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## **The Instagram and the image of a modern woman: influence and interaction**

Today women became more active in social, political and economic spheres. As a result of the impact of West (US and Europe) and East (Arab countries) women have experienced diverse cultural transformations. Accordingly, their system of values, psychology, behaviour and status has changed. To adapt traditional Kazakh values to new social relations, to place it into the spiritual centre of social life is not only a cultural, philosophical or worldview issue, it also has political significance. And the one who can realize it and to make it viable is a woman, a mother and a grandmother. In order to answer the questions about how a woman has changed, how she looks today, what she wants from life, how she positions herself, we can see her social media. Cyber technologies, which have become an integral part of modern human life, including a new type and level of communication, the impact of social networks on women, the influence on the transformation of the image of a woman, the causes and consequences of high demand for Instagram will be analyzed in this paper.

*Keywords:* social media, Instagram, internet, woman, the image of a woman, communication, post, stories.

### *Introduction*

Social networks, which were founded in 1995 and reached our country in the 2000s, are becoming an integral part of our lives. Today, paper publications and TV and radio programs have been replaced by social networks, and there are very few people who do not use the Internet and don't have accounts online. According to the latest data, 76.2 % of the population of Kazakhstan is registered on the Internet. In 2017 a study conducted by AST Kazakhstan found that the share of women in social media in the country is 55 %, and 45 % for men [1]. This information proves the relevance of the chosen topic. The aim of the study is to list the most popular social media and to find out how much time people spend on them, what topics and posts are of interest, and most importantly, how they affect the daily lives of women.

D. Bell, O. Toffler, A. Turen, M. Kstels study the theory of information society, and S. Andreev, E. Dyakova, A. Trachtenberg, V. Emelin study the culture of the information society. U. Aleshina, A. Volovich, A. Zhichkpa, A. Voiskunsky, I. Sidorskaya, K. Afanasyeva, L. Karatayeva, G. Alimbekova focused on gender features of communication in social networks.

### *Research methods*

The research uses the methods of analysis, sociological survey, questionnaires and content analysis (visual aids).

### *Results and discussion*

During the years of independence women's magazines were the best friend of any girl or woman. Each issue was like treasure trove of wisdom and an encyclopedia of women's lives. What kind of books must be read, what kind of movies must be seen, what kind of clothes are needed to find a job, what kind of perfume is preferred to be given to boyfriend, what kind of pants fit a yellow blouse, what kind of curtains should be hung on the new kitchen, articles in magazines answered thousands of such questions. Also, some of the articles focused on psychological and motivational topics such as the methods of becoming an independent individual, the ways of raising a salary, the secrets of attracting men and prestige among colleagues. "To become a real woman is the dream of all women. It is there, in magazines and their Internet counterparts, that the female half can find clear indications that allow one to approach the shining ideal, and indications for all occasions", said scientist E.M. Sherman, describing the "glossy magazine phenomenon" of the 1990s. [2]

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Also, TV programs such as “Zhenskaya dol’ka”, “Zhelyti salon”, “Akzhunis”, “Na shpilke” are still actual and interesting. The guests of the program comforted the audience, entertained, expanded their knowledge, taught them to consume, but forbade thinking, doubts, frustration. They became a woman's best friend, mentor, reliable partner, sold the goods of their sponsors, led to their goals.

The development of cyber technologies has led to the creation of a virtual space and an effective platform for advertisers, which is ideal for social interaction, replacing both glossy magazines and TV programs. As a result, a new social phenomenon of the network has emerged. According to the Center for Public Opinion Research (CIOM), “78 % of the population uses the Internet: daily or almost daily — 54.3 %; several times a week, not every day — 18.1 %; several times a month — 5.4 %; The share of those who do not use the Internet at all — 22 %” [3].

People use the Internet for services that include activities such as e-mail correspondence, e-government transactions, banking, and e-journaling. And outside of work in their free time most people surf social networks. According to “BrandAnalitiks”, 2.5 million people have Facebook accounts in Kazakhstan, but only 390,000 of them are active users. Twitter covers only 28,600 people. VKontakte (ВКонтакте), which is popular among consumers under the age of 20, has 2 million users, and the leader among adults is Instagram with 1.5 million people [4].

We are interested in Instagram, where 55 % of 1.5 million users are women, because through social media modern norms, images, value systems, certain rules are propagated and established, brands and trends are formed. So “Instagram is a social network with 1 billion subscribers and was launched on October 6 2010, created by Kevin Systrom and Mike Krieger, where people communicate each other by exchanging photos and videos” [5]. At first glance, it is a very fun world: beautiful, bright pictures, eye-catching images, slender sculptures, the most interesting places in the world. Are young girls interested in life like on Instagram? Do they dream of dressing beautifully and spending summer in Turkey and winter in Dubai without leaving the beauty salon and fitness center, cosmetology and shopping center boutiques? Or do they want to become an active blogger and write posts that motivate the community? To attract people’s attention by sharing unique photos? We conducted a social survey to answer these and other questions. Questionnaires were distributed online, through the WhatsApp network and in person. 200 people took part in the survey. Their ages are as follows (Figure 1):

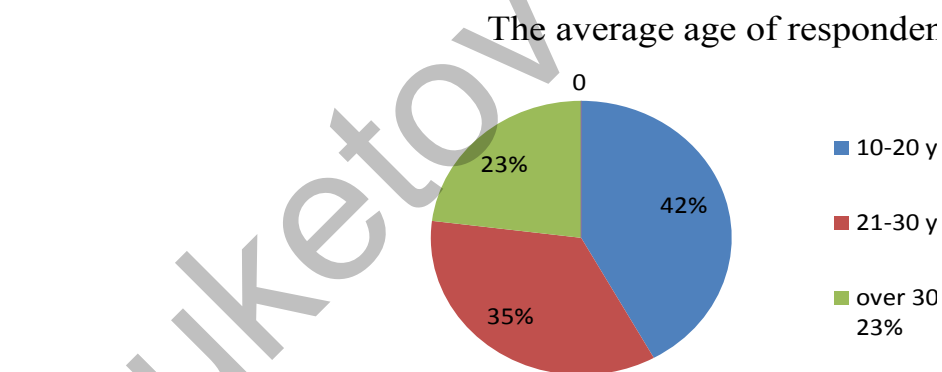


Figure 1. Ages of the respondents

There were 8 questions asked, including 3 questions about oneself and 5 open questions:

1. Your name and surname.
2. Your age.
3. Your profession
4. Why did you sign up for Instagram?
5. Which celebrities do you read on Instagram and why?
6. Are they your idols?
7. What is your purpose in using Instagram?
8. How does Instagram affect you?

One of the interesting things noted during the analysis of the answers was that the older the respondent, the longer the answer. If the majority of girls under the age of 20 are limited to 1–2 sentences, women over the age of 30 convey their opinion in a meaningful and comprehensive way. So, how do we explain the activity of women in social networks, especially on Instagram?

First, all the current news are spread through social networks and discussed everywhere, so they use social media in order not to be left out.

Second, people's style, status, material status become known through social networks.

Third, all the interesting information about celebrities is available in Instagram (everything that pop stars, actors, athletes, bloggers, poets, writers, journalists, presenters, in short, popular persons do).

Fourth, social networks give an opportunity to keep up with the latest news in the world of beauty industry and fashion.

Fifth, Instagram creates a sense of psychological relaxation, that is, watching an interesting picture of someone's beautiful life one experiences such feelings like jealousy, curiosity, pity, pride, admiration, amazement.

Sixth, it gives a motivation. By looking at the different persons on social networks, one seeks to be good shape, to bring up the child properly, to dress well, to do makeup, to travel, to cook delicious food, to earn money.

Seventh, it allows quickly and accurately learn about the lives of loved ones, relatives, friends, classmates, etc., as well as to share news about own life, and sometimes to evoke feelings of pride or care and compassion.

This is the first open question in the survey.

As for the second open question, every respondent, in addition to her acquaintances, reads at least 1–10 (13 %), 15–30 (49 %), and more than 30 (38 %) celebrities, who are trendsetters. “Trendsetter is the person, whose style, features, behavior and attitudes form the preconditions for new cultural trends” [6]. For our respondents trendsetters are singers, actresses, TV presenters, aitskers (poets), models and, in part, bloggers. Let's take a look at the most common answers of women who wrote about why these people are interesting and what qualities they like in them:

- Alaguzova Bayan Maksatkyzy: for courage, life principles, honesty, achievements, beauty;
- Super mamasita (Aliya Baitukaeva): life hacks, for showing her daily life without any adjustments, for constantly being active and motivating other people;
- Karakat Abildina: for her family and work, beauty, art, excellent upbringing of 5 children;
- Tamara Asar: for perseverance, passion for life, intelligence, scientific research;
- Dinara Satzhan: for versatility, diligence, fashionable dress, business acumen, compassion for children;
- Leila Sultankyzy: for eloquence, gentleness, kindness, diligence and having a time for family, work and writing books;
- Erke Esmakhan: for fashionable clothes, femininity, hit songs, sincerity and taking care of her son;
- Ainur Tursynbayeva: for diligence, intelligence, excellent cooking, psychological advice, business acumen;
- Asha Matai: for her delicacy, beauty, being a good TV host, femininity.

56 % of respondents said that their idol is a famous person. For example, 20 year old Tazhenova Moldir said the following: “I like Karakat Abildina because I see her as a person with a special love for family. She is very respectful and kind woman. She is very beautiful, has a unique style and stands out for keeping Kazakh traditions”. 18 year old Bota Bizak: “I like Bayan Maksatovna, she has a lot of successful works and projects, she is a strong and successful woman”. 20 year old Almira Kydyrnazarova: “My idol is Erke, because she is a very fashionable, beautiful and a modern singer”. 16 year old Aruzhan Kairatova: “Aidana Medenova is my idol because she captivates people with her soul, external and internal beauty”.

Another common answer was “my idol is my mother” (also among them there were variations of “parents”, “mother and mother-in-law”). This opinion is found in 32 % of respondents, which means that 1/3 of women in the country want to look like their mother.

“My first idol is my mother and second is Bayan Maksatovna. Because these two women are role models for me. When I grow up, I want to be like them”, said 16 year old Mahabbat Ediginova. “My parents were together in bad and good days. They brought up their sons and daughters-in-law very well, and I am proud of that”, said 27 year old Perizat Duisenbaykizi.

There were also answers such as “No one is an idol to me”, “I am an idol to myself”, “I follow the path given by God”. 12 % of respondents do not follow anyone's example, they want to find their own way.

It should be noted that the above-mentioned Instagram stars contribute to the formation of the image of a woman not only through social networks, but also through books. According to the chain of stores Meloman, Laila Sultanovna's “My second book” («Менің екінші кітабым» 2016), and Bayan Maksatkyzy's “Bayan. About me and not only” («Баян. Обо мне и не только», 2017) became the bestsellers of domestic bookshelves [7]. These books are so popular among women because of the following:

1. Women are more active readers than men;
2. Our delicate contemporaries are interested in Bayan and Leila, who are well-known, self-made, have their own opinions and civic principles;
3. A simple language, light style of an autobiographical novel is more interesting than philosophical, historical, journalistic works with deep meaning;
4. Authors of books — well-known people with their own audiences. Some women imitate them, some like and some don't, but most importantly they are not indifferent.

Both celebrities mentioned above don't use other sources of advertising than their Instagram pages, such as audio, video, banners, etc. This is probably a factor that demonstrates the marketing potential of the social media.

And now let's ask why women use Instagram. “The overwhelming majority of Kazakhstani users use the Internet for their leisure time. Communication with friends via social networks, skype and e-mail, music, culinary recipes, e-shopping, humor and games — this is what attracts the Internet for most of Kazakhstanis”, concludes domestic researchers [8]. Respondents to our survey gave one or more reasons. The most common answers are:

1. To monitor the lives of relatives, friends and acquaintances;
2. To keep abreast of news in the lives of celebrities;
3. To keep abreast of world news;
4. To participate in various competitions and win something;
5. To purchase goods, products;
6. To learn recipes, beauty secrets, various life hacks related to the household;
7. To see changes and innovations in the world of fashion;
8. To participate in online marathons (weight loss, learning language) and seminars (happy family, child rearing, psychology of spouses, etc.);
9. To entertain themselves by watching funny videos;
10. To advertise and promote business or earn extra income;
11. To take a picture of beautiful places or new things and upload them in Instagram and brag about that.
12. I use it in my free time.

As we have seen from these answers, women consider Instagram to be a source of news, a form of education, an encyclopedic collection, a catalog of goods and services, a source of income, a hobby, a way of self-presentation.

The last question of great interest to us was “How does Instagram affect you?” The analysis of the questionnaires showed that the majority of respondents (81 %) visit the social network several times a day. In general, 55 % of participants said that Instagram was useful (finding acquaintances, building relationships, developing business, finding the right things quickly, acquiring new knowledge and skills, self-development, striving to dress well and be slim), 25.5 % said that Instagram did not affect them, and 19.5 % of women have a lot of negative effects (spending time inefficiently, addictive, being dissatisfied with their own life and appearance, buying something they don't need or that does not fit, becoming jealous, getting negative emotions etc.).

### *Conclusion*

While many movie and pop stars see Instagram as a hobby, an advertising space, and a source of extra income, for ordinary women their accounts serve as a role model. Trendsetters' actions, speech, demeanor, dress code are an example for others and even the salons, cafes, and shops they visit will not be left without attention. So, today there is every reason to say that Instagram is a socio-cultural phenomenon that has a profound effect on women's lifestyles, clothing, travel, food and sports, that is, their lives as a whole. Social media are gradually replacing verbal communication and becoming both a hobby and a means of

communication. Undoubtedly, Instagram has its advantages, such as saving time, access to audio and video, quick finding and sharing of information. However, it should be noted that it encourages women to over-consume goods and services, causes the emergence of flaw complexes, lookism and body centrism. In other words, social networks, including Instagram, are distorting the value system, making consumption the main value and making a significant contribution to changing the image of modern women.

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## Инстаграм желісі және заманауи әйел образы: ықпалы мен қарым-қатынасы

Бүгінгі таңда әйел затының қоғамдағы саяси-әлеуметтік және экономикалық белсенділігі артты, батыстың (АҚШ және Еуропа) және шығыстың (Араб елдерінің) ықпалы әйел адамның бойында бірқатар мәдени өзгерістер мен жаңғырулар туындатты, сәйкесінше оның құндылықтар жүйесі, психологиясы, өзін-өзі ұстауы, мәртебесі өзгерді. Қазақ халқының дәстүрлі құндылықтарын жаңа қоғамдық қатынастар талабына бейімдеу, оны қоғам өмірінің рухани өзегіне айналдыру тек мәдени-философиялық, дүниетанымдық мәселе ғана емес, сонымен бірге оның саяси маңызы да зор. Ал оны жүзеге асырып, өміршендігін арттыратын — әйел, ана, әже. Әйел адам қаншалықты өзгерді, оның бүгінгі келбеті қандай, өмірде нені қалайды, өзін қалай ұстайды, көзқарасы қандай деген сауалдарға жауап беру үшін оның әлеуметтік желідегі парақшасын қарауымызға болады. Жақында енген кибертехнология біздің өміріміздің ажырамас бөлшегіне айналды, ал әлеуметтік желілер ауызша қарым-қатынасты қалыптастырды. Мақалада Инстаграм әлеуметтік желісіне әйел затының қызығушылығының себептері мен салдарын анықтауға талпыныс жасалған, әлеуметтік желілердің заманауи әйел бейнесі мен жаңа құндылықтар жүйесін қалыптастыруға әсері, ықпалы деген мәселелер қарастырылған.

*Кілт сөздер:* әлеуметтік желі, Инстаграм, Интернет, әйел, әйел образы, коммуникация, пост, сторис.

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## Инстаграм и образ современной женщины: влияние и взаимосвязь

Сегодня женщины стали более активными в социальной, политической и экономической сферах. В результате воздействия Запада (США и Европа) и Востока (арабские страны) женщины испытали разнообразные культурные преобразования и обновления. Соответственно, изменились ее система ценностей, психология, поведение и статус. Адаптировать традиционные казахские ценности к новым общественным отношениям, поставить их в духовный центр общественной жизни — вопрос не только культурный, философский или мировоззренческий, но и политический. И тот, кто может это осознать и сделать жизнеспособным, — это женщина, мать и бабушка. Чтобы ответить на вопросы, как женщина изменилась, как она выглядит сегодня, чего хочет от жизни, как себя позиционирует, мы можем посмотреть ее социальные сети. Не так давно кибертехнологии вошли в нашу жизнь, но уже успели стать неотъемлемой ее частью, а социальные сети заменили вербальную коммуникацию. В

рамках статьи предприняты попытки определения причин и последствий высокого интереса со стороны женского пола на социальную сеть Инстаграм, рассмотрены вопросы влияния социальных сетей на формирование образа современной женщины и новой системы ценностей.

*Ключевые слова:* социальная сеть, Инстаграм, Интернет, женщина, образ женщины, коммуникация, пост, сторис.

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