

Mediatization of needs of people with disabilities in war discourse in Ukrainian social media

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Abstract

The full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine became an event that pretended to change the game all over the world. According to media consumption polls, during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the consumption of social media has increased compared to the use of more legally regulated and better-researched traditional radio, television, and the press. In this situation, people with disabilities (PWD) manifest themselves as active participants in communication.

The study aims to describe the model of the mediatization of the needs of People with disabilities in social media in Ukraine during Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine based on the data selected for the Report [39].

The study analyzed 1,200 relevant messages from social networks—Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, Odnoklassniki, Instagram, and VKontakte—collected using the YouScan monitoring system. It focuses on messages, authors, representation of PWDs, and effects that are generalized in a model of double mediatization of the needs of PWDs in SM. As we see in the SM discourse, the needs of PWDs are mediatized on two levels—consumption (usage of technology) and meaning (instrumentalization of the message). Coverage of the needs of PWDs is actualized in connection with newsworthy events and focuses not only on possibilities for inclusion but also on media manipulations. It shows that when PWDs have access to media and the Internet, they freely share their opinions on various topics. Still, in the occupied territories of Ukraine, they become more vulnerable to disinformation and Russian propaganda. Mediatization are seen not only as the consequences of a technological threat that creates the illusion of solving the problem through refusal but also as the context in which society is located, when media consumers are not only objects but also subjects of media influences.

Keywords


mediatization, social media, discourse analysis, needs of people with disabilities, war in Ukraine

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1. Introduction

In just a short span of time, social media has deeply embedded itself into every aspect of modern life, becoming a crucial tool for fostering social inclusion and supporting the freedom of expression, which are fundamental human rights [31], [35]. Media development is such a vivid process that it demands knowledge production in the moment of change. That is why digitalization is one of the goals of the EU's 2030 strategy, and in the context of European integration, it concerns both ensuring human access to information and media regulation in the face of information threats in Ukraine.

The necessity to study media stems from two oppositions: the first is the knowledge of what and how technology is made of and uncertainty about how it will work in a constantly changing environment, and the second opposition is the requirement to counteract the threats of harmful information influences and the need to provide people with access to information.

The full-scale invasion of Russia into Ukraine became an event that pretended to change the game all over the world. According to media consumption polls, during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by Russia, the share of those using social media has increased compared to the use of more legally regulated and better-researched traditional radio, television, and the press [36]. This is primarily driven by people's need for information and communication with loved ones [37]. According to the international organization's estimations, almost 7 million people became IDPs, and other estimations showed that from 4 to 7 million found a shelter abroad [29], [32]. According to the International Organisation for Migration data, around 23% of IDPs have disabilities; the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees data show that 13% of families who moved abroad have at least one member of the family with disabilities [30]. Ukrainians with disabilities who are looking for shelter also risk finding themselves in segregation in care home institutions along with informational and social isolation.

Mobile and social media communication still have the status of innovation in society (the industry's history is on its way to its 50th anniversary, and when it comes to accessing mobile applications, people with disabilities (PWDs) are sometimes on an equal footing with other media consumers. Applied research on the use of social media by PWDs is mostly highly specialized. This research aims to address the specifics of the discussion of the needs of PWDs in a comprehensive manner in the context of SM studies.

In this article, we consider the following hypotheses:

H1. People with disabilities manifest themselves as active participants in communication.

H2. The discourse of needs during the war is largely militarized. The topic of the needs of PWDs is both an opportunity for the inclusion of PWDs and a field for manipulation.

H3. In the SM discourse, the needs of PWDs are mediatized on several levels – technologically and psychologically.

As mentioned in Shadow UN Report prepared by European Disability Forum Recommendation UN European Disability Forum, National Assembly of Persons with Disabilities, and League of the Strong Ukraine is a party to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities [32], [31] and has a broad legal framework to support persons with disabilities; however, many gaps in implementation still exist [8]. The commitment of the Government declared for 2022 to develop guidelines for mass media on the provision of information for person with disabilities in accessible formats (sign language translation, audio comments, and other formats for presentation of information for reading and communication)

has not been fulfilled to the full extent [32]. Official statistics pointed out that there are 2.7 million PWDs (PWD) living in Ukraine, which is 6% of the total population of Ukraine. The full-scale attack was provoking an unprecedented humanitarian crisis across all countries.

The purpose of the study is to describe the model of the mediatization of social media needs in Ukraine during the crisis - Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine - which requires outlining the structure of the field of communication of the needs of PWDs, identifying the actors in the field and the specifics of SM users interaction. The object of the study is social media discourse on the needs of PWDs. The main question is: How do people with disabilities communicate their needs in situations of war? This involves answering the following questions:

- Who is talking and about whom in a discourse of the needs of people with disabilities?
- What do people discuss in the needs of people with disabilities?
- How do people talking about needs use social media?

The study of the discourse of the needs of PWDs raises connections with previously invisible causes that put a person in a situation of disability. This applies to health problems and bureaucratic procedures that protect a person in a crisis. The situation of war has highlighted the needs of PWDs. In some sense, it opened them to society because of similar needs for humanitarian and social assistance.

2. Methodology

By the request for the YouScan monitoring system, which has access to all social networks, including those that are closed to users in Ukraine 1,200 relevant messages from social networks were collected from social media platforms (Facebook, TikTok, Telegram, Odnoklassniki, Instagram, and VKontakte). A sample of posts includes either open publications or comments on personal profiles that were published in the first half of 2023 with the geolocations "Ukraine". For analysis we used as machine coding with author identifications, demography, time, place of publication etc., and manual coding that was carried out with the following categories identified:

1. PWD`s nosology or vulnerable situation mention in the text
2. Type of author
3. Type of PWD represented in messages
4. The author's attitude to a PWD in the message
5. Sentiments

Quantitative data analysis was combined with discourse analysis to describe the structure of discourses and define communication strategies. Five coders participated in manual coding. They were required to discuss all cases in which they had doubts in a common chat and make a collective decision. This way, homogeneity of approach was achieved.

As an extension of the concepts of media logic, we apply in this research the concept of logic of social networks based on CDA and combine it with ethnographic approaches to digital media connection theory to social technology platforms.

Additionally, we analyzed the geography of distribution, dynamics of the discussion, coverage, and interaction with the messages. In a discussion, we outlined posts by PWDs and

those who support them, specialists in inclusion and disability issues, media representatives, activists promoting the rights of PWDs, and officials.

We use the message analysis methodology to analyze social media messages [5], [24], while most advanced output evaluations also use discourse analysis, which is based on Van Dijk's approaches and Thurman's principles of mixed methods analysis [28], [24].

3. Literature overview

The issue of the mediatization of life was raised by the cultural critic J. Baudrillard in the context of the traditional media functions analysis when he problematized the destruction of living reality by the symbolic [13]. Theorists mostly focused on mediatization of politician activities [12], [14], [27].

Last half-century, the media concept has been intensively debated and expanded to include an unlimited number of objects - clothes, money, consumer products [9], [12], [26], etc. Schultz reconstructs mediatization as a process that reveals the role of media in social change, emphasizing that media exceeds human capacities for information consumption, becomes the primary source of knowledge about social reality, and replaces social activity and social institutions [33]. Hepp, through the proliferation of media, talks about different cultures of mediatization that shape everyday practices through involvement in different communities of media communication [1].

The use of social media by PWDs has focused mainly on socialization. Anderson provides a literature review at scoping review of peer-reviewed literature published between 2000 and 2021 that reported empirical research on social media use, experiences, training and outcomes for adults with intellectual disabilities [25]. Authors emphasize that adults with intellectual disabilities use social media platforms and experience positive outcomes, including feeling more included and valued, as some of the negative impacts include exploitation and bullying [17]. Research on the use and satisfaction of social media for the disabled: “despite that offline inaccessible environment, barriers and prejudices have, to a certain degree, been replicated online” [4]. In analysis based on qualitative interviews Minghao Teng shows that the use of social media by PWDs can empower PWDs so that they can participate in social activities like other people [20]. Mammadova suggest that the use of social media by PWDs facilitates integration, “job search, and opportunities for their influence in society in terms of communication, exchange, and activism” [19]. However, these are “mostly observations based on Western, developed and English-speaking world and different global perspectives are often overlooked” [17].

Mediatization of war studies conceptualizes the variability and flexibility of media technologies as diffusion in media discourse [2]. In media studies, this topic is raised in connection with the investigation of disinformation attacks, fake news, the spread of stereotypes, and hate speech.

Our qualitative research shows that for PWDs in Ukraine, access to social media was almost the only way to keep in touch during the full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation [37]. Thus, in a crisis situation, a person is dependent on the sources of information to which he or she has access, and the specifics of the mediatization of information play a significant role in decision-making and further connectivity. Digital media, and social media as

a part of it, is seen by researchers as an extension of human beings and part of their well-being [18].

In this sense, mediatisation processes should be seen not only as the consequences of a technological threat that creates the illusion of solving the problem through refusal but also as the context in which society is located, when media consumers are not only objects but also subjects of influences, as Dan Gillmore rightly noted in his book “We the Media” [38].

We extend the concepts of media logic by applying the logic of social networks [6], [15], [16] in this research, based on CDA [22] and combining it with ethnographic approaches to digital media [7], connecting theory to social technology platforms [26].

4. Discourse of needs of people with disabilities in SM: structure and dynamics

4.1. Topics of discussion in SM: situations and nosologies.

Monitoring of needs of people with disabilities in SM opened 20 leading themes identified in manual coding that were clearly divided into two subtopics: 1) those that indicate the situation of vulnerability in which a person with a disability finds himself or herself, and 2) those that indicate directly the nosology of the person with a disability whose needs are voiced. The first group comprises 826, the second – 308 from the total coverage of 1200 posts) [39].

The Table 1 shows the distribution of topics in the first subgroup, where a strong connection to the author’s sphere of activities appears.

Table 1

Discussion on situation of vulnerability for PWDs (based on Report “Social media discourse on needs of people with disabilities”) [39].

Situation	Q	Generalized Meanings of the Message
Humanitarian and social assistance	270	Humanitarian aid, evacuation, registration at new places of arrival.
Inclusion and barrier-free environment.	212	Development of an inclusive environment within the framework of international projects.
Access to medical services and medicines.	60	Procedure for undergoing the Medical Commission and report bribery of doctors. They ask for help with treatment, including cancer (women).
Evacuation from danger areas.	51	Announcements from carriers from places of danger: from the occupation and under fire – to other parts of Ukraine and abroad.

Employment	50	Job offers for PWDs (sellers, cashiers, administrators, chat managers of marriage agencies).
Mobilization/demobilization	46	Specifics of the mobilization of disabled people. Stories about soldiers with disabilities at the front and in rehabilitation.
Consequences of the war.	40	Storytelling about the PWDs in current time and in the past, often comparing (Soviet) past and present in favor of the last.
The rehabilitation of veterans and PWDs	29	Government support and NGO programs. Primarily, it concerns soldiers with motor disorders and amputations.
Caring for PWDs	23	Concerned about guardianship of children, adults, and the elderly) when they are traveling abroad, or living in occupation, especially if they do not agree to leave. Highlighted the high cost of caring for a "special" child. In the occupied territories, there are proposals to increase pensions at the expense of "dependents."
Industrial disaster.	23	Willingness to support the victims of the Kakhovka flooding disaster - from the Mykolaiv and Kherson regions.
Legal advice	22	Paperwork, termination of employment, paying taxes, receiving payments for injuries, disability certificates, etc.

The division allows us to outline the communication field regarding the needs of PWDs and to identify actors in different situations of vulnerability.

Only a quarter of the posts indicate a nosology or a human body disorder. The authors of the posts with mention of neologies are mostly persons with disabilities or their guardians. Table 2 shows the range of nosologies, the meaning of the messages, and the genres people

chose to pay attention to their needs. The sphere of the author's can be identified as a guardian or PWD right defenders.

Table 2

Generalized meaning and types of messages with defined nosology (based on the Report "Social media discourse on needs of people with disabilities") [39].

Nosology	Q	Genre of the Message
Immobility	121	Stories about traveling abroad, dating announcements from people with cerebral palsy, and other routines.
Autism	54	Information campaigns, with the same texts being shared by different women, apparently mothers of children with ASD, explaining what autism is, telling illustrative stories about bullying, exclusion from activities with other children, etc.
Congenital developmental disorders	52	Press releases or official announcements.
Amputation of limbs	28	Engaging stories from the military about recovery after rehabilitation or humorous posts
Visual impairment	26	Reposts of ready-to-publish phrases and pictures
Hearing impairment	25	Announcements, videoclips about everyday life
Injuries	2	Personal messages, reposts of personal messages
Autoimmune disease		Personal messages, reposts of personal messages

In general, discussions are held on Facebook, where both persons with disabilities (PWDs) and specialists are active. A notable proportion of the debate occurs on Telegram. Visual content on social media platforms such as Instagram and TikTok is employed by users to disseminate information to individuals with hearing impairments.

The discussion focuses mainly on humanitarian aid and is structured in a positive or neutral way. A common theme is that when a fact about a person with a disability appears in the media, it is presented as a story and is widely disseminated in social media. For example, the opening

of an inclusive coffee shop was widely reported on social media. Less positive stories include several cases of alleged bribery, abuse of status, and spreading false or disinformation about resource mobilisation and attitudes towards persons with disabilities (PWDs). Offensive language is used in some posts with political connotations, including criticism of the Ukrainian authorities.

Official sources and national media utilise social media platforms to disseminate content to their target audiences, while activists conduct information campaigns and online flash mobs with the use of hashtags. Authors on Vkontakte and Odnoklassniki represent SM users that spread Russian propaganda posts prepared for the occupied territories, where Russian authorities offer social services and evacuation to PWDs. Women speak more and not only for themselves; men speak primarily for themselves. Communities speak on behalf of PWDs and organisations working in the interests of PWDs [39].

The map of communication on the needs of PWDs covers all regions of Ukraine, as well as abroad. Traditionally, regions with cities with a population of over a million people (Kyiv, Lviv, Odesa, Dnipro, Kharkiv), which had a more developed infrastructure for supporting PWDs before the war, were more involved in communication. Once people move, they bring a social media connection with themselves. We see posts from countries that are host to refugees from Ukraine - Poland, Germany, Czech Republic, Romania, Lithuania, USA, Canada, Moldova, and Russia. Users in other countries also shared supportive posts or news useful for displaced people (Estonia, Lithuania, Germany, Poland, Romania).

In the regions, topics on evacuations from dangerous areas situated by location (Kherson, Kharkiv, Zaporizhzhya, Dnipro, Donetsk regions) or by hosting location where PWDs can be accepted (Kyiv, Vinnytsia, Lviv, Rivne, Volyn) [39].

4.2. Dynamics and calendar of newsworthy events Authors and affiliations

The dynamics of the discussion are closely linked to the war or to the calendar events. The issue of the physical accessibility of urban space and public places is gaining momentum, especially in the areas of restoration and construction. The only spike in bad news coincides with the first anniversary of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Overall, news with a positive tone maintains the general trend. Educational topics with public awareness to pay attention to people with specific nosology of disabilities (ASD, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, etc.) appear on the occasion of UN or Ukrainian official dates (Figure 1).

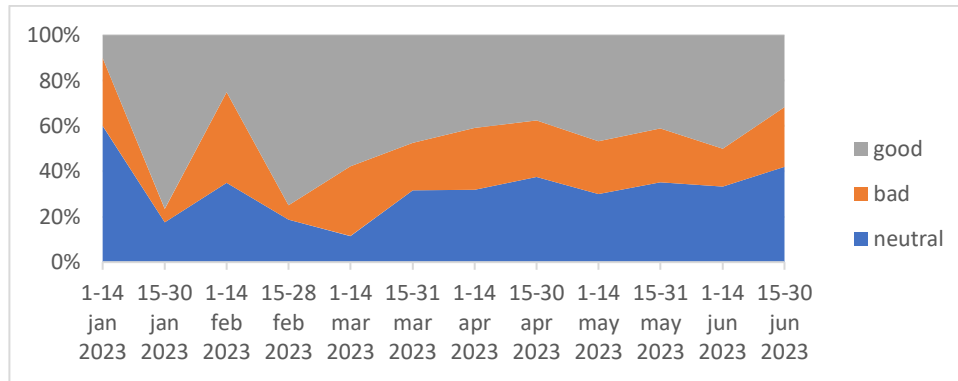


Figure 1: Dynamics of sentiment in discussing the needs of PWDs in the first half of 2023 (based on Report “Social media discourse on needs of people with disabilities”) [39].

The public's attention to the needs of people with disabilities is linked to the calendar of events (holidays and special dates). On the one hand, this reflects the rhythm of a person with a disability, which is quite self-contained and complex to distract from immediate health problems. When military events cause anxiety, fear, or anger in the discussion, calendar dates act as anchors, helping people structure reality with its uncertainty and mobilise for current, habitual action.

In mid-January, with the celebrations of World Braille Day (4 January 2023), Christmas and the Old New Year (7-14 January 2023), there is a peak of good news. After the 16th of January there was an increase in negativity, especially after a rocket hit a civilian building in Dnipro, where the family of a girl who has not spoken since birth was unable to call for help (Dnipro - we are from Ukraine, dp). Negative attitudes reached a peak in the middle of February and have been decreasing. Since February, the emotional background has continued to grow and to be reinforced. Since the beginning of March, stories of IDPs' return to life in the de-occupied territories (Izyum, East-West Hub), in new locations, activities for children (Dnipro), and reports of the receipt of aid have been disseminated as good news.

Since mid-March, there has been a high percentage of negative sentiments from people with disabilities regarding the Medical Commission and the rehabilitation period. There have been posts about indifference and the consequences of bad treatment. On 21 March, the Day of the Person with Down Syndrome keeps things positive for a time. Links to advertising sites or garbage sites with click-bite stories about the beating of a man with a disability, about a defender without a leg who was denied recognition as a person with a disability, etc., ensure a descent into negativity.

More posts about autism for World Autism Day from 2 April spreading by activists and communities. Celebrities (Potap, Maneken, Solomiya Vitvitska, Oleg Vinnik, Alina Pash, Zhenya Galich, Iryna Horova, Andriy Khlyvnyuk and Onuka) took part in a media campaign to debunk myths about autism. Since April 2023, there have been posts about the reform of the Medical Commission for PWDs (with reference to Prime Minister D. Shmyhal), which have resonance.

Easter is celebrated on the 30th of April with greetings and traditions by people with disabilities, the World Mobility Day is dedicated to accessibility (Sergey Valeryevich Tyutyunik) and mentioned by activists. The Reconciliation Day of the WWII (8 May) celebrated by

Ukrainians who are on controlled territories and Victory Day (9 May, barbecue) are celebrated by PWDs who are on occupied territories of Ukraine. Negativity manifests itself in stories about the issuance of summonses to people with disabilities - "a man without a weapon was issued with a summons" (VK, Pofig normality); such contributions bear the hallmarks of Russian propaganda. At that time, the discussion about the participation of Russian Paralympians in world sports competitions ("base of Ukrainian sports") also provoked negative feedback.

As we can see in the communication of the needs of people with disabilities, the message is the need through which other participants in the communication - both people with and without disabilities - express themselves. Important dates frame the discourse of the needs of people with disabilities with additional connotations - 'respect for human dignity' (positive) and 'unfair treatment of people with disabilities' (negative). The latter is used by Russian propaganda to keep in touch with subscribers on occupied territories.

5. Person with disabilities in SM: images and actors

People with disabilities are portrayed in social media messages from relatives and friends in a variety of ways: as sick individuals, those who endure suffering, and as heroic figures. Furthermore, the term "sick" is predominantly associated with positive connotations. The exploitation of emotions for the purpose of evoking empathy for an individual with a disability by portraying them as a sick person, a sufferer, or a hero is a prevalent practice, particularly in the context of personal posts. In messages with geographic locations on occupied territories, people with disabilities are often depicted as marginalised. However, this portrayal often serves to reinforce a normative characterisation of individuals who do not have disabilities (Figure 2).

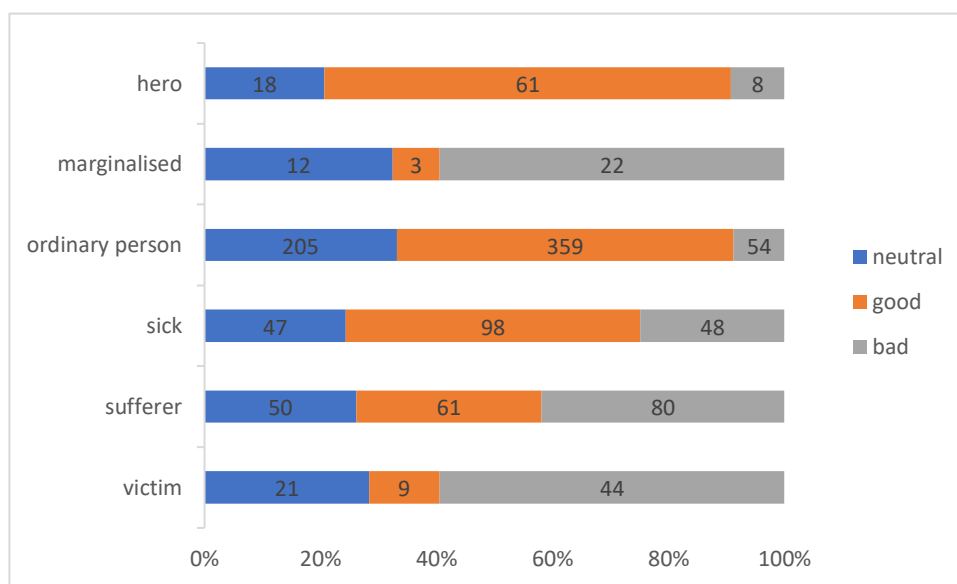


Figure 2: Attitudes towards PWDs in SM (based on the Report "Social media discourse on needs of people with disabilities") [39].

In the discourse of need, there are three types of PWDs that are in the focus of SM users attention:

- people with disability that is a result of the war – due to the participation in hostilities or as a result of rocket attacks (activates general volunteers, has a broader reach);
- people who had disability before the war (discussions in bubbles of specific communities - autism, cerebral palsy, societies of the blind, deaf, etc.);
- somebody who want to get the status of disability to avoid mobilisation or going abroad (mostly men discuss).

The terms "disabled", "retarded" and "down" are employed in a pejorative manner, albeit not in reference to PWDs, but rather to denigrate others or to predict the future of an individual who may encounter adversity ("you will become disabled"). This includes instances of indifference to their development, including language learning, whereby they are labelled as "disabled because they do not know the language" or "let's all laugh together at the disabled person without a jaw".

5.1. Demography characteristics of person with disabilities in SM

Categories of PWDs represented in SM. Because of the war, children and the military are given special attention. Speaking for themselves, active adults mostly visible on social media. Positive connotations refer to persons, negative to circumstances (war, destruction, service, etc.). Less attention is paid to covering civilian women, men and the elderly.

As we see, the war frames attention of SM users. Bribery and the use of disability status to avoid the army have negative connotations. Announcements about social services provided by the state, civil society organisations or volunteers are neutral (Figure 3).

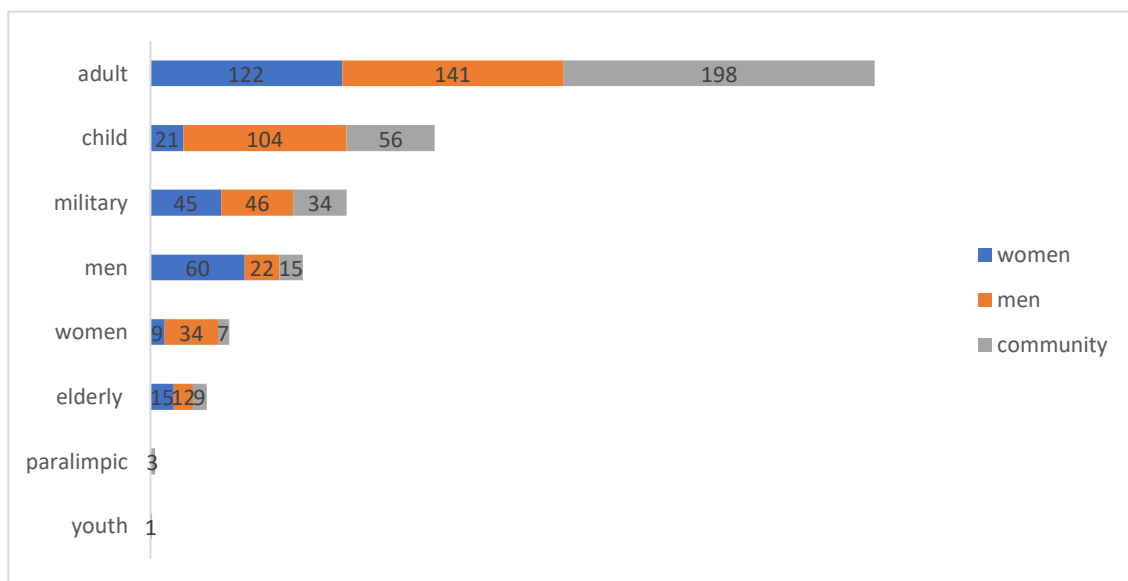


Figure 3: Relation between objects of messages and authors based on Report “Social media discourse on needs of people with disabilities”) [39].

Men speak primarily for themselves; women speak not only for themselves but on behalf of their children, relatives, or friends. Communities speak on behalf of PWDs and as organizations working in the interests of PWDs. The discussion is mainly framed in positive or neutral terms.

Let's take a closer look at the discussion of the defined categories and articulated needs (Table 3):

Table 3

PWDs categories and needs [39].

Categories	Needs
Adults	Communication, medication, support, physical access. They criticize enemy, initiate some activities, ask for money etc.
Children	They need help and care. Stories of those injured by shelling rise to the top. For example, the story of the first child to have an amputation as a result of the war has gone viral in TikTok.
Military men	Raising funds for prosthetic limbs for heroes (Instagram), collecting for crutches and medicine for the hospital, mentioning the injuries that led to the disability, undergoing medical examinations, bribes to prolong the disability, etc.
Military women.	Injuries and treatment. There was a viral news in FB groups with a frame of criticism of the authorities looks like a fake news about mobilisation of a woman who has a family and a husband with a disability after the ATO (Judge Rico Dredd, 1172 comments).
Men Civilians	Ask for help because of job loss, write about the passing of the commission, about the illegal delivery of summonses to boys with disabilities and about the passing of the

		commission or the avoidance of mobilisation.	
	Women civilians	There is a story of a woman with a disability being used to get her husband registered as a guardian for travel abroad.	
	`Elderly people	They are worried about getting evacuated, about bureaucratic problems such as getting pensions and making wills.	
As we different with have needs, and	Paralympians	Recognition for their victories in competitions, which should help to keep the Ukrainian spirit alive.	see people disabilities diverse

communication with them on social media platforms can be easily targeted.

5.2. Communication actors in discourse about the needs of PWDs

The following types of actors appear as active participants in communication: guardians, media representatives, government officials, specialists in medical, legal, psychological, etc. support, and activists. The authors of posts or speakers representing communities or institutions, guardians of persons with disabilities, media representatives, government officials, specialists and activists. The person with a disability acts as an author in social media, and he or she objectifies himself or herself through his or her needs.

Let us consider separately the activity of authors and speakers in the discourse, as it mention in a report [39].

Specialists (420 relevant posts) - psychologists, educators, lawyers, and attorneys - use the advertising model of communication with algorithms aimed to reach their target audiences by preparing clickable visual content and supporting it with texts, voice, and effects. Educators communicate more intensively than others and drive an inclusive agenda (provision of educational services, training for working with children with disabilities, and the creation of an inclusive environment). There are specialists who developed their channels before the war, and they're continuing to develop and communicate more effectively and credibly. Advocates and lawyers, even if they never work with PWDs before are seizing the opportunity to expand their client base on the issues of war and displacement [8].

Media representatives. (357 relevant posts). The media are eager to cover sensational stories. The provision of social services and financial support is in demand (Ukraine today - Money, this publication has information in both Ukrainian and Russian). Inclusion is a "promoted" issue, mainly related to educational initiatives in schools, and has received national media coverage by involving officials (Olena Zelenska) and celebrities (Potap, Onuka, etc.). Some media sources cover military personnel who have been disabled in combat, thus increasing the overall number of people with disabilities in Ukrainian society, which contributes to a rethinking of their role in society and attracts the attention to their needs (TSN). In some

resources, persons with disabilities are not on the agenda unless they have to do with military affairs (Pryamyi, Espresso.TV). Media reports are often provided due to the presence of government or local authorities representatives.

While the national media cover common themes, the regional media present more diverse stories about the employment of PWD and other social projects. Humanitarian aid, social and medical services, motivational activities and stories about the consequences of the war were discussed in pro-Ukrainian media. In pro-Russian media on occupied territories people with disabilities are more often portrayed as victims with claims against the authorities or enemies (Ukrainians, in their opinions) as PR or propaganda content.

Activists (121 relevant posts). Activists and NGO representatives communicate horizontally, usually provide information about needs in the general framework of war events (Kakhovka dam blast, shelling, evacuation, occupation). It is still expected to see the use of inaccurate terms such as "vulnerable groups of people", "disabled people" and euphemisms such as "little Bakhmutians" (children from Bakhmut, Donetsk region), "children of the sun" (Children with Down's Syndrome), "inclusive people" (meaning people who has needs for inclusion) and "special children" (children with special educational needs). Activists respond supportively to effective action taken by the officials, and keep their channels informed. Businesses act as civil society activists and focus on implementing accessibility (providing a safe space, installing a ramp, organising inclusive centre, etc.) [8].

A person with a disability. (120 relevant posts). People with disabilities communicate as horizontally as using advertisement models. Mostly, they create and share content mainly to announce the need for help with treatment or vital support (food, clothing, equipment). Clear articulation of needs makes interaction in social media effective. Ones interact for help, communicate, get to know each other, and share knowledge and situations. Other people with disabilities are developing their channels to play online games remotely and organize events (mostly people with cerebral palsy). Some posts show signs of paid desperation stories used to attract attention or to promote certain medications. But in the Occupied Territories, they write about the lack of payments, pensions and social benefits. It is obvious that they do not have enough access to information there [39].

Guardians of persons with disabilities. (98 relevant posts). It was not that easy to differentiate this group from the activists, but they are mostly relatives or friends of PWDs. They write about their children, wounded soldiers, or relatives who can't be able to publish on their own. The Guardians also write about themselves, especially about how much they get burnt out. However, it is not a lot, and even though the topic is seen in a positive light in the bubble of a colleagues who are commenting their posts: 'you can rest a little', 'you are entitled', 'you have given authority to those you trust'. The discussion reveals certain topics with a high potential for questioning the officials and promoting lobbying for certain solutions. Among others, the topic of weapons was raised by the guardian of a disabled ex-serviceman, and this topic shows potential for further speculations [39].

Officials. (63 relevant posts). Officials' posts are limited to texts and disseminate it in a propaganda way, spreading the same materials through sources they can reach without any specific targeting [39]. Despite the war, some officials, following the Soviet tradition, are trying to promote themselves. The war catalyses the involvement of officials to social media and even inspired to carry out projects necessary in the situation. The news have mostly positive connotations. Mayors, heads of local authorities, heads of departments and members of

parliament are in personal contact. Their knotting businesses, international organisations, volunteers in news agenda. Government officials' communication is largely reactive - reports and responses to challenges. They often abuse the means of expression, turning those who have to do their job into heroes (the communicators of the Servant of the One Party, for example, include showy portraits of officials in publications about the evacuation). The authors of posts or speakers representing communities or institutions, guardians of persons with disabilities, media representatives, government officials, specialists and activists. The person with a disability acts as an author in social media, and he or she objectifies himself or herself through his or her needs.

5.3. Double mediatization as a specific communication effect in discourse of needs of PWDs in SM

The needs of PWDs mediatized in SM discourse on two levels.

On the first level, the mediatization effect is based on technology features. It appears in three strategies:

- usual media chain: a media outlet or NGO posts the news on its online platform and promotes it on social media, where subscribers share it (mostly Ukraine);
- connection in communities by nosology - PWDs, relatives of people with ASD, Down syndrome (Ukraine and EU Countries);
- individual communication by PWDs or specialists who use different strategies depends on their social capital and resources (Ukraine, Russia and other countries).

The efficacy of interaction is contingent upon the interpretation of messages in conjunction with sentiments.

The meaning of the message pushes **the second level of effects**. The person with disabilities and the needs of PWDs are instrumentalized as a message to channel communication between the author and target groups. Authors construct the message to evoke emotions, and a person with a disability becomes a 'picture' to attract the attention of media audiences. Social media connectivity determines the possibilities of further communication. Back in the early days of sociological research, Gallup noted that when people answer interview questions, they try to impress the interviewer by showing the best version of themselves [10]. This effect also works on social media, and the topic of the needs of PWDs is a fertile ground for presenting qualities (empathy in particular) that will ensure a good reputation for the speaker. The instrumentalization of needs and emotions becomes an opportunity for those who want to attract attention, and they are not necessarily PWDs.

Actors use communication strategies according to their social capital and skills as SM users ().

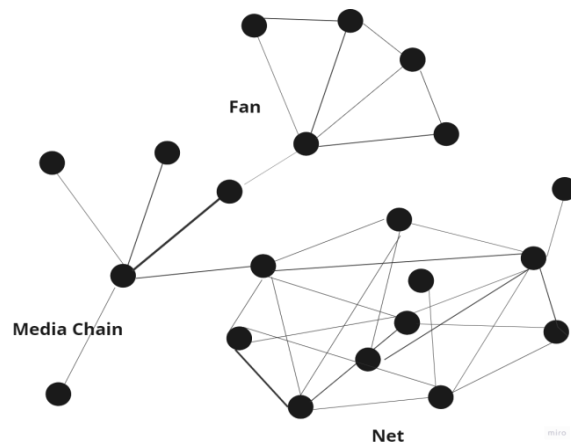


Figure 4: SM communication strategies in discourse of needs of people with disabilities in SM.

Media representatives and officials use the media chain strategy having access to the sources of information and influencers. Specialists and activists mostly use the fan strategy being trusted by people with disabilities, they provide specific rules and promote communication ethics. The net strategy is used by PWDs and their guardians. It is quite a close circle of communicators but being recognizable by the media or officials they shape the agenda. Media chains strategy is a more efficient strategy in terms of coverage, but community nets are more sustainable, i.e., they motivate repeat requests and develop personal communication. All these strategies work together in a discourse, as shown in a model.

6. Conclusions

The discourse of the media about people with disabilities during the war is not just a field of informing about needs, but also a space for shaping culture and new meanings of communication. The effectiveness of disseminating these meanings (empathy, compassion, help) is emotionally driven. The author of the message controls the discourse, and activated emotional triggers determine the value perception of the message.

PWDs are active in SM communication. They create messages, share them and give interviews to the media. Ukraine's SM environment allows them to have a free expression of opinions, and we see it in posts geolocated by Ukraine-controlled territories. PWDs on occupied territories write less about their experiences, less about everyday life, and focus exclusively on pensions, other social benefits, and bureaucratic procedures. Discussions in this situation serve a propagandistic or PR function on the part of individual influencers. Consequently, there is a dearth of information, and access to sources of information and exchange for PWDs is limited in the occupied territories.

Ukrainian society demonstrates a clear awareness of needs of PWDs and inclusion, with news stories openly discussing problems, giving PWDs a platform to speak, and consulting experts on the matter. There are no discernible boundaries between individuals with and without disabilities within society. By concentrating on removing obstacles, those with disabilities are not sidetracked by political agendas and do not expend time on disagreements. Such circumstances also engender greater resilience to disinformation. Those who care for

PWDs and those who sympathize with them appear to be particularly susceptible to Russian propaganda, which often employs disinformation and reinforces negative sentiments about the future, the indifference of society, and the government, as well as criticism of corruption in reconstruction efforts. However, these criticisms are not always entirely unfounded.

The discourse on the needs of persons with disabilities (PWDs) is militarised. The protection of human rights during wartime is primarily focused on the male population. The extent to which topics related to the needs of a person with a disability are covered depends on their involvement in hostilities.

While the visibility of persons with disabilities is increased in the media due to wounded soldiers, the topic of the needs of persons with disabilities is not always presented convincingly. Rather, it tends to be presented as a temporary consequence of the war that affects only those who participated in hostilities, and thus is not given the same degree of scrutiny as the needs of other groups, such as children and the military. Additionally, women and the elderly attract less attention than children and the military, despite women being more active in the conflict zone, acting as guardians, volunteers, and so forth, which further diminishes their representation.

It is noteworthy that the subsequent examination of discourse pertaining to the requirements of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in 2024 substantiates the patterns of mediatisation identified for 2023. However, there is a discernible decline in the involvement of PWDs in communication, while the provision of services is on the rise. This includes the utilisation of disability or a person with a disability as a pretext for those who are reluctant to be mobilised.

In the discourse on the needs of people with disabilities (PWD), a phenomenon that may be described as a "double mediatisation effect" emerges. The message's meaning (in relation to the identified needs) is conveyed in a performative and multimodal manner within the context of social media (SM). On the one hand, the media serves to highlight important issues affecting PWDs and facilitate connections between them. On the other hand, the media channels dedicate attention to the resources available to PWDs, particularly children and military personnel, in order to increase the clickbait value of posts by focusing societal attention on these categories. Images of a person with a disability as a victim are employed by Russian propaganda in the occupied territories, exemplifying the disposition towards a person with a disability within a paternalistic framework as afflicted and victimized by the Ukrainian "regime." The subject of the needs of PWDs presents both an opportunity for the integration of PWDs and a domain for media speculation.

It is evident that there is a necessity to develop principles and policies for engaging with stakeholders on such intricate subjects. The adherence to the principles of universal design and the implementation of inclusion in educational and construction projects can serve as a conduit for communication, fostering cooperation between persons with disabilities (PWDs), organizations that advocate on their behalf, businesses, and journalists. In light of the impact of mediatization, it is imperative to formulate tailored policies and agreements concerning the importance of personal data protection, the prevention of hate speech, and the mitigation of ordinary populism. The portrayal of PWDs in the media can become a powerful symbol, influencing media agendas and advertising, which may not always be beneficial for them. The topic of military personnel with disabilities is similarly complex. It is, therefore, valuable to consider the current version of the Ethics of Public Speaking about PWDs and communication

policies not only in the educational sphere. The results of the study of the mediatization of the discourse on the needs of PWDs can be extrapolated to further discussion and can be applied to research on the representation of the needs of other vulnerable groups in society.

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