

Wealth inequality, alongside with income inequality, plays a significant role in social stratification. After mid-20th-century declines, it is rising again, driven by the growth of the intangible economy, increasing real estate prices, and tax avoidance among the wealthy. Property values in major cities have surged, concentrating assets among the affluent and widening regional disparities. Migration to prosperous urban centers further boosts housing demand, while the growing importance of intangible assets amplifies spillover effects, accelerating urban growth and driving up real estate prices.

The rise of intangible assets in corporate ownership also makes it easier for owners to transfer capital to low-tax jurisdictions. This limits governments' ability to pursue redistributive policies aimed at reducing inequality. Unlike industrial capital, which requires costly relocation, intangible assets can be moved with minimal effort, often through legal adjustments alone. Their mobility pressures governments to maintain competitive tax rates to prevent capital flight, reinforcing economic inequality. The traditional working class in developed countries has lost out in these transformations, as firms retain only core activities tied to intellectual property, offering few jobs for low-skilled workers.

To summarize, the growing role of intangible assets reshapes social stratification, amplifying income and wealth inequality. Their scalability and spillover effects widen the gap between skill levels, concentrate income among a few firms, raise urban real estate prices, and enable tax avoidance – deepening economic and political inequalities and fueling social polarization.

E. Zhiznevskaya

Е. С. Жизневская

БНТУ (Минск)

Научный руководитель Д. И. Бондарчук

THE IMPACT OF SHORT VIDEO CONTENT ON THE COGNITIVE ABILITIES AND CONSUMER BEHAVIOR OF YOUNG INDIVIDUALS

Влияние короткого видеоконтента на когнитивные способности и потребительское поведение молодежи

The digital era has fundamentally reshaped our information consumption. Short videos on TikTok, Instagram Reels and Youtube Shorts now dominate how young people access content. Research reveals that users aged 15-27 average 2 hours 32 minutes daily on TikTok – significantly more than YouTube (1h 56m) or Instagram (1h 52m). This deep engagement prompts important questions about how such content shapes cognitive development and daily behaviors. The purpose of this research is to investigate in detail the implications of this deep engagement with modern social media platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels etc.

1. Impact on cognitive functions

Short videos are altering how young people process information. With much spending nearly three hours daily on TikTok, we must consider the consequences for their thinking skills and behavior. This media format encourages rapid information consumption, making it difficult for viewers to engage with complex subjects. As attention spans shorten, we could see a potential decline in critical thinking and focus, which can create challenges in academic performance and personal growth.

2. Transformation of consumer behaviour

Today, short video platforms are more than just entertainment; they actively influence purchasing decisions and perceptions of products. This new marketing approach, often called «one-minute stories», engages audiences in ways traditional advertising cannot.

- Algorithms and micro-influencers: the new reality of advertising. Traditional advertising is losing its effectiveness. A clear shift is occurring towards authentic content created by micro-influencers-individuals with smaller but more dedicated followings. Platform algorithms analyze user's behavior to present ads within a natural context. Instead of obvious commercials, users see relatable people using products in real-life situations, which builds trust and connection.

- Impulse purchases and fear of missing out: engines of sales. Watching products in action-like kitchen gadgets or cosmetics-triggers strong emotions and frequently leads to unplanned purchases. Limited-time offers and trending items create a powerful fear of missing out (FOMO). This anxiety pushes consumers to make quick decisions, driven by the desire not to lose an opportunity others might seize.

- New consumption habits: content as a product. These platforms also play a key role in shaping consumer behavior. Participating in trends-such as dancing to viral sounds, using fashion filters, or joining challenges-has become a part of youth self-expression and social interaction. This phenomenon turns content and community involvement into products themselves, where taking part in a trending activity holds value and directly impacts their purchasing choices.

Short video platforms have a complex, dual impact on the youth. On the one hand, they can negatively affect development: they contribute to fragmented attention, superficial information processing, and a potential dependency on constant entertainment. This creates significant challenges for both educators and parents. On the other hand, these platforms have transformed the very principles of consumption by democratizing marketing and creating new income opportunities. They have become tools for promoting innovation, supporting local businesses, and uniting people around shared interests. Short-form video content has evolved beyond mere entertainment – it's now an integral part of our culture. Its future impact will be determined by our ability to use digital technology consciously while maintaining mental clarity.