DANGEROUS THREATS IN THE INFORMATION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SPHERE OF UKRAINE'S HUMANITARIAN SECURITY UNDER WAR CONDITIONS

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Summary

The purpose of the article is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of hazardous threats in the information and psychological domain of Ukraine's humanitarian security under conditions of war. The study examines the nature of information and psychological influences as an integral component of hybrid aggression and identifies their destructive impact on the humanitarian sphere, in particular on education, culture, social relations, and the mental health of the population. It is scientifically substantiated that disinformation, manipulation of mass consciousness, and psychological pressure constitute systemic threats aimed at undermining social resilience and national identity. Special attention is paid to the role of the state and civil society in shaping effective mechanisms for countering information and psychological threats. It is also demonstrated that the effective provision of humanitarian security is possible only through comprehensive interaction between state institutions and civil initiatives, the development of strategic communications, and the enhancement of the population's information culture. A priority and urgent task is to identify prospects for further scientific research in the field of developing information and psychological resilience of society under martial law and during Ukraine's post-war transformation. The development of resilience—the ability of individuals, communities, systems, and the state to withstand stress, crises, and shocks, to adapt to them, and to recover – will make it possible to preserve core functions and ensure the sustainable development of the country.

Key words: information warfare; disinformation; stress resistance; psychological resilience; resilience; civil society; martial law.

1. Introduction

The situation of a full-scale war against Ukraine has transformed the information and psychological space into one of the key theaters of hostilities. Alongside military means, instruments of information influence, disinformation, propaganda, and psychological pressure are being actively employed. Such threats directly affect the humanitarian security of the state, as they are aimed at destabilizing public consciousness, destroying national identity, significantly undermining trust in state institutions, demoralizing the population, and fostering feelings of fear and hopelessness.

Information and psychological threats in wartime have a systemic nature and encompass various spheres of humanitarian security, including education, culture, science, social policy, the information environment, and the mental health of the population – particularly internally displaced persons (IDPs) and military personnel. The adversary employs fake messages, manipulative narratives, information sabotage, and psychological operations (PSYOPS) designed to divide society and weaken the internal resilience of the state.

In this context, the need for a scientific understanding of the mechanisms through which information and psychological threats affect Ukraine's humanitarian security becomes particularly urgent. This includes identifying their typology and scale, as well as developing effective countermeasures under conditions of martial law. This necessity determines the relevance of a comprehensive interdisciplinary analysis of the problem, taking into account contemporary challenges of hybrid warfare and international experience in information security.

Purpose of the Study. The purpose of this study is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of dangerous threats in the information and psychological sphere of Ukraine's humanitarian security in the context of war and to identify the main directions for their neutralization.

2. The main areas of research into Information and Psychological Threats

The object of this study is Ukraine's humanitarian security under wartime conditions, while the subject of the study comprises dangerous threats in the information and psychological sphere of humanitarian security.

The scientific novelty of this research lies in the systematization of information and psychological threats to Ukraine's humanitarian security in wartime and in substantiating comprehensive approaches to strengthening societal resilience against destructive information influences *(Lipkan, 2016; Pocheptsov, 2019)*.

To identify and develop countermeasures in the information domain, the following research objectives were formulated:

− to analyze the essence of humanitarian security under martial law;

− to define the content and specificity of information and psychological threats in modern hybrid warfare;

− to characterize the main forms of information and psychological influence on society;

− to examine the impact of information and psychological threats on Ukraine's humanitarian security;

− to identify population groups most vulnerable to information and psychological influence;

− to determine the role of state and civil society institutions in countering such threats;

− to substantiate directions for strengthening the information and psychological resilience of Ukrainian society, including the development of resilience *(Sosnin, 2018; Horbulin, 2017)*.

Humanitarian security is a complex interdisciplinary category that encompasses the protection of human rights and freedoms, the preservation of social stability, national identity, and spiritual values, as well as the functioning of education, science, and culture systems. In contemporary scholarly research, humanitarian security is regarded as an essential component of national security, closely linked to social and information security *(Kovalenko, 2010, pp. 45-47)*.

Humanitarian security undergoes critical transformations under conditions of martial law, as war affects not only the material resources of the state but also worldview orientations, value systems, and the psychological state of the population. Researchers emphasize that modern armed conflicts are complex in nature and involve active influence on public consciousness, which significantly increases the importance of the humanitarian dimension of security *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 112-114)*.

Thus, humanitarian security in wartime should be understood not only as the protection of an individual's physical existence, but also as the обеспечение of information and psychological resilience and the preservation of national identity. The information and psychological component of humanitarian security is associated with protecting individual and collective

consciousness from destructive information influences carried out through mass media, social networks, and special information operations. Contemporary scholars emphasize that information and psychological influence constitutes one of the key instruments of hybrid warfare aimed at undermining social unity and demoralizing the population *(Pocheptsov, 2019, pp. 63-65).*

In wartime conditions, information and psychological threats acquire a systemic character and are directed at generating fear, panic, distrust toward state institutions, and the devaluation of national values. Such influences pose a direct threat to humanitarian security, as they undermine social cohesion and reduce the level of psychological resilience of society *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 94-96).*

Therefore, information and psychological security serves as a necessary condition for preserving the humanitarian stability of the state under conditions of armed confrontation. A comprehensive contemporary study of dangerous threats in the information and psychological sphere of Ukraine's humanitarian security requires the application of an interdisciplinary approach that integrates the methodological foundations of political science, sociology, psychology, and security studies. The systemic approach makes it possible to consider humanitarian security as a holistic phenomenon in which information and psychological threats function as one of its key structural elements *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 102-104; Kovalenko, 2010).*

The structural-functional approach enables a comprehensive analysis of the mechanisms through which information and psychological threats affect various spheres of humanitarian security, including education, culture, and the social sphere. The axiological approach, in turn, allows for assessing the impact of such threats on the system of social values, national identity, and the worldview orientations of society.

The methodological basis of the research also includes general scientific methods of analysis and synthesis, comparison and generalization, as well as the analysis of regulatory and legal acts in the field of ensuring Ukraine's national security. This makes it possible to comprehensively assess institutional mechanisms for counteracting information and psychological threats *(Kovalenko, 2010, p. 52).*

In contemporary security studies, the concept of information and psychological threats is defined as a set of deliberate actions and influences aimed at changing consciousness, behavioral attitudes, and value orientations of individuals and society through the use of information as a tool of influence. Such threats are intended to destabilize social processes, demoralize the population, undermine trust in state institutions, and weaken social cohesion.

Modern scholars emphasize that information and psychological threats differ fundamentally from traditional forms of information hazards in that their influence is covert, long-term, and oriented toward deep psychological mechanisms of reality perception . In this context, information is transformed into a means of psychological pressure capable of generating fear, confusion, apathy, or aggressive reactions.

Under wartime conditions, these threats become particularly dangerous, as they are directed not only against individuals but also against the humanitarian security of the state as a whole-its cultural, moral, and value foundations *(Horbulin, 2017, p. 109).*

Information and Psychological Threats as Instruments of Hybrid Warfare. The contemporary war against Ukraine has a hybrid nature, combining military, political, economic, and information and psychological means of influence. Researchers emphasize that information and psychological operations (PSYOPS) constitute one of the key instruments of hybrid warfare, as they enable the achievement of strategic objectives without the direct use of armed force *(Gerasimov, 2013, pp. 7-9).*

Within such operations, disinformation is actively employed, including fake news, manipulative narratives, distortion of historical facts, information provocations, and the dissemination of panic. The purpose of these actions is to construct an alternative reality that undermines national identity and reduces the level of trust in the state and social institutions. Thus, information and psychological threats emerge as one of the most dangerous factors affecting humanitarian security, as they operate indirectly-through the transformation of citizens' thinking, emotional states, and behavioral patterns *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 121-123)*.

Main Mechanisms of Information and Psychological Influence. The main mechanisms of information and psychological influence include information manipulation, emotional contagion, the construction of an enemy image, the imposition of fear, and the creation of a sense of hopelessness. These mechanisms are actively implemented through social networks, messengers, and digital media, which significantly accelerates the spread of destructive information content *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 57-59)*.

Researchers also pay particular attention to the phenomenon of information fatigue, whereby an excessive volume of negative information leads to psychological exhaustion and a decline in the ability for critical thinking and adequate evaluation of incoming messages. Under such conditions, the population becomes more vulnerable to manipulative influences, which poses a direct threat to the state's humanitarian security.

Thus, in wartime, information and psychological threats operate in a complex manner, combining cognitive, emotional, and behavioral mechanisms of influence on society. This determines the necessity of applying systemic and interdisciplinary approaches to their timely identification and neutralization *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 115-117)*.

Disinformation Threats and Fake Narratives. One of the most widespread and, at the same time, dangerous types of information and psychological threats is disinformation, which involves the deliberate dissemination of false or intentionally distorted messages with the aim of misleading a mass audience. Contemporary scholarly research considers disinformation campaigns to be an effective tool of psychological influence designed to undermine trust in official sources of information and to construct alternative narratives that are beneficial to the aggressor. Disinformation is actively used in the war against Ukraine to discredit state authorities, the Armed Forces of Ukraine, and international support, as well as to create a sense of hopelessness, chaos, and social disorientation. Fake messages that appeal to strong emotions-such as fear, anger, and fatigue – pose a particular danger, as they spread rapidly through social networks and messengers and generate significant public resonance *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 112-114)*.

Thus, disinformation threats directly affect the state's humanitarian security, as they disrupt information balance within society, reduce the level of critical thinking among the population, and create favorable conditions for manipulative influence.

Psychological Pressure, Intimidation, and Panic Messaging. Another significant type of information and psychological threats is psychological pressure, which is implemented through the dissemination of panic-inducing messages, intimidation, threats, as well as exaggerated or distorted news about dangers, losses, and crisis situations. Such influences are aimed at forming a persistent sense of threat, anxiety, and emotional instability among the population *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 120-122)*. Scholars note that systematic psychological pressure leads to a decrease in individuals' adaptive capacities, an increase in chronic stress levels, and the intensification of social tension. In wartime conditions, this is particularly dangerous, as it negatively affects the mental health of the population and weakens the humanitarian resilience of the state *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 134-136)*.

Thus, psychological intimidation acts as one of the key mechanisms of information and psychological warfare, aimed at demoralizing society, destabilizing social processes, and undermining internal cohesion.

Manipulative Technologies and the Distortion of Public Consciousness. Manipulation of public consciousness is a complex and multidimensional form of information and psychological influence that involves the covert imposition of specific evaluations, viewpoints, and behavioral models. Manipulative technologies are often disguised as analytical materials, «expert» opinions, or pseudo-journalistic investigations, which significantly complicates their identification by a broad audience *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 86-88)*.

In the context of war, such manipulations are actively employed to undermine faith in victory, devalue national symbols, distort historical memory, and construct a distorted perception of reality. These actions have a long-term cumulative effect and pose a serious threat to Ukraine's humanitarian security *(Horbulin, 2017, p. 125)*. Accordingly, manipulative threats are aimed at profound transformations of public consciousness, which significantly complicates the processes of their detection, counteraction, and neutralization.

Undermining National Identity and Value Orientations. A particularly significant vector of information and psychological threats consists of actions aimed at undermining national identity, cultural values, and the historical memory of the Ukrainian people. These threats are implemented through denying Ukraine's right to statehood and discrediting national culture, language, traditions, and symbols *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 142-144)*.

Researchers emphasize that the devaluation of national identity is one of the strategic objectives of information warfare, as it weakens internal social cohesion and creates preconditions for social fragmentation and destabilization.

In this context, the protection of national identity is regarded as one of the key directions for ensuring Ukraine's humanitarian security under wartime conditions *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 128-129)*.

The Impact of Information and Psychological Threats on Education, Science, and Culture. Information and psychological threats in wartime conditions significantly affect the functioning of the education, science, and culture sectors, which constitute fundamental components of the state's humanitarian security. Through disinformation, manipulative narratives, and psychological pressure, attempts are made to distort historical memory, devalue national cultural heritage, and undermine trust in educational and scientific institutions *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 158-160)*.

Scholars emphasize that the dissemination of fake historical interpretations and pseudo-scientific claims in the media space poses a threat of forming a distorted worldview, particularly among young people, who are the most vulnerable to information influences. Under conditions of distance learning and the widespread use of digital platforms, the risk of information and psychological influence increases significantly.

The cultural sphere also experiences systematic information pressure through the discrediting of the Ukrainian language, traditions, and cultural heritage, which is aimed at weakening national identity and undermining the cultural distinctiveness of Ukrainian society.

The Social Sphere and Vulnerable Population Groups. Information and psychological threats are particularly acute in the social sphere, where they are directed at intensifying social tensions, fostering distrust among different population groups, and undermining social cohesion. During wartime, such influences acquire a systemic character and are capable of destabilizing social relations at both local and national levels.

Internally displaced persons (IDPs), older adults, youth, and families of military personnel are especially vulnerable to information and psychological influences, as they experience heightened emotional and social stress *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 134-136)*.

The dissemination of manipulative messages concerning social injustice, allegedly «unequal» access to social assistance or state support, is used as a tool to incite social dissatisfaction and antagonize different population groups. Such information influences directly threaten humanitarian security, as they contribute to social fragmentation and the weakening of social ties *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 121-123)*.

Researchers note that under wartime conditions, the psychological state of the population becomes particularly important, as prolonged information pressure may lead to emotional burnout, loss of trust in social institutions, and a decreased capacity for social adaptation.

The Impact of Information and Psychological Threats on Mental Health and Psychological Resilience of Society. One of the most dangerous consequences of information and psychological threats is their destructive impact on the mental health of the population. The constant flow of negative information, messages about danger, losses, and threats leads to increased levels of anxiety, fear, and psychological exhaustion, thereby undermining the psychological resilience of society *(Sosnin, 2018, pp. 131-133)*.

Scientific studies indicate that under wartime conditions prolonged information and psychological influence may lead to the formation of chronic stress, apathy, emotional numbness, and a sense of helplessness. This, in turn, reduces the level of societal resilience and complicates the process of restoring the humanitarian sphere after the cessation of hostilities. Thus, the protection of the population's mental health and the formation of information and psychological resilience of society emerge as one of the key objectives of ensuring Ukraine's humanitarian security under martial law.

State Policy in the Sphere of Information and Psychological Security. The conditions of a full-scale war compel the state to act as a key actor in ensuring the information and psychological component of humanitarian security. The formation of effective state policy in this sphere involves the implementation of a complex set of legal, institutional, and communication measures aimed at protecting the population from destructive information influences *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 142-144)*.

Among the main tasks of the state are the development of an effective regulatory and legal framework for countering information threats, the advancement of strategic communications systems, as well as the support and strengthening of the national information space. As noted by V. Lipkan, in the absence of proper coordination among public authorities, information security becomes fragmented, which significantly reduces the overall effectiveness of humanitarian policy *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 171-173)*.

An important area of state activity is also information support for the population, particularly ensuring access to reliable, timely, and comprehensible information, which contributes to reducing anxiety levels and increasing trust in state institutions.

The Potential of Civil Society in Strengthening Humanitarian Resilience.

Civil society plays an exceptionally important role in countering information and psychological threats, especially in wartime conditions, when official communication channels are not always able to respond promptly to all challenges. Volunteer organizations, civic initiatives, independent media, and expert communities form alternative sources of trust, solidarity, and support for the population *(Pocheptsov, 2019, pp. 158-160)*.

Scholars emphasize that civil society is particularly capable of effectively countering disinformation through the development of media literacy, critical thinking, and social interaction

at the community level. Such initiatives contribute to strengthening psychological resilience and preserving humanitarian security.

In addition, civil society organizations perform an important function of social support for vulnerable population groups, including internally displaced persons and war-affected individuals, thereby reducing the risk of their information and psychological marginalization *(Horbulin, 2017, pp. 147-148).*

Interaction between the State and Civil Society as a Condition for Effective Counteraction to Threats. Effective counteraction to information and psychological threats to Ukraine's humanitarian security is possible only under conditions of close and systematic interaction between state institutions and civil society. Such interaction presupposes partnership relations, information exchange, and the joint development and implementation of educational, awareness-raising, and communication programs *(Lipkan, 2016, pp. 176-178).*

H. Pocheptsov emphasizes that the synergy of state and civic efforts makes it possible to form a unified national information narrative based on truth, democratic values, and national interests, which is a determining factor in ensuring humanitarian security under wartime conditions.

Thus, partnership between the state and civil society serves as a strategic foundation for the formation of information and psychological resilience, social cohesion, and the preservation of Ukraine's humanitarian potential *(Kovalenko, 2010, pp. 137-139).*

3. Conclusions

The comprehensive study conducted allows us to conclude that Ukraine's humanitarian security under wartime conditions is affected by systemic, targeted, and multidimensional threats that have both short-term and long-term consequences for society and the state. Information and psychological influences act not merely as auxiliary tools but as integral components of hybrid aggression aimed at undermining social resilience, national identity, and the humanitarian potential of the country.

Accordingly, the key information and psychological threats include:
- disinformation and the dissemination of fake narratives;
- manipulation of mass consciousness;
- psychological pressure on the population;
- discrediting of cultural and educational values;
- the formation of narratives aimed at demoralizing society.

These threats are complex in nature and affect the educational, social, cultural, and psychological spheres, which confirms the interdisciplinary character of humanitarian security.

The study places particular emphasis on the impact of these threats on the mental health of the population. It has been demonstrated that prolonged information pressure leads to increased anxiety, emotional burnout, and a sense of social instability, which complicates society's adaptation to the conditions of martial law. In this context, the formation of psychological resilience among the population becomes a key task in ensuring humanitarian security.

Effective counteraction to information and psychological threats is possible only through systematic interaction between the state and civil society. State policy in the field of information security should therefore include legal regulation, the development of strategic communications, support for the national media space, and the enhancement of the population's information culture.

At the same time, the active participation of civil society, volunteer initiatives, educational, and awareness-raising programs strengthens humanitarian resilience, promotes social

cohesion, and contributes to the formation of information and psychological resilience.

Prospects for further scientific research are associated with:

− in-depth analysis of mechanisms for the formation of information and psychological resilience;

− the development of effective tools for countering disinformation at the community level;

− the study of the impact of digital technologies and artificial intelligence on the information security of the humanitarian sphere in the context of Ukraine's post-war recovery.

Thus, the results of the study confirm that information and psychological security is an integral component of Ukraine's humanitarian security and a key factor in preserving social resilience, national identity, and the sustainable development of the state under conditions of war and post-war transformation.

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