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THE ROLE OF INFORMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS IN CRISIS AND COMMUNICATION RESPONSE

The purpose of the study is to reveal the role of information and psychological operations in crisis and communication response.

Research methodology. To achieve the goal of the research, general scientific methods of cognition and methods of system analysis, dialectical consideration of phenomena, events and processes, analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction were used.

Results. Academic approaches to the definition of the «information and psychological operation» concept are analyzed, the main stages of its planning, organization, and implementation are characterized.

The author's interpretation of the «information and psychological operation» concept is presented, which is a holistic system of pre-planned, coordinated and interconnected actions, manipulations based on the use of reliable or false information, as well as methods and forms of psychological influence by competent specialists of the adversary country, used to fully control individual and mass consciousness, transform their moods, feelings, and will in the desired direction, and disorientation, as well as for their disorientation.

It was found that to organize an information and psychological operation, methods of influencing the target audience with the help of the mass media, of the printed materials, radio, and video are used, as well as through communication to influence their attitudes or behavior model in order to achieve political and military objectives.

The main countermeasures against information and psychological operations and methods of offensive and defensive counterpropaganda are characterized.

Novelty. The understanding of the information and psychological operations role in crisis and communication response is generalized.

The practical significance of the obtained results is determined by the fact that the role of informational and psychological operations in crisis and communication response is identified. They can be used in developing an effective system of counteracting information and psychological operations in order to protect citizens from destructive information influences, which can be implemented within the strategic communications.

Key words: information war, information and psychological operation, propaganda, destabilization, manipulation, crisis and communication response.

I. Introduction

Today, information technology is developing rapidly, which has contributed to optimizing the effectiveness of communications and information dissemination. Accordingly, the information warfare phenomenon concept has been adopted and put into wide circulation using various means, methods and influence techniques. It is customary to distinguish between information and psychological, and technical operations, so on this basis, objects of influence in the information aggression process are classified.

As it is known, the object of information and psychological influences is the consciousness of the individual, and in this regard, such means of influence are used, based on knowledge of psychology and social engineering, which is enhanced by the use of information technologies in the field of crisis and communication response, which include a significant number of target audiences [9; 11].

Today, the priority interests of any state are information independence and security. The dynamic development of innovative technologies in the crisis communications field and the rapid emergence of an information-based society focus on the study of the main aspects of influence on the consciousness of individuals and the masses. A separate study is needed to ensure effective information security based on the implementation of information and psychological operations during crisis and communication response.

The main aspects of Ukraine's information security, threats to information security in our country and in the world, various tools and means of manipulation, methods of protection against negative influences on individual and mass consciousness have been studied by such scholars as: Yu. Babenko, V. Husarov, N. Zrazhevskaya, V. Petryk, B. Potiatynyk, A. Tsuladze, and others.

Many international and Ukrainian authors in their studies have paid attention to the theoretical and technical aspects of information and psychological operations, namely V. Bohysh, V. Hydym, V. Knysh, C. Komov, A. Manoilo, R. Mapytian, V. Maxnin, A. Petpenko, V. Petpyk, D. Ppyciashniuk, O. Pomanchyk, A. Ros, V. Smolianiuk, A. Taras, O. Feklistov, V. Fomin, D. Frolov, P. Chernyk, A. Cherniak, and others.

The relevance and insufficient study of the role of information and psychological operations during crisis and communication response led to the choice of the topic of our study.

II. Research objective and methods

The objective of the study is to reveal the role of information and psychological operations in crisis and communication response.

To achieve the research objective, general scientific methods of cognition and methods of system analysis, dialectical consideration of phenomena, events and processes, analysis, synthesis, induction, deduction were used.

III. Results

Today, the mechanisms for protecting the consciousness of individuals and citizens are functioning at an insufficient level, and public authorities, which should control and use all possible resources for a potential influence, cannot counteract threats due to the lack both of coordination of actions and of a single governing body; in addition, the current legislative framework of Ukraine has many shortcomings that need to be corrected and is not aimed at the rapid and continuous activity of governing bodies. Accordingly, due to the lack of important and valuable own information resources, there are manipulative influences on the consciousness of citizens, which is a danger during crisis and communication response.

Any country using only military and technical means, methods and techniques cannot fully protect itself and its population. Therefore, the priority task is to ensure national security and strategic communications during a crisis; to solve it, first of all, it is necessary to use all forms of warfare, especially information and psychological ones. The information component is carried out through such a phenomenon as psychological operations.

Having analyzed academic sources on this issue, we found that among a significant number of scholars who have worked in the field of psychological operations, there is no clearly structured approach to the basic definitions of the relevant terminology [3; 4; 10].

Until 2010, international scholars called actions aimed at changing the consciousness of individuals or the masses «psychological operations»; nowadays, they are called «military information support operations.» In particular, Ukrainian scholars most often use the «special information operations» concept. Other researchers and the military sphere representatives prefer the «information and psychological operations» term. Based on this, it should be noted that all this, to a certain extent, complicates mutual understanding between specialists in different fields. In this regard, we consider it necessary to analyze academic approaches to the «information and psychological operations» definition.

Analysis of V. Baranov's academic work shows that he understands an information and psychological operation as a certain process of pre-organized use of techniques, methods and means of disseminating important information to influence the public consciousness. In this case, the most commonly used are fake publications with hidden information, as well as relevant information and political actions involving authoritative political figures or former employees of special services [1, p. 62].

Other scholars, namely V. Veprintsev, A. Manoilo, A. Petrenko and D. Frolov, describe the information and psychological operation as an integral system of coordinated and interdependent measures for manipulating relevant data and information, implemented on the basis of a clearly defined plan of action to achieve and maintain superiority by influencing information processes in the enemy's system [5, p. 73].

The opposite definition of this phenomenon was offered by V. Krysko, who characterized the information and psychological operation as a professionally organized impact on the consciousness, emotional state, needs and desires of the enemy in order to achieve previously defined goals [2, p. 59].

At the same time, I. Panarin in his academic research interpreted the «information and psychological operation» phenomenon in a broad and narrow sense. In the broad sense, «information and psychological operation» is a clearly targeted use of propaganda messages and other methods of psychological influence on the views, attitudes, feelings and, in general, on the behavioral pattern of the audience by political opponents in order to make people take the desired actions in the directions clearly outlined by the politicians. Accordingly, in a narrow sense, it is a system of propaganda and military measures, as well as a set of psychological methods of influence in order to ensure proper support for

the warfighting of own troops and to conduct psychological pressure on the enemy's military personnel and its people [5, p. 75].

We are interested in the research views of V. Petryk, who in his work characterized such categories as an action of information influence (dissemination of partial, false, biased, untrue information, which is provided once and in a short time) and a special information operation (includes such features as: a well thought-out plan, focus on the target audience, a much longer timeframe, as well as a gradual increase in information messages on the relevant topic; avalanche-like growth of messages on a particular topic; giving great publicity and discussion based on the emotional component) [6, p. 75].

Therefore, based on the analysis of academic approaches to the «information and psychological operation» definition, we consider it necessary to form our understanding of this phenomenon, which is an integral system of pre-planned, coordinated and interconnected actions, manipulations based on the use of reliable or false information, as well as methods and forms of psychological influence by competent specialists of the adversary country, used to fully control individual and mass consciousness, transform people's moods, feelings and will in the desired direction, as well as their disorientation.

The main task of an information and psychological operation is to manipulate the consciousness of citizens, to make them feel anxious and fearful, to disorient them and to reduce their trust in public authorities.

It is known that it is very difficult to counter an effectively implemented information and psychological operation, because it is almost impossible to track the stage of planning and well-organized preparation, while when the active phase begins, the state spends a lot of time studying the situation and searching for the main ways to solve it and apply countermeasures.

An information and psychological operation involves several stages [6, p. 74]:

1. Planning of actions, i.e. determining the need for a relevant operation, formulating the goal and objectives, defining the target audience, selecting psychological methods of influence on the system of socio-political communication, etc.

2. Creation of a negative event that can be used as a ground for the implementation of propaganda.

3. Promotion of the information occasion used to achieve the goal and objectives of the operation, first of all, the destruction of the relevant structures of socio-political communication.

4. Consolidation, i.e., the phased completion of a psychological operation or propaganda activity after achieving the previously set objectives.

To organize an information and psychological operation, methods of influencing the target audience with the help of the mass media, of the printed materials, radio, and video are used, as well as through communication to influence their attitudes or behavior model in order to achieve political and military objectives.

Based on the analysis of scientific sources, the main components of information and psychological operations were identified: information and propaganda activities, which involve the use of mass communication tools, as well as direct contacts with different audiences through the use of psychological methods of influence on people's psyche; demonstration measures (actions aimed at applying psychological influence on the target audience); organizational and practical activities that take place in the form of actions and measures aimed at implementing psychological influence on the relevant group of people [2, p. 57].

In particular, O. Boiko, L. Kompantse, V. Ostroukhov, V. Petryk, M. Prysiashniuk in their research identified the following main means of applying information and psychological operations: disinformation; lobbying; manipulation; propaganda; crisis management; and blackmail [7, p. 13].

In the context of the large-scale armed aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which, in addition to military actions, uses comprehensive propaganda campaigns aimed at both Ukrainians and the international community, there is a need to organize effective counterpropaganda for crisis and communication response.

That is why it is better to develop a process of crisis communication in social media before the crisis begins, so it is possible to respond quickly.

According to specialists' academic research, counterpropaganda is usually classified into offensive and defensive. In particular, A. Barovska considers offensive counterpropaganda as striking the aggressor on its own territory, i.e., the counteroffensive is used as a strategy of information and psychological warfare in a crisis and may include irrational measures [1, p. 60].

At the same time, M. Dushkina in her works identified and characterized the main methods of offensive counterpropaganda, namely [8]: transmission of negativity, which involves the formation of a negative attitude towards a specific object through the media coverage of political leaders who are associated with them but cause a feeling of disgust and indignation; reflection of a negative image, which consists in transferring the negative features of individuals, social groups and organizations active in the field of politics and government to the event. It should be noted that this method is more effective in times of war, as it allows transferring negative nature from any object to another; negative

interpretation based on the inclusion of changes in the information messages of the aggressor's propaganda activities to reduce their credibility.

Moreover, the scholar described defensive counterpropaganda and noted that the main task is to counteract the aggressor's propaganda activities [8, p. 17]. The researcher also identified the following methods of its implementation: denial of the stereotype, which is used to completely overcome any propaganda activities of the aggressor; the method of ignoring is based on the fact that the aggressor's negative information messages cause less damage if they are in the information space for a short time. But it should be noted that this technique is not always effective. The next method is distraction. According to M. Dushkina, it is more effective because it helps to overcome the negative influence and neutralize the effect of the enemy's propaganda. With the constant use of this method, the aggressor has the opportunity to create new information attacks in the form of messages, for example, «the authorities do not cover important issues and hide them», «citizens are not informed about real losses on the battlefield.» An important role is also assigned to the immunization method, which raises a specific topic that can be implemented by the aggressor, so based on this, it undergoes certain changes, sharp corners are reduced, which contributes to a decrease in confidence in the topic, and the level of critical understanding of negative information messages increases. One of the most primitive methods of defensive counterpropaganda is to spread completely appropriate counter rumors.

The use of softening or masking words and phrases (euphemisms) is mainly aimed at preventing possible information attacks by the aggressor, concealing important problems that need to be urgently addressed. All this is done by giving the opposite meaning to the relevant event through renaming.

Thus, having characterized the main methods of offensive and defensive counterpropaganda, we can state that they are more general and widely used in counterpropaganda activities.

In our opinion, the point of V. Panchenko is reasonable, who in his works considered the main measures to counteract information and psychological operations that can be used in campaigns to implement communication strategies to ensure the security of Ukraine, namely: informational and explanatory activities with citizens living in the occupied territories; formation of national and patriotic consciousness, as well as moral and psychological stability of Ukrainian citizens; elimination of hostile media channels that disseminate false information about events in Ukraine; increasing attention to the legitimacy of the actions of the Ukrainian government; objective large-scale informing the world community about events taking place in Ukraine [5, p. 79].

Moreover, it is important to note that in today's conditions, the main function of public relations is to inform the public with factual, truthful information, while information and psychological operations search for the main methods of influencing the target audience to change its intentions, moods and behavioral patterns. Public relations speaks on behalf of the command and is its voice, and ensures communication between the command and society. They do not function to create news or influence the formation of public opinion, but to provide information on the basis of which people can form their own points of view. To our minds, the information used to conduct information and psychological operations must be truthful, but also manipulative to achieve the desired result.

IV. Conclusions

To summarize, an information and psychological operation is a powerful tool for achieving political goals through the planned use of means, forms and methods of disseminating information to influence human consciousness and behavior. In this context, the development of an effective system of countering information and psychological operations to protect citizens from destructive information influences is a key task that can only be realized systematically within the system of strategic communications. Thus, Ukraine should apply appropriate technical, organizational and legal measures and actions of public diplomacy to ensure proper protection of information sources from distortion by interested groups or states.

Information and psychological operations can have a negative impact on decision-makers and destabilize the socio-political and economic situation in the country, threatening the national security of Ukraine. Therefore, in order to avoid adverse impact on all spheres of the country, especially on citizens, it is necessary to detect the fact of the beginning of an information and psychological operation as soon as possible in order to prepare national information resources.

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Киричок А. П. Роль інформаційно-психологічних операцій у кризово-комунікаційному реагуванні

Мета дослідження – розкрити роль інформаційно-психологічних операцій у кризово-комунікаційному реагуванні.

Методологія дослідження. Для досягнення мети дослідження використано загальнонаукові методи пізнання та методи системного аналізу, діалектичного розгляду явищ, подій і процесів, аналізу, синтезу, індукції, дедуції.

Результати. Проаналізовано наукові підходи до визначення поняття «інформаційно-психологічна операція», охарактеризовано основні етапи її планування, організації та реалізації.

Подано авторське розуміння поняття «інформаційно-психологічна операція», що являє собою цілісну систему попередньо спланованих, скоординованих і взаємопов'язаних дій, маніпуляцій на основі застосування достовірної чи неправдивої інформації, а також методів і форм психологічного впливу компетентними фахівцями країни-супротивника, що використовують з метою повного контролю над індивідуальною та масовою свідомістю, трансформації в потрібному напрямі їх настроїв, почуттів, волі, а також їх дезорієнтації.

З'ясовано, що для організації інформаційно-психологічної операції використовують заходи впливу на цільову аудиторію за допомогою засобів масової інформації, друкованої, аудіо-, відеопродукції, а також через комунікацію, щоб вплинути на їх настрої чи модель поведінки з метою досягнення політичних та воєнних цілей.

Охарактеризовано основні заходи протидії інформаційно-психологічним операціям та прийоми наступальної та оборонної контрпропаганди.

Новизна. Узагальнено розуміння ролі інформаційно-психологічних операцій у кризово-комунікаційному реагуванні.

Практичне значення одержаних результатів визначається тим, що виявлено роль інформаційно-психологічних операцій у кризово-комунікаційному реагуванні. Результати дослідження можуть бути використані під час побудови результативної системи протидії інформаційно-психологічним операціям з метою захисту громадян від руйнівних інформаційних впливів, що можливо реалізувати в межах стратегічних комунікацій.

Ключові слова: інформаційна війна, інформаційно-психологічна операція, пропаганда, дестабілізація, маніпуляція, кризово-комунікаційне реагування.

Kurczok A. Rola operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych w kryzysowo-komunikacyjnym reagowaniu

Cel badania – ujawnić rolę operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych w kryzysowo-komunikacyjnym reagowaniu.

Metodologia badania. Dla osiągnięcia celu badania wykorzystano ogólnonaukowe metody poznania oraz metody analizy systemowej, dialektycznego rozpatrzenia zjawisk, zdarzeń i procesów, analizy, syntezy, indukcji oraz dedukcji.

Wyniki. Przeanalizowano naukowe podejścia do definicji «operacja informacyjno-psychologiczna», scharakteryzowano główne etapy jej planowania, organizacji oraz realizacji.

Przedstawiono autorskie rozumienie pojęcia «operacja informacyjno-psychologiczna», która jest kompletnym systemem zaplanowanych, skoordynowanych i wzajemnie powiązanych działań, manipulacji opartych na wykorzystaniu wiarygodnych lub fałszywych informacji, a także metod i form psychologicznego wpływu przez kompetentnych specjalistów kraju przeciwnika, wykorzystujących w celu całkowitej kontroli nad świadomością indywidualną i masową, transformacje w pożądanym kierunku ich nastrojów, uczuć, woli, a także ich дезorientacji.

Wyjaśniono, że dla organizacji operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych są wykorzystywane metody wpływu na grupę docelową za pomocą środków masowego przekazu, materiałów drukowanych, audio lub wideo, a także poprzez komunikację, w celu wywierania wpływu na jej nastrój lub model zachowania dla osiągnięcia celów politycznych i wojskowych.

Scharakteryzowano główne środki przeciwdziałania operacjom informacyjno-psychologicznym oraz techniki kontrpropagandy ofensywnej i defensywnej.

Nowość. Uogólniono rozumienie roli operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych w kryzysowo-komunikacyjnym reagowaniu.

O **praktycznym znaczeniu** uzyskanych wyników decyduje ujawnienie roli operacji informacyjno-psychologicznych w kryzysowo-komunikacyjnym reagowaniu. Mogą one być wykorzystane podczas budowy skutecznego systemu przeciwdziałania operacjom informacyjno-psychologicznym mającym na celu ochronę obywateli przed destrukcyjnymi wpływami informacyjnymi, które mogą być realizowane w ramach komunikacji strategicznej.

Słowa kluczowe: wojna informacyjna, operacja informacyjno-psychologiczna, пропаганда, dестабілізація, маніпуляція, кризово-комунікаційне реагування.