THE INFLUENCE OF MASS MEDIA UPON STUDENTS’ EDUCATION, A TWO-EDGED SWORD

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ABSTRACT

This research paper aims to quantify the young people’s perception, in general, but mainly of the ones that still study in universities, namely if, and to what extent they consider the influence of the mass media nowadays to be beneficial and helping them to better understand the environment they are acting in or, on contrary, as manipulating them.

The manipulation is a historical concept, that have been used for thousands years by the political and military leaders to use the masses for achieving their targets. At first, used in a direct way for later, closer to our present days, to be used in a more subtle way through mass media, the manipulation stays as a controversial topic, as it is not equally perceived by each individual. The written or the broadcasted press has a considerable input in the public opinion formation, thus becoming a pillar for transmitting the image intended by the communicator to the predilect users of the media channels. This way, mass media becomes a favorable environment for an instant dissemination of the information towards the news consumers. The news lacking any objectiveness or the shows with a confusing way, the implicit or not strictly argued information are just a few tools used to manipulate people, both by press or TV. Another particular important factor that influences people’s opinion is the Internet. The technological ascension in the past few years, has transformed the Internet into an alternative for information and interaction that is currently indispensable for all the population segments but mostly for the youth. This qualitative research measures the perception of the influence the mass media has upon the youth, by the received answers to the grid-type closed questions that were addressed to over 100 students.

Through its conclusions, the research suggests a synthesis both of the positive and negative aspects in terms of the influence the mass media has upon the young generation that is hungry for knowledge, leaving the right to judge and action being fully informed, right into their hands.

The manipulation and control techniques that are presented in the Annex to the present paper represent a think over suggestion for its readers. The main conclusions of the current paper confirm the initial research hypothesis, namely that the mass media is a two-blade sword for Generation Z, born on internet. On one hand, it forms, on the other hand, it deforms. It is up to us to learn how to use this tool and this study can be useful for such learning.

Keywords: Mass media, internet, manipulation, education, two-blade sword, Generation Z.
1. Introduction and Establishing the Objectives

Taking into consideration the wide mass-media spreading over the contemporary society, we reach to the conclusion that this may have a major influence upon the citizens’ education, being a potential mean of education and modeling for all generations. Consequently, a closer approach upon the ambivalent nature of the effects mass-media has upon the youth is quite vital.

By this paper, we aim to analyze the possible influences that mass-media may have upon the youth in general (the students, for our case), as the youth may be, due to their age, more easily influenced upon.

The main objectives considered in this paper are:

- Identifying the positive and negative influences that mass-media has upon the students during their very education process;
- Analyzing the conclusions resulted from the research, the identified aspects and valuing the results;
- Identifying the main manipulation techniques used by mass-media and the modalities to control all these.

2. General Data About How the Education Is Influenced By Mass-Media

In order to be able to respond to such a question that is an important part of our objective, we will start by trying to understand what education is and who are its main beneficiaries?

According to The Explanatory Dictionary of the Romanian Language (DEX, second Edition, 1998), the education represents „the measures that are systematically applied as a whole, aiming the intellectual, moral or physical features formation and development in the respect of children, of youth....and of the all society, etc”. The expected result of such pedagogic activity should be a harmonious development of the individuals, both from the moral and physical point of view, a polite behavior within the society and an as good as possible educational and cultural level.

Leading this analysis beyond the definition, we acknowledge that there exist three types of education: formal, non-formal and informal.

The formal education is an institutional form of education that happens within an official learning system, according to some well established standards. It has a general nature, allowing to all the individuals to have an equal access to knowledge and information from various fields such culture, science, art, literature and technical knowledge but also to the social and human experience.

The non-formal education is considered to be complementary to the formal education, because although it aims the same objectives, the modality of achieving the information is different. The specialists in the field such as Kleis et al. (1973) define this concept as „any type of educational activity that is purposeful and systematic, usually developed outside schools and whose content is adapted to the individual’s needs and to the special situations that occur, for thus maximizing the learning process and minimizing the problems the individual faces within the formal learning system (the stress of receiving marks, imposed discipline, doing homework)”. Other important researchers of the non-formal education with valuable findings that made some changes in the agricultural educational process are Moayed & Mehti (2011). Their work helps to improve farmer's participation for increasing the non-formal education and wheat production in Iran. Mirza & Chowdhury (2013, p.95) founded that „...flexibility of time opens a new door to education for vulnerable children and at a time creates a barrier for teachers for achieving the goal within the fixed time.”

The informal education represents an incidental, spontaneous education, developed from unintentional influences, by which one can get knowledge. Also, it is characterized by the absence of restrictions and standards, thus stimulating the need of autonomous knowledge.
The three forms of education contribute to the creation of the individuals’ personality, especially of the young generations. The basis of the education must be achieved by formal education, whose efficiency can be increased by integrating the other types of education, in smaller proportions.

The highest degree of influence is represented by the informal education that is materialized particularly in stimuli, impressions and mass-media messages, as stated by Bunescu, G. & Negreanu, E. (2005).

All along the years, the mass-media influence increased and became more and more powerful due to the technological evolution, from telegraph, radio, newspapers and internet. Mass-media has an important role upon the education of the young people, being a more and more accessed modality of getting information, that are more or less useful to the people.

Many researchers studied the link between mass-media and education, bringing pro and against arguments for this ratio. DeFleur and Ball-Rokeac (1999) consider that „mass-media perverts the cultural values of the public, discourages the creativity and stimulates the increase of delinquency”. In return, the authors also see some positive aspects considering that media is useful as it reveals the corruption, gives us the freedom of expression, informs about the events that take place all over the world and increases the living standard of the individuals.

A study accomplished by UNICEF in 2013 indicates that 90% of the teenagers are daily watching TV and that 50% spend more than 3 hours doing this activity, time that otherwise could be used for socializing or doing other activities with a more instructive profile. The same study shows that 88% of the teenagers use the internet, on average, for 3,37 hours per day, mainly for social networks. Over 50% of the youth that use social networks, do this for being in contact with their friends and just 1% use the social media for finding more about the risks they are facing if they consume alcohol and drugs. For the youth, the information found on social networks have a low reliability degree, the data resulted from the survey indicating a very low level of trust in such networks. This difference of opinions represents actually the starting point of our research.

3. The Analysis of the Mutual Influences Between Mass-Media and Education

The PEST Analysis

This analysis has in scope following the impact and the general trends of the main four change triggers, namely: the political factors (P), the economical factors (E), the social factors (S) and the technological factor (T). These factors do not action independently or parallel, but are in an interaction with each other and can generate unpredictable changes.

The political factors widely influence the mass-media: the impact of the charged taxes and of the legislation in force, are some of the main factors. Also, the degree of political stability is same important.

In the mass-media field, we can find the following categories:
- the written/paper press
- the audio-visual
- the media socializing channels

There are four types of control from the state’s side, in the respect of mass media. This control manifests legally, through the legislation in the field. Given the fact that „the power” has the capacity to control mass-media, this can influence it in many ways: legally, economically, in terms of norms and regulations and also structurally.

In Romania, there does not exist, properly speaking, an organization and functioning law for the press, namely a generic law in the respect of the rights and limitations for this and respectively, protecting the
rights of the press in relation with the political class. The only regulations in force, to regulate the freedom of speech and the right to information are in the audiovisual field: „The Law of Audiovisual” (Law no. 504/2002) and ”The Law Regarding the Establishing and Functioning of the Romanian Radio and TV Broadcasting Institutions” (Law No. 41/1994).

The Law of Audiovisual has a technical character, establishes CNA (The National Council of the Audiovisual) and also the distribution modality concerning the broadcasting licenses. The law that concerns the establishing and functioning of the Romanian Radio and TV Broadcasting Institutions, settles the modality of functioning for the audiovisual in the public field, fact that limits the quantity and quality of information that mass-media transmits to the „consumers”, the influence it has upon the education of any person being quite high. The mass media functioning modality is based on the existing functioning laws, and „ the way the information is processed and distributed is representative for the way a society functions”, states Gross (1999, p.61).

The transformations within mass media are not chaotic but, in our opinion, there exists a general scheme. In time, there existed three stages of mass media development: the first stage is of the TV broadcasted revolution, the second is of passing to the capitalist society and setting the functions and the third - the attempt these institutions had to improve themselves and get more professional, fact that in our opinion, should be noticed in the beneficial influence upon the degree of culture and civilization of the media consumer. And this is the very objective we would like to shed light upon, within this paper and to show how mass media influences the students that are in full completion process in the respect of their education.

Mass-media offers the possibility and capacity to transmit various information messages, internal and external, namely: technical, cultural, artistic, political, economical, juridical, sport-related, religious, etc.

The resources of paper, distribution and licenses in the audiovisual field are controlled by the state, according to the law. As it has a monitoring capacity prior to publishing, the state can punish an article, a program or a broadcast, as, by its specialized entities and tools, is in charge with controlling the mass-media market. CNA (The National Council for Audiovisual) represents the controlling and regulation institution in the field of audiovisual, and, in addition, there exist the associations of the civil society activating in the field of regulations, having in scope also the written press and papers, such as the Agency for Press Monitoring and The Romanian Press Club.

The social factors or socio-cultural factors include the educational level, the population’s lifestyle, the attitude towards quality, the age rate, the attitude towards ecology. Speaking of the educational level, the way mass media influences the population varies from one person to another. In achieving education, there are a lot of contributing factors: the family, the social environment, the school, the church, the cultural institutions, mass-media and the associations. The higher the level of education is, the lowest the mass-media influence. A person with a high educational level will not accept the gross information from mass-media’s side until he or she verifies other sources, too.

The technological factors have a particular influence upon the performance in any field, due to the innovation elements that are to be found in all the areas. In the present society, the mass-media plays an important role, being also called „the fourth power in the State”. The term of mass-media was formed by joining two words of different origins, namely the Anglo-Saxon word „mass” - that means a crowd of people and „media” – a Latin word that means channels. Consequently, the concept of mass-media refers to the communication spread at a large level, by various channels.

As the technology evolved, the modalities of sending the messages diversified and, in the same time, became more efficient, so that the information reach the people very fast. Consequently, the time between finding out a piece of information or about an event and its receiving by the public is very short. Even if it is
about the TV, radio, written press or internet, the people are continuously searching to satisfy their need to get informed, to have access to culture or entertainment and the technological progress helps them in a much more facile way.

Another important role the mass-media has is to transmit values, cultural models and to form perceptions and behaviors, and, if in the past this was not an easy task at all - as the information reached the public slower, once the technological progress and the various channels’ development, things have changed completely.

The SWOT Analysis

Further on, we will present the SWOT analysis - that was done for obtaining a clear and correct image of the impact the mass-media has upon the youth’s education. Thus, by presenting the strengths, the weaknesses, the threats, the opportunities the press institutions confronts with today, we propose creation a comprehensive picture that offers an overall image upon the positive factors and, why not, upon the negative ones, that all influence the good functioning of such institutions in one way or another, institutions that, lately, took over the role of the fourth power in the state.

- **Strengths**:
  - Wide information: the many ways and means (on-line, off-line, at local and national level, worldwide);
  - Imposing/Promoting values, behavior attitudes;
  - Transmitting information in and light and catchy way;
  - Activation the public for taking part in various common/social projects;

- **Weaknesses**:
  - Promoting non-values;
  - Disinformation;
  - Public manipulation;
  - Encouraging conflicts, the physical and verbal violence;

- **Opportunities**:
  - Quitting the regulation procedure by OG/HG;
  - Regulating the field according to the valuable international practices;
  - The independence of the media institutions, apart from the political factor;

- **Threats**:
  - Enclosing the right of free expression for the press
  - The lack of interest from the cultivated public’s side
  - The absence of financing for the press entities;
  - The lack of conformation to the technological changes;

Following the performed analysis, we acknowledged that, although by the levers it has, the press represents an indispensable instrument for the modern population, in this moment, it faces a lot of gaps that keep it apart from accomplishing its main objective, namely to correctly inform the TV audience, in a professional and deontological manner. As very many press institutions cannot finance themselves by their market activity and thus they often appeal to unethical and sometimes illegal financing modalities, some of the journalists that depend on the media moguls’ money, cannot do their job professionally and consequently, they appeal to mass-disinformation modalities, for this way to serve their owners’ or sponsors’ interests. It is quite obvious that this has a negative impact upon the education granted to the population, in general and to the youth, in particular.
4. Accomplishing the Proper Research

This qualitative research aims, at first, to measure the youth’s perception about how and how much they use mass-media for achieving correct information and secondly, to find out what we have to do for reducing the level of misinformation and manipulation. For avoiding manipulation, the present paper identifies the negative effects of easily and excessively using the mass-media as a unique source of information and fights for developing a collective spirit open to positivism and professionalism. The change of the information flow orientation from doubtful and confusing rumors to visible results may become a viable solution for eliminating such negative techniques. The personal opinions deliberately expressed in the public online environment about persons, companies and public institutions require concrete analyses based on relevant statistics, quantitative analysis and performance indicators. Educating and orienting the youth to choose information based on qualitative studies and figures represents an important step in fighting the mass misinformation. For making an analysis that highlights if there are any influences from the mass-media’s side upon the way the young students complete their education, and, if so, for identifying them as such, as being beneficial or not, for fighting the eventual negative effects the mass-media has upon the education but also for consolidating the positive input, we used the questionnaire as a research instrument.

The questionnaire is formed of 12 questions and aims to gather information from the persons that are part of the target group for a qualitative research, for thus obtaining an optimal volume of relevant information, to help us sketch the targeted conclusions and the fixed objectives. The target group of our research was formed of 108 young students at the National School of Administration and Political Studies in Bucharest, both boys and girls, coming from the rural and urban environment, with the ages comprised between 18 and 30 years old.

The targeted group of our qualitative research has, as a common denominator, the relative uniform age (young), the high intellectual and cultural level of the selected subjects, but especially their need to permanently inform themselves. For the students, the contact with the transmitted information via mass-media as a necessary and objective aspect, and accessing the internet became a daily habit of every young person nowadays, in a country that places itself in the worldwide top of the audience and the of the internet traffic, with approximately 70% internet users out of the total population between 16 and 64 years old, according to a research of the Romanian Joint Industry Committee for Print and Internet (BRAT), as cited The Romanian Press Agency Agerpress.ro (2015). From an environment initially considered to be a high-end one, mainly accessed by educated young people living in big cities, the Internet became accessible to a larger and larger category of population, as the study reveals.

Starting from the research hypothesis we consider as valid and namely that, the mass-media influence upon the youth is equally positive (if they know how to perceive it), but also negative, if they are not aware by the associated risks, we will further on present the result of our research and of the measurements, as revealed by the questionnaire.
Further on, we will present the questions and the interpretation to their answers:

![Chart showing media channel usage]

**Answers’ capitalization for question 1.** According to the respondents, the most used media channel is the internet, the rate being of 85%, followed by TV with 13%, the radio and the written press having insignificant ratios of less than 1%.

This result indicates the fact that the online environment is the most accessible for the youth, granting them the possibility to inform themselves, to socialize, but also to have fun. The connection to the internet is extremely accessible in the present times, positioning the TV on the second rank among the preferences of the questioned students, as this channel does not offer as many benefits as the social media.

![Chart showing media time usage]

**Answers’ capitalization for question 2.** Almost half of the questioned students spend less than three hours surfing the internet (the media channel that is mostly used, according to the answers received for the first
question) and 43% out of these less than one hour, fact that demonstrates that the youth are quite efficient and do not waste so much time searching for information. Also, the result suggests various other ways of spending the spare time by the questioned persons, but also the balance between the online and the offline activity.

For the 49% from the youth spending between one and three hours on internet, there is a moderate risk that this „virus” become chronic, but for the case of the 8% that spend more than 3 hours in front of their computers or smart-phones, we may for sure state that the latter are wasting precious time. The wasted time we refer to, should be used for education, for reading books of general culture. The influence of mass-media in such cases is for sure negative, both upon the culture level but also raises significant risks for the physical health, as well.

![3. In Your Opinion, Mass-Media Is:](image)

**Answers’ capitalization for question 3.** The most of the questioned persons (46%) consider mass-media as a source of information, this aspect indicating the people’s need to value, control and supervise the environment by accumulating information. The respondents that see mass-media as a main source of information are used to evaluate the environment based on the information they receive in a facile way, little filtered by own judgment or at all.

A significant percentage of the respondents consider mass-media as a manipulation mean (32%), That means that these admit mostly the negative parts of mass-media and less the positive ones, while 21% from the respondents consider mass-media as a relaxation mean by which they can escape the day-to-day stress, and only 1% consider mass-media as an education mean.

Once we reached this point of our quality research, we consider that through the responses we received, we got to obtain those information based on which, to sketch some valuable conclusions about the fixed objectives.

We cannot ignore the fact that, a third of the responses indicates the fact that mass-media has a manipulation impact upon the young people’s opinions. It is extremely important that the students acknowledged this danger. Same important is the fact that they consider mass-media as an education factor just in a small proportion, which is, in fact, true.

From this point on, once our paper is set on the solid grounds of logics, we will continue to discover further bonds for this research.
Answers’ capitalization for question 4. The perception of the respondents upon the information’s trustworthy as provided by the mass-media is neither good nor bad, as 49% consider the ranking as „Neither big, nor small”, when they refer to the credibility of the information they access through mass-media, fact that might sometimes mean a lack of trust. The students obviously need information, but it is good that they are reluctant to what they get, being aware that the information must be filtered, verified, framed and assessed and only after that considered and used properly. A percentage of 29% from the respondents do not trust the credibility of the information received through mass-media at all, while only 17% consider these information to be trustworthy. These percentages, that rather suggest a lack of decision, prove to us that there is a certain influence of the mass-media upon the youth during their education process and that the results of such a research may lay at the basis for identifying some measures that enhance the positive influences and reduce the negative ones, such as manipulation, as much as possible.

Answers’ capitalization for question 5. In what the influence upon the youth’s attitude and behaviour concerns – for the ones using the media channels - we can observe that 56% do not consider that they are dramatically influenced by the information received through such means, so that it produce an attitude or behaviour change. The weight for the response „In a big proportion” is of only 8% for this question, aspect that is not bad at all as, also considering the conclusions that were drawn for the previous questions, the manipulation, the entertainment and the irrelevant information are not a proper base for changing the behaviour but only for those who do not have enough life experience to judge/separate the good from the evil. If the slight change of the 56% of the respondents will be towards choosing the real sources of culture, towards avoiding manipulation and towards education, then the change is beneficial and we can state that the mass-media influence is also desirable.
Answers’ capitalization for question 6. The most of the respondents (51%) chose the option according to which they wouldn’t allow their children to use the media channels as a formation source. This aspect evidences that the young students preponderantly identified the negative effects that the media has upon the children’s education and are aware about the impact these have in their formation. Also, the decreased percentage of 10% representing the ones that consider mass-media as an appropriate source of formation evidence the majority’s reluctance towards the messages transmitted through mass-media. We acknowledge that these messages are also consistent with their answers and with the previous conclusions.

Answers’ capitalization for question 7. Most of the respondents (69%) considered that mass-media has both a positive and negative influence in the educational process. Consequently, mass-media may generate both benefic and negative effects upon the educational process. Although 20% from the respondents considered that mass-media has negative effects upon the educational process exclusively, and 7% that it exclusively has positive effects, once again we can remark the fact that, in what the impact of mass-media upon the educational process concerns, the students preponderantly identify negative aspects and it is desirable to enhance the benefits that these media channels offer to the youth, under the condition to be correctly identified. Or, this is exactly the importance and the value this study brings.
Answers’ capitalization for question 8. To the question: „Do you consider that the information broadcasted through mass-media have to be subject to a higher degree of filtration?” a considerable percentage from the respondents answered positively (81%). Consequently, the mass-media „consumers” are aware that the information received are not carefully selected by the specialists, and this deliberately sometimes. The filtration of the information involves the eliminating the data that are not objectively describe the reality, misinform, and are not cut for the receiver’s understanding. It is true that, in the Romanian mass-media such filtration is sometimes done according to political likes or dislikes, selecting subjects for thus defending certain interests. The information filtration involves also presenting some ideas from various sources, so that the receiver may see all the sides of a controversy and to choose for himself what to believe and what not to. The mass-media must allow the consumer to make his own choices and not to present him or her single alternative, but for this, the sources have to be carefully selected.

Answers’ capitalization for question 9. The respondents chose „Yes” option (61%) for this question, highlighting the fact that the „freedom” in the on-line environment comes as a package with certain minuses and a institutional regulation could or, at least, should lead to a decrease of such disadvantages. All that is left to be done is to work on the quality of the persons that are nominated as regulators for this field. And here, we have to highlight again the role of the youth, in full formation process, as future specialists or at list as opinion moderators, not just as simple informational manoeuvre mass.
10. In Your Opinion, an Increased Number of Cultural Messages Would Help to Improve the Education Among the Youth?

Answers’ capitalization for question 10. To this question, 78% from the respondents consider that an increased number of cultural messages would help to improve the education degree among the young persons while 12% of the questioned ones do not consider this being a method that favors improving the education among the young population. A percentage of 10% chose to say „I do not know” as they cannot appreciate the impact the cultural messages have upon the youth’s education or do not lay emphasis on such a subject.

Our opinion is that the role of the mass-media is, for sure, very important in shaping the young generation’s solid cultural values and also as good citizens, as well educated persons, values that are expected to already exist at the age the interviewed students are. Anyway, the essence of the question is whether we need more cultural messages in mass-media. The answer is unquestionably: YES. Mass-media has to increase the good impact of the culture among the young consumers of information.
Answers’ capitalization for the question about age and gender. A percentage of 81% from the respondents to our questionnaire are aged between 18 and 25, whilst 13% are aged between 25-30, the rest of 6% being under 18 years old. In what the gender concerns, 70% are females and 30% males. From the sociological and statistical point of view, the results are reasonably corresponding to the student’s profile attending this university and do not influence the quality of the answers.

5. Conclusions of the Research
In brief, most of the respondents use the Internet as media mean, for approximately 1-3 hours per day. Almost half of the respondents consider that mass-media is an information source and more than one quarter consider that it is a mean of manipulation, results that confirm our research hypothesis to a large extent. The respondents do not trust the transmitted information as considered not trustworthy in an unfiltered form and not determinining a change in their attitude and behavior at all. The own judgement stays decisive and it will prove itself to be good or bad as the educational and cultural level is higher or lower.
A lack of trust in the raw information is also shown by the fact the more than half of the respondents would not leave their children to access mass-media as an information source.
The information that the mass media might have is both positive and also negative, but mainly negative
judging by the received answers. As questionnaire results, we concluded that the Internet needs a better regulation for filtering the listed information on value criteria and that an increased number of cultural messages would help to educate the youth in a positive manner. As 46% from the respondents consider mass-media as being an information source, it is quite obvious that the strategy has to be focused on the positive aspects the Internet has. It is true that, used without limits, the Internet has several negative effects as tiredness, social isolation, etc but, in present, it indisputably is the main information source, grants a rapid and cheap access to information, has numerous sources.

As the questioned subjects are young people having a high education, our research hypothesis starts from the circumstances that they are able, based on their own judgement, to discern between good and bad, if they are supported to know and acknowledge the two blades of the sword of truth, the way our paper presents further on.

Among the positive aspects of the Internet, we can count:

- a rapid spread of the information
- a facile access for the users in stating their opinions upon the debated subjects
- a better and easier communication between individuals living on different continents
- the possibility to read structured information, gathered from various sources
- improves the memory and the ability to argue and debate
- improves the peripheral attention
- has beneficial effects upon the multi-tasking ability and stimulates attention
- offers many sources thus giving the receiver the opportunity to choose, increasing his or her decision-making ability.

The negative aspects of the Internet are:

- It affects the memory
  A recent study commissioned by Grant’s Whisky Company and published by Daily Mail Reporter (2013) revealed that the Internet affects the memory. The research proves that the people are comfortable to access the information anytime and, for this reason, they retain fewer things. A proportion of 90% from the respondents to our questionnaire admitted that they do not pay so much effort to remember things that they can easily find on Internet.

- Dependency
  All these media networks have applications as games, questions and other news, all of them trying to make you spend as much time as possible on their own site. On the lateral sides of the site, several advertisements for applications, games and news are sliding, aiming to make you access them if you are not satisfied with a preliminary look. The key element is that they present you information about real persons in the high life, persons that you know well.

- Depression
  The Internet contains a lot of informations about tragic moments in the real life. A part of these information are unuseful to the community as they promote only the negative side of the subject without referring to the way the „tragedy” could have been avoided, in first place. An excessive reading of such information creates a depressive mood, a continuous panic mode.
Manipulation and misinformation

In the online environment, the manipulation comprises subtle forms of trespassing the professional ethics. Sometimes the companies that activate in various fields post general, confusing and erroneous information about the competitors on their own sites or within blog pages, aiming to generate misinformation and confusion, such as rumors without true background about the direct competition.

Several times we can find articles having titles with no connection to their content. The free expression seems to be erroneously understood. The articles are full with confusing texts that lack the qualitative background. Such examples can be found on blogs, thus turning into a proper background for misinformation by bad intentioned and denigrating texts about state entities and even from the private environment. The texts are missing relevant proofs and are full with groundless opinions that manipulate the collective towards an unproductive and negativist orientation.

We consider the conclusions to our study to be at least relevant and maybe, just because it highlighted both the negative and positive influences the mass-media has upon the education, the study can be considered real and valuable. Regarding the proposed solutions, they are mainly in the decision makers’ hands but also in each reader’s of the current research paper, as everyone of us are mass-media information receivers and users and, according to our education level, we can be molders of opinions and molders of generations.
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ANNEX no. 1. Manipulation Techniques Used in Mass-Media and Ways of Control

The Main Manipulation Techniques Through Press

As Cirino (1972, p.103) argued that “mass-media participates not only to the genesis but also to the public opinion’s manipulation”, as cited in Bilbie (2005, p.9), we agree that the press is part of the most active public opinion manipulation systems, reaching to the conclusion that it represents an extremely strong weapon when it comes to its influence potential. The main press manipulation techniques that are currently used are:

1. news selection – it is considered to be the most efficient way to insert influence within the information space, as the selection criteria already belong to the ones that already have a certain influence within the social structure. It is obvious that these ones will select only the information that do not affect their own interests.

2. focusing the news is usually achieved by omitting some components of the initial message, the public having access only to some segments of the information circuit. Knowing that they do not have to oppose the public, the ones who are editing them have a funny projection, containing particularly familiar enunciations even about extremely serious facts, the approachability of such information being thus granted. Also, they have the obligation to stylistically control the content, meaning that it has to be adjusted to the public’s expectations.

3. influencing by placing the news – aims the axiological dimensioning of the content, according to the place where the news is edited or to the space allocated within a broadcast. Thus, placing an ordinary fact on the first page can project it as an extraordinary event, while an authentic event but not so favorable to the leaders or to the ones currently having the power, once distributed in the last pages, is thrown into obscurity, the public opinion following this trend.

4. influencing by titles – it is based on the fact that the synthesis within the title of the article represents an evaluation of the article in the general structure of the publication. The chosen fonts indicate also their importance for the editors, importance that is thus transferred to the public.

5. selecting the events with a great power of influence, as approaching the entire activity of a leader in the context of the prestige status of the activity field he or she distinguished himself or herself in, contributes to his or her disparagement in an apparently tendentious but efficient manner.

6. the selected photos in the written press and also the related explanations may affect the public’s attitude towards the content of the images. A wordless disparagement is done by assigning a scandalous photo to the image of a person who is not nicely presented in the press, at that time.

7. the editorial, by the inherent orientation of the editor, may contribute not only to one personality’s assertion but also to his or her transformation into an opinion leader for the public that shares the same point of view with the respective editor. The effect of such a situation is cultivating the reader’s laziness, that will begin to circulate ideas and opinions that do not belong to himself or herself but are borrowed from the editorial.

8. producing and spreading tendentious information – occupies a special place in the manipulation art, as the tendentious information used to be widely identified with either the error or the lie.

The Control of the Mass-Media upon the Public Opinion

The study reveals that sometimes, the public opinion is used and controlled by the mass-media more and more obviously, the targeted ideas being inserted into the social mental by the news in the written press, internet, or broadcasted on TV and radio.

The people receive a portion of news every day, news intended for instigating, intoxicating and disparaging the human relations. All these happen as the managers of some media trusts want to get as much rating as possible, as rating means profit. Thus, we are given what is mostly desired and best sold: the scandal, the lack of culture, the barbarism and the bright death of brains (of the education or even of the individuals).