

MECHANISMS OF MANIPULATION IN THE INTERNET SPACE

Механизмы манипуляции в интернет-пространстве

The phenomenon of manipulation, having undergone a slight transformation, has found fertile ground in the global information space of the Internet. The purpose of the study is to analyze the main mechanisms of manipulation in the digital environment. In scholarly and journalistic works, online manipulation is defined as the use of digital technologies to covertly influence human decision-making [1].

A. I. Makhalin and I. V. Loskot note that unprepared audiences are more often the target of manipulation, and by promoting its understanding, society can develop immunity to it [2]. The mechanisms of influence described by R. Cialdini are also evident in the digital environment. For instance, in online advertising, goodwill is created by using attractive people or those who evoke sympathy to trigger emotions and influence the decision to buy a product, provide material assistance, or write comments. The authority of celebrities and bloggers, even if they are not experts, influences the emergence of trust in the advertised product. The rule of reciprocity works when free stickers are given, followed by a request for a donation. Commitment and consistency manifest when a discount on the next purchase encourages a new order. The social proof mechanism is evident in the multitude of «likes» from followers, positive reviews, or a growing counter of winners in online casinos. Often, marketplaces rely on artificially created scarcity, indicating limited time for a promotion or a limited quantity of goods. E. I. Trushkova draws attention to the problem of hidden and deceptive clickbait that does not meet expectations and is a sophisticated form of manipulation [3].

The research results showed that 38 % of respondents demonstrate low susceptibility to manipulation, intentionally verifying information and controlling emotional reactions. More than half of the surveyed (52 %) show medium vulnerability, periodically succumbing to provocative content and rush offers. 10 % showed high susceptibility, acting impulsively and without analyzing sources. A key risk was the predominance of emotional reactions over critical thinking, making these study participants potential targets for manipulation. A correlation was also established between susceptibility to manipulation and such parameters as: personal conformity-suggestibility ($r = 0.303$, $n = 42$), and independence ($r = -0.319$, $n = 42$).

The obtained results are consistent with contemporary research. L. V. Bezpalko notes that most subjects, when making purchases, rely on reviews in addition to personal experience [4]. B. Aismontas draws attention to the problem of embellishing one's personality through social media accounts to influence others' perception [5]. Many social

media users consider such behavior acceptable, although it is often a lie and «conscious self-falsification» [6].

Internet manipulation mechanisms are diverse, constantly evolving, and pose a serious threat. The primary means of prevention is the ability to recognize fraudulent manipulation schemes and to develop such personal qualities as critical thinking, independence, self-regulation, and fact-checking skills. Effective counteraction to online manipulation requires a balanced approach combining the efforts of technology companies, media, civil society, and the state.

References

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PERSPECTIVES OF USING DIGITAL PLATFORMS TO IMPROVE FINANCIAL LITERACY

Перспективы использования цифровых платформ для повышения финансовой грамотности

The aim of this research is to identify the role of digital platforms in improving financial literacy and to outline promising directions for their use.

The relevance of the topic is determined by the low level of financial knowledge among the population. According to OECD, only 34 % of adults in Eastern Europe possess basic financial literacy skills. In Belarus, the National Bank survey reported an average index of 12.7 out of 21, which is below the EAEU average. These results indicate the urgent need for innovative educational tools that ensure accessibility and engagement.

The study is based on the analysis of OECD and World Bank statistics, a review of publications on digital education (McKinsey Digital Report, 2024), and the examination of