

Sannikov A.I.

Individual psychological qualities of a personality and decision-making style

*Sannikov Alexandr Ilich, candidate of psychological sciences, associate professor
South Ukrainian National Pedagogical University named after K. D. Ushynsky, Odesa, Ukraine*

Summary. The modern state and main directions of studying style in Psychology are presented in the article. The modern direction in investigation of decision-making styles is substantiated. The foundation of classification of decision-making styles is considered, as well as their dependence on personal qualities. Cognitive, analytical and executive components of decision-making style are defined. Besides, the author describes a complex of methods, which provides measurement of parameters of decision-making style.

Keywords: style, decision-making, personal qualities, decision-making style

Introduction

Modern investigations in the area of the Psychology of choice show that it is decision-making that defines contextual, procedural and resultative parameters of activity. Cost of failures, extent of losses for wrong decisions are extremely high. In view of this applied researches in the field of organization of secure personal activity also have to take into account common factors of decision-making and there is immediate practical importance of studying both – a decision-maker, and factors, directly relating to the process of decision-making. In many cases conditions of secure activity to a greater or lesser degree depend not just on a personality who makes a decision, but also are directly determined by him/her.

The significance of the problem is also defined by the role of decision-making not only in the process of activity implementation or efficient management, but also in the process of forming a decision-making style by a personality. Of the same importance is the role of researches concerning decision-making style in the modernization of teaching technologies, in the psychology of professional self-determination, development of a professional's personality, in the process of organizing professional selection, in development of psychological activity theory [2].

Complexity and contradictory of style problematics is revealed by the conversance with it. So, for example, Aleksandr Libin notes that "the field of use of the word 'style' is so wide, that some experts consider this concept to be interdisciplinary, being included into the categorical apparatus of philosophy, psychology, art studies, linguistics, biology and other science disciplines. Along with that there are almost no research papers in the area of systematization of accumulated theoretical and experimental results, methodological compilation of researches" [14, p. 3-4]. It becomes especially important in the conditions of increasing responsibility of a professional for the eventual result and consequences of his decisions.

Initially, there were three directions of style studying in research papers concerning this problem. Different arguments were used: a) in cognitive styles these are characteristics of cognitive processes; b) in activity styles – parameters of behavior and activity; c) in personality styles – combination of individual psychological characteristics of a person, personal dispositions [7]. In the late 90s in psychological literature some attempts were performed to allocate a generalized direction of decision-making study, where parameters and conditions of decision-making were emphasized as a basis.

Cognitive styles of decision-making

Gordon Willard Allport has substantiated psychological interpretation of style in the first direction and he supposed that some personality traits might have instrumental

importance, representing style or expression of behavior, not necessarily being a part of personality base structure. The style is determined as a characteristic of an system of operations, to which an individual is prone due to his/her personality factors.

Cognitive styles in the literature are considered as individually-psychological features of cognitive processes, proneness to usage of human means of interaction with information, actualization of individually-specific cognitive structure of a personality, mediating processes of information operating at all levels of cognitive abilities [14, p. 3].

It seems obvious, that the above mentioned psychological formations are certainly interrelated. Typological properties of the nervous system (interacting with external conditions of human vital activity) determine the types of temperament, which on the basis of the similar interaction influence the formation of the individually-personal organization. Interactions with individual cognitive experience of a subject manifest themselves in the cognitive sphere as cognitive styles. The latter, according to Marina Kholodnaya, determine individual forms of object representation in the cognitive sphere and strategies of cognitive activity, conditioned by the relevant objective [16, p. 207].

Analysis of cognitive and stylistic characteristics of decision-making allows us to draw the following conclusions. There is more differentiated, than earlier, understanding of the functional meaning of cognitive styles – as characteristics of not only the processes of cognitive reflection, but those which regulate this reflection and activity of a human on the whole (those psychological processes, which are related to actualization of decision-making). Cognitive styles are estimated in the process of solving cognitive tasks, but in any such a process decision-making is a required component together with two psychic subsystems – cognitive and regulative one. Description of the holistic decision-making can be obtained with the help of the special research and analysis of the mutual functioning of the above-mentioned subsystems. There is a regulatory function along with traditional and cognitive ones among other functions in the cognitive processes.

Analysis of researches, performed by Irina Skotnikova, shows that application of the term "cognitive style" is not quite correct. Usage of this common notion rather corresponds customary psychological study tradition and concretizes just a narrow field of the study, namely cognitive processes [13, p. 78].

Action, behavior and interaction styles

A concept of individual activity style was developed on the basis of the analysis of the human behavior and action patterns by Eugene Klimov and Volf Merlin. It was considered as a stable system of ways of optimal activity

realization, determined by typological peculiarities of the nervous system. A distinctive feature of the second direction is an emphasis on the adaptive style function, which includes two components: psychophysiological and psychological [5, p. 136].

Later Eugene Klimov emphasized other “acknowledged formal characteristics of the individual action pattern”: a) this system is determined by certain personality qualities”, b) this system is a means of efficient adjustment to objective requirements” [4, p. 74]. In the narrow sense of the word “an individual activity style” is a stable system of methods that is compiled by a person, who is eager to perform it in the best way. These are not carried-out and all the more physical acts, – these are gnostic, orientational activity and change of functional states, if they act like a means of achieving a goal. Style is an individual original system of psychological methods, which a human applies consciously or spontaneously in order to balance his (typologically determined) individuality with subject, external activity conditions [9, p. 165-167].

The development of the concept predetermined elaboration of the new approach in style researches in the late 80s of XX century, namely the professional activity style research (by Vladimir Toloček). According to it, professional activity style is considered together with varied forms of its manifestation in a broader way – as an adaptation of the subject not only to activity requirements, but also to the environment, to social and technical systems. The style has a three-factor determination: actualized individual characteristics; organization of components of mutual professional activity and organization of subject interaction. Style is a psychological system of active and passive adaptation (“interrelations”) of a human to the environment and its transformations, which interfuses all human lifestyle and modifies itself in its specificity. Professional activity styles reflect the main strategies of subject adaptation to the environment: a) transformation (authoritarian style; attacking style); b) interaction (democratic; engaging, playing style); c) coexistence (liberal; defensive style). Peculiarity of style forms depends on the state of organization (“structurdeness”) of the environment (working conditions and subject interaction) and predetermines the possibility of different style manifestations, its mutual transitions [15].

This approach also includes interaction styles, among which there is a family education style. The concept of family education style in psychological and psychotherapeutic literature refers to the wide and polysemic conceptual constructs of child-parent relations, which include such categories as parent attitudes and corresponding behavior patterns (styles); standpoints of parents; types of parent attitude; types of “mother-child” relations; types of positive and false authority; types (patterns) of upbringing children; features of pathogenic upbringing patterns (styles); parameters of educational process; family roles of a child; communication styles offered by parents. Besides, a concept “styles of parent functioning” is widely spread in modern psychology. These terms are often used as synonyms [17, p. 322], nevertheless each of them has its specificity. The most suitable attempt to distinguish these concepts, in our opinion, is one, proposed by Helen Siliaieva [11].

Personality and decision-making styles

Presentation of the stylistic sphere of a professional as

a peculiar psychological formation in the personality structure (the third direction), which has its specific functions, becomes more and more demanded and acknowledged. It gives an opportunity to formulate a hypothesis about the status of style, which is implemented in two aspects: internal – through the system of individual psychological parameters, and external – in the form of different types of interaction of a personality and environment.

Investigations of internal status show that stylistic properties serve as a mechanism of interrelation of formal and meaningful personality characteristics, creating invariant psychological structure. The nature of the style in this case is determined by the specificity of correspondence of psychological parameters of near-by personal substructures.

Data of Aleksandr Libin show that style functioning is provided by the activity of mechanisms, which mediate the interrelation of the parameters of different psychological formations. The specificity of their contingency is manifested at different levels of human individuality organization – from psychophysiological to interpersonal. The investigation of the style status in the personality structure showed its in-between position between above mentioned psychological formations and is accessible from the position of the application of a formal approach in psychology [7, p. 112].

The style performs a matching and compensatory function in the personality structure, is manifested in the optimizing and adapting effects, integrates parameters of a socialization process. It is important to emphasize, that the form of interaction of an individual with a certain situation is determined by the properties of his personality and semantics of environmental fragments.

A new direction relating to the study of decision-making style of a director (later of a manager) was formed simultaneously with the distinguished research directions of the style in psychology of management and later in the organizational psychology. Changes in conditions of economic management, study and generalization of research results of management activity determined intensive development of management theories and as a result – development of concepts concerned with decision-making style in management of an organization.

A great variety of professional activity tasks predetermine the appearance of the majority of decision-making styles and impossibility of forming a single multipurpose one. For instance, Juvenile Kuliutkin’s research results of interrelation of risk and cautiousness gave an opportunity to distinguish five types of decisions (for example, cautious, risky and impulsive) [6]. Parameters of manager activity in the classification of Ahmed Kitov formed the basis of eight main personality profiles of solving business tasks (for example, heuristically-organizational profile). The ratio of responsibility and delegation of authorities allowed Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt to develop the pattern of efficient decision-making, which includes seven possible styles. The most extreme and significant are the first one, when a manager makes a decision and announces about it, and the seventh one, when he allows the subordinates to act within determined by the supreme authority bonds [10, p. 177].

Stylistic diversity can be determined by the specificity of stages and applied decision-making technique, for in-

stance, revealing a problem situation, preparing for its solving, making a decision (solving a problem) and further examination. The authors of this approach, Heorhiy Lozhkin and Nadezhda Poviakel, mark that “decision-making... is individually preconditioned and depends on the number of psychological peculiarities of a personality and also on his/her activity style” [8, p. 80].

Anatoliy Karpov suggests a structural-leveled organization of decision-making processes as a basis of above mentioned examples of types and styles of decision-making. It includes five main levels, which synthesize all basic kinds and types of administrative decisions, tightly related with stylistic differences in their implementation. Organization levels of decision-making as well as attached to them methods of solutions have a consistent trend to subjective preferences and fixation in style peculiarities of manager’s activity. According to Anatoliy Karpov, “the preference itself and consequently the further fixation of techniques depend on the manager’s individuality and on the system of his personal qualities” [3, p. 422]. In accordance with this model (pattern) a manager chooses one of the seven possible styles in terms of three factors combination: a) personality properties of the manager; b) personality peculiarities of subordinates; c) features of the situation. The whole spectrum of choices is placed on the line between democratic (style “democrat”) and authoritarian (style “autocrat”) alternatives, accordingly associated with the interest to human relations or to the work.

Forming objectives, methods and research results

The considered directions in study of decision-making styles determined the subject and objectives of the research, namely the search and approbation of the stable structure of personal qualities, which provide formation and implementation of decision-making style, as well as the complex of its detecting techniques. The earlier written scientific papers were used as reasons for choosing elements of such structure ideas: 1) cognitive, emotional, volitional and motivational components are involved in the system of decision-making; 2) rational choice in the conditions of uncertainty is performed on the basis of the personality potential of a decision-maker; 3) decision-making is mediated by the variety of functional personality structures; 4) decision-making is based upon the multiple bonds of processes and personal qualities involved into this process; 5) personal qualities together with intelligence perform as style factors of decision-making.

A group of personal qualities was formed to choose a complex of techniques, which provide the research of indexes of decision-making styles, and to examine its working efficiency. The condition of choice was the analysis of the literature concerning the problem of decision-making style and the correspondence of personal qualities to particular requirements: remeasurement, adequacy to the conditions of the choice situation, resistance to external (environmental) influence, interrelation with parameters (qualitative and quantitative) of decision-making. An experiment aimed at study of interrelation of personal qualities, which create a decision-making style, was performed to check these conditions. The experiment involved 197 subjects (survivors) aged from 19 to 46 years.

The experiment consisted of three stages. The first stage is a theoretical analysis of the literature and data correlation, with help of which a complex of personality

properties was distinguished as factors of efficient decision-making. The second one is an empirical stage, which included testing aimed at studying impact features of different personality properties on decision-making. The third stage is a statistical proceeding of empirical study results with help of application of a program package SPSS 13.0. A quantitative (correlation) and qualitative (method of “ACes”) analysis of the obtained data was applied to collect the data about interrelation of the researched variables.

A complex of diagnostic techniques, which provide the necessary data acquisition about the parameters of decision-making style, was distinguished in the result of the research: a) technique “Volitional personal qualities (VPQ)” by M. V. Chumakov; b) technique “Personal factors of decision-making (PFDM)” by T. V. Kornilova; c) technique “Questionnaire of decision-making (QDM)” version of V. Il’in; d) technique “Active strategy of stress-coping (scale SACS) by S. Hobfall; e) technique “Psychodiagnostic four-modality questionnaire of emotionality” by O. P. Sannikova; f) technique “Determination of the reflexivity development level” by N. V. Vishniakova; g) “Diagnostics of mindset” by G. V. Rezapkina [12]. The total amount of the measured indexes, which characterize the components of decision-making style, is 51.

Accomplishing the analysis of personal qualities, which form the structure of decision-making style, some results should be **reviewed** and some conclusions should be drawn.

1. Comparison of the conceptual views and opinions of different authors concerning the problem of style shows that there are a number of diverse definitions of the same terms. The diverse concepts and terms are used to describe the same components of style as well as the same concept contains the confusion of different psychological ideas.

2. The informative analysis of the main stages of decision-making shows that the first and the second ones refer to the information processing (it means that they can be presented as a cognitive element of decision-making style); the third stage refers to the implementation of the made decision (the function element of style), and the distinguished contents is the general characteristics of the decision choice (the basic element of style is analytical one). Besides, there is an obvious dependence of the parameters of decision-making style not so much on the external, environmental factors (incertitude of the choice, risk and the lack of time), as on psychological features of a decision-maker.

3. The distinguished components of decision-making style partially coincide with the proposed ones by Isabel Briggs-Myers, because it is based on the cognitive functions together with personality features. In particular, the following parameters are used as distinguishing criteria: personal attitudes (extraversion/introversion), processes (information perception, basing upon the logics), and functions (assessment of information, unconscious experience, emotional responses) [1, p. 775]. Analysis of the style functionality shows that they are fully manifested in those activity components of a professional, which are characterized by the maximum complexity, responsibility, specificity of the personality role in them, and demand manifestation of particular properties and qualities.

4. Investigations performed by the author, aimed at studying the peculiarities of decision-making in different

kinds of professional activity, revealed the existence of common factors of using particular decision-making methods and techniques, which are marked by individual structure. The noted factors characterize the decision-making style as an integral, activity regulating system process. Variability of decision-making style is partially defined by specific peculiarities of activity and generally depend on the level of personal qualities maturity, which form holistic subsystems, and also on the personally de-

termined organization of cognitive, analytical and function style elements.

5. Decision-making style is a personality characteristic, one of the professional formation determinants; it develops and transforms under the influence of professional activity features. That is decision-making style, which provides reducing the uncertainty of the problem that disturbs a personality.

REFERENCES (TRANSLATED AND TRANSLITERATED)

1. Briggs-Myers, I. (2002). Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, v: Yu. B. Hippenreiter, V. Ya. Romanova (ed.) "Psychology of Individual Differences". Moscow: Publishing office CheRo, Pp. 754–775.
2. Karpov, A.V. (2003). Psychology of Management Decision Styles. Yaroslavl: Publ. office Avers-Press, 108 p.
3. Karpov, A.V. (2004). Psychology of Management. Moscow: Hardarika, 584 p.
4. Klimov, E.A.(1982). Individual Activity Style, v: Yu.B. Hippenreiter, V.Ya. Romanova (ed.). "Psychology of Individual Differences". Moscow: Publ. office MHU, Pp. 74-77.
5. Klimov, E.A. (1969). Individual Styles of Labour as Determined by the General Type of the Nervous System. Kazan: Publ. office of Kazan university, 278 p.
6. Kuliutkin, Yu.N. (1970). Heuristic Methods in Decision Structure. Moscow: Pedagogika, 229 p.
7. Libin, A.V. (1998). The Unified Concept of Human Style: metaphor or reality?, v: A. V. Libin (ed.) "Human Style: Psychological Analysis". Moscow: Smysl, Pp. 109–124.
8. Lozhkin, G. V., Povyakel, N.I. (2003). Practical Psychology in the "Man-Technique" System. Kiev: Publ. office MAUP, 296 p.
9. Merlin, V.S. (1986). Essay of Integral Character Research. Moscow: Pedagogika, 256 p.
10. Morozova, G.B. (2006). Psychological Support for the Organization and Staff. St. Petersburg: Rech, 400 p.
11. Siliaeva, E.G. (Ed.) (2002). Psychology of Family Relations with the Foundations of Family Consulting. Moscow: Academia, 192 p.
12. Sannikov, A.I. (2013). Personality Aspects of Decision-Making by a Professional. Science and education, №7/CXVII, Pp. 295–303.
13. Skotnikova, I.G. (1998). Cognitive Styles and Strategies of Solving Cognitive Tasks, v: A. V. Libin (Ed.) Human Style: psychological analysis. Moscow: Smysl, Pp. 64 – 78.
14. Libin, A.V. (Ed.) (1998). Human Style: Psychological Analysis. Moscow: Smysl, 310 p.
15. Tolochek, V.A. (1996). Styles of Professional Activity: Components Organization and Subject Interaction. Journal of Moscow university, № 3, Issue. 14. Psychology, Pp. 51–60.
16. Kholodnaya, M.A. (2002). Cognitive Styles: on the nature of individual mind. Moscow: Publ. office PER SE, 304 p.
17. Shneider, L.B. (2000). Psychology of Family Relations. Moscow: EKSMO-Press, 512 p.

Санников А.И. Индивидуально-психологические свойства личности и стиль принятия решений

Аннотация. Представлены современное состояние и основные направления изучения стиля в психологии. Обосновано современное направление в изучении стиля принятия решений. Рассмотрено основание классификации стилей принятия решений, их зависимость от свойств личности. Выделены когнитивный, аналитический и исполнительный компоненты стиля принятия решений. Описан комплекс методик, обеспечивающий измерение параметров стиля принятия решений.

Ключевые слова: стиль, принятие решений, свойства личности, стиль принятия решений