Young People Leisure Activities
Transformation During Quarantine Self-Isolation: Characteristics and Regulation Problem

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Elena V. Mischenko *
Maxim S. Fabrikov **
Elena V. Martynenko ***
Stanislav E. Martynenko ****
Viktor M. Smirnov *****
Gulnara R. Ibraeva ******
Andrey V. Kosenko *******

Abstract

The objective of the research is to study the characteristics of leisure activities of young people in self-isolated conditions during the coronavirus pandemic. As a research method, the authors use an online survey that allowed them to more effectively visualize the features of leisure activities and the peculiarities of their regulation among self-isolated students. The article also considers the leisure strategies of young people in conditions of self-isolation and social fortune. The novelty of the research...
lies in the fact that the hierarchy of leisure preferences of young people was studied for the first time during the period of self-isolation. It is concluded that the leisure practices of young people are identified by the regular use of the Internet, instead of the use of sports or any other practice. The priority areas of the Internet application are: study and communication, reading books and consulting news. In addition, there is the ability to communicate on social networks, search for video and audio recordings and games on the network. Preferred game genres are shown to be multiplatform simulators and strategies.

**Keywords:** student youth: leisure practices; self-isolation; COVID 2019; regulation problems.

La transformación de las actividades de ocio de los jóvenes durante el autoaislamiento en cuarentena: características y problema de regulación

**Resumen**

El objetivo de la investigación es estudiar las características de las actividades de ocio de los jóvenes en condiciones de autoaislamiento durante la pandemia de coronavirus. Como método de investigación, los autores utilizan una encuesta en línea que les permitió visualizar de manera más efectiva los rasgos de las actividades de ocio y las peculiaridades de su regulación entre los estudiantes en condiciones de autoaislamiento. El artículo considera también las estrategias de ocio de los jóvenes en condiciones de autoaislamiento y cuarentena social. La novedad de la investigación radica en el hecho de que se estudió, por primera vez, la jerarquía de las preferencias de ocio de los jóvenes durante el período de autoaislamiento. Se concluye que las prácticas de ocio de los jóvenes se identifican por el uso regular de Internet, en lugar del uso de deportes o cualquier otra práctica. Las áreas prioritarias de la aplicación de Internet son: el estudio y la comunicación, lectura de libros y consulta de noticias. Además, existe la capacidad de comunicarse en las redes sociales, buscar grabaciones de video y audio y juegos en la red. Se muestra que los géneros de juego preferidos son los de estrategias y simuladores multiplataforma.

**Palabras clave:** juventud estudiantil: prácticas de ocio; autoaislamiento; COVID 2019; problemas de regulación.
Introduction

Changes in youth leisure are due to the emergence of a new form of reality of self-isolation and a new information and communication space. The Internet is a special social space, a sphere of communication (Putilina et al., 2019; Olkhovaya et al., 2019a, 2019b). Leisure activities are undoubtedly important in the daily life of any person, as they meet many needs of the individual. The basic functions of leisure activities can be identified as therapeutic and Wellness (Cherdymova, 2017; Khanmurzina et al., 2020). Satisfying his/her needs for leisure activities, especially in the context of quarantine, the person avoids disturbing thoughts, obsessive-compulsive disorder.

If you avoid this type of activity, it is possible through constant tension, stress and neuroticism to come to psychological depression, especially in difficult conditions of self-isolation, which are dictated by the coronavirus pandemic (Usak et al., 2020). Along with communication in the Internet space, one of the most common Hobbies of young people is games. With the development of a new information and communication space, new forms of leisure activities appear which are formed into whole leisure strategies. Today, changes in youth leisure are becoming obvious, and there are significant differences from traditional leisure activities. (Kendo, 2000; Zborovsky and Orlov, 1970; Zharkova and Chizhikova, 1998).

There is a dynamic development of information and communication space and its integration into the leisure sphere in the process of self-isolation. Modern works on leisure activities are mainly devoted to the problems of widespread use of the Internet as a new information and communication space (Yaroshenko, 2017; Reprintseva, 2003; Mandrika and Tyutyunnikov, 2000; Turkhanova, 2006; Ponukalina, 2009). Communication via the Internet in on-line mode has already gained its unshakeable popularity among Russian citizens.

The concept of leisure is the starting point for understanding leisure strategies in the space of youth life-activity, so there is a need to clarify it in connection with the different understanding of leisure and the concept of free time, which is close in meaning in the scientific literature on this issue. Even ancient philosophers said that one of the main human aspirations is the desire for pleasure. As a rule, a person gets pleasure by doing his/her favorite activity, hobby, satisfying their interest, and this is all, in turn, related to leisure activities (Tregubov, 1991; Mints, 1997). In a situation of self-isolation due to the coronavirus pandemic, in an ordinary home environment, it is quite difficult to fully realize personal needs for self-development, just as it is quite difficult to get it in full in the business sphere, in the household, since everyday work, routine actions and limited
activities, absorb the individual’s consciousness and do not allow him/her to distract from their worries.

The essence of free time is that which remains for the individual after work and is spent on rest, leisure, recuperation, physical and spiritual development of the individual (Drobinskaya & Sokolov, 1983; Grushin, 1967; Tregubov, 1991; Mints, 1997). Leisure, in our opinion, is a part of free time, the content of which is filled with activities for their own pleasure, entertainment, self-improvement, development or other goals of their own choice. This is not working time, which a person spends with pleasure and interest, in the process of which he/she restores his/her mental balance. The structure of leisure consists of several levels, which are distinguished from each other by their psychological and cultural significance, emotional weight, and degree of spiritual activity (Andreeva and Novikova, 1988; Omelchenko, 2006). One of the most common leisure strategies is rest, relaxation, which is necessary for a person to restore potential, both physical and psychological, which in turn will lead to the restoration of psychological balance and psychological health (Gordon and Klopop, 1972; Grushin, 1967; Levikova, 2002).

Special attention should be paid to the developing and educational functions of leisure. Indeed, during the period of socialization and individual development of the individual, leisure becomes of great educational importance. However, these functions remain important at any age. There is still a need to expand one’s horizons, especially in the modern world with a high speed of updating information, maintain social ties, and meet the requirements of the time (Surtaev, 1992; Streltsov, 2002; Derzhavin, 2002). Free activity was regarded as the highest manifestation of the human spirit, and leisure as the highest good. In other words, the concept of free time is broader in scope than leisure, and leisure is only part of it. In analyzing the problems of free time and leisure, it is most interesting and important to pay attention to the socio-demographic group of young people, since this group is the most vividly and quickly responds to new social trends (Fatov, 2006; Goncharova, 2009; Zakharchenko, 2008). Therefore, when talking about leisure strategies in the context of self-isolation, we will also consider young people as a group involved in this space and reacting as quickly as possible to the appearance of innovations as an object of close study (Bidwell, 1972; Bovkun, 1988; Vishnevsky and Rubina, 1997; Gavrilyuk and Trikoz, 2002). The vast majority of young people prefer to spend their free time away from home, in the company of their peers, but in conditions of self-isolation, leisure activities undergo significant changes.
1. Materials and Methods

The problem field of the study is determined by the fact that today young people are forced to sit at home in self-isolation during the coronavirus pandemic. Quota selection based on socio-demographic characteristics (gender and age) was used as a sampling method.

Types of leisure strategies for young people in conditions of self-isolation in the new information and communication space. The research questions were:

What leisure practices do you most often use when you are in self-isolation about the coronavirus pandemic?

How often do you spend your time at home?

How often, on average, do you use the Internet in conditions of self-isolation?

1. Every day
2. Almost once a week
3. Every other day
4. Once a week or less

Why do you use the Internet most often in self-isolation?

1. To work
2. for study
3. for leisure, communication, entertainment
4. To search for information not related to work or studies
5. Other (specify what it is)

If you use the Internet for recreation, communication, entertainment, what ways do you use exactly?

1. Communication in Social networks
2. Search for videos (videos and movies) and audio (music, stories, etc.)
3. Reading books and news in electronic form
4. Computer games playing
5. Network games playing
6. Other (specify what it is)
How many hours a day do you play these games on average?
1. 0-5 hours
2. 6-10 hours
3. 11-18 hours
4. 19 or more hours

Do your friends play similar games with you?
1. Almost everybody play
2. Only some of them play
3. Approximately half of them plays
4. Almost no one plays
5. No one plays among my friends

Have you developed any new leisure activities during your period of self-isolation?
If so, which ones?

2. Results

Moving to the results of the survey, we can state that all 100% of the students surveyed are Internet users. More than three-quarters (78%) of students never play on the Internet on a computer. The remaining quarter of students (23%) play computer Internet games with varying regularity. Of these, about one in eight (13%) of the students surveyed rarely play on the computer and almost one in ten (8%) often play computer games on the Internet. The absolute majority of respondents (80%) have a positive attitude to the computer and the Internet. Of these, more than half of the respondents (54%) like them very much. 13% of respondents are neutral about these technologies. According to more than half of the respondents, the Internet will not be able to replace the classic media (Newspapers, radio, television).

A third of respondents (31%) think that the Internet in conditions of self-isolation can replace the classic media, and 13 find it difficult to answer. The distribution of the frequency of Internet use gave the following results. Among Internet users, almost every one of the respondents (95%) uses the Internet in conditions of self-isolation every day; only 3% use the Internet 4-6 times a week. Two or three times a week, 2% of the youth surveyed use the Internet, and none of the respondents who use the Internet once or less
often. The percentage of young people who use the Internet in conditions of self-isolation less than four times a week is represented by a statistically insignificant value. Distribution of respondents by areas of life in which they use the Internet. The absolute majority of young people surveyed (100%) use the Internet to study. About one-third of the respondents use the Internet for work. The majority use the Internet for recreation, communication, and entertainment (99%) and search for information, which is not related to work, or study (51).

In terms of self-isolation, the opportunity to read books and news in electronic form is in the first place in the hierarchy of preferences of young people among the entertainment opportunities of the Internet (88%). The second place in the hierarchy of preferences of young people among the entertainment opportunities of the Internet network is occupied by the ability to communicate in social networks (86%). In the third place in the hierarchy of preferences, the ability to search for videos and audio recordings on the Internet is preferred by more than half of the respondents (57%). In addition, in the last place in the hierarchy of preferred opportunities are gaming practices. About a quarter (27%) of those who use the Internet for entertainment play online games, and only 9% play computer games. It is worth noting that among those who play games on a computer, the absolute majority (99%) prefer network games. Exactly half (50%) of the respondents who are interested in computer games spend about 6-10 hours a day on this activity. It is worth noting that the absolute majority (97%) of respondents who are fond of computer games, some friends are fond of such games. Just 1% says that almost everyone plays, and the same amount (1%) that almost no one plays. It is worth noting that from the above-mentioned data, we can conclude that if a person is fond of games, then at least one of his friends is also fond of them. The first type: active participants, they are characterized by a high degree of involvement in gaming and related practices.

They often use a computer and Internet resources, and their priority activity on the Internet is mainly various gaming practices that require a lot of time. Among their friends, there are always representatives who share their passion. You can join virtual or real groups, chat rooms, and forums dedicated to computer or network games. The presence of interest in information related to the appearance of new products in the computer game industry. The share of representatives of this type is only 4% of those who play computer and network games. Another type of player is characterized by an average degree of involvement in game practices and, possibly, partial involvement in accompanying practices. The share of representatives of this type is more than half (90%) of respondents who play computer and network games. The third type is characterized by a low degree of involvement in gaming practices, and in the accompanying practices are mostly not included.
Also, a variety of passive participants are those who are formally included in the accompanying practices, but the game practice for them is not a priority occupation on the computer or on the Network, the time spent on this type of activity is very limited. The share of representatives of this type is only 6% of those who play computer and network games. Thus, in conditions of self-isolation, the proportion of young people using Internet resources for leisure activities has increased significantly.

3. Discussions

Leisure occupies an important place in the life of modern people, it is a part of free time, the content of which is filled with activities for their own pleasure, entertainment, self-improvement, development or achieving other goals of their own choice. In the conditions of self-isolation about the coronavirus pandemic, the amount of free time has significantly increased and the features of its conduct have undergone significant changes. Free time is not working time, which a person spends with pleasure and interest, in the process of which he/she restores his/her psychological health. Youth leisure develops in a young person such habits and skills that will then completely determine his/her attitude to free time. It is at this stage of a person’s life that an individual strategy of leisure and recreation is developed, the first experience of organizing free time is accumulated, and attachment to certain activities occurs.

It is important to note that in conditions of self-isolation, the fascination with computer and network games is not limited only to the practice of playing. There are a number of related aspects, one of which is that the absolute majority of young people playing games, according to the results of the survey, are registered in Internet chat rooms, forums dedicated to computer games. As well as the majority of computer-players are interested in information related to the appearance of new products in the computer game industry. So according to the results of the survey, two-thirds of them are interested in such information to varying degrees, a little more than half of them are more interested in this information than not, and accordingly for less than half of the respondents who are fond of computer games such current information is very interesting and useful for self-development.

Having described the empirical distribution in the conditions of self-isolation of the surveyed youth by the degree of involvement in gaming practices, we can note the following: only a third of the respondents are interested in computer or network games. It is important that among this third, representatives of the moderate and passive type of players predominate, that is, young people with an average and low degree of involvement in gaming practices, despite the development of the computer entertainment industry.
The assumption about the involvement of young people in the conditions of self-isolation in gaming practices was somewhat exaggerated. Instead of the expected half, only a third of young people are included in gaming practices. In modern conditions, new scientific discoveries and technological innovations lead to the development of information and computer technologies, which young people are passionate about. Information and communication space is increasingly absorbing the attention of students.

In conditions of self-isolation, the phenomenon of information and communication space covers almost all spheres of public activity, including politics, ideology, culture, lifestyle, as well as the very conditions of human existence. In particular, this phenomenon has firmly taken its place in the field of leisure.

Through the computer, a person in self-isolation has created a fundamentally new environment—virtual reality, which exists alongside the real world, and over time, this border between virtual reality and the real world becomes more blurred. One of the embodiments of virtual world is computer games, which served as the basis for the formation of a subculture of gamers. The gaming movement today captures more new social groups and categories of individuals. At the same time, the information and communication space, despite its external attractiveness and rather deep penetration, especially in the youth environment, has an ambiguous socio-cultural impact on society.

Conclusion

Leisure is an important and necessary structural element in any person’s life. Modern times offers a huge variety and range of leisure activities, especially for young people. As a result, leisure can always be considered as the realization of personal interests related to recreation, self-development, self-realization, communication, health improvement, etc. Leisure is important for any person in order to restore physical and mental potential, to meet the needs of a person in self-development. In conditions of self-isolation at home, due to the coronavirus pandemic, the conditions for meeting this need are significantly narrowed and transformed.

Young people who previously satisfy the need for personal development in the external environment feel quite limited in movement and constrained by reality. Consequently, previously meaningful and active leisure of young people was transformed into a more passive and non-characteristic for them form, which does not meet the needs of young people. Undoubtedly, the leisure activities should be varied, interesting, entertaining, and unobtrusive in nature. Such leisure can be provided by providing an
opportunity for everyone to actively show their initiative in various types of recreation and entertainment.

In conditions of self-isolation in a limited space, young people move less, their active lifestyle significantly decreases, and, as a result, they become more and more exposed to Internet technologies, they become more and more involved in the Internet web, which undoubtedly has the most effective effect on their moral image and Outlook. In conditions of self-isolation, leisure activities of young people are quite strongly reduced to passive leisure, active movements are becoming less and less, which, in turn, requires maximum concentration and compliance with the daily routine in order to somehow stimulate themselves to activity in order to restore physical potential and form and, as a result, to help their mental health.

Thus, leisure in conditions of self-isolation integrates many disparate aspects of human life into a single whole, which allows a person to feel the fullness of life. Without leisure in conditions of self-isolation due to quarantine, life activities of young people would be monotonous and difficult to bear.

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Orenburg State Pedagogical University. Orenburg, Russia


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