Цитування:


INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS OF INFORMATION ACTIVITY ON MANAGERIAL DECISION-MAKING

The purpose of the article is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of socio-psychological factors of information activity and to find out their influence on managerial decision-making. The methodological basis of the study is general scientific and special methods for studying the problem, in particular, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, generalization and abstraction, survey-analytical and classification methods, as well as description and comparison, which help to achieve the goal. The set of the methods made it possible to determine the role of socio-psychological factors of information activity, attitudes and stereotypes in the preparation and implementation of effective management decisions. The scientific novelty of the work lies in the generalization of the main approaches to the problem of ensuring effective managerial activity, adequate perception of information and making informed decisions in the informational sphere. The authors have stated that effective management activity should be based on the awareness of real socio-psychological phenomena that accompany the economic, political and spiritual-ideological processes of social development, on taking into account the ratio of the management efforts of the authorities and the internal trends of the development of society, on knowledge of the psychological features of individual and group behaviour, psychological foundations of managerial communication and the implementation of managerial influence.

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Conclusions. The study has proved that the effectiveness of the organization depends on the correctness of decisions. The most likely directions of application of the achievements of personality psychology in the field of information activity have been proposed. Intuitive, rational and judgmental approaches to the decision-making process have been characterized. A certain dependence between the types of decisions and the approaches to their adoption has been determined. The mechanism of group influence on the behaviour of an individual and collective decision-making has been considered and an effective way to overcome this phenomenon has been proposed. The main stages of decision-making have been characterized and the problems that arise at each of the stages have been identified. The main mistakes that managers make in the process of information activities and preparing decisions have been named. It has been noted that the process of effective decision-making is significantly influenced by objective and subjective factors. The authors have emphasized that necessary and sufficient condition for the effective solution of a specific problem is the presence of the decision-maker’s characteristics that are part of an objective set of psychological qualities, in particular the level of knowledge for assessing the situation, skills for solving similar problems, the ability to find a way out of the situation taking into account external and organizational conditions, the ability to predict the outcome of one’s activities and determine one’s attitude to the problem. 

Keywords: information, information activity, psychological mechanisms, socio-psychological factors, managerial decisions.
The relevance of the research. The process of managerial decision-making and information exchange in social systems is characterized by a psychological factor. This results in the potential for inadequate perception of information and its distortion during the communication process. Instances of insufficient professionalism can be found at all levels of management, and thus, in information-related activities as well. In fact, the level of professionalism among subjects of information-related activities and the nature of the situation can be seen as a manifestation of the law of unity and struggle of opposites. Even a qualified professional can find themselves in an exceptionally challenging and unfamiliar situation, which could question their level of professionalism [18, 34–36].

The culture of managerial activity requires government officials to possess professional, organizational, moral and ethical, cultural norms as well and is manifested in the ability to work with people, take into account the conditions of the surrounding social environment and act not only in accordance with the needs, but also in response to the challenges of the time. An integral component of the culture of public administration is the possession of knowledge in the realm of individual and social psychology by government officials. This includes a grasp of psychological tools for managerial communication and influence, as well as the ability to consider the potential impact of psychological factors on informational activities.

According to M. Logunova, effective managerial activity should be founded upon an understanding of tangible socio-psychological phenomena that accompany economic, political, and spiritual-ideological processes of societal development. This involves considering the interplay between governance efforts and internal societal development trends, as well as comprehending the psychological intricacies of individual and group behaviour, the psychological principles of managerial communication, and the execution of managerial influence. Acting on these principles, systematically organized managerial activity will contribute to fostering productive interactions between government officials and citizens, ultimately shaping a positive image of the authorities and their representatives [19, 4].

The experience of foreign countries that have undergone stages of transformational changes underscores the significant role played by socio-psychological patterns in the evolutionary processes of social relations. Particularly, the pace and direction of economic and political reforms are heavily influenced by the readiness of broad social strata to accept them, along with their desire and willingness for change.

The establishment of a democratic society with an efficient market economy is, to a large extent, a consequence of effective managerial activity. The process of governance, the actions of the managerial elite, viewed through the lens of social psychology, are regarded as an interaction between the managerial elite and the populace, aimed at ensuring active and coordinated participation of the masses in achieving the strategic goals set by the elite [6].

Analysis of recent research and publications. The issue of decision-making is one of the classical philosophical problems. It has been researched for many years in the fields of economics, mathematics, and cybernetics. From the early 20th century, decision theory became a subject of investigation in social and psychological sciences. The introduction of psychological considerations into decision theory was pioneered by Herbert A. Simon. The social-psychological aspects of decision-making were also studied by M. Allais, D. Derner, P. Slovic, D. Kahneman and others. In the domestic context, social-psychological studies of decision-making processes are grounded in O. Leontiev’s activity theory. Modern social-psychological research on decision theory is built upon A. Karpov’s concept, which defines decision-making as an integral psychological process, as well as T. Kornilova’s concept of multiple functional-level regulation of decision-making, rooted in the notion of dynamic regulatory systems.
The issue of managerial decision-making, in its various aspects, has been widely addressed both in the works of foreign psychologists [see: 1–9] and in the researches of domestic scholars [see: 11–24]. These studies delve into the structure, types, forms of decision-making, factors influencing decision-making processes, and more.

Among the most well-known studies dedicated to the methodology of managerial decision-making, notable works include the researches of G. Altschuller, F. Aunapu, J. Khol, O. Larychev, Ch. Lindblom, L. Plunkett, G. Heil and others.

Managerial decisions are made within the context of specific situations or when a problem arises and requires a solution. The issues of problematic situations arising in modern conditions have been developed by numerous domestic authors [see: 13–16; 19; 24]. However, any managerial (problematic) situation is linked to certain factors that influence the process of decision-making [see: 6; 13; 17].

The purpose of the work is to carry out a comprehensive analysis of socio-psychological factors of information activity and to find out their influence on managerial decision-making.

Presentation of the main material. Modern Ukrainian society is a complex of intricate socio-psychological processes and phenomena. They are brought about by economic and political reforms that have ambiguously impacted the development of Ukrainian society; by crisis-ridden socio-economic and political occurrences; by the evolution of democracy and the resulting political and ideological diversity and uncertainty; by the breaking of established stereotypes, societal consciousness, norms, traditions, and morals that were cultivated by the previous political regime; by the withdrawal of the state from paternalistic care of citizens and the unpreparedness of the majority to act independently, take initiative, take risks, and bear responsibility for the outcomes of their actions and choices; by the proliferation of corruption and criminality and their negative influences on the moral-psychological climate of society; and by crises in the realms of culture and spirituality, among other factors [19, 64]. These socio-psychological processes and phenomena have become especially acute during the war between Russia and Ukraine.

The beginning of the 21st century was marked by the emergence of the phenomenon of complex psychosocial relations between a person and the information environment that surrounds him [25, 89]. The socio-psychological atmosphere of Ukrainian society during its transformational phase is significantly influenced by the following factors:

1. The absence of a clearly defined orientation of social-political institutions and the population as a whole towards a common goal – the social-political transformation of society.

2. The lack of a formed system of life values that are recognized by the majority of the population as moral foundations of life and simultaneously act as regulators of people’s social actions.

3. The disunity (economic, regional, party-based, ideological) of the Ukrainian national elite, and as a consequence, a low level of socially beneficial efficiency, an inability to unite based on common goals and the common good.

4. The weakness and contradictions in the functioning of socio-economic and political institutions, which affect the nature and direction of the processes of socio-economic transformation in Ukrainian society (for example, contradictions and constant conflicts between different branches of power, inefficiency of legislative frameworks, etc.).

5. The destruction of ideological foundations of the previous social system, established models of life activity, and the formation of new ideological values and behaviour models, which inevitably affected the overall state of mass social consciousness [3].

It is obvious that there have been significant shifts in societal psychology regarding the understanding that changing one’s material status and improving the quality of life can only be achieved by relying on one’s own efforts. This should be taken into account in managerial activities, when defining state policies, making specific managerial decisions, and implementing them in practice.

Requests for social management have prompted the emergence of humanistic psychology – a new direction in the study of personality psychology. The following most probable directions for applying the achievements of personality psychology in the field of information activity have been identified:

1. internal arrangement of information services (motivation, relationships between employees);

2. conducting external interactions (direct communication, negotiations).

At the same time, the genesis of these directions in the development of personality psychology to some extent influences the possibilities of utilizing their achievements at various levels of information activity arrangement [18, 41].

Information activity in the media space proves that messages are “only the starting point for the recipients’ discursive activity, a reflexive basis for self-expression and further influence on public opinion” [10, 481] and, accordingly, on the mechanism of managerial decision-making in society. Psychological factors are a driving force and a necessary condition for the process of making
effective decisions during informational activities. Decision-making is a distinct form of human activity aimed at selecting the best course of action. A decision is a choice of an alternative, that is, a possible solution to a task. An evaluative criterion is chosen, the parameters of which need to be optimized. The decision-making procedure involves seeking necessary information, establishing criteria of optimality, considering limitations, and selecting the best alternative from the available options. It’s important to note that decision-making is always constrained by time and the implementation of decisions is associated with specific material costs.

The course and outcomes of individual informational activities, including the decision-making process, are significantly influenced by the personal characteristics of psychological processes (perception, memory, thinking, imagination), psychological state (attention, emotions, feelings, will), and psychological traits of the individual (temperament, abilities, character). The specificity of psychology in informational activities lies in the fact that these characteristics cumulatively impact this type of activity. Understanding these traits is necessary for effective communication with information suppliers and/or recipients and for improving the internal arrangement of informational activities within specific structures or departments.

Since humans are social beings, informational activities of both individuals and groups are influenced not only by the psychological characteristics of the individual but also by socio-psychological factors. Attitudes play an important role in this process, representing evaluative reactions to something, which are expressed in thoughts, opinions, feelings, and purposeful behaviour. These attitudes are formed over a certain period of an individual’s life and are influenced by their previous experiences [7]. As psychologists point out, attitudes particularly strongly influence people’s conclusions and behaviour when there is room for different interpretations of information upon which decisions are made. Such situations can arise in various fields of professional activity such as business, government and local administration, politics, and so on.

Automatic human reactions to specific signals are often influenced by stereotypes, which are mental constructs used for decision-making without a comprehensive analysis of information [7]. Stereotypes are closely related to attitudes. Attitudes embody the same life values that are embedded not only in consciousness but also in the deeper layers of human psychology. They form the foundation upon which an individual’s stereotypical or template behaviour is based. Often, attitudes serve as unconscious criteria for stereotypical decisions. The advantages of stereotypes lie in their ability to save an individual’s time and energy, and often that of an organization, when making decisions.

A highly specific and widespread form of stereotype is the so-called authority stereotype. Its essence is that people often perceive information as credible solely based on the fact that it is presented by an individual recognized as an authoritative expert in a particular field. The validity of the statement, as a rule, is not verified. Psychologists argue that people are inclined to automatically react not so much to the authority itself, but to its symbols, such as position, academic degree, or title, etc. [3; 7]. For effective management, it is crucial to determine the real level of authority of the sender (source) of information. In order to achieve this, one needs to know whether the qualifications and professional level of the sender (source) of information correspond to the profile and complexity of the issue being discussed. However, it’s worth considering that the mechanism of the authority stereotype’s influence is based on societal experience, as making decisions based on assessments from an authoritative expert in that particular field allows the individual to save time and effort in decision-making.

There are programmed types of decisions (these result from the implementation of a certain sequence of actions, similar to those performed when solving a mathematical equation) and non-programmed decisions (decisions that involve an element of novelty and are linked to unknown factors).

In addition, there are several approaches to decision-making:

1. Intuitive Approach: this involves making a choice based on a feeling that it is the right one;
2. Judgment-based Approach: this is a choice influenced by knowledge and accumulated experience (recall attitudes);
3. Rational Approach: this is a choice that is justified through an analytical process [6].

It’s important to note that there is a certain correlation between types of decisions and the approaches used to make them. Programmed decisions are predominantly solved using a rational approach. On the other hand, non-programmed decisions are often addressed using judgment-based or intuitive approaches. Additionally, the types of decisions and the approaches to making them should not be confused with the situations in which these decisions are made. The categorization of situations as standard or non-standard for the decision maker often depends on their experience, which, in turn, shapes the scope and structure of their informational needs.

According to the decision-making process,
decisions can be categorized as individual and collective. Individual decisions in the realm of management can be made by a single person or taking into account the opinions of various experts and consultants. In government administration, large and medium-sized businesses, and politics, collective decisions tend to prevail. Unfortunately, when making collective intuitive decisions or decisions based on judgments, there is a potential for information distortion due to the influence of socio-psychological mechanisms.

The phenomenon of groupthink is an interesting mechanism of group influence on the behaviour of individual members and the decision-making process. Groupthink is a mode of thinking that arises when the pursuit of consensus becomes so dominant within a cohesive group that the group is inclined to dismiss realistic evaluations of alternative courses of action. Social prerequisites for this phenomenon include high group cohesiveness and relative isolation, a directive leadership style, and the absence of methodical procedures for information search and evaluation. These factors can manifest in stereotypical thinking, illusions of unanimity, insufficient information among group members, and a biased attitude towards alternative problem-solving approaches.

An effective way to overcome groupthink is to foster a creative atmosphere within the decision-making collective and encourage a tolerant attitude towards opposing views. Sometimes, the well-argued and consistent defence of one’s beliefs by a minority can help other group members consider constructive information more openly [7].

The structure of managerial decision-making follows this sequence: managerial issue → decision-making.

It’s important to emphasize that in the process of management, a leader makes an endless number of decisions. Therefore, this process can be visualized as an infinite series of such sequences (Fig. 1), since each decision made in turn triggers the emergence of a new issue and its corresponding resolution.

![Fig. 1. Decision-making process](image.png)

![Fig. 2. Stages of the management decision-making process](image.png)
The process of managerial decision-making consists of three main stages (Fig. 2). The preparation stage involves the identification and realization by the organization's manager of a managerial problem, along with the clear formulation of the task that needs to be accomplished. The stage of searching for and making decisions based on alternative choices involves a comprehensive examination and analysis of possible methods and ways to solve the managerial problem. The aim is to select the most appropriate method of problem-solving for the given situation, considering the analysis and justification of key factors that influenced the choice. During the implementation stage, the chosen decision is communicated to the executors and stakeholders, ensuring its execution and monitoring its implementation [14; 15].

Managerial decisions are made in the context of emerging problems that require resolution. A problematic situation characterizes the interaction between the subject and their environment, as well as the psychological state of the individual involved in a conflicting context. Any managerial (problematic) situation is linked to specific objective (external) and subjective (internal) factors that determine, constrain, or define the criteria for addressing the existing problem. These factors significantly influence the process of making managerial decisions [13].

In the process of informational activity, while preparing well-founded decisions, managers often commit the following typical mistakes:

a) misunderstanding the problem;

b) non-systematic or fragmented representation of the problematic situation (psychological prerequisites for this may include insufficient experience, a tendency to stereotype one’s own activity, and an inadequate managerial concept of the decision-maker);

c) untimely identification of the problem (caused by both individual psychological traits of the manager and a lack of proactive control over the situation. Delayed decisions more often arise when the responsibility for problem identification is delegated to a higher management level. Occasionally, hasty decisions occur due to high personal anxiety, limited experience, and a lack of adequate understanding of the situation’s development dynamics);

d) informational scarcity, resulting in the ignorance of relevant information and absorption of unnecessary information [24].

Problems that arise during the decision-making stage often stem from suboptimal activity styles characterized by either inertia or impulsiveness, as well as inadequate critical evaluation of decisions. During the decision implementation stage, issues can arise due to a lack of confidence in the success of its execution.

According to Mescon M., Albert M., and Khedouri F., during the problem analysis stage aimed at optimizing processes and resources, it is advisable to avoid information overload and select only relevant information pertaining to the situation (problem). When it comes to alternative selection, managers’ decision-making processes are influenced by their personal evaluations, risk tolerance, time and changing circumstances, probability of negative outcomes, interdependence of decisions at different hierarchical levels, and the surrounding context [6].

A necessary condition for the effective solution of a specific problem is a certain objective set of psychological qualities of the decision-maker. A sufficient condition for making an effective management decision is the presence of the decision-maker’s characteristics, which are part of an objective set of psychological qualities, such as: the level of knowledge for assessing the situation, skills for solving similar problems, the ability to find a way out of the situation taking into account external and organizational conditions, the ability to predict the result of one’s activity and determine one’s attitude to the problem.

If a certain psychological characteristic of a manager is not fully developed or is absent, this leads to so-called “defective” decisions. Such a shortcoming of a manager requires correction through self-improvement; specialized training of the manager for making managerial decisions as part of postgraduate education; providing psychological assistance to managers within the context of specific educational organizations, and so on.

The scientific novelty of the work lies in the generalization of the main approaches to the problem of ensuring effective managerial activity, adequate perception of information and making informed decisions in the informational sphere. The authors have stated that effective management activity should be based on the awareness of real socio-psychological phenomena that accompany the economic, political and spiritual-ideological processes of social development, on taking into account the ratio of the management efforts of the authorities and the internal trends of the development of society, on knowledge of the psychological features of individual and group behaviour, psychological foundations of managerial communication and the implementation of managerial influence.

Conclusions. Therefore, effective managerial activity should be based on an understanding of real socio-psychological phenomena accompanying economic, political, and socio-cultural processes of societal development. It involves considering the balance between managerial efforts of authority and internal trends of societal development, as well as knowledge of psychological aspects of individual and group behaviour, the psychological foundations of managerial communication, and the implementation of managerial influence. Practical experience in managerial activities demonstrates that employees of the public service system who prioritize people in their work achieve more significant results than those who primarily focus on economic or purely technical aspects of the problem.
The effectiveness of an organization depends on the correctness of the decisions made. The efficiency of the decision-making process by a leader significantly depends on both objective and subjective factors. A necessary and sufficient condition for effectively solving a specific problem is the possession of a defined set of psychological qualities by the manager.


References