

## Managerial Mentality: Scientific Paradigm of Research

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study, which results are presented in this article, is to review the managerial mentality in terms of the cognitivist, activity, system-structural and psychosemantic approaches. Searching for the best methodological approach we carried out the theoretical psychological research, the object of which was the administrative mind as a determinant of professional management. It was the theoretical sources that were subjected to theoretical analysis as a methodological basis of investigation of managerial mentality. The study found that the structural approach in psychology produced the developments that allow considering the structure of managerial mentality as a set of elements of psychic experience or professional activity. The cognitivist approach shows the cognitive component of the managerial mentality, which includes a set of intellectual components of professional mentality of a specialist. The activity approach considers the professional needs, interests, motivations, values and goals of professional actors. Psychosemantic approach allows penetrating into the genesis of professional values and meanings, revealing the structure of the profession image and the mechanisms of changes and transformations of managerial mentality. The originality and value of this research is that the first time in English psychological literature the authors substantiate the concept of "administrative mind" on the basis of four research paradigms.

**Key words:** Mind • Managerial mentality • System-structural paradigm cognitivist paradigm • Activity-based paradigm • Psychosemantic paradigm.

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### INTRODUCTION

Research topicality. Managerial mentality is a mental phenomenon, which activity provides such all-important social and economic processes as the production and social relations. Today, however, neither in Slavic [1] nor in the English literature [2] there is no terminology, methodological substantiation or theoretical understanding of managerial mentality, its substantial characteristics and features of semantics within the frameworks of management occupations.

In this regard, we have begun the study of managerial mentality as a particular method of psychological reflection of reality inherent in a professional group of managers. In our opinion, the managerial mentality is the highest level of mental reflection of the world of trade and the internal world of the subject of management, which is determined by the professional content of the managerial activities.

**The Object of Our Study Is the Managerial Mind:** The subject of research is the content and the structure of managerial mentality in terms of the cognitivist, activity, system-structural and psychosemantic approaches.

**Background:** Historical analysis of scientific psychological literature demonstrates some consistent trends in the development of ideas about consciousness. Since the middle of the XIX century each of the psychological trends and schools - structural, functionalist, Gestalt, cognitivist, cultural, historical, activity, psychosemantic - introduced significant theoretical and experimental findings into the psychology of consciousness. Psychologists began to think over consciousness in relation to the processes of learning from the mid twentieth century. At that, while the cognitive approach [3, 4], describing work of mind, emphasizes the role of information received through the feedback channels, the cultural-historical [5] and activity concepts of consciousness [6], understand its content as filled with meaning and sense.

**Cognitivist Approach:** An undoubted merit of cognitive psychology [7, 8] is identification and understanding of extramental mechanisms of cognitive mental activities. In particular, studies of mnemonic activity found that the memory stores a lot more information than a person can learn or remember, that is only part of information is comprehended by the person. Experiments have shown

that the mind is able to process information by extramental control. Therefore according to A.Yu. Agafonov [9], the basic postulate of cognitivists about the limited capacity of mind in terms of processing information was falsified. The theoretical sources of cognitivism come from the attempts to explain the determinants of human behavior. Thus, according to E. Tolmen [10], the meaning of actions and situations for the subject is preset by his subjective attitude to them, their valence and demanding nature of these objects. The author develops a classification of requirements: primary (achieving positive targets, eliminating negative targets, using short-cut techniques for achieving preliminary requirements) and secondary (requiring specific types of targets and specific object-means).

So Nyutten [11] relates behavior to the comprehension of the situations that a man faces while processing information and constructing a conceptual image of the world. The researcher writes about the irresistible impulse of people to building a system of views about the universe and their place in it, based on the meaning of their existence.

The unit of analysis in the most famous of cognitive concepts, the theory of personal constructs by G. Kelly [4], is a construct. Constructs are a system of binary oppositions, which are used to categorize the world subjects, yourself and other people. These are constructs that determine the system of subjective categories, in the light of which the subjective perception of the world is realized. Kelly's concept for the first time allowed assessing the degree of a human cognitive complexity.

However, from the very inception, cognitive psychology has demonstrated some limitations of the scientific approach to investigation of consciousness. The main reproach for its scientific paradigm was that the cognitive psychology revived the old postulate of elementarism: declaring the opportunity to build the whole process of human cognition from the isolated blocks of information processing.

**The Problem of Consciousness in the Slavic World of Science:** In the Slavic world of science, among the theoretical ideas about the nature of consciousness the honorary status is attributed to famous paradigms: the cultural-historical paradigm of L.S. Vygotsky [5, 12], its derivative – A.N. Leontiev's activity paradigm [6, 13] and psychosemantic paradigm by J. Fodor [14] and V.F. Petrenko [15].

In the works of the famous Russian philosopher M.K. Mamardashvili [16] the main research problems of consciousness are articulated as follows. Consciousness as such (rather than its understanding) cannot be

"experienced in our lives", cannot be the phenomenon of life for us and therefore cannot be the object of positive knowledge.

V.P. Zinchenko [17] as a separate scientific problem of consciousness investigation sees the fact that consciousness, as a process, is often replaced by its result, i.e. one or another phenomena available for studies or monitoring.

Consciousness is one of those specific objects of knowledge, which is not subject to direct experimenting. In this sense, we agree with the opinion of A. Agafonov [9] that "the content and structure of consciousness can not be the subject of empirical research. None of these experiments deal with the actual content or structure of consciousness. The primary data of analysis are always the effects of the mind functioning" [9, p. 26]. The study of the mind activities has led most scientists to conclusion that the work of the consciousness mechanism is not realized. They insist on the opinion about the selectivity of consciousness, i.e. that this mechanism takes a special decision on what is to be understood.

**Activity Approach:** In the context of the activity approach, the methodological basis of the research of a particular type of professional consciousness was laid by A.N. Leontiev [6], S.L. Rubinstein [18], O.R. Luria [19] and V.P. Zinchenko [17], who closely related the mind to human activities. A.N. Leontiev [6] defined consciousness as a specific human form of subjective reflection of objective reality, as the picture of the world, where a person is included and which reveals actions and states for the subject. The researcher emphasized that in order to penetrate into the internal structure, not limiting to the study of phenomena and processes on the surface of consciousness, it is necessary to consider consciousness not as a field, contemplated by the subject, projecting proper images and concepts, but as "a special internal movement generated by the motion of human activity" [6, p.13]. In line with this understanding of consciousness V.N. Myasishchev [20] focused on the fact that consciousness is the highest degree of mind development and that it expresses the unity of the person's reflection of reality and his relation to this reality.

A.N. Leont'ev [6] also proposed a uniform way to describe the contents of consciousness and mechanisms of its change through understanding of consciousness as a unity of three elements: the sensual material (gives reality to the picture of the world), the value (expressed in the form of linguistic values) and the personal meaning (gives consciousness the character of bias). At that, the sensual material links consciousness with the world

through perception; and the personal meanings determine the relationship of consciousness to the need-motivational sphere of a human. A mediating link in the trinomial scheme is human activity, because it is the activity where transition of the object in its subjective form, in the image, occurs. Along with this, there is the transition of activity in the objective results - in its product. Thus, it is the activity where the real connection between the subject and object exists.

Today in the activity paradigm, consciousness continues to be interpreted as an instance, simultaneously reflecting and generating the world. For example Ju.M. Schwalb [21] offers the most generalized definition of consciousness that combines the features of both functional and structural approaches. Consciousness is internally differentiated, structural and compositional integrity of ideas, knowledge, notions, images and emotions. The author develops the idea of purposeful consciousness: in his opinion, the individual through a purposeful consciousness is able to organize his relations with the world. In addition, the scientist notes that consciousness exists as three interrelated processes: contemplation, thinking and reflection [21, p. 46]. Each of them complies with the basic ability of consciousness: the ability to comprehend, the constructive and generating abilities. The final product of goal setting in the first case is the self-expression of personality, in the second - setting goals of activity and in the third - plan.

Consider the problem of the relation between consciousness and administrative management. According to A.G. Asmolov [22], in the psychology of activity, there are two research paradigms: morphological and dynamic. Within the morphological paradigm we study structural units of activity: a special activity, driven by the motive; the action, directed by the goal; the operation that correlates with the terms of action; and physiological implementors of activity. While Leontiev [6] points out that the structural features of activity, ("units" of activity) do not exist separately. Distinguishing these units, the researcher tries to answer three questions. What are the activities performed for? What is the activity aimed at? What are the ways and methods used for implementing the activities?

Specify these categories in relation to management activities. Replying to a question, what are management activities performed for, we should point out such systemic sign, characterizing specific activity, as the motive of the activity (object of need). One of the most important components of management activity is motivation, which investigation is accessible for the psychological analysis in two aspects: in the process of verbalization (in the communicative act, when an

exchange of speech representations of experience and their understanding occur) and in the form of so-called non-verbal semantics, W. Goodenough [23]. Motivational factor of managerial mentality is an element which serves to build a subjective reality of the leader and his image of the world of trade.

In managerial activities, the following motivational orientations are distinguished: external motives (e.g., achievement and prestige of work) and internal motivation (orientation to the process and the result of work, personal and professional growth, self-actualization), Heckhausen and Heckhausen [24].

A specific motif in management activities is orientation to domination, the motive of power. So, H. Murray [25] highlighted the main features of the need for dominance and their corresponding actions. The sign of the need for dominance is the desire to control social environment, to influence the behavior of others, guide them with advice, persuasion or order, to encourage others to act in accordance with their needs and feelings, to persuade to cooperate and to convince others in one's rightfulness.

We turn to the scientific position of A.B. Orlov [26], who offers to interpret motives and needs of professional in terms of centration. According to the author, personal centration is an integral backbone feature of professional activity in the system "person - person".

Continuing this logical line, note that the nature of centration of the need and motivational sphere of managers determines the style, attitudes and social perception of the leaders. We distinguish seven major centrations, which can dominate in management activities in general in particular and specific circumstances: selfish (in the interests of the "I"); bureaucratic (in the interest of administration, management); conflict (in the interests of colleagues); authoritative (in the interests of colleagues and supervisors); cognitive (in the interest of the organization development), altruistic (in the interests and needs of subordinates); humanistic (in the interests of own essence and nature of other subjects of management (administration, peers, subordinates). The most progressive is believed to be the humanistic centration showing humanistic psychological approach to the person, compared to the first ones, reproducing the reality of traditional management [26].

Answering the second question of the activity paradigm, namely, what managing activities are aimed at, we distinguish the second backbone feature in it, i.e. the goal toward which the leader, driven by some motive, aspires. Management objectives, i.e. the processes directed to achievement of the intended result, are a sort of management actions.

To answer the second question, what means are used for performing the management actions, we distinguish there the actions and operations, i.e. ways to achieve the goals of management, which correspond to the terms of their performance. In these circumstances, as a rule, one or another "functional value" is fixed. N. Murray [25] separates specific actions that are grouped into the following unities: to incline, lead, convince, persuade, regulate, organize, manage, supervise; to subordinate, rule, dictate, judge, make laws, to introduce standards, develop the rules of behavior, decide to prohibit, restrict, resist, deny, punish, imprison; to charm, to conquer, to force to listen to and set the fashion.

Management activities are implemented through perceptual, mnemonic, communication, object-transformation, research, monitoring and evaluation operations, for which successful implementation we need not only the right objectives, but the professional orientation of the leader as well. The success of management depends on the professional abilities and skills of the manager. As it was noted by S.L. Rubinstein [18], the development of human capabilities is a process of human development. Assimilation of certain knowledge and modes of action by a human requires a specific premise or internal condition, namely, a certain level of mental development. Thus, in particular, the level of development of professional consciousness of the leader depends on the maturity of his conceptual-categorical system in a particular domain of management, psychology of management, level of adoption of professional meanings that are embodied in the professional motives, interests and set goals.

Thus, the activity approach in psychology suggests a new look at the consciousness and origin of the image of the human world. Consciousness and the image of the world, as its product, are not only determined by environmental conditions or genetic programs of life, they are conditioned by the very life of the subject in the society and his activities, including the professional one. Thanks to the activity approach, the psychology declares the idea of ??complex determination of professional consciousness: biological, psychological, social and spiritual (cultural).

**Psychosemantic Approach:** This psychological paradigm in the study of consciousness was developed from the last third of the twentieth century by: E.Yu. Artemyeva [27], V.F. Petrenko [15] and A.G. Shmelev [28]. One of the most promising sectors of psychology, psychosemantics, deals with the research and reconstruction of values and meanings, as the structures of representation of experience in the human mind, J. Fodor [14].

In psychology, the question of specific correlation of human experience, the world image and consciousness is still open and, therefore, debatable. The image of the world in some paradigms is considered as a component of consciousness and in this case, we study the structures of subjective experience (systems of values and meanings), based on which the image of the man's world is built. This research trend within the Slav psychosemantics is called psychology of subjective semantics - the line of E.Yu. Artemieva [27] and A.N. Laktionov [29].

In other cases, the image of the world is considered as an individual system of values and personal senses; this direction is presented in the pioneering works by G.A. Shmelev [28] and V.F. Petrenko [15] in the eighties and later; it is considered psychosemantics by definition. Psychosemantics a priori assumes the existence of two realities: the objective reality and subjective inner world. Modeling of such separate realities (internal and external) in itself would be a serious methodological problem, if not based on the statement of S.L. Rubinstein [18] on the single structure of the world with an actor inside it and on the position of A. Leont'ev [13] on impossible consideration of the subject beyond his activities in the world.

Psychosemantic approach to the study of the processes of consciousness involves the methods of mathematical statistics (factor, cluster analysis and multidimensional scaling) for building the semantic space: it provides the relation of psychosemantics with the wider issues of cognitive psychology, artificial intelligence, the psychology of perception and the psychology of art.

Ch. Osgood and G. Suci [31], Ch. Osgood [30] T. Urbánek [32, 33], V.F. Petrenko [15] and G.A. Shmelev [28] proved the validity of the model of generalized semantic space; it is shown that the distinctiveness of the coordinates of subjective semantic space depends on the meaning of the leading motives of the investigated activities. The concept of the phenomenon understanding and the psychology of meaning of D.A. Leont'ev [34] and A.A. Brudnyi [35] and the idea of ??human perception mediation by the system of values by A.A. Leont'ev [36], Luria [19], S. Harri-Augstein [37], H. Triandis, [38] are close in their methodological bases.

**Systematic and Structural Approach:** The problem of the consciousness structure in the history of psychology emerged and continues to exist as a question of finding the elementary unit of consciousness. In this case, if we take an element of psychic experience as a unit of analysis, the analysis of consciousness is either based on substantive aspects or structural aspects and then the

analysis is performed from the position of organization of the consciousness contents, that is its formal aspect is accentuated, Titchener [39].

Managerial mentality, as a special kind of professional consciousness, is a comprehensive system (V.A. Hanzen [40]), consisting of different elements in certain natural relations, so the study of professional consciousness of the manager is, as a rule, realized in line with the holistic system approach. As we know, this is the holistic system-structural approach that allows creating a model of a real system, increasing the level of abstract description of the system, determining the completeness of its composition and structure, the basis of description and the laws of dynamics.

Given the relatively undeveloped state of categorical system of managerial mentality, this was not directly the terminological system that we subjected to basic theoretical analysis, but its super-system (the nearest and the located higher) and subsystems.

Consideration of the managerial mind from the point of view of system approach allows determining its place in the overall structure of consciousness as follows: consciousness as such (universal measurement) → public consciousness (social dimension) → professional consciousness (group measure) → professional consciousness of the individual (individual dimension).

The concept of "managerial mind" is the collective dimension of the phenomenon. Finally, the individual measurements may be used to consider professional consciousness of particular person - the manager. As the examples of "super-system" in relation to managerial consciousness, we can consider such types of consciousness, as political, religious, musical and artistic consciousness. On the one hand, in their manifestations, they are the essential varieties of social consciousness, i.e. represent the human mind in its social dimension. On the other hand, the term "political", "religious", "music", "artistic" and other similar kinds of consciousness convey the concept of "professional consciousness" in its group, the collective dimension: the mind of a professional politician, musician, artist, etc... On the third hand, these concepts can express the contents of common mind, such as "artistic consciousness of the child," "the political consciousness of the students". However, the super-system that is the nearest to managerial mentality is economic consciousness. This is explained by the presence of the new cohort of managers that is still insufficiently studied, the ones who work in the private sectors of the economy and business.

Managerial mentality is structured in a certain way. While the professional mentality is a form of consciousness, its structural organization should in a way

reproduce the structural components of consciousness, defined in a particular theory, for example, in a two-component theory of consciousness by L.S. Vygotsky [12] or three-component structure of A.N. Leont'ev [6], or in the four-component structure of V.P. Zinchenko [17], or in a five-component structure by F.E. Vasilyuk [41].

Managerial mentality is a multi-level and multi-component structure with a current picture of the professional world, the professional culture and intellectual activity in the mode of methodological reflection (understanding). The core of this structure is the content of management activity, its theories and models (values) and professional values and principles of management (management senses). Above this core there is not the least important sensual material, which is expressed in differentiated perceptions of managerial reality by the professional (the image of the trade world.) Each of these components is not constant- during the professional activities of the manager not only his system of values but also sensual fabric and meaning change (new knowledge is acquired, methodological apparatus improved, etc.). Managerial mentality represents the nature and the level of profession-genesis of the manager's personality and ensures the performance of the professional functions. Content, level and structural features of the managerial mentality determine managerial forecasting, goal formation, planning, decision making, monitoring and evaluation and correction of administrative activity.

Managerial mentality is a set of ideas, knowledge, images, values, personal meanings, dominant attitudes, opinions, ideas and stereotypes based on direct experience of professional managers; it reflects the social relations within the professional group, precedes the practical professional activity of the leader; it is formed phylogenetically and interiorized ontogenetically during professional training and management practices.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the structural approach in psychology resulted in the developments that allow us to consider the structure of managerial mentality as a set of elements of psychic experience or professional activity.

The cognitive component of managerial mind includes: a set of intellectual and cognitive components of professional consciousness of a specialist.

In the context of the activity approach we considered professional needs, interests, motivations, values and goals of professional actors.

Psychosemantic approach allowed penetrating in the genesis of professional values and meanings and revealing the structure of the profession image and the mechanisms of change and transformation in the minds of management.

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