Coercion as a type of political diffusion: cognitive-ideological model of reception

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Abstract: Crises in relations between countries are an important factor of 'disseminating' (diffusion) of new ideological values and attitudes through sanctions or strategies of 'soft power'. The research result is the developed model of cognitive-ideological reception of coercive political diffusion. Its elements are the system of ideas, the means of cognitive activity, and the system of diffuse networks connecting the 'recipients' and the 'donors'. The research is significant for developing the state policy methodology, determining the character of diffuse networks as a communicator of coercion and a 'soft power' resource and correlation between explicit and implicit processes and their characteristics. **Keywords:** anti-censure; coercion; international relations; sanctions; 'soft power'.

1. Introduction

Today, the world is becoming more and more open; a global community is being developed; a global system of network links, communications and information streams is being formed. At the global level, a constant process of exchanging ideas, values, and resources is going on. All this can be depicted as endless spontaneous, almost chaotic, diffuse movement. Especially interesting are the world leading political players' attempts to 'manage' the chaos, the desire of the 'core states' to dominate by using different variants of 'soft power' or even coercion. Researchers in this sphere of international relations are most of all interested in finding efficient strategies of using 'soft power' and the motives for choosing it as a toll of foreign policy (Gallarotti 2011). We consider it promising to research the forms combining the hard and soft powers and to reconsider such object of their application as forming the political agenda (Rothman 2011).

The notion of political diffusion has been rather comprehensively studied; to a lesser extent, the same is true for the processes of political diffusion management. Coercion as a type of political diffusion is rather insufficiently studied. All this predetermined the research interest towards the topic. The novelty of the research consists in considering reception as a set of cognitive-ideological processes. In a broader context, coercion is often viewed as a forceful resource of management, used by the leading countries for expanding their influences on other countries and promoting their own interests.

A new round of escalation of tension in Russia's relations with many leading countries was marked by a topical, widely discussed issue in the sphere of international relations – consequences of anti-Russian sanction policy implemented by the US and many European states due to returning of the Crimea to Russia in 2014. As for the results of the sanction regime, there are different opinions in the academic circles. Some scholars believe that all countries involved into sanction will suffer, but Russia will suffer relatively more, and the USA and the EU less. The sanctions of the European Union have a larger influence on Russia than the US sanctions; at the same time, the Russian countersanctions will have larger influence on the EU. From economic viewpoint, the optimal choice for the USA and the EU is to eliminate the anti-Russian sanctions. The countries to win are those staying outside the sanction game (Dong and Chunding 2018). Other scholars fully approve of the anti-Russian sanctions because of the Ukrainian conflict and the alleged Russian intervention into the USA presidential elections in

2016, which allows the USA to impose broad economic influence without introducing an economic embargo (Crabb 2018).

Both in Russia and in other countries, sanctions are discussed, first of all, in regard to the economic losses born by Russia. However, the consequences can be much deeper, penetrating to the levels of public consciousness. Indicative is the opinion of American citizens polled in August 2018. During escalation of tension in American-Russian relations due to the alleged Russia's intervention into the USA elections, the Americans, nevertheless, believed that it was more important to make efforts to improve the USA-Russia relations (58%), than to take strong diplomatic and economic steps against Russia (36%). It should be mentioned, however, that this ration was 76–20% in 1994, for example (More in U.S. Favor…).

Crises in relations between countries are one of the crucial factors of 'disseminating' (diffusing) new ideological values and attitudes. Attitudes of the youth are especially subject to influence, easy to change and unstable, as they are in the period of formation; however, it is they that determine the future trends of public development. Youth's conscience is unstructured and amorphous, any external influence may not only lead to changing the ideological world outlook, but to its radicalization, which may provoke extremist behavior of the youth and lead to destabilization of the political system.

The research hypothesis is correlation between cognitive principles, ideological attitudes and the level of reception of politics under coercion.

The research objective is to conceptualize the notion of coercion as a type of political diffusion, to characterize the main features of 'coercive' diffusion, to describe the cognitive and ideological indicators of its reception at institutional level and at the level of public and group conscience, to estimate the diffusion network as a media for disseminating coercive political diffusion, and to represent the results in the form of a descriptive model.

The research tasks are:

• to consider coercion as a type of political diffusion by the example of sanction policy case;

• to estimate coercion as an external factor influencing the state of affairs and the internal policy agenda of states by the example of Russia;

• to determine the character of diffusion networks as a communication media for transferring the coercive policy and implementing the 'soft power' resource;

• to conceptualize the notion of 'reception of coercive political diffusion' from the viewpoint of cognitive approach, to establish the links of this notion with ideological preferences and individual world outlook system of the policy followers;

• to determine the ratio of explicit and implicit processes and states;

• to elaborate a cognitive-ideological model of reception based on empirical research of group and individual public conscience.

2. Methods

To conceptualize the notion of coercion as a type of political diffusion, we applied the theory of diffusion and the network scientific approach. Conceptualization of the notion 'reception of coercive political diffusion' is based on the theory of cognitive heuristics and the conception of diffuse networks. To construct a model of cognitive-ideological reception, we used description technique. The model of cognitive-ideological reception was elaborated on the basis of empirical research of group and individual conscience and operationalization of the concepts 'ideological preferences and attitudes' into the notion of reception.

The model of cognitive-ideological reception was constructed on the basis of empirical data describing the cognitive-ideological matrices of reception of consequences and capabilities of the Russian sanction crisis by students. Sociological research methods were applied: a series of group interviews was performed; the results were processed with quality analysis and content analysis methods.

The author's notion of cognitive-ideological matrix enables, based on the monitoring results since 2014, to study the attitude of students to crisis phenomena through the prism of cognitive ideological self-identification, taking into account operationalization of such concepts as 'freedom', 'equality', 'nation', 'human rights', 'free market', 'migrants'. Special attention was paid to preparedness to act in a crisis situation; this required applying narrative approach, enabling to analyze the implicit cognitive concepts and hidden ideological attitudes. The secondary sociological analysis was used to represent the studied phenomena in the pubic conscience.

3. Results and discussion

The research result is the developed model of cognitive-ideological reception of coercive political diffusion, which reveals its manifestation at three levels: political-administrative, group, and individual. The model elements are the system of ideas, the means of cognitive activity, and the system of diffuse networks connecting the 'recipients' and the 'donors'. The notion of diffuse networks was conceptualized as a means of communication for disseminating coercion; the normative, informational and institutional network links were defined; capabilities of network media as communicators and mediators in policy diffusion were evaluated.

Difference was defined between the character of reception of political leaders and reception of citizens at the level of group and individual conscience. It was proved that the choice of policy to borrow is determined by the leaders' ideology; their diffusion channels are mainly institutional. Individual representatives of elite groups may be under individual sanctions and direct address influence; in this case, the resource of coercive pressure on them is their capitals in foreign banks. Reception at the level of public opinion formation is carried out mainly through communication channels and personal experience, while the influence of institutions in this case will be indirect.

We revealed the techniques for impeding dissemination of coercion through network diffusion, which are used by the government of the state under sanctions. Also, we considered the factors impeding dissemination of coercion in the system of network communities. These are echo-chamber effects, bubble filters, anti-censure.

We estimate the heuristic potential of the model of cognitive-ideological reception in order to build prognostic scenarios of internal political situation development under the influence of external political factors both in the form of explicit pressure and as a result of using 'soft power' by the example of youth issues.

To perform a series of group interviews, we chose students of a number of universities in the south of Russia. In a stable situation, it would be more appropriate to study the type of diffusion called 'teaching' by the example of students' groups; however, for analysis we chose the case of the crisis situation formed in Russia due to sanctions, thus creating the communicative situation of 'coercion'. As a result, we obtain the collective estimation of the influence produced by the sanction crisis on the specter of preferences in the conscience of youth in the studied sample.

The key thesis under analysis of scientific discourse is the concept of cognitive-ideological model of reception, which can be formulated as follows. The cognitive-ideological model of coercive reception of political diffusion consists of cognitive conceptions, related

ideological attitudes and diffuse networks acting as channels for the policies dissemination. The reception process is searching for or perception of the information imposed on political leaders or public opinion.

Coercion as a type of political diffusion

Within the studied area, the most disputable issue is whether coercion is one of the mechanisms of political diffusion. Martino Maggetti and Fabrizio Gilardi (2016) in their work 'Problems (and solutions) in the measurement of policy diffusion mechanisms', having analyzed 114 publications, classified the mechanisms of politics dissemination into three large categories: learning, emulation, and competition. They did not include coercion into the list, contrary to other authors who view coercion as a policy carried out under the influence of powerful states or international organizations, like the European Union (Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier 2004) and World Bank or International Monetary Fund (Mukherjee and Singer 2010), stemming from the assumption that no actors coordinate dissemination of policy, though admitting that coercion may influence policy formation.

There is a different point of view. In his work 'Transnational Diffusion: Norms, Ideas, and Policies', Fabrizio Gilardi (2012) calls coercion one of the mechanisms of policy diffusion alongside with learning, emulation, and competition. Dobbin, Simmons, and Garrett (2007) also view coercion as a part of diffusion process. Gilardi gives the following definition of coercion: 'Coercion is the imposition of a policy by powerful international organizations or countries; competition means that countries influence one another because they try to attract economic resources; learning means that the experience of other countries can supply useful information on the likely consequences of a policy; and emulation means that the normative and socially constructed characteristics of policies matter more than their objective consequences' (Gilardi 2012, p. 461). He contrasts coercion with competition, under which countries influence each other trying to attract economic resources. Coercion implies that international organizations and powerful countries may exert pressure on other states so that they adopt a certain policy. A typical coercive resource is conditionality: to obtain access to certain sources, national governments must observe the particular requirements of international institutions. Learning means that other countries may give useful information about the probable consequences of the policy; emulation means that the normative and socially constructed characteristics of policies matter more than their objective consequences (Gilardi 2012, p. 461).

A number of works are dedicated to comparing various types of diffusion processes through their alternative models (Zhou 2019). Comparing the alternative models of coercion, learning, emulation, and competition, one may estimate the role of international organizations in diffusion processes (Sommerer and Tallberg 2019). Analysis of the mechanisms of policy dissemination at the local level showed the following: learning is characteristic to new followers of the policy, competition is most often characteristic to the nearest cities, emulation is used by larger cities, while coercion is used by the governments of states (Shipan and Volden 2008).

Political character of diffusion is analyzed in the work 'The Politics of Policy Diffusion' (Gilardi and Wasserfallen 2018). According to F. Gilardi, the problem setting and the need to reflect it in the political agenda refer to a rare object of influence for diffusion – the initial stage of political cycle. By the example of sanctions imposition, we may see how the leading European countries and the USA try to influence the early stage of political cycle, when the problem is being realized and the strategy of its solution is starting to be elaborated. This is an understudied diffusion process fully reflecting its political character.

At the initial stage of political cycle, especially topical is the problem of policy legitimation, or support. Boushey (2016) believes that policy is disseminated quicker if it is formulated to correspond the stereotypes – people's ideas about political advantages. Gilardi et

al. (2018) point out that the way of formulating policy depends on how deep it penetrates into the diffusion networks of the particular state. Their main conclusion is that normative frames (frames substantiating policy support or counteraction) are much less sensitive to diffusion than the frames focused on the practical aspects of policy, like law-enforcement.

In support of this thesis, one should admit that the policy of Western sanctions, though damaging the Russian economy, had no political effect, as it did not make the Russian government change its position on disputable issues and its internal political course according to the expectations of the sanctions' initiators. Russia already had the experience of preventing the export of 'colored revolutions' (Koesel and Bunce 2013). Economic measures were taken to enhance the economic independence of Russia and protecting its political interests.

As for the practical politics, namely, the social sphere and public opinion, diffusion disseminates there according to its own laws and through different communication channels. Here, attention is focused not on the direct coercion from abroad, but on perception of this process by the public opinion, which is essentially indirect. At this level, of interest is transformation of coercion into learning, as there are no mechanisms of direct pressure on group and individual public opinion, and attempts to impose such pressure have negligible result.

Cognitive elements of the diffusion model

The cognitive elements of the diffusion model can be described through the concept of cognitive heuristics. Cognitive heuristics is defined as heuristics used for making decisions or forming attitudes. Heuristics is any empirical rule used for making decisions; sometimes, it is also interpreted as the simplified methods of making judgments. In regard to ideology, these issues are considered in the work 'Ideology, Motivated Reasoning, and Cognitive Reflection' by Dan M. Kahan (2012). The author defines motivated reasoning as a form of processing information which rationally promotes the people's interests in forming and maintaining their attitudes.

Of interest is the block of publications in cognitive heuristics revealing the mechanism of making decisions both by politicians and citizens in the diffuse process (Weyland 2012). At the same time, there are critical estimations of the concept of cognitive heuristics. Richard R. Lau and David P. Redlawsk (2001) express doubt and consider insufficiently grounded the assumption that cognitive heuristics improves the ability for decision-making in ordinary voters. They attempted to substantiate the thesis that cognitive heuristics is from time to time used by almost all voters and that they are more likely to be used when the situation of choice is complex. Using heuristics usually increases the probability of correct voting in the voters who are experts in politics, but decreases the probability of correct voting in novices.

K. Weyland (2006a) views cognitive heuristics as a type of decision-making by the example of a particular case of pension reform. He researches the issue of whether the national leaders searched for appropriate information and processed it in a systematical and balanced way, or relied on cognitive simplifications which accidentally attracted their attention and distorted their judgment. K. Weyland believes that coercion as a form of 'the cross-national spread of innovations raises three major issues that speak to the basic question of rationality in politics, namely, external imposition vs. domestic autonomy; normative and symbolic vs. utilitarian motivations; and comprehensive vs. bounded rationality' (Weyland 2006b).

K. Weyland also views the issues of cognitive heuristics by the example of another case – healthcare reform. He proved that, though external pressure facilitated the healthcare reform, cognitive heuristics influenced that process significantly. The experts and the persons making decisions did not attempt to study the international situation or systematically and thoroughly estimate foreign innovations, as it requires comprehensive rationality. Instead, limited rationality prevailed.

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Various authors analyze the issue of contradictions appearing due to the variants of heuristic strategies and circumstances, which lead to applying several potentially competing heuristics when making complex decisions (Huckfeldt et al. 2005). It was found that citizens apply different heuristic techniques when forming judgments and evaluating political candidates and political issues. Practice showed that the respondents systematically demonstrate confusion in regard to specific combinations of ideological and problem heuristics, i.e. difficulties in finding criteria to estimate candidates. R. Huckfeldt asserts that political environment changes both the accessibility of some heuristic strategies and the steadiness of association in memory. Hence, the ability of citizens to choose heuristics is determined by the larger environment of the received information.

Bruce A. Desmarais, Jeffrey J. Harden and Frederick J. Boehmke (2015) attempted to prove that states use a set of heuristics to adopt policies based on viewing the actions of other states as sources of information; these can be neighboring states, states with similar characteristics, or states with larger resources. The authors claim that it is possible to distinguish various effects on diffuse policy of leaders and followers. States with large resources can process more information and make larger-scale political decisions. The authors showed that ideology plays a decisive role in choosing the types of policy the states strive to adopt. States prefer the policies adopted by ideologically similar states compared to ideologically differing states, as the former have more chances to correspond to the preferences of their citizens.

Ideological elements of the diffusion model

Most of the authors researching the ideological aspect recognize the exceptional importance of the ideological element as a resource of influence, emulation, and pressure in the diffusion process. Whether a state will copy the policy of other states largely depends on the information about the ideological preferences of the states – previous followers (Grossback et al. 2004). Also, learning is the way to disseminate the ideologically oriented policy adopted already by ideologically similar states (Butler and Pereira 2018, Volden et al. 2008).

According to Gilardi and Wasserfallen (2018), Gilardi et al. (2018), in all types of political diffusion during political decision-making, a significant role is played by ideology, namely, ideological preferences of political leaders making the key strategic decisions at all stages of political cycle: stating the problem, determining the agenda, adopting the policy, implementation, and assessment. Besides, one should take into account the context in which decisions are made; a lot depends on the current phase of electoral cycle and the electoral rhetoric.

Daniel M. Butler and Miguel M. Pereira (2018) showed that ideology influences on whether a state would copy the policy adopted by another state, judging by the internal political situation. When a policy is approved by party members, state officials will more probably consider the possibility of its implementation, and additional information on policy does not reduce such bias (Nicholson-Crotty and Carley 2018).

D.M. Butler, C. Volden, A.M. Dynes and B. Shor (2017) found that ideological preferences of the politicians, who do not accept a certain policy for ideological reasons and do not want to learn from others, may change under the influence of a policy success or its adoption by partisans in other communities. A similar bias exists among traditional ideological proponents who are less eager to learn from their ideological opponents.

Another block of publications are devoted to the influence of economy on distribution of political views. The participants of the Symposium on Global Diffusion of Public Policies (Simmons et al. 2006) asserted the interrelation between successful dissemination of political liberalism as an ideology and the efficient dissemination of economic liberalism.

J.M. Owen connects the future of liberalism with the presence of a 'liberal hegemon', necessary for promoting liberal democracy by its own example; he attributes this role to the USA. In his work 'Liberalism and its Alternatives, Again' (2018), J.M. Owen analyzes the prospects of the future global 'liberal internationalism', which he interprets as a set of national and international institutions aimed at maximal autonomization through global trade and self-government.

F. Dobbin, B. Simmons and G. Garrett (2007) analyze the four theoretical approaches explaining dissemination of policies in different countries in the context of economic processes. In their opinion, constructivism traces the political norms which determine the economic progress and the human rights. Theories of coercion are based on the influence of national states and international financial institutions, which threaten with sanctions or offer help in exchange for financial conservatism and free trade. Competition theories imply that countries compete for investments and export due at the expense of decreasing the cost of business, reducing limitations for investments or tariff barriers.

Consider an example from international political practice. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank link their financial aid mainly with neo-liberal economic reforms to be implemented by the governments of the receiving states. The European Union conditions its joining by large-scale reforms oriented towards the EU legislation and restructuring internal political institutions and practices. However, these theses are ambiguously interpreted in the scientific discourse and require empirical substantiation. The EU requirements include both political and institutional goals, such as observing the general democratic principles and esteem to minorities.

According to Beth A. Simmons, Frank Dobbin and Geoffrey Garrett (2008), dissemination of markets and democracy all over the world was the determinative characteristics of the late 20th century. The content of this process was orientation of countries towards free market, economic reforms, macroeconomic stabilization and liberalization. The 'third wave' of democratization and liberal constitutionalism spread over the larger part of the Earth. The authors associate diffusion of policy as a means of soft coercion either with ideas or with stimuli. Coercion can be implemented by governments, international organizations or non-governmental institutions through manipulating with economic costs and benefits and even through monopolizing information or expertise.

If anti-Russian sanctions are viewed not as a factor of economic pressure but a part of the Western mission of disseminating liberal values, then of great interest is the reaction of public and group opinion to the means of liberalization through economic pressure or perception of liberal values as attractive models.

Ideology again became an important topic of research for social, personal and political psychologists; the number of works viewing the structure, content and functions of ideological systems is growing. John T. Jost, Christopher M. Federico and Jaime L. Napier (2009) studied various viewpoints at how many (and which types of) dimensions individuals use to organize their political views, to which extent people acquire discursive content related to different ideologies, and the social-psychological functions these ideologies perform for those who perceive them; also, they viewed the consequences of ideology, especially in regard to attitudes, estimations, and processes of systematic substantiation.

From the viewpoint of prospects of changing the internal policy under sanctions, the ideological obstacles are an insurmountable barrier, as they were primarily aimed against independent external policy of Russia and, though explained by ideological contradictions in the sphere of adhering to liberal values, are directly associated with both economic and foreign-policy interests of Russia implementing the policy of 'the Russian world' protection. By estimations of some researchers, Russia fails in using 'soft power' as an efficient tool of its

foreign policy largely due to its negative image of an 'authoritarian state' which has formed in the world (Rutland and Kazantsev 2016).

An insurmountable contradiction in perception exists: Russia positions itself as a democratic state pursuing the liberal economic and political course, while the image of Russia in the western countries is different, as it is perceived as an authoritarian state with pseudo-democracy.

According to Michael Freeden (2019), one of the leading experts in the sphere of ideology, an understudied field is new means of ideology transmitting and disseminating. Ideology acquires a new look due to digital media disseminating individual information.

Diffusion networks as elements of the diffusion model

Although the notions of 'social networks', 'communicative networks', 'network communities' have long entered the scientific circulation, the conception of 'diffuse networks', related to them, remains understudied. It possesses its own characteristics and demonstrates certain regularities in its dynamics. Diffuse networks were researched in 'Persistent policy pathways: Inferring diffusion networks in the American states' by Bruce A. Desmarais, Jeffrey J. Harden and Frederick J. Boehmke (2015) by the example of disseminating the US policy through diffuse networks connecting different states. Based on the analysis of 187 policies, they proposed a model of diffusion, which allowed using empirical methods to establish a dynamic interrelation between the political actors. Bruce A. Desmarais, Jeffrey J. Harden and Frederick J. Boehmke view diffuse networks as an independent factor of policy diffusion, determining the efficiency of borrowings. The question is how the communicative, say professional, networks correlate with the diffuse ones. Diffuse network consists of associated states, officials, consultants, and scholars (Walker 1969). Virginia Gray (1973) viewed diffusion as reflecting the specificity of 'regional or professional communication networks, capable of forming specific diffusion patterns'.

Coercion in any form causes counteraction; its forms are rather stable and diversified nowadays, which allows judging about the features of reception both in the real and virtual world. Media-channels of political diffusion are independent network resources. Media resources occupy their own niche in the network of political diffusion: significant political decisions at state level are publicized in mass media, thus, they produce influence in the sphere of news perception (Sundar et al. 2007).

For coercive type of political diffusion, very important are the factors impeding diffusion of coercive pressure in the form of information flow. Echo-chambers and bubble filters is what can impede disseminating information in diffuse networks (Borra and Weber 2012). The growing polarization of (political) discourse in combination with the online-cultures offering information on what the like-minded people think about the matter, has resulted in the effect of echo-chambers (Sunstein) and bubble filters (Pariser), which impede reception of citizens.

There are different viewpoint on the effect of echo-chambers (Wagner and Ylä-Anttila 2018). Paul M. Wagner and Tuomas Ylä-Anttila believe that people and organizations, as a rule, receive information from those, whose attitudes are similar to their own, thus forming 'echo-chambers' with their own network links. The echo-chambers are potentially harmful for elaborating policy based on actual data, as they may impede reaching consensus. A number of works use the notion of 'echo-chambers' to explain informational flows in multiple social environments and to find disproportional links between ideologically similar political communicators (Jasny et al. 2015). Forums are considered to be a mechanism to counteract the effect of echo-chambers and bubble filters (Wagner and Ylä-Anttila 2018). Political forums

may help to reduce the effect of echo-chambers, if organizations with different views use the possibilities given by forums to learn from those outside their networks.

The echo-chambers effect is also compared with epistemic circles and networks (Madsen et al. 2018), where like-minded people actively communicate and become more and more convinced in their ideas. It is still unclear whether cognitive mistakes are inevitable for the echo-chambers effect and how echo-chambers may retain in the networks with alternative information available. According to the authors, it is the network structure that promotes the echo-chamber formation, but cognitive and social beliefs alone are not the necessary conditions for echo-chambers occurrence.

Reception as an element of the diffusion model

One of the understudied areas of political diffusion is network communication in the system of public opinion. Having studied political attitudes, J. Zaller (1987) proposed a model of the process by which political views are disseminated through public opinion. Echoing the works by Converse and McGuire, he asserts that this process depends on variations of individual impact and perception of information as convincing. The model demonstrates that the impact increases depending on the level of political activity of people and is related to their ideology and age.

F. Gilardi, C. R. Shipan and B. Wüest (2016) studied political frames and analyzed the mechanisms of political frames diffusion. They focused attention on the initial stage of policy formation – establishing political frames and discussing their basic principles. They also interpreted policy diffusion as the process of decision making in the countries, states, or cities under the influence of decision making in other political structures.

The moral and cognitive-political aspects of this process were studied by the Russian researchers S.P. Potseluyev and M.S. Konstantinov (2013). Their research of students' conscience showed the presence of latent forms, like readiness to use extremist methods. These conclusions are confirmed by the poll carried out by the authors in 2014–2016: as a rule, students do not admit radical right-wing attitudes in their conscience, identifying their ideological preferences as liberal, conservative, nationally patriotic, etc. (Potseluyev et al. 2016).

In our research we studied the lowest level of political coercion reception: the group and individual level of public opinion by the example of ideological preferences of students. Analysis and construction of the matrix were based on the author's conception of cognitive-ideological matrix, i.e. a set of cognitive contexts and ideologemes, combining knowledge and values, explicit and implicit cognitive processes. To describe the matrix, we used analysis of the results of group interview and narrative analysis. The poll was carried out in two student groups majoring in 'Political Science'.

We performed narrative analysis of 70 essays on the topic 'History of Russia: the past, the present, the future', in which the students were to identify their political views and ideological preferences by speaking about the Russian history, to emphasize the most important events, to describe the processes taking place in the country today, and to propose their own model of the future for Russia. In describing the future, all students mentioned strong presidential power, weak civil society, and low level of social security. In describing the past, everybody emphasized the Soviet period of history. To a certain extent, all works contained analysis of the present situation, and just a few gave prognosis for the future. Those who gave a prognosis for the future did it rather briefly, but in general most of the respondents gave positive estimations for the future. At the same time, 80% of students believe that Russia will not change in the future, but 1% are pessimistic, saying that there will be fewer rights and freedoms in the future. The rest do not have any clear vision of the country's prospects. Quite

a large number of students – about 30% – forecast irremovability of power in Russia. The conclusion which can be made is rather paradoxical: young people think little about the country's future, they are more concerned about the social problems of the present.

The most frequently mentioned topics in the essays were: civil society, the role of Russia in the global arena, the history and genesis of paternalism, forming of the Russian statehood, the role of the USSR in forming of the modern state system, economic situation in Russia, political culture, 'the Russian way of development', repressions. The most frequently used words were: 'civil society', 'bureaucratic apparatus', 'democracy', 'stagnation', 'decent life', 'bright future', 'state control', 'Putin's Russia', 'Russian way', 'authoritarianism'. 'paternalism', 'competition', 'nomenclature', 'Empire project', 'identity'.

The narrative analysis allowed revealing the hidden attitudes, orientations and preferences, and in some cases – marking the lack of correlation between them and the ideological self-representation of students. The following categories of correlation between self-representation and the revealed preferences can be distinguished:

•   Perception of the author corresponds to the declared ideology (37 respondents).

•   Generally, the author corresponds to the declared ideology, but there are some declinations (10 respondents).

•   Denial of ideological preferences in self-representation and signs of ideological estimations in statements (8 respondents).

•   Self-representation of the author does not at all correspond to the declared ideology (15 respondents).

The sanction crisis was specially researched during the group interviews. In general, the students' position regardless of their ideological orientation coincides with the official one: the positive result is that sanctions are to give an impulse to the Russian economy development, and these results are already visible in agriculture. At the same time, some negative consequences if the sanctions are perceived, for example, growth of prices for petrol. We revealed no intentions of students to somehow influence the official position of the government in regard to sanction. In the consolidated opinion of students, Russia must not yield to the pressure in exchange for raising sanctions, as even in that case it will not be viewed as an equal partner in the system of global cooperation, including due to returning of the Crimea, protecting the interests of Donetsk basin residents, and implementing the policy of protecting 'the Russian world' abroad.

4. Conclusions

The research result is the developed model of cognitive-ideological reception of coercion as a type of political diffusion. To do that, we conceptualized the notion of coercion, described the cognitive and ideological indicators of its reception at institutional level and at the level of group and individual conscience, estimated the condition of diffusion networks as a media for dissemination of coercive political diffusion.

The model allows describing the rational mechanism of making political decisions and revealing the problem spots where risks of making political mistakes occur. Also, the model allows better understanding of the leaders' motivation when making decisions under particular policy. Revealing links in diffuse networks helps verifying and evaluating the theories which explain the inter-state dissemination of policy. Empirical representation of the concepts of 'cognitive-ideological reception' allows making the next step, which is building dynamic models to predict ideologies diffusion.

Based on the research of group and individual conscience of students, we empirically proved certain inconsistency between ideological self-identification, cognitively formed as a theoretical world outlook system, and axiological ideological beliefs, which exist latently. Thus, methodology was developed to research correlation of cognitive contexts and ideologemes, combining knowledge and values, explicit and implicit cognitive processes.

The empirical materials will be used for further research of the author's conception of cognitive-ideological matrices. The conclusions, based on researching the axiological structure of the youth conscience under social instability, cannot be extrapolated to the situation of unstable social-political environment. The action of youth under crisis, 'liminary' situations, that is, the 'threshold situations of choice', may lead to unpredictable consequences, including extremist manifestations.

The cognitive-ideological matrix determines the frameworks of changes in the youth's opinions about the causes and consequences of the sanction crisis and he individual strategies of coming out of the difficult situation.

It was shown that coercion in the form of sanction regime is ineffective, as it cannot be admitted by the elites ideologically and from the viewpoint of the Russian economic and political interests. As a result, the sanctions failed to influence the political agenda sufficiently as to raise sanctions. At the level of group and individual conscience, sanctions are not perceived as struggle for liberal values. Representatives of various ideological groups share the official viewpoint.

The obtained results contribute to the research of coercive mechanisms in the theory of policy diffusion, as well as to understanding of policy reception regularities by its followers. The present research is significant for developing the state policy methodology for determining the character of diffuse networks as a communicator of coercion and a 'soft power' resource, as well as correlation between explicit and implicit processes and states.

The obtained scientific results are applicable in the sphere of researching the ideological identity, determining and quantification of its individual and group characteristics, as well as in analyzing the attitudes and political orientations of various actors based on subjective perception of social phenomena and processes.

The following areas of research should be developed: conceptualization of 'political diffusion management'; possibilities of applying the model for analyzing political processes. In future, the sphere of implicit cognitive studies should be developed, to research the implicit cognitive processes and narrative analysis of ideological attitudes and orientations, aimed at researching the processes at latent level.The following areas of research should be developed: conceptualization of 'political diffusion management'; possibilities of applying the model for analyzing political processes. In future, the sphere of implicit cognitive studies should be developed, to research the implicit cognitive processes and narrative analysis of ideological attitudes and orientations, aimed at researching the processes at latent level.

5. Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

6. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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