

The Image of the Police in the Printed Media

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Abstract

Police legitimacy and police confidence are indicators of whether the public agrees with how the police apply their authority and power and whether the public are willing to accept police decisions. These are important aspects of police work because how much citizens trust the police, the more they feel a moral responsibility to provide assistance and cooperation.

Part of the solution for the creation and maintenance of police legitimacy and trust is the establishment of an appropriate strategy for public relations, aimed to continuously maintain good image of the police. In such a strategy for public relations, the media are an important part because they are the means of creating and maintaining the police image as it is framed and ordered by the police. Police image directly affects both police legitimacy and trust and therefore, scholars dealing with the issues of police trust also have to deal with the media impact on building that trust.

Therefore, we have made a qualitative analysis of media reports about police and policing in Macedonia in order to see how police are portrayed in the mass media. Specifically, by analyzing the content we want to answer the following research questions: What aspects of policing are presented in the mass media? Are there more positive or negative portrayals of the police? What are the sources of information? And whether, on the basis of the information that is given to the public, can we "recognize" a police strategy for building public trust? The research interest is focused on the importance of both the language and the style of presentation, as well as on the message that is sent to the readers.

Keywords: *police trust, media, media discourse, police news, Macedonia.*

Introduction

Police legitimacy and confidence in the police are indicators that indicate whether the public agrees with the way the police apply their authority and power and whether the people are willing to accept police decisions. These are important aspects of police work because the more citizens trust the police, the more they feel a moral responsibility to provide assistance and cooperation. Therefore, trust and legitimacy help police to function successfully and to exercise their daily police tasks. As a result of many studies, the prevailing view in the literature is that direct contact with the police is a major contributor to an increase in trust of the police among citizens. But survey data also show that the vast percentage of the population does not have direct communication with the police during their lifetime. About 30% of citizens in the British Crime Survey in 2009 and 2010 had contact with the police in the last 12 months. However, besides personal experience additional factors that have an impact on the acquisition and maintenance of confidence in the police include the experience of the others, the visibility of the police and the views of citizens about the effectiveness of the police. On the other hand, the ignorance and false beliefs of citizens about the crime situation and the irrational feeling of fear of crime that is caused by the media are major factors which decrease the police trust.

The aforementioned positive and negative factors become priority topics on the police agenda. Part of the solution for the creation and maintenance of police legitimacy and trust are the establishment of an appropriate strategy for public relations (PR strategy), aimed to continuously maintain a good image of the police. In such a strategy for public relations, the media are an important part because they are the means of creating and maintaining the police image as it is framed and ordered by the police. This image directly affects both police legitimacy and trust and therefore, scholars dealing with the issues of police trust also have to deal with the media impact on building that trust (Hohl, 2001:28). In other words, police need to be trusted to enforce the law in a legitimate and effective manner, and the public also needs to have confidence because citizens who do not have such confidence, when they need to get help, protection or a specific service, will be less likely to approach the police. Information on the functioning of the police is important too, especially for those people who have lower levels of trust because the feeling that they are not well informed about how police work has a negative effect on public confidence (Hohl, 2001:13).

The role of media in building trust and maintaining the legitimacy of the police

However, the key question is how to build that trust, defined as faith in the competence and ability of the police to meet the expectations of citizens and to perform police tasks aimed to protect citizen? An additional question is how media coverage of the police ought to be presented to have a positive effect on public confidence.

Regarding the first question, trust is based on the motives and the intent of those who need to be trusted (in this case, police) and, therefore, three basic prerequisites need to be met in order to gain that confidence. They are: 1. cooperation between the community and the police as part of the community policing approach; 2. just and fair attitude of the police towards citizens (procedural fairness the police); and 3. efficiency of the police in dealing with crime.

Based on the previous mentioned, the answer to the second question envisages that the media should inform and publish more media articles related to the: a) cooperation between citizens and police, b) fairness of the police and c) their effectiveness. Taking into account those presumptions, the research of Hohl (2001) on the media effect of the police coverage to the citizens is based on the *model of trust* under which for the citizens it is important to the citizens how police carry out their duties, what the police the attitude towards citizens is and how well the police address the problems of the local community (Hohl, 2001:13). So that model, is composed of perceptions of police fairness, of involvement of the community and of police effectiveness (Jackson & Bradford, 2010).

Taking as a starting point for effecting police confidence, Hohl's survey sets out the following hypothesis: "*media coverage of police activities related to the participation of the community, the just and fair attitude of the police towards citizens and the effectiveness of policing in dealing with crime have a positive effect on trust.* In addition, the research starts from the assumption that *the effect of presenting both, the involvement of the community and the just and fair attitude of the police is higher compared with a positive portrait of their effectiveness.*" (reference) Previous studies on media coverage of police have come to the conclusion that community participation and fair and equitable treatment are rarely covered in the media and therefore they have no positive effects on public confidence.

Hohls's research covers the period from April 2007 to March 2010 and includes two samples. The first sample is composed of 9290 media articles published in five daily newspapers in London (the Times, the Guardian, the

Daily Mail, the Sun and the Mirror),¹ while the second sample consists of 61,436 respondents who were asked how well the police do their job in your local area in order to measure the public confidence in the police (Hohl, 2001:40-41).²

For the content analysis several categories and subcategories have been formulated: false positivity, actions of community involvement, police behavior (subcategories: improper police conduct, direct meeting, fair treatment, poor treatment) police effectiveness (subcategories: in a particular case, as police organization), statistics on crime and the tone of the article (subcategories: positive, negative, ambivalent).

The survey results show that the surveyed media published an average of 33 article a month pertaining to the police, 40% of the stories being positive, 20% ambiguous, and 25.5% of the articles being presented in a negative tone. Only a small percentage (3.3%) of the articles have a positive tone. Related to the question what areas of policing are covered in the media, largest percentage of articles covers police investigations in specific criminal cases (57%) and comments about the police organization (40% of stories). A small percentage (8 %) of articles inform the public about police behavior towards citizens. A high 90% of these articles are about discriminatory and unfair actions by the police towards the public, while only 10% address a positive attitude of the police towards citizens. Taking into account the total number of articles, it is estimated that only 1% of the articles refers to a positive attitude towards citizens. Also, very small percentage (3% of total articles) represents articles about community involvement.

The illustrated data indicate that articles on the procedural fairness of police and community participation in policing are rare. Media usually focus on police effectiveness, these articles (47%) generally being neutral in tone, which has the smallest impact on citizens' trust in the police.

Compared to the type of newspaper, *Daily mail* (which is right oriented) focuses more on the high crime rates and less on the improper police conduct.

¹ Times, Daily mail and Sun are right-oriented newspapers, while Guardian and Mirror left-oriented. In the research period in the Great Britain prime minister is David Brown (2007-2010) who is representative of the Labour party which is left oriented.

² Home office and Metropolitan Police London in order to estimate the public confidence in the police have asked the question, how well the police conduct their work in your local area? This question is applied as standardized measure for public trust in the British crime survey and in the surveys for the London Metropolitan police.

The number of negative articles is much larger than the articles which are positive. In the *Times* (which is right oriented) the largest number of articles on police organization is neutral, while the *Sun* (which is also right oriented) focuses on the police investigation and current cases. *Guardian* (which is a left-oriented newspaper) uses a neutral tone on the effectiveness of the police in dealing with crime, while *Mirror* (which also belongs to the group of left oriented newspapers) publishes more reports on individual cases of improper police conduct than criticism of police as an organization (Hohl, 2001: 52-53).

Based on the results of the research, findings indicate that the articles in the newspapers about police and policing are too rare to have a substantial effect on public confidence in the police. In addition, messages from the media about the effectiveness of the police, who make up the largest percentage of all articles (over 85%) also show little effect on confidence in the police. The general finding proves the theory according to which public confidence is based not so much on the performance of police and police effectiveness, but more on the citizens' perceptions of how police treat them and listen their needs and the needs of the community in dealing with crime and community safety.

Linked to the trust and the media coverage of the police, other studies focus more on the question of whether the media create a positive or negative image of the police, rather than the content of the article. It is generated from the assumption that the police are feared because the negative image of the police can result in reduced confidence among citizens, which is undesirable. This is determined by the fact that by distorting the media image of the police, the police also lose their legitimacy. Even more serious consequences of the crisis of legitimacy are the public disorders and the dissatisfaction of citizens with the police. Therefore, any police through daily communication with the media should take care to maintain their positive image (Fung, Kim-kum, 1994: 103).

In the Republic of Macedonia, the rules for public relations are governed by the Guidelines on Public Communication adopted in July 2007. The Guidelines prescribe several forms of communication with the public and with the journalists as "carriers" of the message to the audience in both electronic and print media. Some of them are communicated on a daily basis, and some according to the need. For example, briefings are held every day and public announcements are regularly published in order to inform the public about events that have occurred the previous day. On the other hand, media conferences and interviews with the Minister of Internal Affairs (or with his deputy) can be arranged when necessary. From the content of the information provided by those forms of communication, as well as from their interpretation

and presentation by the media depend both the image and the public perception of police.

Notes of methodology

Rainer points out that, in order to understand the relationship between the media and the crime, we need to investigate production of crime news, or the reasons for its production, presentation of the content and the effects and consequences that crime news have on the readers (Reiner, 2007: 310). Those aspects have mutual influence, which assumes that the effects of the contents depend on how it is interpreted by the audience (Dowler, 2003).

To investigate some of these issues, we have made a qualitative analysis of media reports about police and policing in order to see how police is portrayed in the mass media. Specifically, by analyzing the content we want to answer the following research questions: What aspects of policing are presented in the mass media? Are there more positive or negative portrayals of the police? What are the sources of information? And whether, on the basis of the information that is given to the public, can we "recognize" a police strategy for building public trust? The research interest is focused on the importance of both, the language and the style of presentation, as well as on the message that is sent to the readers.

According to the already existing theoretical findings(Chan, 1995: 33, Pollack & Allern, 2014: 37, Chan K. Angela, Chan, M. Vanessa, 2012), the connection between the media and the police is determined by several viewpoints: 1. the media have an important role in the creation, but also in the destruction of the police legitimacy and trust; 2. the media, as watchdogs of the government and as advocates for human rights and freedoms carefully follow and analyze the work of the police, and alert their readers of any abuse of police powers and authority; and 3. the articles and texts in the media that refer to the police, have certain effects on the readers which shape and influence their opinion and attitudes.

To answer these questions of how the police is portrayed in the mass media in the Republic of Macedonia, a qualitative analysis of media articles related to the police has been made.

This research included an analysis of all media articles referring to the police and their work in the printed daily newspapers *Vest and Dnevnik*³, which

³The articles in Koha (or other newspaper) in the Albanian language were exempted from the analysis because the main researcher had an insufficient knowledge in Albanian language, i.e. due to the inability of the Faculty of Security in Skopje

are published in three-month period from 10 November 2014 to 10 February 2015.

Both qualitative and critical discourse analysis were used (Van Dijk A. Teun, 1988: 2) in order to deconstruct the manifested and latent meaning of the written texts. The term “interpreter repertoires” or “interpretation lists” can be found in the criminological literature (Chamberlain, 2013) and it refers to” analytical procedure that helps us to describe the world around us. It aims to deconstruct the text, which is constructed by certain social actors” (Chamberlain, 20013:152).

The selection of the above mentioned newspapers was made based on the national coverage, popularity, circulation and length of existence.

Dnevnik is the first privately held printed newspaper in the Republic of Macedonia that started with publishing in March 1996 (the first edition was published in March 20, 1996) and it is the most circulated newspaper in Macedonia, with an average circulation of 55.000. Regarding the current political beliefs, it leans toward the dominant political authority.

Vest is also a popular printed newspaper with long-standing existence (the first edition was published in June 7, 2000). The editorial policy is permanent, and according to their political observations, the newspaper is considered as neutral or more critically determined to the political party in power.

The sample is composed of 17 articles, out of which 6 articles are published in *Vest* and 11 in *Dnevnik*. Those numbers indicate that *Dnevnik* make available much more media space for the police and police work.

Considering the previously presented findings, the short research period of three months is not sufficient to draw reliable conclusions about media effects on readers, however, we raise several research questions: Whether, relying on the model of confidence, presentation of police reports contributes to improving public confidence in the police? What are the sources of knowledge of data relating to police and policing? How media understand police and police work and how they disseminate their perception? What are the differences and similarities in the depiction of police between two printed newspapers, one of which is considered as pro-governmental oriented, while the other as neutral.

Within the study two main hypotheses are established and examined: 1. Newspapers create different images of the police in combating crime. In that

to obtain financial support for the translation of the media articles. However, these limitations do not reduce the value and quality of the newspapers research results.

context, the image of effective police is determined by the source of knowledge, or the Unit for public relations of the Ministry of Interior (hereafter: MoI); 2. The media and the police develop cooperation of mutual interest. Police "feed" the media with stories about criminal events and the media contribute to create and maintain good image of policing in public.

Within the content analysis, in order to test the confidence model as a basic theoretical approach, three categories and several subcategories are established to categorize the media texts into one of them. Those are: 1. The efficiency of the police: crime situation, police action, 2. Cooperation with citizens and community participation: preventive activities and 3. Fairness towards citizens: procedural fairness.

The sample is composed of the following headlines and set of units, grouped by defined categories and subcategories.

A set of themes (headlines).

Cooperation and participation of citizens

1. Gratitude for citizens that have helped the police (January 2, 2015, Dnevnik)
2. Help police, a neighbor is abusing the children (February 9, 2015, Dnevnik)
3. Crimes will be reported online on the website of the MoI (February 9, 2015, Vest)
4. Campaign against the use of firecrackers (December 15, 2014, Dnevnik)

Police efficiency

5. *Alfi* have arrested 3696 suspected criminals in the last 12 months (January 5, 2015, Dnevnik)
6. Last year 3696 people were arrested (January 5, 2015, Vest)
7. They closed four files for frightening murders committed in the previous decade (January 6, 2015, Dnevnik)
8. Profiles of Kikolo and Montana are a drop in a sea of pedophiles on Facebook (January 13, 2015, Dnevnik)
9. Europol: Frankfurt Mafia in knockout (December 24, 2014, Dnevnik)
10. Frankfurt Mafia had been organized as a terrorist cell - dealers hadn't known who they worked for (December 27, 2014, Dnevnik)
11. One drug dealer is caught in the police "spider" web every day (January 8, 2015, Dnevnik)
12. Ministry of internal affairs, quiet Christmas night (January 2, 2015, Dnevnik)

13. More killings and domestic violence, fewer robberies (November 17, 2014, *Dnevnik*)
14. Out of eight trafficked people, six are minors (6,7,8 December 2014, *Vest*)
15. Last month *Alfi* detained 264 persons (February 9, 2015, *Vest*)
16. Rubber bullets used against violent protesters (December 24, 2014, *Vest*)
17. Ministry is in constant contact with the security structures in the region and the EU, Jankulovska: Terrorist attacks are hardly predictable (January 15, 2015, *Vest*)

Results and discussion

The initial review of the titles (headlines) of the articles shows that the media do not pay equal interest in topics related to the operation and effectiveness of the police in combating crime. *Dnevnik* published 11 reports, while *Vest* 6 articles. Out of them, three times more articles refer to the police effectiveness, compared with those who are related to the police co-operation with citizens.

By type of newspaper, *Dnevnik* published three articles on the cooperation and participation of citizens in crime prevention, while in *Vest* only one article is presented.

Also, *Dnevnik* uses more space for articles dealing with police performance, including analysis done by the police related to specific crime situations (eight articles in *Dnevnik* and five articles in *Vest*).

A significant feature in relation to the source of information is the fact that all the articles whose main topic is the police, rely mainly on the Ministry of Interior as the primary and only source of information. This means that media exclusively transmit the statements of authorized police officers in charge of communication with the public without research or requesting additional information from other sources. Only in three cases did the authors use a second source of information. In one case it is a spokesman for the government, in the other case a professor, a former police chief of the Bureau for Public Order and Peace within the MoI and in the third case, the same journalist conducts research on a particular topic.

Cooperation and prevention activities of the police

Media give positive examples of the citizens' cooperation with the police (*Gratitude for citizens who have helped to the police (January 2, 2015,*

Dnevnik). On one side is their willingness to report certain crimes to the police, and on other side is the effective rapid response of the police to prevent those reported crimes. Besides that, given the possibility of citizens to anonymously report certain acts on the website of the MoI raises public awareness about the moral obligation to report crime. This way, the media encourage the public to actively participate in crime prevention.

Particularly, introduction of the system "red button" (*Help police, a neighbor is abusing the children* (February 9, 2015, *Dnevnik*) and, *Crimes will be reported online on the website of the MoI* (February 9, 2015, *Vest*), reinforces the role of the police as a protector of citizens and as an effective body in dealing with crime, which is essentially a part of the strategies to improve citizens' confidence in the police. However, the limitation of cases of human trafficking, child abuse and hate crime indicates that children, victims of hate crime and human trafficking receive special protection by the police that have raised the level of alertness among citizens. In addition, the police point out that these categories of victims rarely report the crime. Due to that state of constant victimization, the system "red button" requests that any person who has findings about such victimization report the case without having to reveal his/her name.

The article *Profiles of Kikolo and Montana are a drop in a sea of pedophiles on Facebook* (January 13, 2015, *Dnevnik*) that informs about false Facebook profiles behind which certain pedophiles have been hidden and about the possibility to report them on the website of the MoI sends the message that pedophilia is a frequent phenomenon. The article also indicates that police are faced with difficulties in identifying and detecting the offenders.

Dnevnik promotes new approaches to preventing abuse of vulnerable victims who are not able, do not know, or for other reasons cannot call for help to the police. Thus, media raise the awareness among citizens that the police function to protect citizens, and that they are ready to detect and prevent crimes. Thus, *Dnevnik*, compared with *Vest*, has a greater contribution to improving the police image, which as a consequence strengthens public confidence.

Also by choosing to display the event in which the police give certificates of appreciation to the citizens, media underline the idea that the police are able to reward those citizens. But at the same time the media interpret the cooperation between citizens and police as one-sided and restricted. Namely, the statement of the former Minister of Interior, that "*all these examples confirm that when we have cooperation with citizens and mutual trust, we are more efficient and we can more quickly respond to their requests and needs*" is accurate, but other criminal situations which are not prevented, even though there have been timely calls by citizens, are forgotten and silenced.

Moreover, the statement of the Minister implies that police are less effective when there are no direct phone calls, which marginalizes the police proactive work to detect offenders. In addition, calls for crime reporting mean that police have no capacity to detect crimes and offenders alone, without reports by the citizens. Giving priorities to the aspect of crime detection indicate that the police marginalize other innovative, nontraditional approaches to building trust and close relationship with citizens.

Efficiency of the police

Dnevnik follows the events attended by an ex-minister of MoI, quoting her on the positive results of the police. For example, media articles cited her concerning the efficient control of terrorism as a security threat emphasizing regular communication between departments, their coordination, cooperation and commitment. This indicates that terrorism is a serious challenge that is difficult to detect and predict.

Regarding the crime situation in the country, the media report part of the reports and statements of the Ministry that alert about the increased violent crime, i.e. about the growing number of murders and cases of domestic violence. The statement that they are "*indicators of the overall security situation in the state*", in the article: *More killings and domestic violence, less robberies (November 17, 2014, Dnevnik)*, indicates that the police are aware of the unstable community safety. The media, through the reporting of an increase in violent crime, support and construct the image of unsafe environments. Another issue has to do with the problem of drug trafficking, including drug abuse, which is on the increase. The police, comment on similar trends in all countries, trying to neutralize the local problem. That means that the drug problem has been perceived as a global problem that our country cannot find appropriate ways for its suppression and prevention.

This presentation of the crime situation confirms that despite the lower rate of violent crime, it is given more media space. As a result the public gain the perception that violence is common and increasing, as evidenced by the statement that the suppression of this crime (especially violent behavior among young people) is one of the main priorities of the police.

Presenting the efforts of the police to increase their presence in places where there have been registered incident among students in order to reduce deviant behavior among youth suggests several things: first, the media send a message that the police will take measures to prevent violence and that they are aware of this situation and, second, the emphasis is placed on increased police presence as if it is the most effective way of preventing accidents. Giving

priority to the police presence in critical areas and marginalizing other preventive actions of the police sends a message to the readers that the police prioritize a traditional approach to policing and refuse (consciously or unconsciously) to familiarize citizens with community policing approach. Community policing gets ad-hoc media space, and neither the police nor the media informs citizens on a regular and systematic way. On the other hand, activities are carried out to “blaze the fire”, which again emphasize the repressive role of the police, that is, also, exposed in the articles that refer to the arrest of offenders by the special Macedonian police units who deal with crimes, Alfi (*Alfi arrested 3696 suspected criminals in the last 12 months (January 5, 2015, Dnevnik)*, *arrested 3696 persons arrested last year (January 5, 2015, Vest)*). The media discourse that has been used in *Dnevnik* include “it can be said to be an impressive number of detained persons,” “the year began and ended with a series of arrests of wanted criminals. “Kumanovo police could not been given a better gift than, when on the last day of 2014, they had arrested Avdi Zejneli...” (6 January 2015, *Dnevnik*, p. 17) has shown the repressive role of the police in a positive light, with words of praise, which means that the more police arrest “criminals” the better. Additionally, media discourse sends the message that arrests of the perpetrators are the most needed and most successful actions in the fight crime. The emphasis that the police succeed in arresting dangerous offenders who were hiding for years underlines their commitment to dealing with serious forms of crime, but, also highlights the dangerous character of the offenders. Opposite to that, part of the audience can interpret the content of media text as the inability of the police and lack of capacity to deal with serious forms of crime. Therefore, readers as consumers with different professional and life experience, and with different ideological and other perspectives, can experience and interpret the words in different ways.

Other data on the activities of the police show that the police and the media pay most attention to the fight against drug crime and drug mafia.

For example a series of articles about the Frankfurt mafia which acts in our country, too, and the police action called “spider web” generally indicates that drug crime is higher compared to other crime, it is a serious problem in our country and abroad, it is organized and the spread of new drugs in our country is enhanced. However, the police are successful and manage to find the perpetrators. They are committed to the fight against drug crime and every day they arrest a new dealer.

For content analysis, we have several questions that need to be elaborated: what do the media report, what perceptions are created about drug crimes and what message is sent to the media? The implicit and explicit messages from the content are as follows:

Police have excellent cooperation with the international investigation teams. Because of the organized and transnational nature of drug crime, Macedonian police is part of international actions to suppress that crime, which shows that the fight cannot be effective unless there is international cooperation.

There is a systemic and organized struggle against drug crimes. The media emphasize a repressive approach because the emphasis of police action is placed on suppression, identification and elimination of street dealers. The reasons for increased use and abuse of drugs is that they find an expanded drug market on the streets that offers and sells drug to youngsters. Therefore, *Dnevnik* supports the thesis of full responsibility of dealers for spreading illicit drug use. To reinforce its thesis, *Dnevnik* calls for an expert opinion from someone who has 30 years of experience and specific expertise in this area. He points out that "*in the fight against drugs we must apply pressing -method, i.e. to be hard obtained and hard offered*, which means that police actions should be directed toward drug market to prevent any opportunity for drug trafficking. It is approach of "zero tolerance" toward drug crime. However, despite this approach, the police confirm an increased level of drug crimes and their unsuccessful fight to deal this crime, which can be seen from the following statement: "*We a opened wide front against drugs that are distributed on the streets in the entire state.*" (in article: *Frankfurt Mafia had been organized as a terrorist cell - dealers hadn't known who they worked for (December 27, 2014, Dnevnik)*). This suggests that the action "spider web" which was carried out during 2014, presumed failure of the police in previous years to deal with drug crime. Concerning the delayed reaction to the already declared epidemic of drug crime and drug abuse in our country, *Dnevnik* refers to an unofficial source of information, which sent a message that the police are aware of its late response.

Highlighting some police actions and undermining others actions. With emphasis on the series of arrests, the media like to portray the police as successful, although the number of arrested dealers does not mean a reduced rate of drug crimes. However, the public perception is created that the perpetrators are caught and by their incarceration drug trafficking will be reduced. In addition, increased media visibility of these actions on behalf of others, reinforces the impression that successful a fight against drug crime maintains the good image of the police.

Causing a feeling of fear among the dealers means that police is successful in the fight against drug crime. The message, which is sent to dealers is that police are closely monitoring the situation with the drugs and thus both the media and the police appear to be causing a deterring effect on potential perpetrators.

Increased drug crime and spread of narcotic drugs in the country. Displaying the police action "spider web" and the joint international police cooperation suggests that Macedonia is a good base for the development of drug business at regional and local level. In addition, the flow of drugs is easier because they can be easily transferred and spread in Macedonia. Namely, the police actions to suppress the selling and consuming the "light" drugs which in other European countries have been legalized and, under certain conditions, can be freely bought and consumed, also sends a signal to the public that our drug law prohibits all types of drugs and so far, there is no possibility of legalizing certain drugs in Macedonia,

The article "*Rubber bullets against violent protesters*" (December 24, 2014, *Vest*) indicates the need for reinforcement by police power as a result of increased aggression in crowds. Informing that "*the purpose of the use of rubber bullets would be to temporarily immobilize people in the crowd who actively disrupt public order*" (December 24, 2014, *Vest*), indicate that police, with their available mechanisms and measures are not able and do not have enough capacity to handle the aggressive groups of citizens. Also, by enabling police to use rubber bullets, public is informed and warned that the police can increase their repressive role and power if the people do not obey the orders of the police officers. In this manner, the police increase their efficiency in dealing with aggressive crowds. That, in turn, produces the public opinion that the protesters are violent, and for them rubber bullets are messages and warning with threat that if they are violent and not obey the orders of the police the bullets can be used against them.

The introduction of this legal opportunity, actually intends to legalize and legitimize repressive police behavior towards citizens, but each country that introduces repressive measures against its own citizens, actually wants to legalize the use of repressive means against violent demonstrators. And every country, who wants to defend against violent demonstrations with such means, actually minimize and relativize the fundamental right of protests that, for any reasons are violently expressed. Thus, the institutional violence is not an appropriate response to increased violence in a crowd.

Conclusion

Police in print media have certain media space, whose size depends largely on the editorial policy of the media and developed relations of communication between specific media and the police. Based on the analysis of the sources of information we can conclude that the police is the main and only

source of information for their actions, activities, and other circumstances related to police work in Macedonia.

Police sources are a common and unique source of information on the activities of the police and therefore the selection process for their display begins in the police department. That way, the media inform the public with the story shaped by the police, restricting and limiting the public debate about these issues.

However, *Dnevnik*, compared with the *Vest*, leaves much more space for the police and publishes more articles about police cooperation with citizens, police efficiency, police crime and police victimization. Hence, *Dnevnik* has a larger contribution in building the image of the police in a positive direction, especially due to the fact that *Dnevnik* favors police actions against drug crime.

The introduction of additional opportunities for reporting crimes to the police indicates the prevalence of certain forms of crime, lack of capacity to detect and to reduce uncovered crime, as well as passive role, not only by vulnerable victims, who in a state of constant victimization are not able to report the crime, but also by other citizens and close friends who have a moral obligation to protect victims. Therefore, the media sent an appeal to readers for more legal protection of vulnerable victims.

If we accept the thesis that the media contribute to increase confidence in the police by showing cooperation with citizens, their fairness, and the effective suppression of crime, then it follows that *Dnevnik* is part of that strategy, but with emphasis on efficiency instead on cooperation and community policing. This means that the media give priority to the traditional approach of policing, and minimize activities as part of the policing model in collaboration with the community. That aspect gets ad-hoc media space, and neither the police nor the media does not inform citizens on a regular and systematic way. Therefore, the recommendation is that if the police want to increase its public trust in the media, then the management of police communication with the public should be subject to greater professionalism, organization and strategic planning.

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