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MASS MEDIA AS A MODELLING FACTOR OF THE COUNTRY IMAGE

Within the last fifty years or so, the world has entered into an information revolution. The information revolution that began in the 20th century has been driven in most part by a geometric growth in the production of high-tech electronics, including computers and its components, video display and audio equipment [3, c. 13]. Particularly with the creation of the Internet in the last few decades, humanity has entered to the information stage of development, which has led to deep changes in society [4].

Today, information has great impact on different transformation processes. Information power and, above all, information power main tools – media – are an integral part of country image modeling and forming the political image of modern world leaders. By the way, the image of politics is a symbolic image formed in the minds of voters and emerges as a product of communication processes between the politician and his social groups, so as a result the contemporary concept of the image is multidisciplinary [1, c. 353]. It's important to be mentioned that the effectiveness of the mechanism of forming both country and leaders image depends on influence of the media as powerful institution, which can create and control public opinion. Nowadays the mass media is a powerful influence on psychological and social condition of the people. Abraham Mole, French psychologist, writes about media: “They actually control our entire culture passing it through their filters and separating certain elements from the total cultural phenomena mass giving this mass special value; they bring much value of one idea devaluing another polarizing the entire field of culture. As a result, in modern times, ideas, which have not got into mass communication channels, have almost no impact on the development of society”.

Due to the media, public opinion is formed, what is a state of mass consciousness with the hidden or apparent attitude of different social communities to the problems and events. In the age of information transparency, if the state doesn't ensure communication openness or doesn't prioritize respect for the fundamental rights and freedoms of the person and freedom of expression of the media, it is impossible to achieve a positive image of a democratic state in the international community [2, c.83]. In view of the above, the media and the image of the state are interconnected because freedom of the press is an important characteristic for the country in the international arena, and the media, in turn, is a significant tool for forming the acceptance of the state both in the internal and external levels. Positive perceptions of the state domestically and globally are keys to the success of global political, social and economic movements, which in essence are reforms. The dominant role is played not only by reforms in those fields but also by the way in which they are brought to public. Undoubtedly, impact of the media can be both positive and negative but, surely, they serve to transmit information.

The media reports in a newspaper, news or on the Internet can be accepted by the public, on the one hand, as facts about some events, on the other hand, news may form the basis for voters' political activity which can be added with their political preferences or with their subjective opinions. As a result, an effective combination of political advertising and free political information can ensure the formation of a positive image of the political party, association, government and state in general. It is quite natural for authority in a democratic society to seek to influence the media in order to use their capacity. The image exists in the heads/the mind of the audience, but it is based on the ability of individuals to decode messages and to interpret the behavior of political leaders, parties send while building their image [5, с. 601], which has the important position in the media. The state should be an important factor in a media regulation and freedom of expression. It is important to remember that the lack of clear boundaries can lead, on the one hand, to increase of the elements of totalitarianism, especially when control dominates, or, on the other hand, it leads to loss of constructivism and efficiency because of permissiveness and lack of control.

The forming of state power and image of a country is a process of political communication and as a result it is implementation of certain images into the mass consciousness using advertising, propaganda, PR and other tools of the mass media. Annually mass media get more and more modern technologies and opportunities to use these technologies to form authority and state image, which is a conglomerate of truth and untruth, real and desired. These things face and compete in the mind of personality but the outcome depends on the mass media that will introduce a certain image to the broad masses which will subsequently find a favorable ideological and political environment for justification.

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