

Features of political psychology in a digital society: Managing and defining disinformation

Liana Spytka*

Doctor of Psychology, PhD in Law, Professor
Volodymyr Dahl East Ukrainian National University
01042, 17 John Paul II Str., Kyiv, Ukraine
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9004-727X>

Abstract. Public opinion management is reflected in a balanced approach to the information policy of the country, where the rationalistic outlook of the community promotes the social, economic, and political development of the state values. The formation of an individual's political consciousness is subject to the influence of the information space in which they live, and this poses the relevance of investigating the issue of managing and defining disinformation at the stage of rapid digitalisation of society. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to determine the specifics of the development of patterns of political behaviour and consciousness of an individual in the process of forming a public stance in the context of socio-psychological, informational, and political determinants. The basis of the theoretical and methodological approach in this study was a combination of qualitative methods of systematic analysis of the specifics of psychological factors shaping political views and community behaviour, as well as content analysis of countering disinformation at the current stage of development of society. Furthermore, several surveys were conducted regarding the views and perceptions of the population on information in the media space in the country. The article also presents data that reflect the issue of the psychological phenomenon of society, in particular political judgments, moods, needs and motives of people, which are the result of social and political relations and are realised in a certain political behaviour and actions of both an individual and society as a whole. This article discusses the issues of combating disinformation in the digital space of the state and ways to improve the information literacy of the population. The results of the research are of practical value for educational, social, and psychological organisations that have a direct impact on the formation of legal behaviour and a conscious attitude to information processes in the digital space

Keywords: infodemia; public opinion; absenteeism; social responsibility; electoral behaviour

Introduction

The digitalisation of the modern world places new demands on the quality of the information space, where attempts to raise the significance of information can lead to unintentional distortion or contribute to deliberate misinformation. These conditions create the need for meaningful information management at all levels of society. In particular, special attention is being paid to the process of forming the political consciousness of citizens and their responsible decisions in the field of the political activity of the country. At the same time, the legal aspect of informatisation regulation is gaining relevance, ensuring the development of legal norms and rules, as well as defining the rights and obligations of participants in this process. In this regard, the issues of political psychology as a mechanism for studying the patterns of behavioural characteristics of people in the context of their political activity are becoming more relevant.

Exploring the issues of political consciousness of different generations, O.I. Tsurkanova (2022) notes that the key role in shaping one's political attitude is played by the information that one receives from formal and informal sources

(political authorities, organisations, rumours). Completeness and reliability of information allow a person to form certain political beliefs that contribute to their self-identification in the political system, in particular, this is reflected in the system of personal values, where a person can realise their own expectations, guidelines and goals, which allow them to critically assess political processes and implement relevant political activities. S. Doskach and L. Kostyk (2021) studying the issue of technologies of information and manipulative influence on people's political behaviour, points to the need to develop political consciousness among the younger generation in order to form their ability to analyse and understand the essence of the socio-political activities of the authorities, in particular the ability to navigate and actively participate in the political life of the country.

At the same time, the authors see the purpose of shaping the political consciousness of the population at the current stage of the digitalisation of society as avoiding and preventing manipulative acts by the authorities. Besides, political orientations are also influenced by the exchange of personal

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*Corresponding author



experience between people regarding a particular political event or process. Thus, E. Kubin *et al.* (2021) studying the differences in the formation of an individual's electoral behaviour in the context of adopting the experience of others and official political facts, determine those moral beliefs, which are validated by the life experience of another person, have a greater impact on an individual's participation in political activities than facts. At the same time, the key motivation for this, as noted by M. Gurytska and V. Ryhlik (2023) is an individual's desire to influence the government, to evaluate its efforts and achievements. Studying the issue of modelling electoral behaviour, the authors note that the lack of a formed political consciousness is the main factor of absenteeism.

The modernisation of state processes in Ukrainian society, including the transformation of the social order, re-assessment of values and awareness of the importance of information management, is increasingly challenging the formation of the political culture of the population. Thus, A.V. Sakun *et al.* (2021) studying the problem of the prospects for the development of Ukraine's political culture, note that the integration process of entering the European space should be implemented on the basis of a set of values, beliefs and appropriate political behaviour of the population, where legal norms should ensure regulation and orderliness of political activity and political relations between citizens and the authorities. At the same time, legal regulation of the information space is of particular importance. Studying the political socialisation of the population in the context of the rapid development of the information culture of society N.S. Ukhanova (2020) highlights the crucial role of mass media in shaping the political outlook of young people. The author also argues that the transmission of personal socio-political values and opinions by the everyday environment of the younger generation (teachers, family, friends) plays an important role in the formation of their political consciousness. However, such preferences and positions may not always correspond to actual political processes, which raises the issue of developing appropriate knowledge and skills among the population to identify disinformation.

The dynamics of political processes in the context of global digitalisation require a change in information security standards. In particular, psychological aspects of the political life of society play a fundamental role in managing the information space of the state, which is an urgent issue of political psychology in modern society. The main goal of the study was to determine the specifics of the formation of political consciousness of citizens in the context of studying the specifics of political psychology and revealing ways to counteract disinformation at the public level.

Materials and methods

The basis of the methodological approach to the analysis of the issue under study is a qualitative combination of methods for establishing the structural components of political psychology and the features of its development in the context of the digitalisation of society, as well as determining the content of the problem of social reality in terms of managing the information policy of the country, in particular, means of combating disinformation at all levels of public life. These issues included determining the conditions for shaping the political consciousness of citizens and finding effective methods of countering disinformation within the

country's legal system. The planning of the research and the implementation of its empirical part were based on the systematisation and unification of the world experience of studying the problem of the development of political psychology, which became the basis for revealing the content of its features in the digital society and a source of determining methods of countering disinformation.

The study of the theoretical framework on the problem of political psychology and the study of the global experience of protecting the state from manipulative violations in the information space allowed for the analysis of the scientific achievements of researchers from Ukraine, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Canada, Ireland, Chile, Indonesia, the USA, Brazil, Norway, France, Finland, and the UK. In addition, this approach involved the use of methods of generalisation, synthesis, and comparison of the results of theoretical analysis of the subject matter. In particular, the considered scientific achievements contributed to the identification of key aspects of the development of the political culture of the population, which made it possible to identify the main directions of managing disinformation and ensuring its counteraction at the legal level.

The main approach to the organisation of practical research on this issue was to identify the incentives for the development of psychological components that are formed as a result of social and political relations between people and their environment and are implemented in the process of their political activity. This approach made it possible to analyse the structural elements of political psychology, synthesise its features and identify methods of combating information manipulation, which contributed to the identification of the fundamental provisions and principles of the research problem and led to the formation of the scientific apparatus of the study.

The outlined goal and analysed theoretical approaches to the study of political psychology in the period of digitalisation of society guided further empirical research, which was based on the method of a sociological survey and aimed at determining the formed political ideology of citizens at the current stage of the country's development, as well as their knowledge and skills to recognise disinformation. Also, the analysis of the theoretical framework led to the hypothesis that modern youth are more critical of information related to the political life of the country, and their media literacy rates are higher than those of the older generation. Kyiv residents were invited to participate in the study. The sample was formed in several stages. The first stage was carried out by interviewing passers-by on the streets of the city. Ultimately, 482 people aged 19 to 63 took part in the study. Further research was carried out using an online survey. Respondents received a link to it via email or SMS, according to the personal data they provided in the interview. The online survey was aimed at determining a person's subjective assessment of their own awareness of disinformation ("Determining the formed knowledge regarding disinformation" (2023)). This allowed to divide the sample by age to identify possible differences in the respondents' political values (IDRLabs 8 Political Values Test (Test on 8..., 2023)) and their level of media literacy (Media Literacy Test (A test to determine..., 2023)). This approach involved an analytical comparison of the results obtained with the findings of other researchers, which helped to identify the key features of controlling and managing disinformation in the context of political psychology.

Results

Building a state that focuses on the interests of the population is a priority for the Ukrainian people. The development of a digital society, where every citizen has free access to the information space provided with up-to-date and accurate data, is the conceptual basis of the country's current political system. Thus, the world practice shows the results of progressive social development in the context of active interaction between the authorities and the population, which is achieved by the introduction of digitalisation at the political, social, economic, cultural and educational levels (Berg *et al.*, 2022). At the same time, a new challenge is the formation of digital culture among citizens, which becomes a determining factor in their social and professional mobility (van Kersbergen & Vis, 2022). The rejection of stereotypical thinking about the dynamics of political processes in a digital society leads to the growing role of political psychology, which can help normalise and optimise the psychological climate of political life in society (Hedling & Bremberg, 2021).

The study of the issue of political psychology is becoming critically important for this age. In particular, political psychology can be viewed within the framework of a mental process, mental state or mental properties. Since politics is created and implemented by people, each individual is guided by their own motives, perceptions, emotions and attitudes, which are reflected in their acts and behaviour. Investigating the regularities, conditions, mechanisms and facts of the manifestation of politics in the socio-psychological aspect, M.F. Golovaty (2006), J. Blais *et al.* (2021), O.T. Muldoon *et al.* (2021), C.R. Kaltwasser (2021), and A. Mashuri *et al.* (2022) interpret political psychology as a separate scientific field designed to study the psychological aspects of the political life of society and which can form political portraits of voters and leaders, in particular, to justify their motives, goals, behaviour and actions. This approach gives political psychology a practical direction and considers it in the context of conscious (rationalism) and extra-conscious (irrationalism) aspects. The authors generally agree that the development of the political-psychological concept is based on understanding the psychological elements of the process of political activity, predicting the outcome of this process and transforming its external properties. Thus, the features of political psychology reflect the monitoring and management influence on the political consciousness of society, including its culture, behaviour, activities, and motivations. Therefore, it is important to define the place of political psychology in the context of human political consciousness.

Previous scientific sources analysed indicate that the reflection of the formed political consciousness is observed in the knowledge of a person and their views on political relations. At the same time, the political consciousness of an individual synthesises their values, experience, and knowledge into appropriate behaviour. In this context, the development of critical and analytical thinking contributes to the awareness of the need for people to take an active part in the political processes of society. It is also worth pointing out that the inability of the political and ruling elite to overcome the crisis and implement the necessary reforms stimulates negative changes in the political consciousness of the community and can become a certain lever for aggravation of the political space and conflict reactions on the part of the population (dissatisfaction with the authorities, protests) (Lund, 2015).

Since the political elite uses information as a means of manipulation to force people to make wrong decisions, this may result in a divergence from the public's perception and lead to political conflicts. Therefore, it is necessary to form and raise the level of information culture of the population.

The rapid development of digitalisation creates a certain dependence on information technologies, in particular those that inform people about certain news (blogs, social networks, messengers). In this case, the issue of infodemia (dissemination of false information) is gaining widespread prominence in the modern world. This problem has become particularly acute during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, studying the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the human psyche, A. Bonafé-Pontes *et al.* (2021) and S. Dash *et al.* (2021) found that disinformation, especially in the context of active digitalisation of society, produces negative emotional reactions in people (fear, uncertainty) and affects the political and economic security of the country. In particular, disinformation causes differences in the views of society and creates a polarity in the perception of the situation, which produces conditions for evading political participation (Tarkin, 2021). Thus, information has exceptional properties based on its scale, universality, influence, and secrecy. In the digital age, this poses a threat to certain segments of the population at the psychological, technical, linguistic, and technological levels and raises the issue of people's political culture, their ability to recognise false facts, manage them and act in accordance with the legal law of the state within the framework of the regulations on the dissemination of information. Therefore, it is important to determine the level of knowledge of the population about disinformation at the current stage of the development of the country.

Residents who lived in Kyiv at the time of the survey were invited to participate in the study. Respondents were selected on the streets of the city over the course of two weeks. At the preparatory stage, random passers-by were asked to complete a quick survey to learn their attitudes and perspectives on the news in the information space. In particular, questions were asked about their trust in the authorities, their position on state policy and their awareness of political relations within the country. Residents were also asked to take an online survey to determine their media literacy, political values, and ability to recognise disinformation. The further study involved 482 adult respondents, including 34 people over the age of 55. The conditions for evaluating the results were the same for all respondents.

The subjective assessment of the respondents' knowledge of recognising disinformation, including political disinformation, was carried out through an online survey compiled using the Google Forms platform (Survey "Determining formed...", 2023). This survey also aimed to determine the political views of people by age aspect. The results of the survey show that young people prefer to learn news from Internet resources (Ukrainian sites 22%; foreign sites 20%) and hardly trust news from television (2%). In particular, the majority of respondents aged 18-35 verify political news from official sources and foreign websites (70%). At the same time, respondents aged 35 to 55 actively use messengers (32%) and social networks (21%) (Telegram, Facebook), Ukrainian-language Internet resources (20%) to watch the news, and TV to a lesser extent (6%). However, the overwhelming majority do not verify information in other sources, but trust what they hear or read in

Table 1. Results of the subjective assessment of respondents' awareness regarding disinformation

No.	Questionnaire questions	Response option	Respondents by age, %		
			18-35	35-55	55 +
1	What sources do you use to get acquainted with news on a daily basis?	TV	2	6	41
		(Internet) Ukrainian news sites	22	20	18
		(Internet) foreign news sites	20	12	3
		messengers	52	32	15
		social networks	4	21	24
2	Which information service do you trust the most?	TV	2	9	68
		Ukrainian news sites	39	54	18
		foreign news sites	21	27	3
		messengers	37	9	6
		social networks	1	1	6
3	Do you verify information in other sources?	yes	70	36	6
		no	30	64	94
4	Whose perspective would you rather accept when hearing news about the government's foreign policy efforts?	news	65	51	71
		inner circle	5	15	26
		accept information only from an official source	30	33	3
5	Do you always vote?	yes	80	74	94
		no	20	26	6
6	How do you view anti-advertising by political opponents in their preparation for the elections?	I consider it to be a manipulation	70	68	38
		inclined to believe	1	1	53
		this reduces the degree of trust in the politician	30	30	9
7	Assess your ability to recognise fake news?	high	46	32	26
		average	53	54	68
		low	1	13	6

a single source (64%). The results of the online survey on disinformation awareness are presented in more detail in Table 1.

The results of the survey indicate lower levels of information culture among the older generation. This suggests the likelihood of a low level of political consciousness or established authoritarian views characterised by state-centrism. Therefore, in addition to political participation of an individual in society, political psychology should also consider the political values of a person, which directly affect their behaviour and serve as a source of political socialisation. In particular, political values are an exceptional phenomenon of human consciousness and an integral part of its political culture, which together form a scale of assessments on the way to the implementation of its political activities

(Golovatyy, 2006). The results of the study of respondents' political values reflect the predominant position of centrism in all age groups, which indicates that they see the political life of society in the context of a balance between equality and social hierarchy in opposition to political perturbations in any direction. At the same time, affiliation with views on a political regime where the government should be totalitarian in legislative, executive, and judicial decisions is reported among the lowest in all groups. It should be noted that among the respondents, there were no political values that indicate radical beliefs about preventing state authorities from making economic, industrial and managerial decisions in society. A visual representation of the results of this survey is shown in Figure 1.

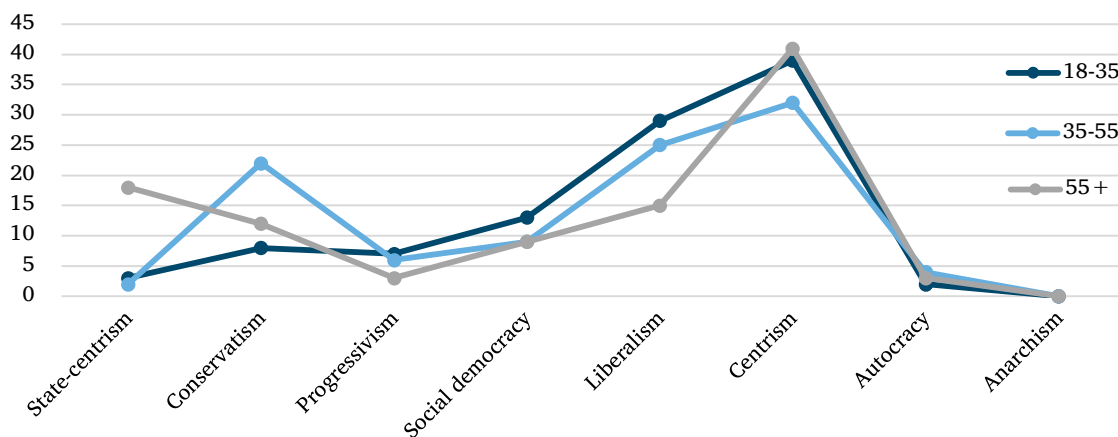


Figure 1. Analysis of survey results to determine political values of respondents

The development of a person's political culture is closely connected with the formation of their spirituality, which is based on moral, legal, social, and managerial principles. At the same time, the political culture of society determines its civilisation, competence, professionalism, and morality (Golovaty, 2006). Performing social functions, political culture is designed to increase the political consciousness of citizens, ensure their influence on the political process, protect the political values of society, contribute to forecasting the behavioural reactions of society, and ensure the ideological and political connection of a person with society and the political system as a whole (Barandiarán *et al.*, 2020). Given the depth of development of elements of a person's political consciousness, it is important to understand their political education and the maturity of political culture. In particular, when considering these issues in the context of a digital society, media literacy is a key issue. Thus, the development of relevant knowledge and skills, as well as information managing skills, allows a person to critically evaluate the information received. At the same time, media literacy also provides an analysis of people's behavioural and emotional reactions, which makes it possible to create various information messages for the media space to influence society, including false facts (Rasi *et al.*, 2019). Therefore,

it is extremely important to understand the development of this knowledge and skills. Analysis of survey results determining the level of media literacy indicates low scores among respondents over 55 (76%) (A test to determine..., 2023). Considering the subjective assessment of this group regarding knowledge about disinformation, only 6% of respondents have this indicator corresponding to reality. The majority of respondents aged 18-35 (69%) and 35-55 (58%) have an average level of media literacy. Generally, the overwhelming majority of respondents could not answer the question about the information medium as the primary source (letters, photographs, texts and data from government agencies and statistical institutions). Difficulties also arose in the survey on standards for verifying the veracity of information, where only 110 respondents in the groups of 18-35 years old (62 respondents) and 35-55 years old (48 respondents) were able to answer in full. For example, some respondents highlighted the items "reliability of information" and "completeness of information". Others marked irrelevant points, in particular, omitting the point about the criticism and distinguishing facts from opinions and assessments, which indicates the need to increase media literacy among the population as a practical method of combating disinformation in the political space of the state. The results of this test are presented in more detail in Figure 2.

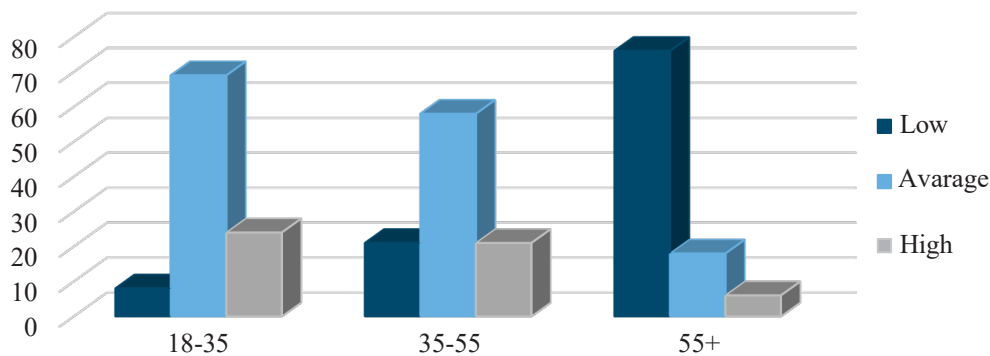


Figure 2. Analysis of the results of the study to determine the media literacy of respondents

The analysis of the empirical study indicates a limited ability of the older generation (55+) to determine the reliability and accuracy of information, especially of political content. However, the aggregate of indicators for young people (18-35 years old) in this study reflects their ability to understand and detect false facts, which suggests that respondents are able to optimise information and store and disseminate it wisely. Indicators of their media literacy and political values reflect the formed system of political knowledge, assessments, motives and orientation in political activity. Similar indicators were also recorded for the 35-55 years old group, but at a slightly lower level. However, only a small percentage of respondents over the age of 55 are willing to change their stereotypical thinking in line with the new realities of the modern digital world. Thus, the study shows that political consciousness is a plastic system of reflection of a person's political culture, intended to facilitate their political activity based on the knowledge, assessments, attitudes, and values they have formed. In the context of studying political psychology, targeted development of a person's political consciousness and information literacy can counteract disinformation at the social level. The implementation of

public information education plays a key role in eliminating stereotypical thinking about political activity and is of particular importance in the digital society (Bundy, 2002).

The empirical research stage involved testing the hypothesis, which was successfully confirmed. For the older generation, entering the digital world, which is oversaturated with information, especially political information, is characterised by a certain difficulty in rethinking the activities of the modern government and personal participation in the political life of the country. This creates difficulties in increasing political awareness and developing media literacy. However, young people are able to critically evaluate information in the digital space and analyse it in accordance with the norms and rules for determining its reliability, including referring to the original source to confirm or refute it. These indicators demonstrate the interest of the younger generation in engaging in political activity, including the formation of consciousness and culture. The findings nevertheless indicate a lack of awareness of disinformation and counteraction among the older generation, which necessitates the creation of appropriate social programmes to improve their information literacy.

Discussion

The introduction of information technologies in the political process creates conditions for strengthening democracy, promotes the development of new forms of communicative communication between the authorities and society, reduces the monopoly on the dissemination of information, provides transparent access to political decisions, forms mechanisms of political mobility and expands the opportunities for mutual activities of the authorities and the population. At the same time, information overload can create risks of falsely informing society and manipulating its consciousness (Carriere, 2022). A special place in the political life of the country is assumed by the mass media, which significantly influence the development of public opinion and views on various political issues. According to P.J. Davies (2022), media play a crucial role in shaping political system change. Investigating the media phenomenon in politics, the author notes that its influence on public opinion is not limited to the period of election campaigns, but is constant, which gives the population an idea of a certain political reality. Similar conclusions can be traced in the study by P.S. Hart *et al.* (2020) on the politicisation of news about crisis events, where the author points out the significant impact of mass communication on public consciousness.

At the same time, R.M. Perloff (2021), studying the dynamics of political communication, media and politics in the digital age, notes that mass media are used in political activities as a means of promoting certain political projects. In particular, the author emphasises that mass communication is a source of the process of political socialisation of the individual, which is characterised by the acquisition of political knowledge, the formation of values and relevant political activity. At the same time, deliberate politicisation of the media leads to a decrease in trust and suspicion about the activities of the political elite. The results of the empirical study also correlate with these conclusions. Thus, the analysis of the data obtained suggests that trust in the media among the younger generation is rather low. Young people are critical of political news and seek reliable information from primary sources, while the vast majority of respondents perceive political advertising as manipulative and an attempt to influence their political consciousness.

Modern scientific research on the political influence on the system of knowledge and assessments of a person, their attitudes and behaviour, in particular, the scientific contributions by M.F. Golovaty (2006), V.A. Gorton (2016), S. Doskach and L. Kostyk (2021), J. Blais *et al.* (2021), U. Reisach (2021), demonstrate that this phenomenon is generally studied in two directions. The researchers refer to the first one as apologetic orientation, which is based on political manipulation as a way to control mass consciousness. The second direction is seen by the authors as a socio-critical aspect that allows political manipulation to be directed towards the development of a new perception of social reality. It should be noted that in the context of the rapid digitalisation of social processes, both approaches are used to suit the goals of the political elite. In particular, as argued by D. Susser *et al.* (2019), the technology of political manipulation consists in including the desired content in the consciousness of individual population groups, introduced into their political attitudes by influencing vulnerable factors through fear or anxiety. Thus, studying the connection between political technologies, autonomy and manipulation

of public consciousness, the author also emphasises that political manipulation is based on the implementation of hidden goals that a disinformant cannot achieve without the full support of society.

Exploring the issues of political manipulation, disinformation and fake news J.E. Fossum (2023) divided political manipulation into mass and interpersonal manipulation, emphasising that each has its own purpose and is subject to certain technologies that help to achieve the desired. Thus, to implement interpersonal manipulation, it is necessary to identify the type of person and their characteristics (motives, views). However, in an attempt to manipulate a group of people, it is necessary to determine its general characteristics and vulnerability criteria. Political manipulation distorts the reality of the political process, which leads to its uncontrollability due to disruptions in the system of mutual exchange of information between society and the authorities. Studying the concept of political manipulation G. Whitfield (2022) determines it by a set of means of psychological, spiritual and ideological influence on the consciousness of the population. According to the author, the purpose of this is the desire to impose targeted political ideas on society to realise personal interests.

High information literacy of the population contributes to the prevention of political manipulation and disinformation. Research by A. Bundy (2002) indicates that the foundation of the information culture of the individual is a system of scientific principles, laws, concepts and provisions that are subject to general cultural approaches and views. Analysing the issue of the development of information literacy of the population, the author emphasises that information culture combines interrelated and interdependent elements of communicative, lexical, intellectual, moral, legal, and ideological processes of the formation of human consciousness. A similar view is shared by I. Levin and D. Mamlok (2021) in the study on the issues of culture and society in the digital age. Thus, the authors note that the development of an individual's information culture is facilitated by raising the level of their information literacy, which consists in the formation of sufficient knowledge and skills to evaluate and adequately use information. At the same time, as argued by L. Smith (2016), low levels of Information literacy make it difficult to recognise false information, which leads to difficulties in determining a person's political values and creates a sense of disillusionment with the political system. Studying the problem of information literacy, the author points out that its insufficient formation reduces political activity and causes absenteeism. The analysis of the empirical research results also points to low information literacy, which makes it difficult to overcome stereotypes about established views of the government, in particular, the older generation showed a limited ability to recognise disinformation and critically assess the activities of the political elite.

In addition to the positive phenomena of the development of digital society, its information component also produces an increase in the number of violations of legal norms intended to regulate information relations. The analysed studies indicate that disinformation is a method of psychological influence, which is a conscious intention to provide false information in order to achieve a mercenary goal to gain benefits or advantages in one's personal conduct. The study of legal liability for violation of information relations is quite complicated due to the absence of a single regulatory

act that would cover the list of information violations, so in practice, this is generally reflected in the incorrect application of legal norms enshrined in the legislation of Ukraine (Golovaty, 2006). For example, the Law of Ukraine “On Information” (2023) explains the basic principles of information relations, in particular, the guarantee of the right to receive information, access to it and the possibility of free exchange of information. At the same time, Article 3 of this Law specifies the provisions of the state information policy, which is designed to ensure equal opportunities for society to create, collect, store, use, disseminate and protect information. At the same time, the Law of Ukraine “On Information” (2023) provides for disciplinary, civil, administrative, and criminal liability for violation of legal norms of information use.

According to M.F. Golovaty (2006), civil liability is imposed on the subject of information relations (individuals, legal entities, associations of citizens, public authorities) as a result of causing damage to institutions, organisations, citizens or enterprises through the dissemination of inaccurate or false information administrative liability relates mainly to the media. According to the Code of Ukraine on Administrative Offences (2023), in particular Article 173.1, it states that spreading false rumours (disinformation) may lead to panic in society or disturbance of public order. Administrative liability is imposed regardless of the method of dissemination of information (social media, messengers, Internet resources). Criminal liability is imposed in cases of spreading disinformation that harms society on a physical level. According to the Criminal Code of Ukraine (2023), this type of liability covers actions committed with the aim of violent change, seizure of state power, violation of the constitutional order or calls for the commission of the above actions (Article 109), and in case of dissemination of such information by an organised group of people, in particular through the media, a more severe punishment is provided. The Code also provides for criminal liability for disseminating disinformation that threatens human life or entails other grave consequences (Article 250), disclosure of the secrecy of adoption (Article 168), violation of personal privacy (Article 182) and disclosure of commercial secrets at the level of a banking or commercial institution (Article 232). Despite the absence of a single legal act on the list of information offences, the existence of a legislative framework for controlling and disseminating disinformation suggests that there are means to combat it. The key point in this matter remains the use of legal mechanisms to counter disinformation by authorised officials, including training and improving their knowledge, as well as clarification of legal liability for professional inaction.

Modern political processes are interconnected with social and information security, which requires a certain degree of control over the reliability of data. At the same time, the specifics of the impact of informatisation on the public consciousness requires the development of skills to counter disinformation not only at the state level, but also puts forward requirements for the formation of information literacy of the population (Olan *et al.*, 2022). Thus, efforts to counter disinformation in Italy involve teaching media literacy to the younger generation (la Cour, 2019). In particular, since 2017, the government has introduced an initiative called “Stop fake” into the educational process, which involves teaching young people how to recognise disinformation. The training materials include a guide to help identify false information and learn how to consume news consciously and

critically. Also, before the elections in 2018, the government of the country developed and introduced the “Red Button service”, which allows citizens to notify the cyber police about fake news in the media space. This has allowed law enforcement agencies to collect, analyse and respond appropriately to cases of disinformation in the media space.

In the US, in 2020, the Cyberspace Commission called on the government to promote digital and information literacy to build a disinformation-resilient society (Cyberspace Solarium Commission, 2021). The commission developed the White Paper, which became the foundation for identifying and managing fakes, manipulation, and disinformation. Thus, research on the issue of disinformation has yielded recommendations for reducing and eliminating its impact on the consciousness of the population. In particular, this document provides advice for creating a set of practical actions to combat disinformation at the state level by providing the educational process with appropriate educational, financial and digital initiatives. This approach allows for real-time monitoring of information literacy. At the same time, in 2020, the Swedish government introduced a nationwide programme to support government organisations in identifying and countering disinformation (MSB: Countering disinformation..., 2020). In particular, the implemented programme “4C Strategies” is based on individual scenarios to help people with low information literacy build knowledge and skills to counter disinformation. The software is designed to work with real-life scenarios, allowing not only to identify manipulations but also to manage them. Also as of 2022, the Psychological Defence Agency to fight fake news, foreign interference was established to identify, analyse, and respond to disinformation that is related to the influence on political activities of the country (Duliman, 2022). The Agency cooperates with scientists, the military, and the media, providing support to regions and various social organisations.

The UK is launching a new strategy to combat online disinformation in 2021 (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport & Dinenage, 2021). For example, the government has made efforts to introduce a programme in educational and social organisations that can teach people media literacy, develop critical thinking, and raise awareness of fakes and manipulations in the information space. In 2019, the French government introduced a set of open-source software tools to counter disinformation in its digital space to meet the political needs of the nation (Dussoutour, 2021). And from 2021, internet users will be able to access this software. This allows for the detection of fake social media accounts and the assessment of the legitimacy of a political advertising campaign on them. That same year, the government also introduced the Viginum Digital Interference Protection Agency, which helps to detect and analyse the spread of fake content in the digital space. The government of Finland has included media literacy in the national curriculum from the preschool level (Gross, 2023). Currently, the country ranks first among European countries in terms of resistance to disinformation. Notably, the Finnish public school system is one of the best in the world. Teachers are given a certain degree of autonomy in choosing the methods of teaching and learning, which helps to include many practical tasks in lessons, including those related to the definition of disinformation. The educational process is based on modern digital technologies and is aimed at the targeted development of critical thinking in children.

The analysed previous studies indicate that the threat of disinformation is intensifying on a global scale. Different approaches to its definition and counteraction make it possible to critically evaluate methods of combating disinformation and choose the most effective way to implement relevant concepts at the state level. The scientific study is consistent with the conclusions drawn by A. Ali *et al.* (2023) and also L. Oldenburg and J. Griesbaum (2022), who argue for the need to introduce the idea of improving information literacy into the educational process. Young people's access to the Internet does not guarantee the gradual acquisition of the competence to identify disinformation, especially in adolescence. By examining the indicators of digital and information literacy of the younger generation, the authors conclude that forming skills and knowledge to identify disinformation will not only help develop analytical thinking, but also allow them to critically evaluate the information they encounter on a daily basis. The study highlights the need to develop critical and analytical thinking, which is an important condition for the formation of a person's electoral behaviour and political activity in adulthood. The results of the study also correlate with the Law of Ukraine "On Information" (2023), which enshrines transparency of access to information, the possibility of its processing and free exchange, including in the digital space.

The conducted study identified the forms of political psychology manifestation, which are political values, emotions, thoughts, beliefs of people, their aspirations, goals, habits, and traditions. In particular, this contributed to highlighting the features of political psychology in the digital society (Zmigrod, 2022):

- the formation of this scientific field is carried out within the framework of political activity of society in the context of interaction of the subjects of this activity in the social and information space;
- the study of human political behaviour, values, motives and attitudes helps to analyse the position of political psychology in the process of digitalisation;
- political processes are forecasted by studying the political consciousness of society, in particular the emotional components of human behaviour.

Political mobility allows reacting to changing political situations:

- the political process is seen as a competition, which allows the advancement of digital technologies and skills in managing them while combating different ideologies and unauthorised interference in the political process (Jost *et al.*, 2022);
- the influence of various factors on the process of political activity is considered within the framework of the present and allows to identify and influence the current needs and interests of citizens (Richards *et al.*, 2022).

The results of the study indicate a significant influence of the media on processes of modern political life. World practice shows that the media actively influence the formation of political consciousness of citizens, the activities of the political elite, and are also used as a means of persuading the political beliefs of society. Since political views allow people to identify

themselves in the system of political activity of the state, to form relevant values, motives, and goals, to understand their own political orientations and expectations, it is necessary to develop and implement social programmes and initiatives that will help to increase the information literacy of society.

Conclusions

Global digitalisation is characterised by the rapid development of innovations and technologies that have a significant impact on the acceleration and modernisation of economic, educational, and political sectors. At the same time, the impact of digitalisation produces significant changes in the behaviour patterns of modern society, which is reflected in the modernisation of its cultural sphere, the transformation of its worldview and values. However, the consequences of the use of digital technologies can be unpredictable, which necessitates raising the level of awareness among the population, including the development of practical skills for adequate perception of information.

The study indicates that the political practice of modernity is distinguished by skilful manipulation of the political consciousness of the population, in particular, this influence is reflected in a certain implementation of the hidden incentive to achieve the results required by a certain political elite. Therefore, the key direction of the process of informatisation in modern society is the individual development of the individual, in particular their information culture, which will be based on improving knowledge and skills in processing information sources, searching for them, optimising them, determining their reliability and legitimate distribution.

The formed hypothesis was fully confirmed at the stage of empirical research. Notably, the indicators according to the criterion of subjective assessment of respondents' ability to identify disinformation were significantly overestimated by the older generation of respondents, while young people critically assess their own capabilities and show a desire to advance their information literacy. Based on the study of international experience in countering disinformation in the context of state educational and political activities, effective methods of countering disinformation were identified, including the introduction of a media literacy programme in the educational system, which allows young people to form a conscious management of information in the digital space and promotes the development of knowledge and skills to identify and counter disinformation. A promising area for further study is the analysis of methods for developing information literacy programmes and ways to implement them in the public life. The findings of the study can be used by educators, psychologists, political scientists, and social organisations that have a direct impact on the formation of information literacy of the population.

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Conflict of interest

None.

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Особливості політичної психології в цифровому суспільстві: управління та визначення дезінформації

Ліана Вікторівна Спицька

Доктор психологічних наук, кандидат юридичних наук, професор
Східноукраїнський національний університет імені Володимира Даля
01042, вул. Іоанна Павла II, 17, м. Київ, Україна
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9004-727X>

Анотація. Управління громадською думкою відображається у вираженому підході до інформаційної політики країни, за якого раціоналістичний світогляд суспільства сприяє соціальному, економічному та політичному розвитку цінностей держави. Формування політичної свідомості особистості відбувається під впливом інформаційного простору, у якому вона живе, що зумовлює актуальність дослідження питання управління та визначення дезінформації на етапі стрімкої диджиталізації суспільства. Тому метою дослідження стало визначення специфіки розвитку моделей політичної поведінки та свідомості особистості в процесі формування громадської позиції в контексті соціально-психологічних, інформаційних та політичних детермінант. Основою теоретико-методологічного підходу в цьому дослідженні стало поєднання якісних методів системного аналізу специфіки психологічних чинників формування політичних поглядів та суспільної поведінки, а також контент-аналізу протидії дезінформації на сучасному етапі розвитку суспільства. Крім того, було проведено кілька опитувань щодо поглядів та сприйняття населенням інформації в медіапросторі країни. У статті також представлені дані, які відображають питання психологічного феномену суспільства, зокрема політичних суджень, настроїв, потреб і мотивів людей, які є результатом суспільно-політичних відносин і реалізуються в певній політичній поведінці та діях як окремої людини, так і суспільства загалом. У статті розглядаються питання протидії дезінформації в цифровому просторі держави та шляхи підвищення інформаційної грамотності населення. Результати дослідження мають практичну цінність для освітніх, соціальних та психологічних організацій, які безпосередньо впливають на формування правомірної поведінки та свідомого ставлення до інформаційних процесів у цифровому просторі

Ключові слова: інфодемія; громадська думка; абсентеїзм; соціальна відповідальність; електоральна поведінка