STUDENTS, NEWS AND DECISION-MAKERS
IN THE STATE OF EMERGENCY

CRISTINA GAVRILUȚĂ[1], COSTEL MARIAN DALBAN[2]

Abstract

The global epidemiological context has caused various social and behavioural changes among the population. This article measures the confidence of Romanian students towards political and non-political communicators, present in the media space during the alert period. Furthermore, the ways of informing them and the effects of "fake news" will be highlighted. Analyses of an online survey show that institutions of power and science benefit from a higher degree of trust compared to political ones. Students are informed from official sources and are aware of the negative effects of fakenews and also appreciate differently the trust offered to the institutions in relation to their nominal representatives. The study had as respondents students from all university centers in Romania (N=1013), being implemented between April and May 2020.

Keywords: *trust, students, pandemic context, public institutions, politicians, news, fakenews.*

Résumé

Le contexte épidémiologique global est à l'origine de diverses mutations sociales et comportementales au sein de la population. Cet article mesure le degré de confiance des étudiants roumains envers les communicateurs politiques et apolitiques, présents dans l'espace médiatique pendant l'état d'alerte. Par ailleurs, les moyens d`information et les effets produits par les fake news seront mis en évidence. Les analyses résultant de la mise en œuvre d'une enquête en ligne montrent que les forces de l'ordre et les institutions scientifiques ont un degré de confiance plus élevé que les institutions politiques. Les étudiants sont informés par des sources officielles et sont conscients des effets négatifs des fake news et apprécient également différemment la confiance accordée aux institutions, par rapport à leurs représentants nominaux. L'étude avait comme répondants des étudiants de tous les centres universitaires de Roumanie (N = 1013), mise en œuvre entre avril et mai 2020.

---

[1] Professor, Ph.D., Department of Sociology and Sociology Work, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, e-mail: cristina_gavriluță@yahoo.fr

[2] Municipal Councilor - Iasi City Hall, Ph.D. student, Department of Sociology and Social Work, "Alexandru Ioan Cuza" University of Iași, e-mail: marian.dalban@gmail.com

Mots-clés: *confiance, étudiants, contexte pandémique, institutions publiques, politiques, actualités, fakenew.*

Rezumat

Contextul epidemiologic la nivel global a cauzat diferite mutații sociale și comportamentale în rândul populației. Acest articol măsoară gradul de încredere al studenților din România față de comunicatorii politici și non-politici, prezenți în spațiul media în perioada stării de alertă. Mai mult, se vor evidenția modalitățile de informare ale acestora și efectele produse de știrile fakenews. Analizele rezultate în urma implementării unui sondaj online, arată faptul că instituțiile de forță și cele științifice beneficiază de un grad ridicat de încredere mai mare, în raport cu cele politice. Studenții se informează din surse oficiale și conștientizează efectele negative ale fakenews-ului și în aceeași măsură apreciază diferențiat încrederea oferită instituțiilor, în raport cu reprezentanții nominali ai acestora. Studiul a avut ca respondenți studenți din toate centrele universitare din România (N=1013), fiind implementat în perioada aprilie −mai 2020.

Cuvinte cheie: *încredere, studenți, context pandemic, instituții publice, oameni politici, știri, fakenews.*

1. Trust and communication in pandemic times

The COVID-19 pandemic leaves behind important and irreversible social changes. Numerous scientific publications have shown that students have been affected by the pandemic context by increasing depressive states (Islam et al., 2020), the presence of various mental illnesses (Kecojevic et al., 2020), having a powerful psychological impact (Larson et al., 2021) and producing atitudinal and behavioural changes (Hatabu et al., 2020), issues that have led primarily to decreased performance in higher education (Gonzalez et al., 2020).

Communication has been a key factor throughout the process. On the one hand, there was a hunger for information on the part of the population and, on the other hand, the abundance of information generated uncertainty, fear and mistrust. This happened when the correct information was mixed with false information, honest information with misinformation, personal with public opinions. The epidemiological avalanche has been matched by a constant effort to communicate with civil society, the transmission of social and protective measures. The scientific argument was the source of legitimization of any speech. However, combating fake news has been a difficult, process to control.

Basically, in a society affected by the pandemic there has been an infodemia as a result of inflation of news and information on the topic of Covid-19. In this context, the communication of state institutions with civil society has been difficult, and it is mediated by political and non-political actors. The specialists note that "before our eyes there is a huge experiment on communication, the battle for interpretation" (Bârgoanu, 2000, p. 257). In the face of a stormy communication of pandemic proportions, the population has continuously adjusted its confidence in the official discourse and attitude towards the work of the institutions responsible for reducing the spread of coronavirus.

Social trust is a concept that arises as a result of stability on the part of the individual and is associated with economic growth, development of innovation, optimal health. The presence of the pandemic context has destabilised all these pillars of the concept of trust, being replaced by novel social measures, financial and economic instability, social crises, lack of predictability and an almost inherent medical danger to citizens. When the evolution of a crisis of this kind is managed, trust is the most valuable unit of exchange between decision-makers and the population (Vanessa et al., 2020).

The measurement of the confidence of students was carried out by certain well-identified parameters: *sources of information for the construction of the perception of the social environment, the activity of institutions and confidence in their communicators.*

The media campaigns carried out insistently on all communication channels were aimed at raising awareness of the danger and identifying the necessary preventive measures (Almuzaini et al., 2021). Against the background of a high emotional load, the informational content took unsuspected proportions, all taking on the appearance of a genuine "communication bazaar" (Gavriluță, 2000, p. 229). At the same time as the official news, a whole fan of fake news has developed. A recent study in Spain on this subject shows that fake news can be a real danger to the health or safety of citizens and has negative psychological and moral effects (Montesi, 2020). The phenomenon of fake news has also been accentuated as a result of the state of uncertainty felt by readers. Reality shows that the health crisis is becoming a crisis of information and interpretation (Xie et al., 2020; Bârgoanu, 2020). In an attempt to fight disinformation, a number of guides and examples of good practice have been made, tools to distinguish real information from fake news.

Trust in state institutions is an essential element in managing a health crisis. Low trust with state institutions prevents the development of health policies to avoid the spread of the virus (Devine, Gaskell & Jennings, 2020). Finally, trust has a dual quality: it leads to a certain conduct that could promote good governance, but in the other extreme full confidence can lead citizens to believe (naively) that the government effectively manages the pandemic when it does not.

In Romania, during the COVID-19 period, institutions of force, such as the army, enjoy a high confidence, followed by health institutions, according to fig.1.
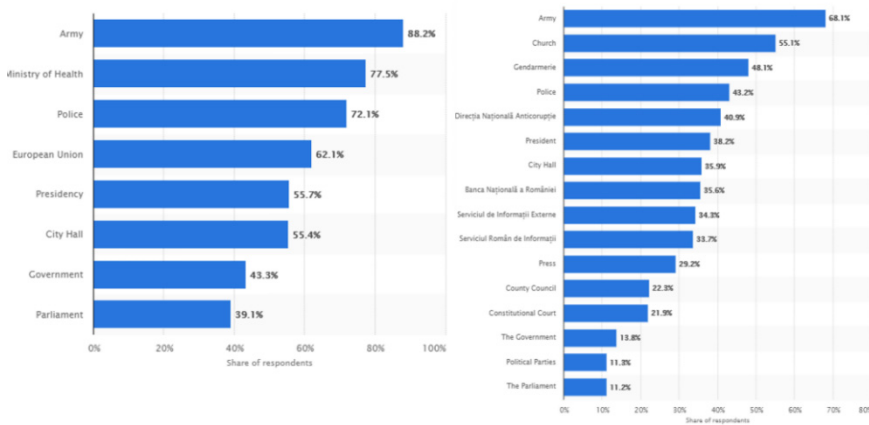
Fig. 1. Degree of trust in state institutions. Comparison between 2019 and 2020
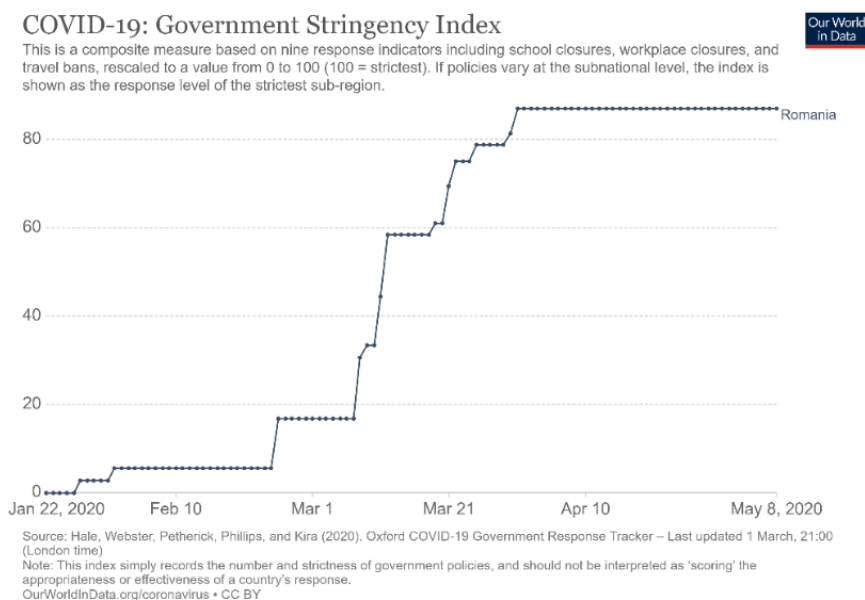*Source:*
A) The most trusted institutions since the outbreak of the coronavirus (COVID-19) in Romania in 2020 - https://www.statista.com/statistics/1105980/trust-in-institutions-since-covid-19/
B) The most reliable institutions before the outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Romania in 2019 - https://www.statista.com/statistics/1101030/trust-in-romanian-institutions/

On the other hand, trust in official communication courts is generated by a multitude of contextual factors related to expectations, people's experiences, environment, education, relational circle, fears, etc. Naturally, most expectations are concentrated around political and decision-making actors. In the context of the pandemic, politicians are subjected to the most difficult examination: the crisis management. Regardless of the answers that the present situation receives, the world of tomorrow seems to be set up in registers different from those we have been used to so far (Toderean, Celac, Scutaru, 2020). Wolfgang Ischinger, a well-known German diplomat, said: "The pandemic puts additional pressure on our capabilities, on our mentality and on our ability to cooperate, to act together. But even if not everything will be transformed, as some have said in the context since the beginning of the crisis, the world seems to be on the verge of dramatic change" (Ischinger, 2020, p. 13). Or these profound changes at the social level lead to a shaping of citizens' trust. On the other hand, understanding the dynamics of trust in the Covid-19 crisis can facilitate appropriate responses at the political and communication level. It should be borne in mind that the measures taken by the authorities are effective and respected in so far as the decision-makers and the political class enjoy an important reliable capital. A whole series of behaviours and attitudes are constructed in this way, which may or may not be favourable to the measures taken by the authorities. The opinion of young students on the current situation can be a good barometer of confidence of a young, educated population.

2. Research method

The research was carried out in the second part of the state of emergency between April and May, at national level and targeted all students in Romania. The approach is quantitative and the method used is the questionnaire-based survey, applied online.

The on-line application of the questionnaires was determined by the epidemiological context and restrictive measures in the state of emergency. In addition, the use of online platforms to complete the questionnaire ensures speed, low costs and access to a wider range of respondents and has allowed us to reap hot results at the very moment of the state of emergency (fig. 2).

Fig. 2. Evolution of measures taken by the Romanian Government
during the state of emergency
Source: https://www.bsg.ox.ac.uk/research/research-projects/covid-19-government-response-tracker

In distributing the questionnaire an important role was played by student organizations, thanks to which we covered all university centers in the country, ensuring a balance of respondents in the socio-human and scientific fields and we were able to appeal proportionally to students enrolled in different curricula (license, master, doctorate).

The sample was one of convenience (Jager et al., 2017), given the use of an online questionnaire, hence a limit on the statistical representativeness of the results obtained. However, the study had N=1,013 respondents and covered all university centers in Romania (Table 1).

Table 1: Distribution of the sample by age, studies, level of study and residence environment

		Age	Studies	Level	Residence environment
N	Valid	1013	1013	1013	1013
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		21.81	1.41	1.20	1.38
Median		21.00	1.00	1.00	1.00
Minimum		18	1	1	1
Maximum		56	2	3	2

Source: Database Processing

From the point of view of social determinants, as a result of the dissemination of the online questionnaire we find a significant number of respondents, the majority being from urban areas 61.9 percent, but also from rural areas 38.9 percent. An average age of 21.8 years is noted, with a maximum of 56 years and a minimum of 18 years according to Table 1.

Closing universities and moving into online education, distancing restrictions and isolation have had an immediate impact on students' lives. For this reason, we have focused on two key operational objectives: the impact of news channels and the degree of trust in political or non-political communicators in a crisis context (Table 2).

Table 2: Indicators analysed and question grid

Operational objective	Indicators	How to collect data
• **Impact of news channels**	• information channels; • the degree of confidence in these transmission channels; • perception of fake news; • psycho-affective and behavioural effects.	Online questionnaire
• **Confidence in political and non-political institutional communicators**	• involvement of institutions in the process of diminishing the spread of the pandemic; • the degree of trust in different national political actors; • confidence in non-political communicators, specialist in the field of virology or defence.	Online questionnaire

Source: Database Processing

The impact of news channels analysed through indicators such as the information channel, the perception of fake news and their psycho-affective effects are important elements in the analysis of trust during the pandemic. This first objective could represent the "hard" part of the analysis, and the "soft" part is characterized by the analysis of political or non-political communicators within some institutions.

The research was quantitative, and the method used was the questionnaire survey. The research was conducted online, and with the help of the "Google forms" platform. It should be mentioned that an important role in the distribution of the questionnaire was played by the massive involvement of student organizations.

In the questionnaire, the questions were semi-open and closed with simple and multiple answers. In this sense, experiential and perceptual nuances of the pandemic as well as its consequences were highlighted.

Following the application of the questionnaires, the data were processed statistically in SPSS. Databases were created with the information found and coded, so that they could be reproduced and analyzed through the SPSS program. With the help of the program were analyzed the frequencies, regressions, correlations between different dependent and independent variables.

3. State of emergency and student confidence in political and non-political institutional communicators

Sources of information of students in the state of emergency

We assume that a significant amount of information is needed during humanitarian crises in a relatively short time. (Tran et al., 2019). The avalanche of information has turned into an infodemia (Patwa et al., 2020), and the results have been represented by a series of serious negative effects on citizens: anxiety, fear, mental disorders, or various behavioral changes (Pan et al. 2020). In the study conducted by Zach Bastick (2021) on a sample of 233 students it was shown that a short exposure of less than 5 minutes to certain fake news led to a significant change in their unconscious behavior. With the development of social media this phenomenon can be easily amplified. By 2020, there were about 3.6 billion people using social networks worldwide, and by 2025 it is expected to increase to 4.41 billion.

Regardless of the nature of the information, it has been shown that the use of a particular communication channel may influence more or less the behaviour of individuals during times of crisis, such as the pandemic one(Al-Dmour et al., 2020). In this respect, in our research, students in Romania had to rank the main sources of information and the degree of trust offered to them: television, official websites, social networks, news agencies, friends or trusted persons.

The results obtained by us show that students prefer to inform themselves from the official websites of the institutions, there is an average of the answers of mean = 4.08 on a scale of 1 to 5. We link this indicator with the fact that all

respondents have a higher educational background, following a bachelor's degree 83.1 percent, master's 13.8 percent and PhD 3.1 percent (fig. 3).

2.Care sunt sursele dumneavoastră de infor4 privind pandemia și în care aveți încrederea cea mai 4?   **[Site-uri oficiale și stiri oficiale]**

Mean = 4.08
Std. Dev. = .987
N = 1,013

2.Care sunt sursele dumneavoastră de infor4 privind pandemia și în care aveți încrederea cea mai 4?   [Site-uri oficiale și stiri oficiale]
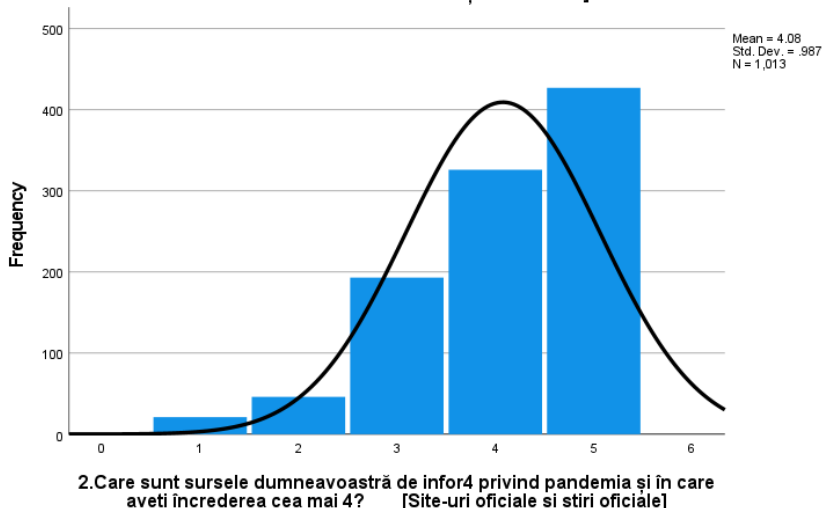
Fig. 3. Student trust in official websites.
Source: Database Processing

Trusted people are an important source of information for students during the state of emergency, with an average of 3.15 responses (Table 3). The circle of trusted persons is built mainly from the family environment and from the circle of those close to them, people with whom direct and constant contact has been preserved. The figures show a visible restriction of social networking. During the state of emergency, the majority of students lived with their parents 72.2 percent, their spouse 6.9 percent, a friend 8.4 percent.

Table 3: Sources of information of students during the state of emergency

		[Television]	[Official websites and official news]	[Facebook and other social networks]	[News agents (written press, online newspapers, etc.)]	[Friends]	[Trusted people]
N	Valid	1013	1013	1013	1013	1013	1013
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		2.85	4.08	2.66	2.87	2.68	3.15
Median		3.00	4.00	3.00	3.00	3.00	3.00
Minimum		1	1	1	1	1	1
Maximum		5	5	5	5	5	5

Source: Database Processing

Television and social networks are among the main sources of information, with an average of the responses mean=2.85 and mean=2.66 respectively. The fact is true for most states. Similar communication strategies with citizens were used everywhere: press conferences and official government briefings were used first, followed by prevention campaigns in traditional media (radio, TV, print media), followed by social media information campaigns (Weitzel, Middleton, 2020). In the study 10 months of Covid-19 in Romania (2020) television is the main information channel of Romanians 79 percent followed by radio 19 percent. It should be noted that in the case of the global population we find a very small percentage of people who inform themselves from the online channels of the authorities (sites, social media) (15%).

However, the ease with which false news can spread in the social media space can contribute to public misinformation (Bastick, 2021). Since 2014, disinformation has been one of the 10 trends of modern shock. However, Kiely & Robertson (2016) identifies a series of steps by which we can clearly delineate false news from real ones: consider the source, check the author, check the date, check your biases, reasons, supporting sources, ask the experts.

In the opinion of students, confidence in a source of information is given gradually by a number of indicators such as: analysis of the situation from a global point of view, providing accurate information, information comes from specialists or represents the point of view of some institutions. All these aspects give a high degree of credibility to the information, which is justified by the most important sources of communication chosen by the students.

**Table 4:** Trust/distrust in communication channels

*min.3 variants of response

Nr.crt	I trust because:	Resp No.	I don't trust you because:	Resp No.
1.	Analyze the situation from a global point of view	577	Overdoing	547
2.	Provides accurate information	532	Cultivate fear	439
3.	They're specialists	527	Manipulate snow figures	413
4.	Represents the views of some institutions	363	Provides conflicting information	318
5.	They tell us exactly what to do.	201	Politicize speech	315
6.	They're nonconformists	68	I'm doing a media show.	312
7.	Reveal secrets	38	There are no specialists	305

Source: Database Processing

Exaggerating the information communicated on certain channels was a main source of mistrust 53.9 percent. It is followed by news that cultivates fear 43.3 percent. They generate insecurity, suspicion, distrust and, as a number of

recent researches (IRES, 2020) indicate can lead to psycho-emotional disorders. Manipulating figures in different contexts and conflicting information represent other important milestones in identifying fake news and increasing student distrust. The politicization of speeches and information is perceived by students as a source of mistrust alongside the media spectacle or lack of expertise in the field. All this indicates that many of the communication formulas existing in the Romanian space during the state of emergency generate suspicion and are considered to be untrustworthy.

Asked how they recognize certain fake news and what vectors they follow to detect fake news, 61.2% made it clear that they are checking the source and issuer of this news (Fig. 4).
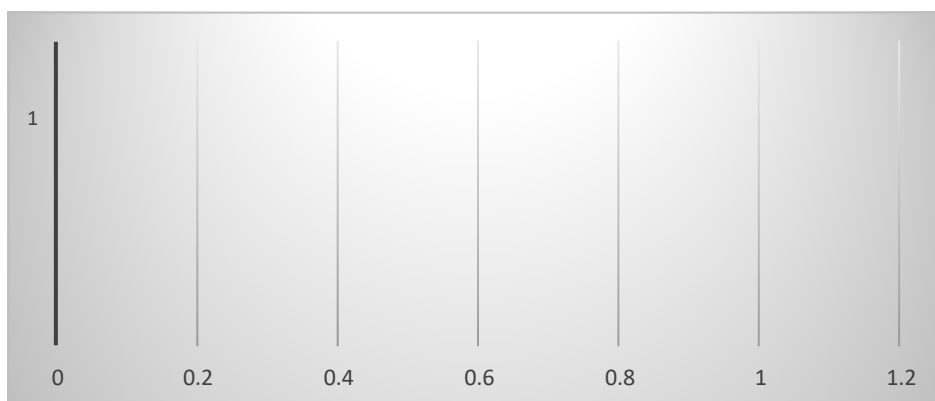
Fig. 4. False News Vectors (N=1.013)
*min.3 variants of response
Source: Database Processing

Fake news for students does not provide enough arguments or have headlines that quickly attract. For respondents, the content and logical coherence of the speech are important indicators that distinguish between fake and real news. A similar analysis, which values the main elements of identification of fake news, is carried out by Huxiao Liu. Fake news is detected on the basis of two sets of features: the author or issuer of the article and the content of the information (Liu et al., 2020).

The data obtained indicate that students have developed their own news selection system during a period of misinformation and fake news. This selection mode shows that, at least among the educated public, official information from credible and reasoned sources is credited as one closer to the truth. Although there is an information selection system, the students stated that existing news affects them quite a lot 78.84 percent and changes their way of thinking and behaving. Most said that they became more attentive to hygiene (N=444 - 43.8 percent), they value their family more (N=306 - 30.2 percent), they changed their priorities in life (N=179 - 17.7 percent), read and study (N=31.3 percent - 317).

There are a significant number of responses that say they smoke more, consume more alcohol, buy pills preventively, talk a lot on the phone (table 5).

Table 5: Appreciation of students
for the work of different institutions

How do you assess the work and involvement of the following institutions?	N Valid	Missing	Mean	Very good	Good	Modest	Poor
[Army]	1013	0	3	33.56%	40.08%	19.35%	7.00%
[Police]	1013	0	2.91	30.00%	39.49%	21.52%	8.98%
[gendarmerie]	1013	0	2.91	31.19%	36.82%	23.59%	8.39%
[World Health Organization]	1013	0	2.9	27.54%	42.25%	22.41%	7.80%
[Ministry of Health]	1013	0	2.88	28.53%	38.70%	24.58%	8.19%
[EU]	1013	0	2.75	20.34%	42.94%	27.74%	8.98%
[NGOs]	1013	0	2.73	23.89%	35.74%	30.11%	10.27%
[Presidential Administration]	1013	0	2.65	21.72%	34.85%	30.60%	12.83%
[Mayors]	1013	0	2.37	9.97%	32.97%	40.77%	16.29%
[Parliament]	1013	0	2.24	6.71%	28.92%	45.90%	18.46%
[Ministry of Economy]	1013	0	2.22	6.42%	27.94%	46.50%	19.15%

Source: Database Processing

Trapped in an information system, various students manage to distinguish between what is true and what is false, between manipulation and correct information. However, the intensity of the news, their aggressiveness and the insistence with which they are presented draw up an apocalyptic picture which, despite an assumed discernment, has psycho-behavioral effects (Tim et al., 2018).

Trust in political and non-political institutional communicators

For the majority of the population 2020 is a year that can be characterized by a series of words such as crisis, social distance, financial regression, problems and financial difficulties. This is a dominant opinion and only for 16% of Romanians the changes were for the better (IRES "1 year of Covid-19 in Romania: the impact of the pandemic on the quality of life of Romanians") Lacks, uncertainty, insecurity, distrust, constraints of isolation have led to a decrease in credibility and trust in state institutions and in their power to manage the crisis

fairly and effectively. A study carried out by IRES in 2020 shows that there is a decrease in the degree of satisfaction of Romanians with the main measures taken by the Strategic Communication Group -17 percent, Presidency -15 percent, Government -7 percent. Therefore, the measures taken by the main institutional actors generate discontent and mistrust among the population.

Among students, the work of fundamental institutions in crisis management enjoys a differentiated assessment (Table 5) in a ranking on a scale of 1 (very weak) to 4 (very good). The results show scores that place the institutions of force and defence first: the army (mean=3), the police (mean=2.91), the gendarmerie (mean=2.91). The data are also confirmed by research carried out by the LARICS Sociological Research Center, in partnership with the State Secretariat for Cults and the Institute of Political Sciences and International Relations of the Romanian Academy, where the army ranks at the top of the population's confidence 61.8 percent (Barometer of Religious Life, 2020). The fact that these state institutions were used to the full in maintaining a social order during the state of emergency and beyond did not affect their image. On the contrary, they have strengthened their image in the eyes of the population.

During the period of the state of emergency, the World Health Organization has a high confidence among students in Romania, the activity being appreciated as very good -27.54 percent and good 42.25 percent. The Romanian Ministry of Health ranks second to the WHO with an appreciation of its activity in the pandemic period of 28.53 percent as very good and 38.70 percent good. It should be noted that the visibility of these institutions is directly influenced by the communication channels used by students for information.

If in terms of public security and health assessments they are positive, politically the figures indicate a crisis of institutional management and the lack of short- and medium-term strategies. Thus, only 56.57 percent of students believe that the presidential administration has been effectively involved in the of the pandemic crisis. Enjoy much lower scores town halls 42.94 percent and the Romanian Parliament 35.63 percent

As for the social actors involved in the crisis management, the degree of confidence indicates major differences between the professional body of doctors and persons with political functions. Their credibility during the state of emergency was measured on a scale of 1 (not at all) and 4 (very large). For better ierarhization, the percentages of the indicators "very high confidence" and "high confidence" were accumulated, thus creating a more representative picture of this indicator (fig. 5.).
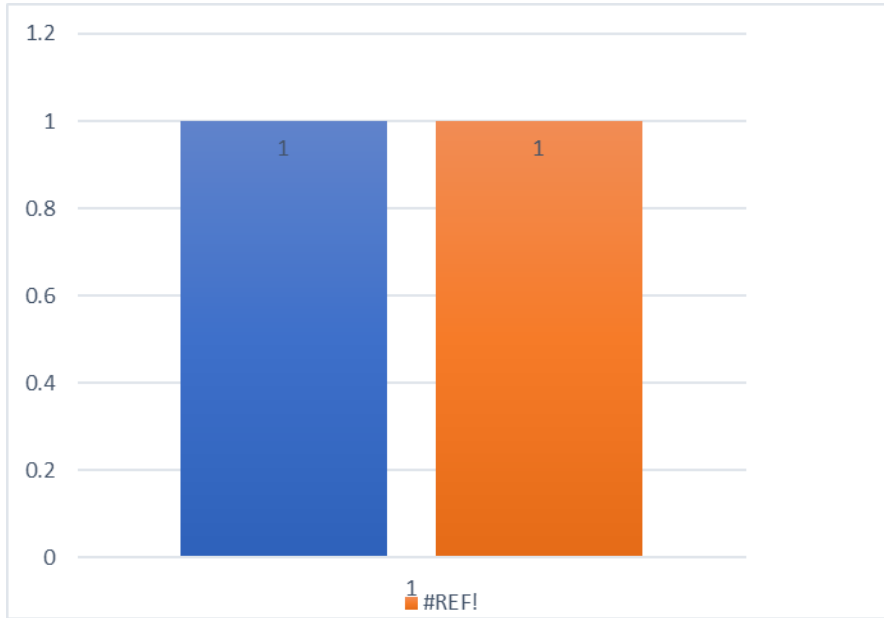
Fig. 5. Confidence in key policy and non-political communicators
Source: Database Processing

Thus, the social categories represented by doctors and researchers enjoy a high confidence of 79.17 percent and 74.53 percent respectively, well above the average of the representative institutional political actors. It should be noted that the latter represented important communicators during the state of emergency.

One of the longest-serving secretaries of state in the field of health, Raed Arafat, who implemented the SMURD project in Romania is rated with a confidence of only 59.72 percent from students, followed by Dr. Rafila, Romania's representative at who 59.13 percent. Thus, the President of Romania has a confidence rating of only 42.15 percent, 14.42 percentage points lower than the institution he coordinates. In contrast, there is a significant percentage increase in confidence towards the Minister of Health, Nelu Tataru of 38 percent, compared to the trust placed on the institution 28,53 percent. Although the defence institutions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs enjoy an important reliable capital, the political representative of the institution registered only 35.24 percent confidence from the students. This aspect multiplied in the rest of the institutions shows that young people appreciate the institutional framework and the functioning mechanisms, but not the nominal political or non-political representatives.

3. Conclusions

The figures presented are part of a larger study in which several indicators were followed, such as: students' relationship with the educational universe during the pandemic, behavioural changes and the effects of psycho-affective

emergency, how to inform and the trust offered in political or non-political communicators, the relationship with spirituality and the social environment.

The way in which students perceived and evaluated the entire communication approach during the period of the state of emergency as well as the work of the main social actors involved in the management of the pandemic demonstrates that in times of crisis the selection of information is an important aspect and that, inexcusably, the image of the policy is altered due to the unpopular measures it had to implement. The data collected are valuable due to the fact that they were obtained during the isolation period and do not represent projections and representations which appear as a result of the occurrence of a phenomenon. Therefore, the responses recorded hot reactions without being influenced by other situations or events. On the basis of these we can conclude the following:

1. Most students have official websites and channels as information sources and recognize fake news according to a number of generally valid indicators such as structure, content coherence, speech politicization, etc.

2. It is recognised that emergency news affects their (78.84 percent) behaviour, their attitudes and changes their way of thinking. Their answers attest to the fact that the entire media picture led them to take some action regarding the safety of themselves and those around them. The pandemic context has made them change their priorities in life and value things more.

3. From the point of view of trust in the social actors dealing with crisis management, there is a great discrepancy between institutional actors and their representatives. This result questions the public image of the political characters, their competence and, by implication, how they are selected for the different positions they occupy.

4. The confidence enjoyed by the body of specialists in different fields attests that vocational training is appreciated and acquires an important credit in the face of politically acquired functions.

5. The period of the state of emergency meant not only social isolation, but also an opportunity to rediscover the family, true friendship and strong social ties.

The results attest that, in times of crisis, social and value coordinates are affected by asking young people for an effort to understand and re-evaluate the world. In this context, perpetuated by a great lot of media noise, students find their balance within those warm communities that Georges Ballandier was talking about. In addition, study, education and spirituality become useful levers in building resilient behavior.

References

Al-Dmour, H., Masa'deh, R., Salman, A., Abuhashesh, M., & Al-Dmour, R. (2020). Influence of Social Media Platforms on Public Health Protection Against the COVID-19 Pandemic via the Mediating Effects of Public Health Awareness and Behavioral Changes: Integrated Model. *Journal of medical Internet research*, *22*(8), e19996. https://doi.org/10.2196/19996

Almuzaini, Y., Mushi, A., Aburas, A., Yassin, Y., Alamri, F., Alahmari, A., Yezli, S., Khan, AA., Jokhdar, HA. (2021). Risk Communication Effectiveness During COVID-19 Pandemic Among General Population in Saudi Arabia. *Risk Manag Healthc Policy*, *14*, 779-790. https://doi.org/10.2147/RMHP.S294885

Bastick, Z. (2021). Would you notice if fake news changed your behavior? An experiment on the unconscious effects of disinformation. *Computers in Human Behavior, 116*, 106633. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2020.106633

Bârgoanu, A. (2020). Răzbunarea comunicării? Pandemia trece, bătălia pentru comunicare rămâne. In Toderean, O., Celac, S., Scutaru, G. (Eds.), *Lumea de mâine. Ce urmează după pandemie?*. Editura Curtea Veche.

Centrul de Cercetări Sociologice LARICS, Secretariatul de Stat pentru Culte şi cu Institutul de Ştiinţe Politice şi Relaţii Internaţionale (ISPRI) al Academiei Române. (2020). *Barometrul vieţii religioase*. https://larics.ro/barometrul-vietii-religioase-din-romania-decembrie-2020/.

Devine, D., Gaskell, J., & Jennings, W. (2021). Trust and the Coronavirus Pandemic: What are the Consequences of and for Trust?. An Early Review of the Literature. *Political Studies Review*, *19*(2), pp. 274–285. https://doi.org/10.1177/1478929920948684

Gavriluţă, C. (2020). Bazarul comunicaţional şi lumile noastre în vremea pandemiei. In vol. Bocancea, S., Covid-19. *Dimensiuni ale gestionării pandemiei*. Editura Junimea.

Gonzalez, T, de la Rubia, M.A., Hincz, K.P., Comas-Lopez, M., Subirats, L., Fort, S., et al. (2020). Influence of COVID-19 confinement on students' performance in higher education. *PLoS ONE 15*(10), e0239490. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239490

Hatabu, A., Mao, X., Zhou, Y., Kawashita, N., Wen, Z., Ueda, M., Et Al. (2020). Knowledge, attitudes, and practices toward Covid-19 among University Students in Japan and associated factors: An Online Cross-Sectional Survey. *Plos One*, *15*(12). E0244350. https://Doi.Org/10.1371/Journal.Pone.0244350

Institutul Român pentru Evaluare şi Strategie (2020). *10 luni de COVID – 19 în România – Stare de spirit şi climat social.* https://ires.ro/articol/410/10-luni-de-covid-19-in-romania

Institutul Român pentru Evaluare şi Strategie (2021). *1 An de COVID-19 în România: Impactul Pandemiei asupra calităţii vieţii românilor.* https://ires.ro/articol/420/1-an-de-covid-19-in-romania---impactul-pandemiei-asupra-calita%C8%9Bii-vie%C8%9Bii-rom%C3%A2nilor.

Ischinger, W. (2020). *Prefaţă.* In Toderean, O., Celac, S., Scutaru, G. (2020). *Lumea de mâine. Ce urmează după pandemie?*. Editura Curtea Veche.

Islam, MA., Barna, SD., Raihan, H., Khan, MNA., Hossain, MT., (2020). Depression and anxiety among university students during the COVID-19 pandemic in Bangladesh: A web-based cross-sectional survey. *PLoS ONE*, 15(8), e0238162. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0238162

Jager, J., Putnick, D. L., & Bornstein, M. H. (2017). More than just convenient: the scientific merits of homogeneous convenience samples. *Monographs of the Society for Research in Child Development*, 82(2), 13–30. https://doi.org/10.1111/mono.12296.

Kecojevic, A., Basch, CH., Sullivan, M., Davi, NK., (2020). The impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on mental health of undergraduate students in New Jersey, cross-sectional study. *PLoS ONE*, 15(9), e0239696. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239696

Kiely, E., & Robertson, L. (2016). *How To Spot Fake News*, Https://Www.Factcheck.Org/2016/11/How-To-Spot-Fake-News/.

Larson, LR., Browning, M., Sharaievska, I., Rigolon, A., McAnirlin, O., Mullenbach, L., et al. (2021). Psychological impacts from COVID-19 among university students: Risk factors across seven states in the United States. *PLoS ONE*, 16(1), e0245327.https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0245327

Lim, V.W., Lim, R. L., Tan, Y. R., Soh, A. S., Tan, M. X., Othman, N. B., Borame Dickens, S., Thein, T. L., Lwin, M. O., Ong, R. T., Leo, Y. S., Lee, V. J., Chen, M. I. (2020). Public perceptions of COVID-19 and behaviour change, Singapore. Government trust, perceptions of COVID-19 and behaviour change: cohort surveys. *Singapore Publication: Bulletin of the World Health Organization.* ID: BLT.20.269142. https://www.who.int/bulletin/online_first/BLT.20.269142.pdf

Liu, H., Wang, L., Han, X., Zhang, W., & He, X. (2020). Detecting Fake News on Social Media: A Multi-Source Scoring Framework. In *2020 IEEE 5th International Conference on Cloud Computing and Big Data Analytics. (ICCCBDA), 524-532.* https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/stamp/stamp.jsp?tp=&arnumber=9095701

Montesi, M. (2020). Understanding fake news during the Covid-19 health crisis from the perspective of information behaviour: The case of Spain. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science.* https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000620949653

Pan, S. L., Cui, M., & Qian, J. (2020). Information resource orchestration during the COVID-19 pandemic: A study of community lockdowns in China. *International journal of information management, 54* (oct.), 102143. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt. 2020.102143

Patwa, P., Sharma, S., Pykl, S., Guptha, V., Kumari, G., Akhtar, M.S., Ekbal, A., Das, A., & Chakraborty, T. (2021). Fighting an Infodemic: COVID-19 Fake News Dataset. In Communications in Computer and Information Science book series (CCIS, volume 1402). https://arxiv.org/ftp/arxiv/papers/2011/2011.03327.pdf

Tim, Y., Pan, S.L., Bahri, S., Fauzi, A. (2018). Digitally enabled affordances for community-driven environmental movement in rural Malaysia. *Information Systems Journal, 28*(1), pp. 48–75. https://doi.org/10.1111/isj.12140

Tran, T., Rad, P., Valecha R., & Rao, H. R. (2020). Misinformation in Crises: A Conceptual Framework for Examining Human-Machine Interactions. In *IEEE / ITU International Conference on Artificial Intelligence for Good (AI4G)*, pp. 46-50. doi: 10.1109/AI4G50087.2020.9311010

Weitzel, T., & Middleton, J. (2020). *What channels are countries using to communicate with the public and at what frequency?* https://analysis.covid19healthsystem.org/ index.php/2020/07/03/what-channels-are-countries-using-to-communicate-with-the-public-and-at-what-frequency/

Xie, B., He, D., Mercer, T., Wang, Y., Wu, D., Fleischmann, K.R. (2020). Global health crises are also information crises: A call to action. *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology, 71*(12). https://doi.org/10.1002/asi.24357