

Popularity of Social Networks Among Armenian Users

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Abstract. Now there is active debate about the influence of virtual (online) communication on real (offline) communication. Do online and offline communications complement each other, or will online communication gradually completely replace real (offline) communication, including in the professional and personal life of a modern person? If people stay at home and go about their daily activities without interacting with other members of society and this suits them, then they will not make efforts to create social connections outside the online sphere, and the field of real (offline) relationships is completely or significantly transformed. The article discusses: the spread of social networks among Armenian users, online and/or offline communication preferences of Armenian users in one or another area of life, depending on age, gender and the subject of communication. As a result of the study, conducted by questionnaire, preferences were identified on the basis of which users build online communication, which determines the purposes of using social networks in Armenia. The research was carried out with the financial support of Yerevan State University according to the scientific project "Mechanisms of dissemination and consumption of fake news in social networks", 2022-2024. The article was prepared according to the International Academic Mobility Program, organized by the National Research Institute of the Communications Development for young scientists from foreign countries.

Keywords: virtual communication, virtual space, online and offline space, social media, social networks, users

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Introduction

Statistics shows that there is an increase in the number of people actively participating in the communication processes taking place on various online platforms around the world, including Armenia. At the moment, there are 4.8 billion users of social networks in the world, and 150 million new users appeared in the last year alone.¹

Therefore, social networks, as a constantly developing field, require their periodic examination in order to identify trends, updates, development and enrichment of information in the field of recent scientific developments. In addition, for us the most important in the study of user behavior is their communicative behavior – preferences, strategy, forms of communication in the network space, including comparing it with communicative behavior in the offline space.

The article develops and presents conceptual problems of development and distribution of network communications:

- Functionality of virtual social networks;
- Statistics on the distribution and popularity of various social networks, including among Armenian users;
- Preferences and goals of social media users in Armenia;

Communicative preferences of users of social networks in Armenia when comparing online and offline communications.

The objective of this paper is to conduct a more thorough study of the users of social networks, the analysis of which may have strategic goals, such as identifying the characteristics of the audience with the help of specialists in public relations, marketing or advertising, taking into account its behavioural characteristics, formulating and positioning communication goals and developing information strategies, as well as effectively engaging new target audiences.

In this paper we will distinguish between online and offline communications. By «online communication» we mean the transmission of information through various Internet platforms both in synchronous and asynchronous context. «Offline communication», in its turn, is the transfer of information and/or various signs in real space and time during personal communication.²

According to McKenna and Bargh, online communication differs from offline communication in several key features: availability, irregularity, idealization of personality, reduced physical signals, and anonymity. These distinctive features, according to the

¹ Chaffey D. Global social media statistics research summary, 2023. URL: <https://www.smartinsights.com/social-media-marketing/social-media-strategy/new-global-social-media-research/#:~:text=A%20summary%20of%20global%20social,the%20rest%20of%20the%20year>

² Lieberman A., Schroeder J. Two social lives: How differences between online and offline interaction influence social outcomes. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 2020:16–21. Available from: https://escholarship.org/content/qt94n9w8b9/qt94n9w8b9_noSplash_293949a5e051fffc8e1fdcc9ffc168c4.pdf?t=qdtez



authors, facilitate communication and prevent the existence of barriers inherent in offline communication³.

There is currently much debate about the impact of online communication on offline communication. Are online and offline communication two complementary spheres? Or will communication in a network space gradually and completely replace real (offline) communication, including in the professional and personal life of the modern person?⁴

A number of studies suggest that online communication strengthens real-life relationships. If relationships are formed only through online platforms, without real communication, they remain superficial and there is a possibility that over time they may deteriorate and cease.⁵

Other researchers argue that online communication is a contributing factor in improving relationships that develop in the context of real communication, that is, relationships that were first established outside the Internet.⁶

Critics argue that online communication does not provide a real-life experience or real interaction. Research shows that people who spend more time communicating in the real world have significantly higher emotional resilience. If virtual communication becomes dominant, users will need more social support over time, as they typically experience higher levels of depression [Gross, 2002]. According to Tyler, one of the reasons for this phenomenon are social signals that cannot be received in an online environment.

So, a step-by-step picture emerges, initially emphasizing the positive aspects of online domination: comfort, security, accessibility, self-expression, the formation of new social connections, the development of communication and social skills. However, this later leads to a weakening of offline social ties, a loss of sense of reality and a lack of desire to engage in them, which can lead to depression. Consequently, social networks lose their ability to be social.

According to recent data, one third of the world's Internet users (approximately 32 per cent of all users) are young people between the ages of 25 and 34. The proportion of young people aged 18 to 24 is 18 per cent. In addition, 80 per cent of Internet users are also users of a certain social network, with a significant proportion of them using multiple social networks.⁷

³ Nina V. A. The Transformation of Online Friendships into a Real-Life Context in Individuals with Social Anxiety-Development and Application of the Need to Transfer Scale. Wien. Vienna, 2015:9-15.

⁴ König R., Seifert Al. University of Zurich Alexander University of Applied Sciences and Arts North, From Online to Offline and Vice Versa: Change in Internet Use in Later Life Across Europe, *Frontiers in Sociology*, 2020. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339334351_From_Online_to_Offline_and_Vice_Versa_Change_in_Internet_Use_in_Later_Life_Across_Europe.

⁵ Pallant J., Whiteside N., Aleti T., Zeleznikow J. Helpful or harmful? Exploring the impact of social media usage on intimate relationships. *Australasian Journal of Information Systems*. 2018: 4-15.

⁶ Matook S., Butler B. Social Media and Relationships. *The International Encyclopedia of Digital Communication and Society*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2014:7-9.

⁷ Distribution of internet users worldwide as of 2019, by age group. Available from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/272365/age-distribution-of-internet-users-worldwide/#:~:text=Age%20distribution%20of%20internet%20users%20worldwide%202019&text=As%20of%202019%2C%20a%20third,aged%2018%20to%2024%20years>.

By the end of 2022, WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, Weixin WeChat, QQ, Snapchat, and Telegram had become the most popular virtual social networks. Not all of these social networks are widely distributed and actively used in the Republic of Armenia.⁸

R. Hanna and a number of other theorists point out that social media have changed the Internet from an information platform to a platform that influences users. It is therefore necessary to examine the communication strategies of users as well as the trends and characteristics associated with these strategies.⁹

Bauman remarked: «Most individuals use social networks to break away from reality and justify in the area of comfort, where perceived voices are echoes of their own inner voice, where the only thing that is apparent is the reflection of their own personality».¹⁰

Valkenburg and Peter (2006) conducted a study on the involvement of young people and adolescents in online communication. In addition, there are psychological studies related to the transition from virtual space to real life, which confirm the presence of psychological problems in this transition.

The authors of the article "On the Internet No One Knows I'm an Introvert" notice that one of the goals of users who turn to online communication is to overcome depression and loneliness. When it comes to social media, the voice of each user is initially of equal importance, but its further form and impact are determined by the analysis of the situation and the chosen communication strategy.¹¹

There are several popular social networks in Russia that play an important role in the everyday communication of Russian citizens. One of the most common networks is «VKontakte», which provides many functional features including groups, audio and video recordings, as well as personal messages.

An important reason for the popularity of social media in Russia is their ability to communicate with friends and family, especially in the context of long distances, which is relevant to this country. Social media also offer the opportunity to participate in panel discussions, exchange views and share information about world events. In addition, many Russian citizens use social media to post their creative works, as well as for business activities, which complements their social dimension of economic and cultural life.

It should also be noted that social networks in Russia have become an important source of information on political events and public life. Many people use these platforms to discuss current events and express their views, making social media a meaningful tool for shaping public opinion.

⁸ Most popular global mobile messenger apps as of October 2020, based on number of monthly active users. Available from: <https://www.statista.com/statistics/258749/most-popular-global-mobile-messenger-apps/>.

⁹ Yulia K., Erik K. Communication Strategies via Social Media. *Jönköping International business school*, 2012:30-36.

¹⁰ Atanesyan A.V. The Impact of Social Networks on Protest Activities (The Case of Armenia). *Sotsiologicheskie Issledovaniya* [Sociological Studies]. 2019; №. 3:73-84. DOI: 10.31857/S013216250004280-1.

¹¹ Yair A. H., Wainapel G., Fox S. Extroversion, Neuroticism, and Internet Interaction. *CyberPsychology & Behavior*. 2002. 5(2):125-128.

Thus, the popularity of social networks in Russia is due to their ability to provide communication, information exchange and public debate, which makes them an integral part of the socio-cultural dynamics in this country.

In modern Russian society, there are unique models of online communications that reflect the complex dynamics of cultural and social interactions. Research works (such as the work of A. Ivanova¹²) provide a perspective on the preferences of Russian users in the field of social media. According to the study, the popularity of the «VKontakte» platform remains important, personifying the central space for the exchange of information and the establishment of virtual social connections. At the same time, along with the established traditions, there is a growing interest in the use of messengers such as «Telegram», emphasizing the evolution of online communications in the Russian context.

At the same time, structured forms of communication on the Internet in Russia reflect not only social relationships but also political aspects. V.Petrov's research¹³ reveals that social media is an important channel for the expression of public opinion and participation of users in political discussions. Users actively discuss current political events and share opinions that influence the formation of public opinion. This layer of online communication in Russia is a dynamic field reflecting the diversity of sociocultural and political aspects in modern society.

According to G. Chu and N. V. Edge, many Facebook users are convinced that their friends on Facebook* are not only online, but also in real life are happier and more successful than they are. Thus, people tend to compare themselves to an idealized image of themselves in a virtual environment, which can harm the formation of a positive attitude towards themselves and lead to low self-esteem. This is due to the fact that in the online space such elements may be included in messages that are not available in real life, or information about other users may simply be unavailable to the user.¹⁴

It should be noted that online interaction within the family is sometimes inferior to offline interaction due to certain situations and social status within the family. This is particularly the case with regard to studying and working abroad. This phenomenon is also manifested in Armenian society, as people studying and working abroad make up a significant part of society, for them the online environment plays an important role in addition to offline communication and communication with family.

Social media now play a significant role in people's daily lives, influencing social dynamics and shaping personal identities. In this context, it is important to consider several key aspects: social networks consumption, conspicuous consumption, self-

¹² Ivanova A. Social Media in Modern Russia: Trends and Preferences. Journal of Communications Research. 2019.

¹³ Petrov V. Online Discourse in Russian Politics: Social Media Analysis. Political Communication. 2020.

¹⁴ * Activity in Russia blocked at the request of Roskomnadzor, 18+ Erin V., Jason P.R., Lindsay R. Social comparison, social media, and self-esteem. American Psychological Association. Psychology of Popular Media Culture. 2014. Vol. 3 (4):206-222.

expression, the disruption and acquisition of social connections, and the fashionable social networks and symbolic capital acquired.

1. Social media consumption.

They have become an important tool for communication, information exchange and the creation and maintenance of social connections. In this context, the analysis of social media consumption is a topical research issue.

Social networks consumption includes a wide range of user actions. It covers reading and commenting on content, creating their own posts, participating in panel discussions, and interacting with other communicators. It is a form of social activity that influences social and cultural dynamics.

Consumption of social media can have different effect on individuals. On the one hand, it can contribute to the expansion of social circles, self-promotion and communication skills. On the other hand, excessive consumption of social media can lead to mental health problems, including feelings of isolation and addiction.

2. Conspicuous consumption and self-expression.

Social media also encourage conspicuous consumption when users expose their achievements, looks, lifestyles to create a certain image. This is due to the desire to gain recognition (including social) in the online community.

With the development of information technologies and the spread of social networks, the concepts of conspicuous consumption and self-expression have taken on new forms and have penetrated into the virtual space. In this context, the analysis of these phenomena on social networks is of interest for understanding the impact of digital platforms on social dynamics.

Conspicuous consumption in social networks consists of creating visual images and content to demonstrate their social status, success, and involvement in certain sociocultural practices. This includes the publication of luxury travel, expensive things, participation in prestigious events, etc.

Self-expression in the context of social networks implies the active expression of individuality through the creation of unique content, emphasizing their interests, values and ways of life. This may include posts about hobbies, cultural preferences, and visual responses to social events.

Conspicuous consumption and self-expression in social networks influence the shaping of cultural trends, fashion and success standards. They affect the perception of social reality and create new consumption norms. Moreover, these phenomena shape the image of a successful individual, which can influence the ambitions and goals of youth.

However, conspicuous consumption and self-expression in social media raise questions about ethics and authenticity in virtual space. Distortion of reality and creation of idealized images can lead to a dissonance between virtual and real «I».

Conspicuous consumption and self-expression in social networks is a complex phenomenon that influences social preferences and values. Understanding these processes is essential for the development of effective strategies for virtual communication and maintaining authenticity in online space.

3. Breaking up and acquiring social connections.

Social media can both strengthen existing social connections and create new ones. But they can also lead to a breakdown of real relationships if the consumption of social media goes beyond reason.

The disruption and acquisition of social connections in modern society are taking new forms as a result of the development of information technologies and virtual platforms. In this context, the analysis of these processes is important for understanding changes in social relationships.

Social disruption can occur as a result of geographic distance, changing circumstances or divergent interests. In today's world, virtual platforms provide tools for communication regardless of physical location.¹⁵

Virtual platforms also facilitate the acquisition of new social connections. They provide opportunities for communication and interaction with people who can be found on the basis of common interests, professional or cultural preferences.

These processes influence social dynamics. Virtual platforms expand the circle of communication, allowing people to find like-minded people and develop professional and personal relationships globally.

However, despite the benefits of virtual social connections, it is important to be aware of their limitations in comparison with real interactions. Real meetings and communication play an invaluable role in shaping deep and long-term relationships.

Breaking up and acquiring social connections on virtual platforms are important aspects of contemporary social dynamics. Understanding of these processes is necessary for the effective use of virtual social networks in maintaining and developing social relationships.

4. Acquiring symbolic capital in social networks: transforming socio-cultural dynamics.

The acquisition of symbolic capital in social networks is an important phenomenon in modern society. This process influences socio-cultural values and social dynamics.

Symbolic capital in social networks represents the accumulation of symbolic resources such as prestige, reputation, influence. It is based on creating and maintaining an image of a virtual personality that has significance and influence in a particular social group or environment.

¹⁵ Shiryaev E. Virtual network as a tool of communication and social adaptation of personality. *Siberian Psychological Journal*. 2017; 64 (1):35-42 [In Russian]

This process has a significant impact on the formation of sociocultural values. Social media become a platform where users create and publish content that represents their values, beliefs and ideals. This contributes to shaping public opinion and influences cultural trends.

The acquisition of symbolic capital in social networks is changing the dynamics of social interaction. Virtual platforms provide tools for the creation and strengthening of social connections based on shared interests, values and preferences. This promotes the formation of online communities and groups where users come together around common ideas and beliefs.

The acquisition of symbolic capital in social networks plays an essential role in the formation of sociocultural values and social dynamics. Understanding this process allows you to consciously influence social processes through virtual social networks.

In conclusion it should be noted that social networks have a profound impact on various aspects of social life. They shape new consumption patterns, as well as influence the creation and maintenance of social connections. It is important to understand both the positive and the potentially negative aspects of using social media and to maintain a balance between virtual and real communication.

In this article we present the results of research of communication preferences of Armenian users in social networks, which will illustrate their approaches to the use of online and offline communication in different spheres of life, preferences and goals of social media users in Armenia.

Materials and methods

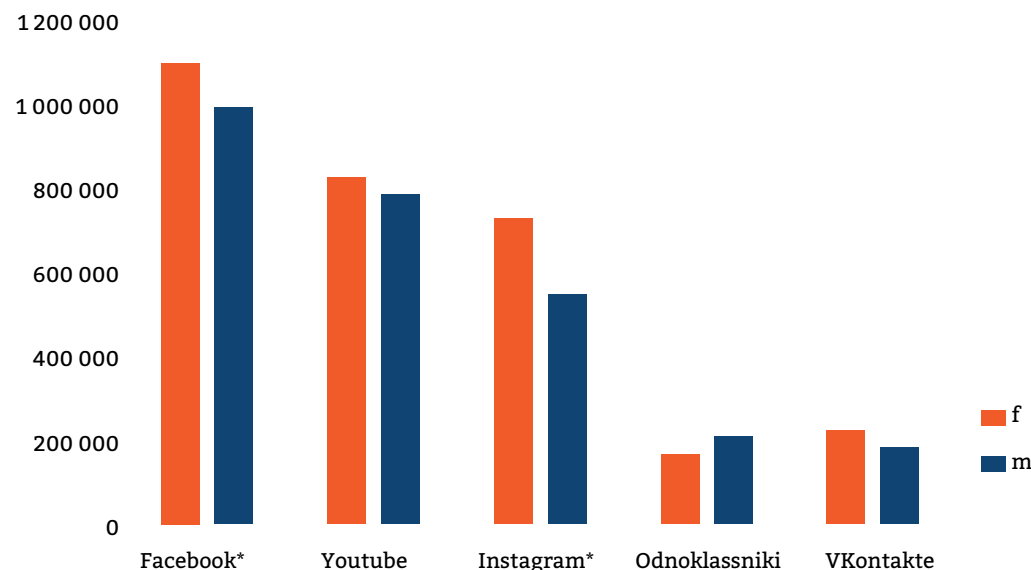
The research was conducted in February-May 2023 by means of a virtual questionnaire survey. 400 Armenian users of the virtual social network were interviewed. The purpose of the survey is to find out the communication preferences of Armenian users in online and offline spheres, preferences and goals of social network users in Armenia.

Research objectives:

- to determine the most popular social networks among users in Armenia;
- to find out the preferences of Armenian users in online and/or offline communication in different spheres of life, taking into account age, gender and communication topics;
- to find out the peculiarities of the communicative preferences of Armenian users of social networks.

Discussion

Based on a number of factors, such as the prevalence of social networks in Armenia, the representation of Armenian users, their functional characteristics, advantages and limitations, country of origin, etc., the following virtual social networks have been

Figure 1. Gender Representation of Armenian users in social networks

widely represented in Armenia: «Facebook»*, «Odnoklassniki», «Instagram»*, «YouTube», «VKontakte», «TikTok».

The popularity of social networks in Armenia is an interesting aspect of the study of modern digital society. It should be noted that our research has shown that Russian social networks are not dominant in this country. Despite the large number of users of Russian social networks, Armenian users prefer alternative platforms for social interaction.

Facebook* is the most popular social network among users in Armenia. The majority of respondents were users of Facebook* or simultaneously users of several social networks.

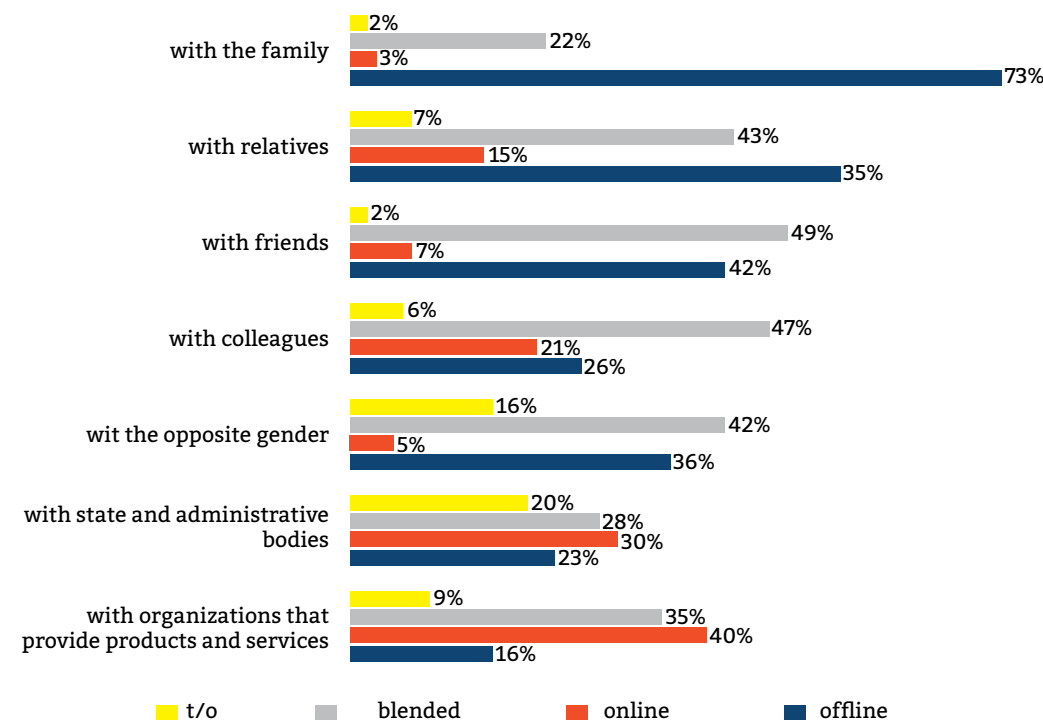
According to the latest data, Instagram* is approaching Facebook* in terms of size of the audience in Armenia. Currently, there are already about 1-1.1 million active users, and every month this number increases. About three quarters of Instagram's* audience are under the age of 35. At the same time, half of Facebook* users are over 35.

There are social networks including «TikTok», whose statistics is unknown, as they do not provide detailed information about the Armenian audience. It was clear that the number of users was increasing, but clear statistics was not available.¹⁶

According to the data we have received, Armenian women are much more inclined to share personal information about themselves on the Internet (66%) than men (34%).

¹⁶ Martirosyan S. Social networks in Armenia: how many people are there, 2022. Available from: <https://media.am/hy/critique/2022/12/20/34858/>.

* Activity in Russia blocked at the request of Roskomnadzor, 18+

Figure 2. Communication preferences among users

These findings are supported by a number of other international studies¹⁷, including those of Russia.¹⁸

The figure shows that people still prefer direct communication with family members, relatives and friends. Unlike personal relationships, in a business environment, many respondents prefer online communication with colleagues. Interaction with Government Organizations, such as the Tax Authority or Government Agencies, is mostly carried out in an online or combined format. This simplifies application processes and decreases time expenses.

Many of those surveyed prefer buying online or buying both ways. Online shopping is becoming increasingly popular among respondents. Convenience, variety of products and the ability to compare prices make online shopping preferable.

¹⁷ Atanasova A. Gender-Specific Behaviors on Social Media and What They Mean for Online Communications, 2016. Available from: <https://www.socialmediatoday.com/social-networks/gender-specific-behaviors-social-media-and-what-they-mean-online-communications#:~:text=Social%20media%20data%20also%20shows,warm%27%20and%20more%20positive%20words>

¹⁸ Mitina O.V., Voiskounsk A.I.E. Gender Differences of the Internet-Related Stereotypes in Russia Petrenko, Moscow State University after M.V. Lomonosov. PsychNology Journal. 2005 .Vol. 3 (3):243–264. Available from: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/220168820_Gender_Differences_of_the_Internet-Related_Stereotypes_in_Russia_Petrenko.

Table 1. The primary purpose of using social networks

Reading news	61%
Communication with friends in Armenia	56%
Viewing posts	35%
Communication with relatives and friends abroad	30%
Spending free time	23%
Communication with colleagues	22%
Establishing professional contacts	19%
Organizing more efficient work/study	18%
Posting photos and/or videos	14%
Shopping	13%
Posting their own thoughts	10%
Sales of user-created products and provision of services	9%
Establishment of friendly relations	8%
Meeting people of the opposite gender	8%
Telling about the everyday life of the user	6%
Games	4%
Hosting live streams	2%
Monitoring number of likes, comments and views of user's posts	2%
Fund-raising	1%

Interestingly, there is little difference in quantitative indicators of preferences in communication with relatives and with the opposite gender. This may also indicate that Armenians see the opposite gender as close to themselves. This may be due to the fact that communication with the opposite gender for every third user implies a long-term connection.

Communication preferences depend on the nature of the relationship and the context of the interaction. Offline communication retains its relevance in personal sphere, while online options become preferred in more formal and business contexts.

User preferences do not change significantly depending on gender. Previous studies on a similar problem confirm this. The study «Preferences of online communication depending on age, gender and duration of use of the network» attempts to study the choice of strategies of online communication, preferences in building relationships and their variations depending on age, gender and duration of network usage. This study focuses on preferences in communication and building relationships in the family, among friends, colleagues and with anonymous persons.

Thus, on the basis of a survey conducted as part of our research the authors have identified a number of preferences that determine the way users interact in online communication. The main differences were found by age, not gender.

Table 2. Results achieved through social networks

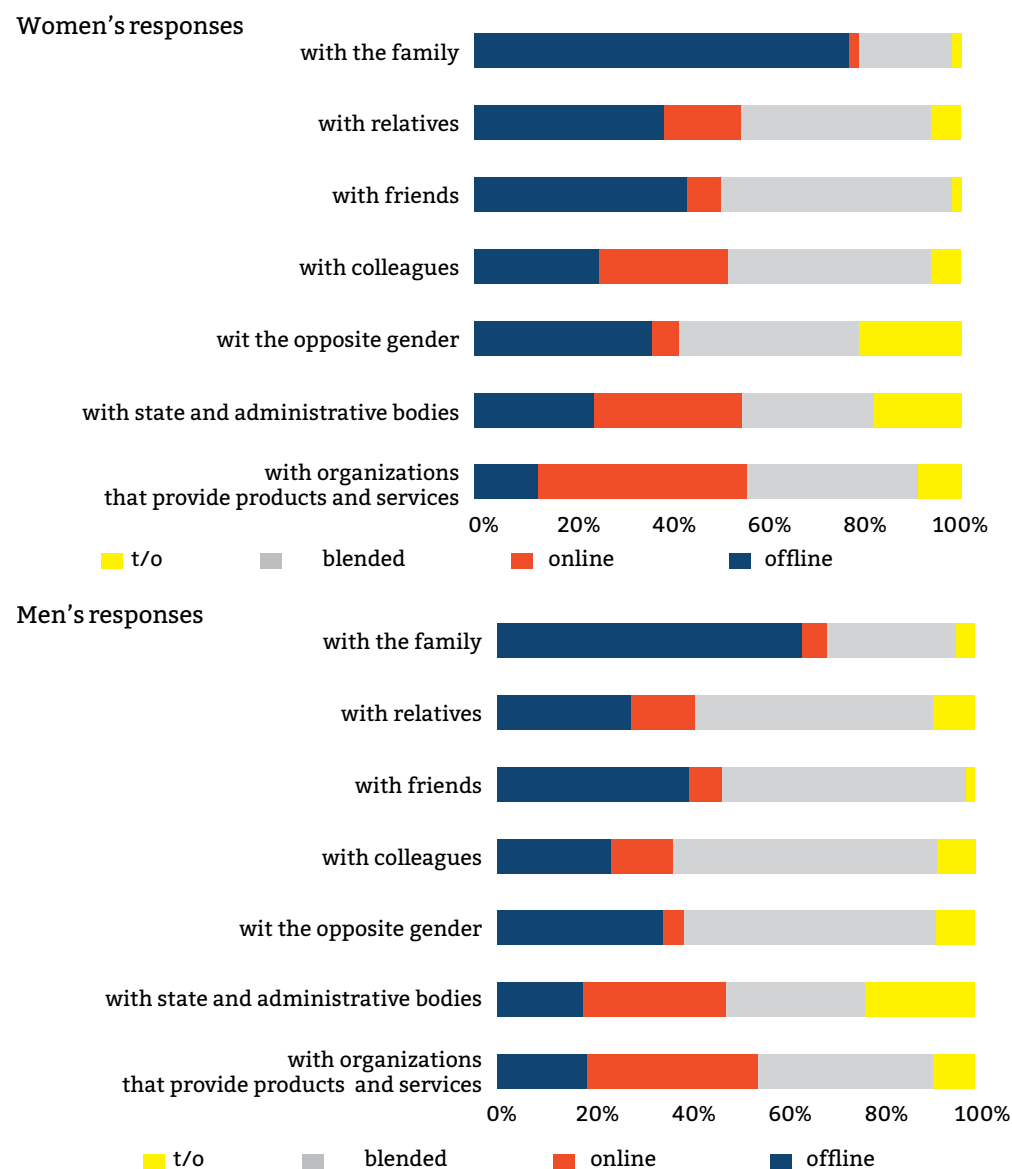
Received information on important events	55%
Acquired new, not virtual acquaintances	49%
Re-established ties with former friends, colleagues, acquaintances	41%
Found job	27%
Met a possible partner	20%
Established professional/business relations	14%
Received important information	13%
Received recognition	12%
Earned money	11%
Organized a fundraiser	10%
Set higher goals, solved environmental issues in the area of residence	7%
Acquired new professional skills	5%
Sold/bought property or goods	4%

Social media play a significant role in shaping public opinion and sharing information. In this regard, the analysis of the level of trust of Armenian users in the information coming from social networks is interesting for understanding the online behavior of users and their perception of information. Based on the data presented in the figure, it can be seen that the group of users who fully trust the information is 1%, which is a small part of the sample. These users are likely to have a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the sources with which they interact. The majority of respondents (32%) in this group mostly trust the information obtained from social networks. This may indicate that they generally consider social media to be reliable sources of information, but that they remain somewhat incredulous. About 60% of respondents said that they mostly do not trust the information coming from social networks. This may be due to concerns about the authenticity of the sources and the dissemination of false or distorted information on the network. The group of users (7%) who do not trust information from social networks is represented by a small percentage. These users most likely prefer to obtain information from other sources, considering social media unreliable.

The most significant purposes indicated by the respondents were:

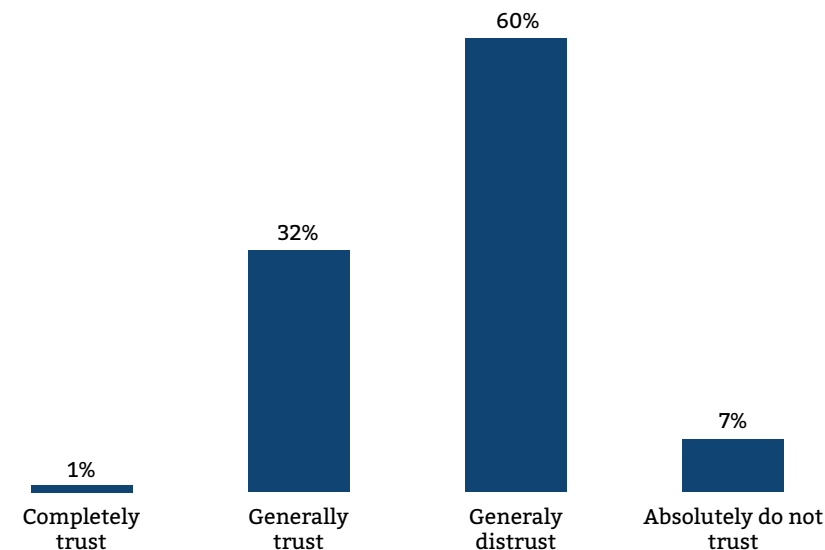
Information on important events (55%). This shows that social networks are perceived as an important source of news and information feedback in Armenian society;

Acquisition of new, non-virtual acquaintances (49%). This indicates that social media are presented to many users as a platform for expanding social contacts and establishing new personal relationships;

Figure 3. User Gender Preferences

Re-establishment of contact with former friends, colleagues and acquaintances (41%). This aspect highlights the significant role of social media in maintaining and restoring old social networks.

In addition, some respondents used social media to find work (27 per cent), meet potential partners (20 per cent) and establish business relationships (14 per cent).

Figure 4. The degree of trust of users in information coming from social networks

It is clear from the data presented that Armenian users of social networks use the above online platforms for very different purposes. The most common motivations are: obtaining information about important events (55%), acquiring new, not virtual acquaintances (49%). These results show that social networks are a means of communication and information exchange for many Armenians.

Armenian users also use social media for other purposes. For example, reconnecting with former friends, colleagues and acquaintances (41%) points to the role of social platforms in rebuilding and maintaining personal relationships.

Another important motivation for using social networks is the search for work (27%), which indicates the growing role of social networks in the professional sphere and in employment.

Analysis of the data obtained indicates a variety of purposes that Armenian users pursue when using social networks. The platforms not only provide information about important events, but they also provide an opportunity to expand social communication, reconnect with acquaintances, and address practical challenges (such as finding work).

The results of the research show the growing influence of social networks on various spheres of life of Armenian users, including social, professional and practical aspects. Understanding these motivations can be useful for developing strategies for effective interaction with social media audiences and gaining user experience.

Conclusion

When researching the preferences of Armenian users in social networks one may find that:

Preferences of Armenian users of social networks are partly replaced by virtual communication instead of real, direct interaction. As a result, we see an increase in the preference for combined (online and offline) communication (on average by 30% in all age groups) and a parallel reduction in the range of offline communication in favor of only online as well as combined communication formats. This trend is most noticeable among users under 15 years of age (up to 60 per cent), but there are no clear differences among older users.

The 16-30 age group (74 per cent) and the 31-55 age group (83 per cent) are the main users of offline communication with the family. When viewed in the context of the use of social media by people in the older age group, it can be assumed that their direct inclusion in social networks occurred in adulthood, after a period of intense spread of Internet. On the other hand, younger users have the same lifestyle as their family members and are therefore inevitably involved in direct communication.

In professional areas, online and combined communication are preferred, especially when interacting with public and administrative authorities, as well as with organizations providing goods and services. Unlike other age groups, young people are more likely to minimize direct interaction with organizations providing goods and services (46% prefer to make purchases only online). In the 31-55 age group, the figure is 36 per cent, in the case of persons under 15 years, 38 per cent, and in the case of persons aged 56 and over, the lowest is 27 per cent.

The younger and older age groups prefer mainly to interact with their families not only offline but also using a combined format. The share of such individuals is 43% among those under 15 years of age and 50% among those under 56+. When looking at the situation of young people, their preference for online communication beginning in the childhood, can be explained by the fact that they perceive it as a more comfortable way of communication. In contrast, older persons may prefer online communication for other reasons, such as living apart from young family members or being in another country.

The research shows that the majority of Armenian users of social networks, namely 60%, express mostly distrust in the information obtained from this source. However, 32% of respondents have a tendency to trust social media in certain cases. These results point to the need to improve the quality of information and trust in social networks in the Armenian information space. Critical thinking and the development of source verification skills can play an important role in increasing confidence in social media among Armenian users.

In general, the data show a variety of goals pursued by users in Armenia. These findings can be useful for further analysing user behavioural patterns and developing strategies for effective communication and interaction with audiences on social media.

Women have a much broader spectrum of communication with different people

online than men, who prefer to establish a closer relationship. As a result, men's circle of communication, dating and relationships is narrowed down.

The choice of signs and language of communication can be determined by gender. Another fact identified in the study is that women feel more free online than offline.¹⁹

Returning to the research, conducted by the authors, men prefer to communicate offline with the public and administrative authorities much less than women. Regardless of age, users prefer to communicate directly with family rather than with relatives, friends or colleagues.

Women have a tendency to do online shopping. One hypothesis put forward in earlier international studies claims that the convenience of using online platforms is related to the frequency of online purchases, and this hypothesis is confirmed by the Armenian example.

According to experts, consumers' online behaviour significantly changes society, including the culture of consumption and behaviour. However, even in the online environment, there are discussions about consumer addiction, which is seen as a rare phenomenon.

Analysis of the results of our research shows that Armenian users of social networks have different motivations and goals when using online platforms. However, it is interesting to note that the primary goals mentioned in the first study do not always coincide with the results obtained through social networks.

For example, in the first survey, the most common target was to read news and news articles (61%), while in the second survey only 55% of respondents indicated to receive information about important events. This may indicate to the fact that some respondents use social media not only for information purposes but also for other important aspects of their lives.

In addition, in the first survey, the communication with friends (56%) ranked second in the popularity of social networking goals, while in the second this goal was not rated lower than the information about important events.

Thus, it can be concluded that users of social networks in Armenia have different motivations, including both social and information aspects. Despite differences in research results, the results show that social networks play an important role in the daily life of Armenian users by providing them with various opportunities for communication, exchange of information and achievement of various objectives.

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