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AUTHORITARIAN LEADERSHIP STYLE IN DIGITAL MANAGEMENT: THE ROLE OF IT IN STRENGTHENING MANAGERIAL INFLUENCE

АВТОРИТАРНИЙ СТИЛЬ КЕРІВНИЦТВА В ЦИФРОВОМУ МЕНЕДЖМЕНТІ: ЙОГО РОЛЬ У ПОСИЛЕННІ КЕРІВНИЦТВА

In the contemporary context of the digital economy development, a significant transformation of organizational management systems is taking place, driven by the widespread implementation of information and communication technologies, business process automation, and the expansion of digital management platforms. These changes affect not only managerial tools and methods but also the leadership styles applied within organizations. One of the leadership styles that continues to retain its relevance in certain managerial contexts is the authoritarian leadership style, which, in the digital era, acquires new forms and mechanisms of implementation.

Considerable attention in academic research is devoted to the study of authoritarian leadership under conditions of management digitalization, as well as to the exploration of opportunities for strengthening managerial influence through modern information technologies and digital management instruments. In particular, N. Dubrova [1] examines the use of digital control tools, personnel monitoring systems, and mechanisms for evaluating employee performance in contemporary organizations. At the same time, D. Holushko [2] emphasizes the impact of digital technologies on the transformation of managerial models and the strengthening of managerial control functions through the application of IT solutions.

The studies conducted by I. Korostov and R. Herzhan [3] focus on evaluating management performance indicators in the context of the digital transformation of enterprises. Particular attention to the issue of changes in leadership styles under the influence of digital technologies and IT tools is given by O. Krainik, T. Serhienko, and S. Loza [4]. In turn, P. Levosiuk [5] characterizes the transition from traditional hierarchical, particularly authoritarian, management models to digital-network forms of organizing managerial activity. Furthermore, I. Shaforenko [6] substantiates the role of information technologies in strengthening the centralization of managerial decision-making and expanding managerial control capabilities in modern organizations.

The authoritarian management style is traditionally characterized by a high degree of centralized decision-making, a rigid vertical power structure, limited employee involvement in managerial processes, and the dominance of directive methods of influence. Within such a system, the manager acts as the primary source of managerial decisions, while subordinates perform clearly defined tasks as executors. In the classical sense, this leadership style proves effective in situations of crisis management, under conditions of high uncertainty, or within organizations possessing military, industrial, or strictly regulated organizational structures.

Under the conditions of the digital transformation of the economy, the authoritarian leadership style does not disappear but rather undergoes modification under the influence of information technologies. Modern IT solutions transform the mechanisms of managerial control implementation, making them more systematic, automated, and continuous. In particular, the use of ERP systems, CRM platforms, project management systems, digital monitoring dashboards, and analytical platforms enables managers to monitor employee activities in real time, assess productivity, and promptly intervene in task execution processes.

In this context, information technologies function not only as instruments for optimizing management processes but also as means of strengthening managerial influence. They create conditions for stricter supervision over task performance, the standardization of work processes, and increased transparency of personnel activities. This is especially evident in digital employee performance evaluation systems, where every action can be recorded, measured, and analyzed.

As a result, a new model of managerial interaction is emerging, which contemporary academic literature often associates with the concepts of “digital control” or “algorithmic management.” Under such conditions, the authoritarian leadership style acquires a technological foundation, since control is exercised not only through direct managerial directives but also through automated systems regulating employee behavior. This contributes to strengthening discipline, reducing deviations from established standards, and ensuring a high level of controllability of organizational processes.

At the same time, it should be noted that the digitalization of management also changes the way employees perceive the authoritarian leadership style. Whereas rigid control was previously associated primarily with direct administrative pressure, today it is often implemented indirectly through digital monitoring systems, key performance indicators (KPIs), ranking evaluation systems, and automated reporting mechanisms. This creates a situation of constant transparency of employee activity, which may be perceived as a form of digital surveillance.

Particular attention should be paid to the issue of the impact of the IT-enhanced authoritarian leadership style on employee motivation. On the one hand, a clearly structured system of control and process standardization contributes to improving labor discipline, reducing the number of errors, and increasing work productivity. On the other hand, excessive centralization of management and continuous digital control may negatively affect employee initiative, reducing their level of autonomy and creative potential.

Furthermore, the intensification of digital control may generate psychological pressure on personnel associated with the feeling of constant monitoring and evaluation. Under such conditions, there is a risk of decreasing the level of trust between management and employees, which in the long term may adversely affect organizational culture and the socio-psychological climate within the workforce.

An important aspect is also the transformation of the manager's role under conditions of digital management. A contemporary manager who applies information technologies within the framework of an authoritarian leadership style increasingly acts as a coordinator of digital information flows and an analyst of managerial data. Their influence on the organization is exercised not only through direct managerial decisions but also through the interpretation of data obtained from digital systems. Consequently, the very nature of managerial influence is changing – from direct administrative intervention to technologically mediated control.

It should also be emphasized that the effectiveness of the authoritarian leadership style in a digital environment largely depends on the level of development of the organization's IT infrastructure and the digital competencies of managers. An insufficient level of digital literacy among managerial staff may lead to ineffective use of technologies or excessive bureaucratization of control processes.

Therefore, the authoritarian leadership style in the context of digital management does not disappear but rather transforms under the influence of information technologies, acquiring new instrumental capabilities. IT acts as a factor strengthening managerial influence by ensuring stricter, more systematic, and continuous control over organizational activities. At the same time, such transformation requires consideration of socio-psychological consequences related to employee motivation, the level of trust, and the development of organizational culture.

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