



Image of the Armed Forces in the Context of Socio-Political Changes

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Abstract: The article examined the problems and issues of increasing and strengthening the image characteristics of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan in close connection with the socio-political changes taking place in the country in recent years. The initial thesis of this article is that a stable trend towards the establishment of the information community has now clearly emerged. Progressive and progressive development of the state and society without the development of the information sphere is impossible. The informational nature of management puts information as such and the possibilities of its use in a dominant position. This circumstance cannot but be taken into account when forming the country's military doctrine. The strength of the Armed Forces and their reputation in modern society is largely determined by the analytical and information activities of the army itself.

Keywords: armed forces, military-civil relations, communication problems, image of the army, monitoring, analytical support, information support

1. Introduction

In the modern world, a stable trend towards the establishment of the information community has clearly emerged. Obviously, without the development of the information sphere, further progress in all areas of life and activity of people, their associations and the state are impossible. The informational nature of management puts forward certain options for using information to important positions [1].

The power of the Armed Forces is also no exception and is largely determined by information and analytical capabilities [2,3,4,5]. At the same time, information methods and means of achieving goals turn out to be more preferable, since they are mobile in space and time and have an almost unlimited frequency of use.

Furthermore, the modern world showcases a discernible trajectory towards the formation of an information-driven society [6]. Undoubtedly, without advancements in the information sphere, the prospect of progress across various domains of human life, societal endeavors, and governmental functions remains unattainable. The ascendancy of information-centric governance underscores the imperative of leveraging data to pivotal positions. This paradigm extends to the realm of national defense, where the potency of the Armed Forces is profoundly influenced by their information and analytical capacities [7]. In this context, the utilization of information-based methodologies and tools emerges as increasingly preferable, owing to their inherent spatial and temporal mobility, coupled with an unparalleled frequency of application. This underscores the indispensable role of information superiority in contemporary strategic landscapes, where agility and adaptability reign supreme.

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Moreover, the public image of the Uzbekistani Armed Forces is intricately intertwined with their information capabilities [8]. As an essential component of national security strategy, the dissemination of accurate and timely information not only enhances transparency but also fosters trust and confidence among citizens [9,10,11,12,13]. The modern era necessitates a proactive approach to public relations, wherein the Armed Forces must effectively communicate their objectives, achievements, and contributions to societal well-being. Harnessing information technologies and media platforms, the Uzbekistani Armed Forces can cultivate a positive public perception, reinforcing their role as protectors of national sovereignty and guarantors of peace [14,15,16,17]. By prioritizing information dissemination and strategic communication, the Armed Forces can bridge the gap between military operations and civilian understanding, fostering a symbiotic relationship that strengthens national resilience and unity [18,19,20].

2. Method

Systematic analysis, comparative analysis and behavioral methods widely used in the field of political science were widely used in the article, and these methods served as the main factor in increasing the scientific level of the article.

3. Results and Discussion

In the conditions of the formation of the information society, information and communication problems of ensuring the harmonious development of military-civil relations in Uzbekistan are being updated, acquiring a different content and form in the new conditions. These circumstances determine the external context of the need to modernize military-civil relations in the interests of ensuring the country's national security. In the modern world, the nature of threats to the interests of the national security of the state is radically changing, and the tasks facing civil society and the army in their timely identification, prevention and neutralization are becoming more complicated. Without building effective communications, state defense policy can neither be developed nor effectively implemented. By constantly filling information communications with various socio-political institutions with positive and objective content, the military department seeks to ensure support for its actions in society.

The armed forces as an institution are part of society, accumulating the totality of social relations. At the same time, this institution has significant independence, autonomy in organizing internal life activities, and military service is a special type of public service, determined by laws, military regulations and other documents. The armed forces are a power institution, because they are created, maintained and used by the state consciously to solve a number of problems important for society and the state.

It is the state that has a monopoly on the creation of a military organization of society; it must set doctrinal, political and current tasks that must be carried out by the army. In this case, the army becomes a means and instrument of politics. In a democratic state governed by the rule of law, the activity of the state is based on the law, and therefore, in the "state-army" relationship, the law must also rule. The armed forces are one of the most important institutions of the political system of society, since it is designed to protect the existing social and political system, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the state. The army cannot be outside politics, but it must be outside the political struggle and support the policy of the state, act on its side.

Based on the specifics of the Armed Forces, the attitude of citizens towards military service and the Armed Forces becomes of fundamental importance in the context of military-civil relations. Since Uzbekistan positions itself as a democratic, secular, legal state, this can mean in practice only one thing: both society and the army must become more and more open.

The army as an institution and military service as a type of public service should become increasingly open and understandable both to society and to the state, which allocates considerable funds for the maintenance of its own Armed Forces. In Uzbek

society, a differentiated attitude towards the army still prevails. Despite the fact that in the last year there has been a slight decrease in the number of people who have a negative attitude towards the army, and some increase in those who have a positive attitude towards it.

At the same time, the image of the Armed Forces is formed by the subject on the basis of his ideas about them. There are three important components in the structure of these ideas:

- 1) official information about the army as a state institution;
- 2) generalized ideas about the army as a social organism;
- 3) everyday information about specific military groups and military personnel.

State structures can organize and control the first component, influence to one degree or another the second component, but practically cannot influence the third component. In turn, the media can participate in the formation of all components of the image, but to a greater extent - in conveying to the population generalized ideas about the army as a social organism. All planned and made decisions in the military sphere (including those regarding the material and social well-being of military personnel) must be repeatedly and consistently explained to all categories of military personnel; this should not be done after the fact. Further openness of the army to society, the applied introduction of elements of civilian control (to ensure that the state and use of the army, due to socio-political necessity, occurs within the framework of the law and meets the needs and interests of society) will help create a positive image of the army in society.

The reality of modern Uzbekistan has become an increase in the number of young people who do not want to serve in the Armed Forces. The image of the army today in the eyes of young people is often more negative than positive. The media are one of the most significant public institutions in the relationship between the army and society. At the same time, the dominant topics in the information space are hazing, corruption and theft. The constant flow of negative information seriously undermines the prestige and authority of the army. This tendency is clearly manifested in the attitude of young people towards the army, for the majority of whom it has now become prestigious to “get out” of the army, to find a way to avoid military “service”.

The current unattractive image of the country's military organization largely determines the difficulties with recruitment by conscription and contract, low motivation for service of all categories of military personnel, the lack of broad public support for the actions of the federal troops to restore constitutional order, and the vulnerability of personnel from negative information and psychological influences. It should be noted that most researchers define image through the concept of a mental image, which is the result of mass consciousness. Within the framework of this approach, the image is characterized by two fundamental features: emotional coloring and stability of the image-image. In contrast to dynamic public opinion and mood, the image is more stable. To form and change it, more time and more significant information is needed. Many researchers indicate that an effective image should be based on existing stereotypes as a cognitive basis, but not coincide with them. The image reflects the social expectations of society, its certain groups, which are determined by their urgent needs and interests.

In the process of image formation, the audience's readiness to perceive the object in one way or another plays an active role. In the structure of this readiness, a certain place belongs to the “ideal image,” i.e., ideas about what a given object should be like. This ideal (expectations, expectations) is culturally determined and is reflected in literature, works of art, and phenomena of everyday consciousness of a specific group of people. The excessive “positivity” of this ideal leads to a negativistic tendency in the perception of a real object and an underestimation of existing advantages. Activities to form an image presuppose the presence of appropriate motivation. The first source of motivation is associated with solving internal psychological problems and self-expression. For the Armed Forces, the first source is expressed in the need to increase the status of military personnel due to the high status of the Armed Forces themselves, the need to increase

the degree of satisfaction with belonging to the army. The second source is based on the idea of image as a means of socio-psychological influence (for the Armed Forces, this is the need to solve problems such as attracting candidates for contract service, facilitating conscription, and generating public support for the activities of the Armed Forces).

It is advisable to consider the problem of forming the image of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan from the position of constructivism as a productive approach in modern social psychology. "By "constructing" here we mean bringing information about the world into a system, organizing this information into related structures in order to comprehend its meaning." The result of this is the image of the social world, which appears before a person as a certain social reality. Consequently, knowledge of the social world is not the product of one individual. It proceeds by correlating the subject's personal system of acquired meanings and the system of meanings with similar systems of other individuals. The objectivity of social perception does not consist in its correspondence to some reality independent of the subjects (such an "objective" social reality does not exist at all), but in the mutual correspondence of the meanings acquired by individuals, the consistency of their personal meanings.

The image of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan is based on non-reflexive, deep and stable structures of public consciousness, which is confirmed by research results.

4. Conclusion

The image of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan is one of the means of solving external (forming public support for the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan, the attractiveness of military service) and internal (forming motivation to continue service) problems of the military organization. To realize these opportunities, it is necessary to identify the structure of the image. Clarification of the socio-psychological essence of the image makes it possible to propose a subject-subject approach to the study and formation of the image of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan. The implementation of this approach requires, firstly, to consider the youth audience not only as an object of influence, but also as a subject of perception of the Armed Forces. This makes it possible to implement the most important principle of image formation - "describing something with the expectation of the most accurate perception of the largest possible number of people in order to obtain a certain impression." At the same time, it is important to explore not only the superficial layers of consciousness, but also to reveal the deep, archetypal structures of public consciousness that mediate the perception of the army of Uzbekistan. It is the implementation of the principle of compliance of the presented information with the categorical structure of the group semantic space that will make it possible to achieve the effectiveness of forming the image of the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan.

Secondly, the Armed Forces must become a full-fledged subject in the formation of their image. This presupposes, first of all, the creation of a reflective image - how the army is perceived by young people today - and a clear understanding of how it should be perceived by young people - the "desired image" of the Armed Forces. As a subject of image formation, the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan will have the opportunity not only to optimize the information about themselves presented to the public, but also to structure their daily activities in such a way as to achieve public trust and support.

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