' mental health should be carried out in three priority areas:

1. Informational and legal, which involves educational activities aimed at students.
2. Psychological, which helps to develop psychological defense mechanisms and coping skills, and to reduce anxiety, irritability and aggression.
3. Pedagogical support, aimed at teaching female student's social competence skills, the ability to resolve conflict situations constructively, and helping them to establish contact with peers, parents and teachers.

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