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LEGAL ASPECTS OF COUNTERING INFORMATION MANIPULATION
IN THE DIGITAL MEDIA SPACE

Abstract

This article examines the specifics of the information dissemination process in Annotation. The article discusses the features of the process of information dissemination in the digital media space, the impact of information manipulation on public consciousness, information security and public relations. The rapid development of social networks and internet platforms not only increases the speed of information dissemination, but also creates conditions for the widespread spread of misinformation, disinformation and manipulative content. In this regard, the issues of ensuring information security and protecting the information rights of citizens are becoming particularly relevant.

In the course of the study, the main types of information manipulations and their impact on the formation of public opinion were analyzed, and the mechanisms of legal regulation in the field of information security in the Republic of Kazakhstan were considered. In particular, the analysis of certain provisions of the laws «on Informatization», «on mass media», «on access to information» was carried out. Foreign legal experience was also studied, including the features of the European Union Digital Services Act and the German NetzDG legislation.

As a result of the study, the need to clarify the responsibility of digital platforms, improve mechanisms for detecting false information, develop media literacy and legal culture, as well as strengthen interaction between the state and digital platforms was substantiated.

Key words: information security, digital media space, Legal Regulation, disinformation, misinformation, internet platforms, digital Law, Information Rights.

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САНДЫҚ МЕДИА КЕҢІСТІГІНДЕ АҚПАРАТТЫҚ МАНИПУЛЯЦИЯҒА ҚАРСЫ
ТҰРУДЫҢ ҚҰҚЫҚТЫҚ АСПЕКТІЛЕРІ

Аңдатпа

Мақалада цифрлық медиа кеңістіктегі ақпарат тарату үдерісінің ерекшеліктері, ақпараттық манипуляциялардың қоғамдық санаға, ақпараттық қауіпсіздікке және қоғамдық қатынастарға әсері қарастырылады. Әлеуметтік желілер мен интернет-платформалардың қарқынды дамуы ақпараттың таралу жылдамдығын арттырып қана қоймай, жалған ақпараттың, дезинформацияның және манипуляциялық контенттің кең таралуына жағдай жасауда. Осыған байланысты

ақпараттық қауіпсіздікті қамтамасыз ету және азаматтардың ақпараттық құқықтарын қорғау мәселелері ерекше өзектілікке ие болып отыр.

Зерттеу барысында ақпараттық манипуляциялардың негізгі түрлері мен олардың қоғамдық пікірді қалыптастыруға ықпалы талданып, Қазақстан Республикасындағы ақпараттық қауіпсіздік саласындағы құқықтық реттеу тетіктері қарастырылды. Атап айтқанда, «Ақпараттандыру туралы», «Бұқаралық ақпарат құралдары туралы», «Ақпаратқа қол жеткізу туралы» заңдардың жекелеген ережелеріне талдау жасалды. Сонымен қатар шетелдік құқықтық тәжірибе, оның ішінде Еуропалық Одақтың Digital Services Act актісі мен Германияның NetzDG заңнамасының ерекшеліктері зерттелді.

Зерттеу нәтижесінде цифрлық платформалардың жауапкершілігін нақтылау, жалған ақпаратты анықтау тетіктерін жетілдіру, медиасауаттылық пен құқықтық мәдениетті дамыту, сондай-ақ мемлекет пен цифрлық платформалар арасындағы өзара іс-қимылды күшейту қажеттілігі негізделді.

Түйін сөздер: ақпараттық қауіпсіздік, цифрлық медиа кеңістік, құқықтық реттеу, дезинформация, жалған ақпарат, интернет-платформалар, цифрлық құқық, ақпараттық құқықтар.

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ПРАВОВЫЕ АСПЕКТЫ ПРОТИВОДЕЙСТВИЯ ИНФОРМАЦИОННЫМ МАНИПУЛЯЦИЯМ В ЦИФРОВОМ МЕДИАПРОСТРАНСТВЕ

Аннотация

В статье рассматриваются особенности процесса распространения информации в цифровом медиа пространстве, влияние информационных манипуляций на общественное сознание, информационную безопасность и общественные отношения. Стремительное развитие социальных сетей и интернет-платформ не только увеличивает скорость распространения информации, но и создает условия для широкого распространения дезинформации, дезинформации и манипулятивного контента. В этой связи особую актуальность приобретают вопросы обеспечения информационной безопасности и защиты информационных прав граждан.

В ходе исследования были проанализированы основные виды информационных манипуляций и их влияние на формирование общественного мнения, рассмотрены механизмы правового регулирования в сфере информационной безопасности в Республике Казахстан. В частности, проведен анализ отдельных положений законов «Об информатизации», «о средствах массовой информации», «о доступе к информации». Также были изучены зарубежные правовые практики, в том числе особенности закона Европейского Союза Digital Services Act и немецкого законодательства NetzDG.

В результате исследования обоснована необходимость уточнения ответственности цифровых платформ, совершенствования механизмов выявления дезинформации, развития медиаграмотности и правовой культуры, а также усиления взаимодействия между государством и цифровыми платформами.

Ключевые слова: информационная безопасность, цифровое медиа пространство, правовое регулирование, дезинформация, дезинформация, интернет-платформы, цифровое право, информационные права.

Introduction

At the present stage, information has become an integral part of social life. The rapid development of information technologies and the widespread expansion of the Internet have fundamentally changed the ways people obtain, process, and disseminate information. In particular,

the emergence of social networks has strengthened the influence of the media space and accelerated the process of information exchange more than ever before. Platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, Facebook, and YouTube have become not only means of communication, but also important informational environments shaping public opinion.

One of the main features of the media space is the ability to disseminate information to a large audience within a very short period of time. Although this creates numerous convenient opportunities for society, it has also led to the emergence of several complex issues. Among them are informational manipulation, the spread of false information, and psychological influence on audience consciousness. In some cases, even when information is accurate, the manner of its presentation may be designed to influence people's emotions and shape a particular opinion. Informational manipulation has become one of the most pressing issues in modern society. In particular, the rapid spread of unverified information on social networks contributes to public anxiety, distrust, and the formation of distorted perceptions. Such phenomena directly affect the worldview of young people, public consciousness, and individuals' decision-making processes. Therefore, the study of information dissemination mechanisms and manipulation techniques in the media space is of particular importance today.

The relevance of the research topic is directly related to issues of information security in the digital society. The excessive increase in the flow of information may lead people to accept any data without critical analysis. In this regard, the development of media literacy, verification of information authenticity, and resistance to false information have become one of the key directions.

The issue of information manipulation is currently being widely studied in legal science. Foreign and domestic legal scholars analyze the impact of disinformation on information security, citizens' right to access information, and social stability. However, the development of digital platforms has complicated methods of spreading false information and has raised new questions regarding the effectiveness of existing legal regulatory mechanisms.

In this regard, the main scientific problem of the study is to assess the effectiveness of legal mechanisms for countering information manipulation in the digital media space and to identify ways to improve them.

The aim of the study is to identify the legal risks of information manipulation, analyze the current legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, and develop proposals for improving legal regulation in the field of information security.

Materials and Methods

The study is based on the analysis of scientific articles, regulatory legal acts, media materials, and internet resources dedicated to issues of information influence and media communication. Methods of publication analysis in the media space, comparative research, generalization, and content analysis were applied. In addition, cases of the spread of false information and manipulative technologies in social networks and digital media were examined.

The normative legal framework of the study consists of the Constitution of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Laws of the Republic of Kazakhstan «On Informatization», «On Mass Media», and «On Access to Information», as well as state programs and strategic documents in the field of information security.

The research employed formal-legal, comparative-legal, systemic-structural, and legal modeling methods. The formal-legal method made it possible to analyze the norms of national legislation, while the comparative-legal method was used to study the legal experience of the European Union, Germany, and other countries in the field of information security. In addition, an analysis was conducted of the legal regulation of internet platform activities.

Results and discussions

In the modern digital society, the media space has become the primary environment where information is produced, disseminated, and consumed. It includes not only traditional mass media but also internet platforms and social networks. The development of internet technologies has

fundamentally transformed the system of information distribution. Today, people most often receive news and information about social events through platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, Telegram, YouTube, and Facebook.

One of the main characteristics of the media space is the extremely high speed of information dissemination. Any material published on the Internet can reach millions of people within minutes. In particular, on social networks, information spreads rapidly through users' sharing activities. In such conditions, the authenticity of information is not always verified. As a result, unverified or distorted information can also reach a wide audience.

Another important characteristic of the digital environment is that any individual can become a source of information dissemination. In the past, information passed through editorial filtering, whereas today, publishing content on social networks does not require special professional training or oversight. Although this has facilitated the exchange of information, it has also created conditions for the spread of false information. In particular, short and emotionally charged content tends to spread rapidly among audiences.

In the modern media space, bloggers, online pages, and Telegram channels have a significant influence on the formation of public opinion. In some cases, audiences tend to receive information from only one source and ignore alternative viewpoints. This may lead to a weakening of critical thinking skills in society. Furthermore, the growing amount of short-form videos and visual content has strengthened the tendency to consume information quickly rather than analyze it in depth.

At the same time, the media space also has a positive impact on society. The accessibility of information enables people to gain knowledge, stay informed about important news, and raise social issues. Through social networks, citizens can freely express their opinions and organize public initiatives. Therefore, the role of the media space in society is complex and multifaceted.

Informational manipulation is the process of deliberately altering and presenting information in a certain way in order to influence people's consciousness, opinions, or behavior. This phenomenon is widespread in the modern media space. In particular, algorithms in social networks contribute to the rapid dissemination of emotionally charged content.

At the present time, people consume information very quickly. Most individuals tend to pay more attention to short videos or visual materials rather than long texts. Such a situation has led to an increase in content that influences emotional reactions rather than deep thinking. In particular, materials that evoke feelings of fear, anger, or surprise spread rapidly among audiences.

Informational manipulation has a direct impact on the formation of public opinion. When a particular topic is frequently discussed on social networks, people tend to perceive it as an important issue. In some cases, emotionally charged content has a stronger influence on society than factual data. As a result, false perceptions or unfounded fears may emerge [1].

Such situations became especially evident during the pandemic period. The spread of unverified medical advice and false information on social networks caused panic among people. This demonstrated that informational manipulation can have a tangible impact on society.

Young people are considered one of the groups that are particularly vulnerable to informational manipulation. This is because most of them spend a significant amount of time in the online space and primarily consume information through social networks. In some cases, bloggers and popular online pages appear more authoritative to young audiences than official sources of information. This creates a new form of informational dependency.

Some bloggers exaggerate or present information in a sensational manner in order to attract audience attention. Emotion-driven videos and controversial opinions often increase view counts. However, not all such content is necessarily useful or truthful.

Another dangerous aspect of informational manipulation is the weakening of critical thinking skills among individuals. When people continuously accept information in a ready-made form, they tend to pay less attention to comparing and analyzing data. This may lead to increased opinion polarization in society and a rise in misunderstandings.

In the modern information society, media literacy has become one of the key competencies. Media literacy is a set of skills that enables individuals to find, analyze, compare, and evaluate information. This concept is not only a technical skill but is also closely connected to cognitive and analytical thinking systems. One of the leading Finnish scholars in the field of media literacy is Dr. Sirpa Purtilo-Nieminen from the University of Lapland. She has conducted significant research on media literacy in the context of lifelong learning, particularly focusing on educating adults and elderly people [1]. Media literacy is not merely a technical ability but an important competence based on critical thinking and analytical perception.

In Finland, media literacy has been introduced into the school curriculum from an early age and is supported by a comprehensive state policy. This country is considered one of the most resilient European states against false information [2].

The Canadian scholar Marshall McLuhan, through his concept «the medium is the message,» emphasized that not only the content of information but also the form in which it is delivered is important [3]. In the era of modern social networks, this idea has become particularly relevant. Information is now most often distributed in short, visual, and emotionally driven formats.

The American researcher Noam Chomsky, while studying the role of mass media in shaping public opinion, emphasized that information filtering mechanisms influence public consciousness [4]. According to him, the media can become a tool for forming a certain ideology.

One of the main objectives of media literacy is to verify the authenticity of information. In the current digital environment, deepfake technologies, as well as texts and video materials generated by artificial intelligence, are creating new forms of false information. Therefore, it is essential to compare multiple sources and identify the origin of information.

According to the principle of «falsifiability» proposed by the British philosopher Karl Popper, any information should be open to doubt [5]. This principle is considered one of the important methods for evaluating information in the modern media space.

UNESCO considers media literacy as one of the essential skills of the 21st century and emphasizes the importance of integrating it into the education system [6]. This is because individuals who are able to critically evaluate information are less susceptible to manipulative influence.

Informational manipulation is closely related to human psychological characteristics. In cognitive psychology, human thinking is explained through two systems: the first is fast and emotion-based perception, while the second is slow and relies on logical analysis. In most cases, people tend to rely more on the first system because it requires less time and effort.

The human psyche tends to pay special attention to threats or negative information. This evolutionary characteristic contributes to the rapid spread of false information in the modern digital environment, as emotional and negative content attracts more audience attention.

Likes, comments, and view counts on social networks influence individuals' emotional reactions. Such mechanisms can increase dependence on social media and encourage superficial consumption of information.

In the modern information environment, individuals deal with a large volume of data. Therefore, the human brain tends to prioritize information that is quick and easy to process. As a result, some materials are only perceived at the headline level without being analyzed in depth.

All of these factors increase the effectiveness of informational manipulation, as it is often directed not at a person's logical reasoning but at their emotional responses.

One of the key characteristics of the modern media environment is the widespread use of algorithms that automatically regulate information flows. Social media platforms and search engines analyze users' interests and behavioral patterns to provide content tailored to their preferences. Although such systems facilitate access to information, they also create certain risks.

American legal scholar and researcher Eli Pariser introduced the concept of the «filter bubble,» arguing that algorithms can limit individuals to information that aligns primarily with their existing beliefs and viewpoints [7]. In such circumstances, users are less likely to encounter alternative perspectives and may lose the ability to evaluate their own positions objectively. According to Pariser,

personalized information systems on the Internet gradually narrow an individual's information environment, confining them within a specific range of views and ideas. As a result, people are exposed not to the full spectrum of available information, but only to the portion selected and prioritized by algorithms.

Filter bubbles also contribute to increasing social polarization. Rather than seeking to understand opposing viewpoints, individuals often focus on reinforcing their existing beliefs. As a result, reaching consensus on social and political issues becomes increasingly difficult. Scholars refer to this phenomenon as an «echo chamber.» Within such environments, individuals are repeatedly exposed to opinions similar to their own and gradually begin to perceive them as absolute truths [8]. Although filter bubbles and echo chambers are closely related concepts, they are not identical. A filter bubble emerges primarily as a result of algorithmic personalization, whereas an echo chamber develops when individuals interact predominantly within communities that share similar views and perspectives.

Algorithms used by social media platforms are primarily designed to maximize user engagement and retain users' attention for extended periods. Consequently, they tend to promote content that elicits strong emotional responses. Research indicates that content provoking emotions such as anger, fear, or surprise receives significantly more views and shares than neutral information [9]. This environment creates favorable conditions for the rapid dissemination of false, misleading, or distorted information.

The commercial nature of information platforms also plays a significant role in this process. Since the revenue of many social media platforms depends on user engagement, algorithms are designed to keep users' attention for as long as possible. As a result, controversial, sensational, or emotionally charged content is often prioritized because it is more likely to attract audience interest. Such content is frequently valued not for its informational significance, but for its ability to generate reactions and engagement. Consequently, within the information environment, short and emotionally driven posts tend to spread more widely than high-quality analytical materials.

According to researchers, algorithmic systems also exploit certain cognitive characteristics of human behavior. Individuals tend to place greater trust in information that confirms their pre-existing beliefs and opinions. In psychology, this phenomenon is known as confirmation bias. Under such circumstances, users are more likely to ignore or question information that contradicts their views. Algorithms detect these behavioral patterns and subsequently recommend similar content more frequently. As a result, the user's information environment becomes increasingly narrow, reducing exposure to alternative perspectives. Another consequence of algorithmic selection is the transformation of the public agenda. In the past, information priorities were largely determined by professional journalists and editorial teams. Today, however, part of this responsibility has shifted to automated systems. On social media platforms, the popularity of a topic often depends on algorithmic decisions. This may lead to situations in which issues of significant public importance receive limited attention, while emotionally engaging or entertainment-oriented content gains greater visibility and prominence.

The growing popularity of short-form video platforms such as TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts has also influenced the ways in which information is perceived and processed. Although short videos are highly effective at capturing users' attention, they do not always provide sufficient space for a comprehensive explanation of complex issues. As a result, audiences often receive only fragmented pieces of information rather than the full context of an event or topic. This may contribute to a superficial understanding of information and lead individuals to draw oversimplified conclusions.

The formation of filter bubbles is also particularly evident in the field of political communication. During election campaigns, citizens are more likely to encounter information that aligns with their own political preferences. As a result, society becomes divided into different informational camps, and the quality of political debate declines. Some studies suggest that such conditions may contribute to a weakening of trust in democratic institutions. This occurs because individuals become less

capable of understanding the arguments of those with opposing views and may fail to perceive ideological diversity as a normal and necessary aspect of society.

Filter bubbles are particularly evident among young people. The younger generation obtains most of its information from social media and rarely uses traditional mass media sources. Consequently, their informational agenda is largely shaped by algorithms. When a user shows interest in a specific topic, the platform continuously recommends similar content related to that subject. Over time, this may influence an individual's worldview, values, and social attitudes.

In recent years, the rapid development of artificial intelligence technologies has further strengthened the influence of algorithms. Modern systems are capable of analyzing not only what content a user views, but also how long it is viewed, what emotional reactions it triggers, and which types of content the user interacts with most frequently. Based on this data, a detailed digital profile of the individual is formed, enabling the system to recommend information that is most likely to be of interest to them. Although this approach increases the efficiency of information services, it also raises new concerns regarding individuals' informational autonomy and critical thinking abilities.

Therefore, understanding the influence of algorithms in the contemporary media environment has become an essential component of media literacy. Users need to recognize that the information presented on social media platforms and search engines is not neutral and is filtered through specific algorithmic mechanisms. To reduce the effects of filter bubbles, it is important to use diverse sources of information, engage with alternative viewpoints, and critically evaluate content. This enhances citizens' ability to resist informational manipulation and contributes to the development of a more conscious and informed information culture within society.

In recent years, the rapid development of artificial intelligence technologies has led to the emergence of new forms of information manipulation. Generative artificial intelligence enables the automatic creation of text, images, audio, and video materials. Although these technologies have produced positive outcomes in fields such as education, science, and creativity, the risk of their misuse for malicious purposes is also increasing.

Deepfake technologies require particular attention. Deepfake refers to a technology that uses artificial intelligence to realistically alter a person's appearance or voice. Such materials can make it appear as though an individual has said words they never actually said or performed actions they never carried out. According to Westerlund, deepfake technologies pose a serious threat to public trust and contribute to the emergence of a new generation of misinformation [10].

Text automatically generated through artificial intelligence can also become a tool of information manipulation. Bots and automated accounts are capable of massively disseminating specific information, creating a false impression of its popularity within society. This phenomenon is known as «astroturfing.» In other words, a particular idea or viewpoint may appear to have broad public support, while in reality it is being promoted by artificially organized networks [11].

In addition, artificial intelligence has increased the capacity for targeted informational influence by analyzing individual users' behavior. Microtargeting technologies enable the delivery of personalized content based on a person's interests, age, occupation, or social characteristics. Although these technologies are highly effective in marketing, they may pose a significant risk to society if used for political or ideological manipulation.

Information manipulation affects not only individuals but also the overall security of society. The widespread dissemination of false information can lead to a decline in public trust in state institutions. If citizens lose confidence in official sources of information, social stability and cohesion may be significantly weakened. At the present stage, information security is regarded as an essential component of national security. A number of states have adopted special strategies to combat misinformation and are implementing media literacy programs. In the European Union's digital policy documents, disinformation is recognized as a factor that poses a threat to the stability of democratic institutions [12].

Information manipulation becomes particularly evident during periods of crisis. Natural disasters, epidemics, or social tensions can trigger widespread panic among the population when false

information spreads. In such situations, the prompt and transparent dissemination of information by official authorities plays a crucial role. According to researchers, when an information vacuum emerges, it is often filled by rumors and unverified data [13].

In the context of Kazakhstan, the development of media literacy and the strengthening of information security remain highly relevant issues. Although the widespread use of the Internet and social media has increased citizens' access to information, it has also intensified the spread of misinformation and manipulative influence. Therefore, the integration of media literacy components into the education system, the formation of fact-checking culture, and the development of critical thinking are considered essential tasks of contemporary society.

Legal Regulation of Information Security in the Republic of Kazakhstan

Issues of ensuring information security in the Republic of Kazakhstan are regulated by several normative legal acts. The Law «On Informatization» provides for the regulation of ensuring the security of information systems, the protection of information infrastructure, and legal relations in the digital space. This law is one of the key legal instruments aimed at ensuring the stable functioning of information resources.

The Law «On Mass Media» establishes rights and obligations in the field of information dissemination and enshrines the principle of responsibility for the accuracy of information. In addition, the Law «On Access to Information» is aimed at ensuring citizens' right to access information, as well as increasing the transparency of public authorities.

Information security, as a component of national security, is also reflected in state strategic documents. These documents define tasks aimed at countering disinformation, strengthening cybersecurity, and improving citizens' information culture.

However, the cross-border nature of digital platforms and the development of artificial intelligence technologies highlight the need to improve existing legal regulatory mechanisms.

Legal Liability for the Dissemination of False Information. The spread of false information in the digital environment may harm public order and the rights and legitimate interests of citizens. In this regard, the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan provides for legal liability for the dissemination of knowingly false information.

In addition, in law enforcement practice, proving the fact of dissemination of false information presents certain difficulties. Anonymous accounts on the Internet, the use of foreign platforms, and the rapid spread of information complicate the work of law enforcement agencies.

In this regard, it is relevant to improve procedures for collecting and securing evidence, develop cooperation mechanisms with digital platforms, and clarify the legal status of digital evidence.

Foreign Legal Practice. In recent years, many states have taken a number of measures to improve legal mechanisms for combating disinformation.

The European Union's Digital Services Act (DSA) imposes additional obligations on large digital platforms to assess and mitigate the risks of the dissemination of illegal and harmful content. The Act is aimed at increasing platform transparency and protecting users' rights.

Germany's Network Enforcement Act (NetzDG) imposes an obligation on social networks to remove illegal content within a short period of time. This law is considered one of the first examples of strengthening the responsibility of digital platforms.

The practices of France and Singapore are also aimed at strengthening legal measures against the spread of false information. In these countries, cooperation between public authorities and internet platforms plays an important role.

The analysis of foreign experience may be useful for clarifying the responsibility of digital platforms and improving information security mechanisms in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Conclusion

In the modern digital society, the media space has become an important tool for shaping public opinion. Although the rapid spread of information has provided people with new opportunities, it has also created conditions for the growth of false information and manipulative influence. In particular,

the widespread use of social networks has complicated the issue of evaluating the authenticity of information.

Informational manipulation is carried out through emotional influence, biased presentation of information, and the dissemination of sensational content. Such phenomena have a direct impact on public consciousness, human psychology, and the worldview of young people.

In the context of Kazakhstan as well, the role of digital platforms is increasing. Telegram channels, bloggers, and short-form content have become important elements in shaping public opinion. In this situation, the development of media literacy and the critical evaluation of information are of particular importance.

Although it is impossible to completely eliminate informational manipulation, an effective way to reduce its impact is the development of an information culture within society. Only a society that is capable not only of receiving information but also of analyzing it can withstand the challenges of the digital era.

Based on the results of the study, the following recommendations are formulated:

1. Clarify the legal liability of digital platforms for the dissemination of false and manipulative content;
2. Provide legal and organizational support for fact-checking and information verification institutions;
3. Improve legal mechanisms for identifying and proving cases of knowingly false information dissemination in the digital environment;
4. Expand the teaching of media literacy and the fundamentals of information law within the education system;
5. Strengthen cooperation among public authorities, the academic community, and digital platforms on information security issues.

The implementation of these measures will help reduce the negative impact of information manipulation, protect citizens' information rights, and strengthen information security in the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Authors' Contributions

Alain A.B. conducted research on the theoretical and legal aspects of countering information manipulation in the digital media space, including the analysis of information security issues, media literacy, algorithmic influence, and international approaches to combating disinformation.

Bizhanova A.R. developed the concept and structure of the study, formulated the conclusions and recommendations, and carried out the scientific editing of the article.

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