

Social Influence for Security

Florin Iftode¹, Cristian - Sorin Prună²

Abstract: The main aim of this work marks the revealing of scientific premises intended to structure the issue of social influence for security. The approach has as aim the identification of those elements that define and characterize the social influence in order to manage conflict, from the perspective of public communication. The proposed approach establishes some synthetic, clear boundaries through the method of research and analysis of the concept of security, social influence, revealing the specifics of public communication in conflict management.

Keywords: security; conflict; social influence; communication.

1. Security. Conceptual Delimitations

Security is a defining feature of human society (state) in which there are fulfilled the conditions of existence and development of nations (purpose) – by the establishment of peace in complex situations and preserve it (objectives), expression of materializing the national values and interests – through integrated approach (in a state entity) and by layering (at international level), based on reducing the imbalance nation-state (process). **The applicability domain:** social organization (production, management and integrative) built by nations and their assemblies - state entities and regional complexes of security (Miller, 2010, p. 43);

The reference domain: the values and interests of nations - conducive to the rule of law (the normal functioning of social organizations - maintaining public peace, assuring the citizens' safety, respecting and protecting their rights), defense (preservation of national sovereignty, independence and unity of States, territorial integrity and constitutional democracy) and national security (guarantees achieving the rule of law and defense);

Actants: Security vectors - organizational structures entrusted to affirm, protect, promote and achieve the values and interests of nations: institutions with

¹ Associate Professor, PhD, Faculty of Communication and International Relations, Danubius University of Galati, Romania. Address: 3 Galati Blvd, Galati 800654, Romania, Tel.: +40372 361 102, Fax: +40372 361 290. Corresponding author: floriniftode@univ-danubius.ro.

² National Intelligence Academy "Mihai Viteazul", Romania. Address: 14 Libertatii Blvd., 5th District, Bucharest, Romania. E-mail: prunacristian@yahoo.com.

legislative, executive and judicial feature; public or private organizations with explicit functions - economic, political, military (armed forces - the army, the intelligence services and structures to ensure public order), cultural or other nature;

The whole security vectors form a (community) security system which can be integrated (belonging to a state entity) or layered (characterizing regional security complexes); vectors of insecurity - subjects or organizations of any kind whose actions (generated by the imbalance nation-state components: internal/external incongruity and inefficient/violent governance) can damage or affect the performance of social organizations (resource generating, management and integration);

Activities of the actants:

• **the security vectors**

- knowledge of threats, risks and vulnerabilities with potential for damaging security;
- prevention activities affecting safety, countering or eliminating the effects of actions already produced or are in various stages of deployment;
- the protection, promotion and defense of the values and interests of the nations;

• **vectors of insecurity**

- disruption of functioning the social organizations for the realization of illegitimate interests (due to the imbalance nation-state) by reducing production capabilities and use of resources (productive function), disruption of relationships between organizations and between people and organizations (management function) and distortion of community spirit (integrative function).

A feature for the conflict evolution (starting from the state of peace) is the dispute (divergence) that can occur between states, organizations, or between states and organizations (under the form of latent tensions, expressing the potentiality of conflict), the lack of resolution facilitates the occurrence of crises, which by its subsequent increase is likely to turn into war.

Factors favoring conflicts are:

- imbalances in development (poor allocation of resources);
- low income (in terms of increasing competition for resources);
- structural, economic and social re-dimensioning.

The causes of conflict are directly related to:

- access to and exploitation of resources (economic competition);
- providing institutional control (political fight).

- affirmation of ideological supremacy (ideological confrontation);
- affirming the identity primacy (competition between ethnic / religious / community groups for economic, political power and social justice).

In conflict situations it can be noticed the interference of the classical types of aggression with the economic, cultural, psychological, symbolic and media ones. Therefore it becomes very important the achievement of the fabrication of the real information to opponents, in order to mitigate and annihilate their possibilities to defend, react, and also in order to create pseudo-legitimacy in relation to the public opinion (influencing its communication through the mass-media).

There are situations in established democracies where through persuading the population's attitude is changed, usually opposing to radical, violent solutions. The result depends on the realization that power option represents, in relation to non-response, not only a practical solution with low risk consequences, but it is also a morally imperative for saving and protecting the lives and the human rights.

2. The Concept of Social Influence

The social influence is the action of a social entity, without resorting to compulsion, by the change of the behavior of the other. The typology of social influence reveals the: normalization, conformity, complacency in the face of others' claims, obedience, contagion and leadership or mass communication.

The specialized literature highlights different approaches in investigating the social influence and its features, such as:

- minority influence (changing attitudes, opinions and behaviors of the majority's behavior by the minority);
- social impact (all changes made at the individual level - by the presence or actions of other people);
- structural approach (emphasizing influences intra-group);
- the perspective of the waiting states (the influence of intra-group interactions by the expectations of members towards the others).

By influence the information is transmitted to the target (social group) with the purpose of changing perceptions, attitudes or behaviors. The sequence of actions is identified as fragmentary (exposure - attention / understanding / acceptance / retention - action). There are highlighted three fundamental types of achieving social influence: obedience (towards individuals with higher social status or lawful authority), compliance (with the typology - normative and informational social influence, by which it is defined what fair or right) and conversion (restructuring beliefs, attitudes and opinions of the target).

The acceptance of the term requires its identification with the manipulation of the cognitive elements that characterize a fact in the sense of generating other cognitive elements substitute for catalyzing the sense of future actions.

Subsumed to the domination forms in modern society (characterized, in general, by the lack of constraint) the achievement of public communication for influence involves overcoming the passive limit, of accepting the views and the behavior induction.

Exercising the influence of the communicating person is achieved through five power elements: rewarding (reward), coercive (punishment), referential (sense of identity), legitimate and for expertise with various functions: the creation of group norms, socialization of the individual, social and innovative integrity. There are important in the communication those that seek conviction and determination of the behaviors belonging to the communication source: charisma, credibility, the intent of information volume, arguments and involvement of the target group.

Public communication designed to manage the conflict situations regards primarily the informational social influence through non-coercive communication, according to a sequenced algorithm, correlated to the phases of conflict. Communication must manage the lack of information, biased speculation and implausibility.

A good communicational strategy could foster the context and the relations meant to influence the achievement of the political, military or economic objectives, so it could be used as mobilizing the public support in major political initiatives, or to support some objectives in conjunction with phasing the state of conflict. Regarding the management of public communication, it should be taken into account that it requires analytical methods of perceptions and of influence of networks, identification and prioritization of objectives, creating messages and the effective use of channels, of building and stimulating innovative, dynamic strategies and tactics and finally, to assess the effects / results.

3. Social Influencing for Security

The public need for information increases as the security is threatened, which facilitates the involvement of the media as a vector of social influence, which most often enjoys the presumption of objectivity from the public. This can vitiate the strategic decision, and the assessment of the force and sustainability of the national security system independent of the using means and the information dissemination represent an important risk, as it can promote the conditions of a media aggression.

The emphasis is on the protection of national interests in terms of information size. Thus the use of technology and information becomes a lever to achieve this goal, which requires the adoption of decisions in terms of information confrontation: information modeling and management of information flow including the media, in

the public area. We are referring to a public communication that constitutes indirectly a resource of national security.

Managing this process of communication regards the optimal solutions to minimize uncertainty and confusion, to eliminate the risk of an informational nature that it lays within the media in the structural transformation of the public sphere. The Online environment can increase uncertainty and confusion, disinformation through the minimum control over the informational communication. Yet such communication networks can offer the possibility of securing public informational flow of mass-media by extending the range of media in real time. Therefore it increases objectivity, limiting subjective communication by official sources.

The prevention and resolution of crises reside in prompt and appropriate response to the national security system consisting of a set of political-diplomatic, economic, informational, military measures, applied individually or combined, in order to eliminate the causes, to diminish and maintain under control the negative effects. In this process, by individualized and structured methodologies in peacetime (legislative provisions, checking competent institutions in matters of regulating crisis) the strategic management achieves systematically activities intended to constitute competent executive structures - national command authorities, departments, cells crisis.

Under these circumstances, the mass-media becomes a factor in the dynamics of crisis, and the actions of the national security system will cover the management of public communication, related to the concept of approaching the crisis:

- prevention - diplomatic, economic and military information;
- active - generating information flows likely to solve the potential crisis before it degenerates into violent confrontation and before it expands;
- reactive - modeling informational flow for the purposes of disclosure and assessment of the situation created as a result of the crisis manifestation, defining the response options.

Public communication will aim at reducing tensions, dragging them into explicit conflict situations and preventing the escalation of the existing conflicts.

This, for example, is a factor in the dynamics of redefining and materializing the interests of the European countries upon the Danube, when there is a security risk premises on the Rhine-Main-Danube corridor such as: unexplored opportunities due to perpetuation / promotion of unfavorable-uncertain prospects, the potential of amplifying the revenge national sentiments and hence the emergence of interethnic clashes, maintaining/enhancing vulnerabilities of strategic objectives that can be targeted by terrorist actions, carrying out illegal trafficking operations (drugs, weapons, explosive materials), illegal immigration etc.

The following are specific for the differences between the Danubian countries:

- Hungary and Slovakia: disagreement on the hydropower from Gabčíkovo (if initially it was set to be constructed, Budapest stopped the construction - following a request of the environmentalists, while Bratislava has completed its part of the deal - the construction of a hydro entity at the Gabčíkovo; Hague International Court recommended that both parties waive all claims, for the Hungary not to build any dam or hydro plant on the Danube and for Slovakia to stay with what he has achieved so far).
- Romania and Bulgaria: there is a series of misunderstandings, following the approach of the Bulgarian side to build a nuclear landfill near Kozloduy (proposed to be located within four kilometers from Danube) and failure to provide minimum depth of 2,5 m of the navigable sailing line on Danube (the parameters necessary for conducting navigation in economic efficiency parameters throughout the year on the common sector of the Danube).
- Romania and Ukraine; the dispute is generated by setting the Channel Bâstroe (approved by the Government of Ukraine, motivated by the economic advantage which it would be obtained from removing the monopoly of Romania on the transport of heavy load on the arms of Danube and at the exist to the Black Sea).

The views of the involved parties are diametrically opposed, meaning that Romania considers that the arrangement will significantly affect the ecological balance of the “Danube Delta” Biosphere Reserve and Ukraine considers that environmental effects will be felt only in the vicinity of the built area, and moreover the project consist of the renewal of the waterway which has functioned in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta to the north of Chilia arm in the early 1990s. This is under the conditions of the Ramsar-Iran international convention (1971) where it states that the arm Bâstroe benefits from an integral protective regime in which hydraulic works cannot be achieved, in these places being forbidden even the public access. Danube is essential for Europe (Maftai, 2012) in its efforts to define, in the context of globalization, the geopolitical and geo-economic role. The River is currently rediscovering itself as an economic axis of European integration and, in the context of globalization, it can support an axis of Eurasian integration. Public communication in all riparian countries should support the macro-regional cooperation based on respect for diversity, civism and multiculturalism, as the Danube is not just a transport axis, but also an element of connection, which structures the area. However, under the conditions of enhancing conflict, the public communication purpose is that of clotting, at national level, the efforts to achieve and maintain public support for situations that require decisions to defend the national interests. The national security system will use mass-media in public communication for transmitting information about the conflict. In this context it reveals the mass-media cooperation with authorities as a compromise, given that the criteria for assessing mass-media depend mainly on the ability to disseminate swiftly checked information. Strategic structures constantly evaluate how their

work will be reflected in the mass-media (which interprets and presents the conflict management), aiming at avoiding situations that could result in reducing public support. Conflict resolution depends to a large extent on misleading the enemy, strategy, tactics, equipment and size of forces, but also how the dispute is perceived at national and international level.

In the information confrontation, the communication by the own public in order to obtain its support may use a number of methods so as to increase the positive aspects and minimize the negative ones:

- media overload (excess of information);
- ideological appeals (patriotism, defense of national interest);
- data selection (censorship);
- providing incomplete aspects.

In public communication during military conflicts it is necessary for the actions covered by the mass-media not to be distorted due to lack of information, the mass-media revealing as decisive factor in achieving and maintaining the public support.

Conflicts tend to mobilize security measures, conditions under which the classical strategy may include invoking a state of crisis in which the mass-media has a relative freedom. If in times of normality, the mass-media activity is exercised without restraint, in times of crisis, it is subject to multiple pressures. When there is a direct involvement of the national security system, the mass-media are not just observers in the process of conflict management, but also its actants.

4. References

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