

Relationship between authoritarianism and tendency to dominate in interpersonal communication of university students

La relación entre el autoritarismo y la propensión a dominar la comunicación interpersonal entre estudiantes universitarios

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ABSTRACT:

The relevance of the study is conditioned by the fact that in recent decades the problem of preventing psychological violence among university students has become urgent one. Authoritarianism and a tendency to dominate as socio-psychological phenomena are factors that contribute to increasing the propensity to psychological violence in interpersonal communication, which actualizes their study. This paper is aimed at analyzing the relationship between authoritarian behavior and the tendency to dominate and control in interpersonal communication among university students. The paper presents the results of an empirical study of the prevalence and interconnection of authoritarianism and the propensity to dominate among university students in the educational environment. It is established that the most common among university students are such features of an authoritarian personality as authoritarian aggression and authoritarian submission. The propensity to domination is associated with such manifestations of authoritarianism as conservatism, authoritarian

RESUMEN:

La relevancia del estudio se debe al hecho de que se ha agudizado en las últimas décadas el problema de la prevención de la violencia psicológica entre estudiantes universitarios. El autoritarismo y la tendencia a dominar como fenómenos sociopsicológicos son factores que contribuyen al aumento de la propensión a la violencia psicológica en la comunicación interpersonal, lo cual actualiza el estudio de los dichos fenómenos. El artículo tiene como objetivo analizar la relación entre el estilo autoritario de comportamiento y la tendencia a dominar y controlar la comunicación interpersonal de estudiantes universitarios. El estudio presenta los resultados de una investigación empírica enfocada en la prevalencia y la relación del autoritarismo y la propensión a dominar entre estudiantes universitarios en el entorno educativo. Se ha establecido que la agresión autoritaria y la sumisión autoritaria son las características de la personalidad autoritaria más frecuentes. La propensión a dominar se asocia con las manifestaciones del autoritarismo tales como conservadurismo, agresión autoritaria,

aggression, anti- interception, destructiveness and cynicism, authority complex and stereotypy.

Keywords: authoritarianism, propensity to dominate, authoritarian personality, interpersonal communication, university students, prevention

antiintracepción, destructividad y cinismo, complejo de poder y estereotipia.

Palabras clave: autoritarismo, propensión a dominar, personalidad autoritaria, comunicación interpersonal, estudiantes universitarios, prevención

1. Introduction

Modern conditions of political and social and economic life of the society, innovations in its important spheres put forward the tasks of psychological prediction of the individual's behavior, prevention of problems of interpersonal communication. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the great variety of individual-typological differences of people, gender, national, cultural and other factors that determine these differences. In this sense, it is relevant to study the relationship between authoritarian personality traits and a tendency to dominate, including among university students, since adolescent age is significant in the formation of personality.

The problem of authoritarianism as a personality's peculiarity in various definitions, such as "personal authoritarianism", "authoritarianism of the individual", "authoritarian syndrome", etc., is investigated by scientists in many countries and from the point of view of different methodological approaches since the last century (Reich, 1999; Fromm, 2017; Adorno, 2001). These studies are combined into a separate scientific social and psychological direction - "the theory of an authoritarian personality", which remains one of the most influential concepts in social and political psychology (Merkel, 2011).

Authoritarian personality is a certain psychological type, which has such features as reactionary, conservative, aggressive, thirsty authority. The concept was introduced by E. Fromm (2017), who thus tried to reveal the origins of Nazism. However, in his opinion, this type of personality is found in history long before the rise of fascism. Martin Luther, head of the burgher Reformation in Germany was considered by E. Fromm (2017) as classical authoritarian personality. In his opinion, in the mind of an authoritarian person there is no concept of equality. The world for such a person is divided into people who either have or do not have the power and authority, i.e. the superiority and the lowest. A typical example of an authoritarian personality can be considered the biography of A. Hitler.

In 1950, the book "Authoritarian Personality", written by T. Adorno (2001) on the basis of his extensive research in this field, was published. This work has gained fame, because of which the authorship of the term "authoritarian personality" is sometimes attributed to T. Adorno (2001). In it, T. Adorno described this phenomenon, proceeding from the views of Z. Freud on the importance of early socialization's role for the development and formation of the personality. In his opinion, as a result of overly strict fostering, when the feeling of insult of the child and his aggression towards parents do not find an outlet, a tendency is formed for their idealization, on the one hand, and for reorienting aggressiveness and hostility to other objects, on the other. This phenomenon formed the basis for his explanation of prejudices against national minorities. In the foreword to the book "Authoritarian Personality", the German philosopher Max Horkheimer wrote that an authoritarian personality is a new anthropological type of man that was formed in the 20th century.

According to American and German sociologists T. Adorno (2001) and E. Fromm (2017), the "authoritarian personality" was the basis in the formation of national-socialist and fascist social entities. In general, they distinguished the following characteristic features:

- Intolerance to freedom;
- thirst for self-affirmation and power;
- Aggressiveness
- Orientation to the authority of the leader, one's own social group and the state;
- Stereotype of thinking;
- Conformism;
- Hatred to the intelligentsia and people from other ethnic groups, etc. (Gritsanov, 2010).

Traditionally it is believed that an authoritarian personality has a tendency to be subordinated the influence of stronger personalities and dominate the weaker. Domination is an attitude towards another person as a means of achieving one's goals, ignoring his own interests and intentions in communication. The goal of the dominant personality is to possess the other, to dispose of time, thinking and deeds of the other, to obtain an unlimited unilateral advantage. To it is possible to refer an open, without masking, imperative impact - from physical and psychological violence, suppression to suggestion, command.

In a situation of dominance in the communication of one of the partners, the other is compelled to occupy a dependent position. This type of interaction is defined as a dominant-dependent relationship model. In this case, one subject in the relationship forces the other to submit to himself and accept goals that do not correspond to his own aspirations and desires. The dominant position includes such behavioral manifestations as self-confidence, independence, authority, demonstration of one's own worth, ability to insist on one's own. Such people are striving for rivalry, they have contempt for human weakness and they need a force for its own sake. In communication, they rarely support the interlocutor, most often use the instrumental style of verbal communication, often ignore the point of view of the interlocutor, seek to gain understanding only their own problems, belittle the importance of the communication partner, inattentively listening to him, rush to give him advice, evaluate his actions, prompt for immediate and thoughtless action (Kunitsyna, Kozarinova & Pogolsha, 2001; Kletsina, 2009).

2. Materials and Methods

2.1. Theoretical and Empirical Methods

The theoretical method of research is the content analysis of scientific papers relevant to the research problem, which makes it possible to consider the degree of its elaboration comprehensively and to reveal the main approaches to understanding the nature of an authoritarian personality and the propensity to dominance.

We carried out an empirical study aimed at studying the expressiveness of these factors among students and for their study used a set of valid and validated methods:

1. To measure the propensity to dominate in interpersonal communication, the Leary's technique was used of diagnosing interpersonal relations (Fetiskin, Kozlov & Manuilov, 2002).
2. To measure the propensity for domination as an orientation of the personality, a personality questionnaire of activity and tendency to dominate was used (extraction from the Kud technique by E. Kudlachkova, P. Osetsky, V. Smezhal and S. Kratokhvil) which allowed determining the level of activity, dominance, passivity and submission (Klyukovkin & Ladygin, 2007).
3. To measure the degree of authoritarian personality, the F-scale of T. Adorno (2001) was used, which allows to describe an authoritarian person who possessed the following traits:
 1. Conservatism: supporting the values of the middle class;
 2. Authoritarian subordination: uncritical, blind submission to the idealized authorities of their own social group;
 3. Authoritarian aggression: the tendency to find people who do not respect the values universally accepted in this society in order to condemn, reject and punish them;
 4. anti-intraception: rejection of all subjective, full of emotions, fantasy, sensual;
 5. Superstition and stereotyping: belief in the mystical destiny of one's own destiny, propensity to think in rigid categories;
 6. Power thinking and mania of power: thinking in such categories as dominance-submission, strong-weak, leader-followers; identifying oneself with images embodying power and authority; the display of strength and fastness;
 7. Destructiveness and cynicism: general hostility, denigration of all human;

8. Projecting: the propensity to believe in the dark and dangerous processes taking place in the world; projection of one's unconscious, instinctual impulses to the external world (Soldatova, Shaigerova, 2008).

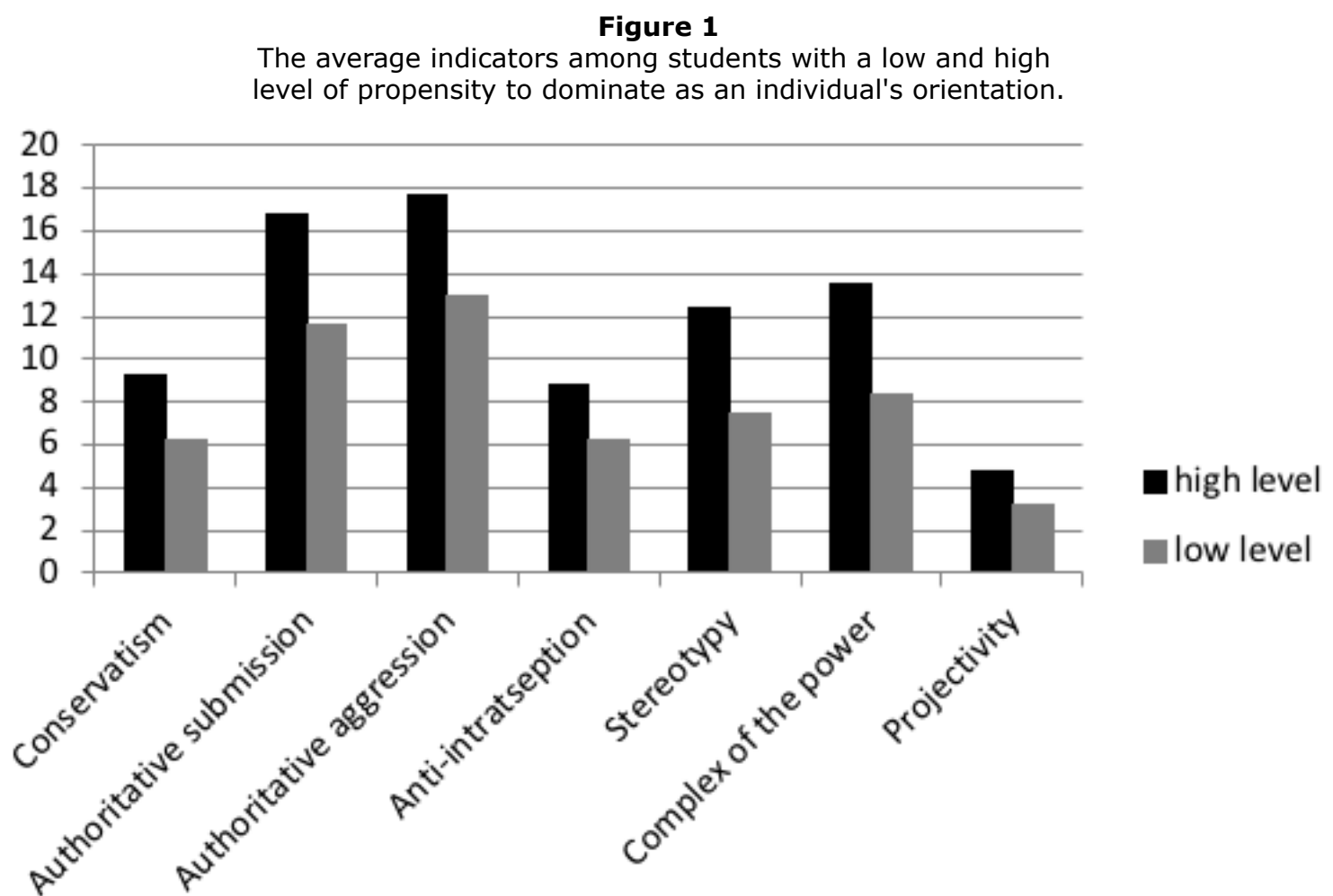
2.2. Research Base

The study involved 134 students of higher educational institutions of Kazan at the age of 19-22 years.

3. Results

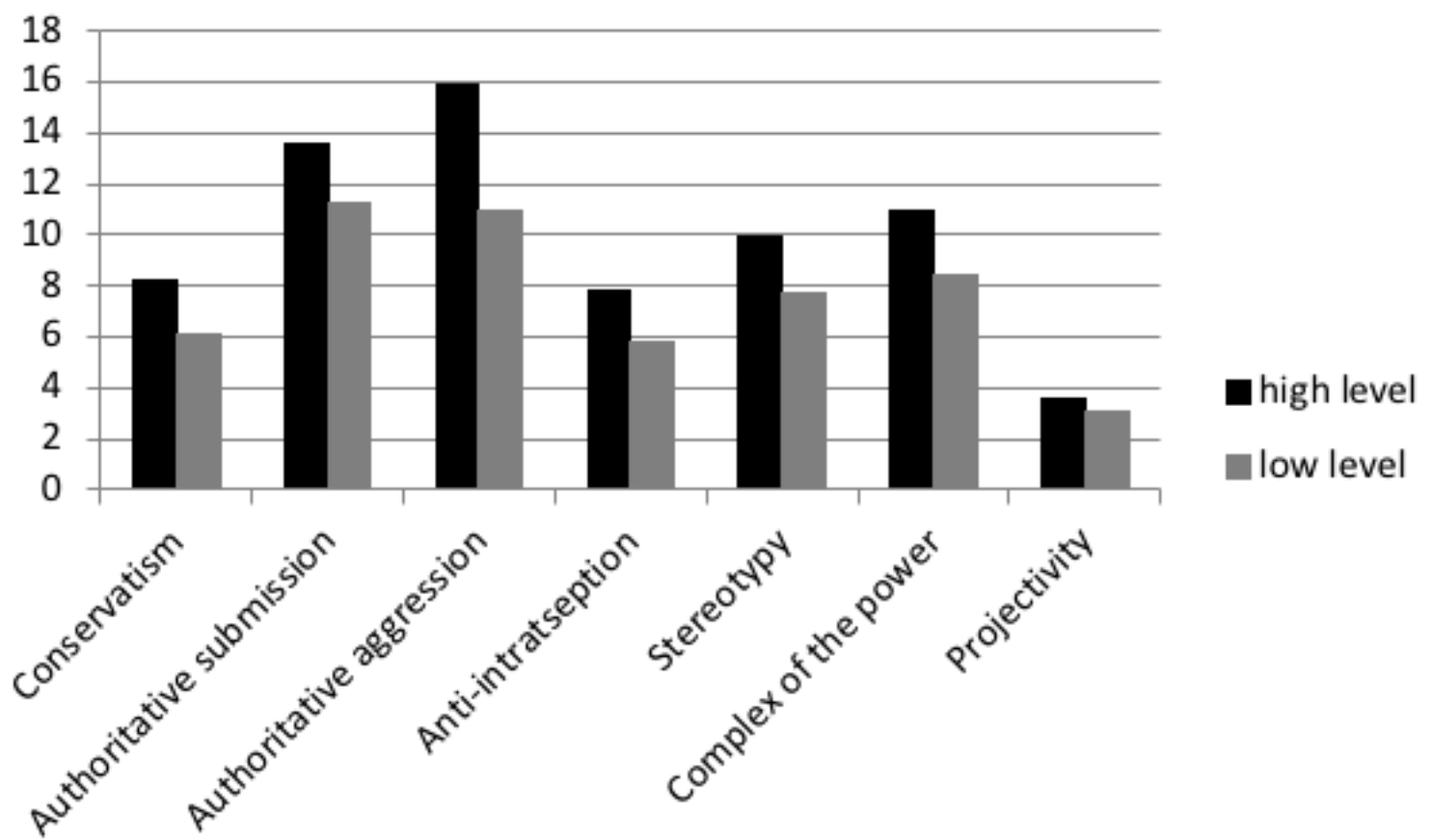
The carried out empirical research has allowed to establish a high level of propensity to domination as an orientation of the person and propensity to domination in interpersonal dialogue approximately among 25% of students.

We conducted a comparative analysis of the average F-scale indicators among the boys and girls with a low and high level of propensity to dominate. The average indicators for students with a low and high level of propensity to dominate as an individual's orientation are shown in Figure 1.



The average indicators for students with a low and high level of propensity to dominate in interpersonal communication are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2
The average indicators among students with a low and high level of propensity to dominate in interpersonal communication.



As it can be seen in Figures 1 and 2, students with a high level of propensity for domination get the highest scores on the scales "authoritarian aggression" and "authoritarian submission". That is, they have the strongest tendency to seek out people who do not respect conventional values in order to condemn, reject and punish them, as well as uncritical subordination to the idealized authorities of their own group. But in general, in comparison with students with a low propensity for domination, they have increased indicators for the F-scale, which indicates a stronger expression of their authoritarian personality traits.

We conducted a correlation analysis of an authoritarian personality's features and a tendency to dominate. These data are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Correlation analysis of features of an authoritarian personality and a tendency to dominate students

	Domination in interpersonal communication	Domination as the direction of personality
Conservatism	0.331*	0.326*
Authoritarian subordination	0.235	0.306*
Authoritarian aggression	0.316*	0.289
Anti-Intraseption	0.357*	0.255
Superstition and stereotyping	0.323*	0,416*
Complex of power	0.296	0,394*
Destructiveness and cynicism	0.175	0.333*
Projectivity	0.267	0.226

** . Correlation is significant at the level of 0.01 (bilateral).

* . Correlation is significant at the level of 0.05 (bilateral).

As it can be seen from the table, the dominance for students in interpersonal communication is associated with conservatism, authoritarian submission, anti-intraception, and superstition and stereotyping. Domination as an individual's orientation is associated with conservatism, authoritarian subordination, superstition and stereotyping, a complex of power and destructiveness and cynicism. Consequently, the propensity to dominate is associated with such features of an authoritarian personality as:

- Substantial support for the values of a stable middle class;
- A noncritical and unconscious desire to be subordinated to the authorities (parents, seniors, leaders, supernatural force) that are important to them, the need for a strong leader, servility to the state power;
- Propensity to condemn, reject and punish people who do not agree with traditional values, the need for an external object to discharge the aggressive impulses suppressed in their own social group;
- Dislike and rejection of everything subjective, creative, suppression of fantasy and imagination, fear of demonstrating genuine feelings and loss of self-control, devaluation of the human person and giving special sacred significance to objective reality;
- Faith in the mystical destiny of one's own life; propensity to superstition, transfer of responsibility to external forces, rigidity of thinking;
- Thinking in such categories as domination-submission, strong-weak, leader-followers; identification of oneself with image embodying power and authority; exposure and exaggeration of the significance of strength and firmness, hardness of character; Common hostility, negative perception of human nature as a whole and assessment of hostility towards outsiders as natural thing.

Thus, it can be concluded that the tendency to dominate has a connection with the majority of the characteristics of an authoritarian personality.

4. Discussions

R.V. Merkel (2011) in her study defined the general psychological component of authoritarianism as a complex personality characteristic by revealing the scientifically grounded links of this socio-psychological phenomenon with other regulatory and communicative properties. She identified the interconnection of authoritarianism with such regulatory properties as: self-control, neuroticism, normative, confidence, tension, etc.; and the interconnection between authoritarianism and the set of values accepted by the individual. Direct correlation links with values of the macro-social level ("active, activity-based life", "high demands", "rationalism", "self-confidence") and negative correlation links with values of the micro-social level ("health", "happy family life", "upbringing", "Sensitivity" (responsiveness) are revealed, the ambiguity of these links is shown, which consists in the fact that the interests of the whole ("one's own" society) for authoritarian individuals are above the interests of the private (individual). The relationship between authoritarianism and the communicative qualities of the personality is revealed, such as friendliness, trustfulness, being under exposure to influence, weak initiative in social contacts. Unlike other studies, her study has empirically proven that authoritarianism is associated with a number of positive qualities (self-control, consciousness, confidence, independence, responsibility), and not only with psychic properties that are interpreted as negative in the framework of traditional culture (self-confidence, anxiety, etc. (Merkel, 2011)).

V.V. Vyalykh et al. (2015) noted the importance of studying the interdisciplinary aspect of the problem of an authoritarian personality's formation. They analyzed ontological, axiological and epistemological directions of studying this problem. Their main attention is directed to the study of the features of adolescence's authoritarian personality formation,

since it is at this age that self-development, professional and personal formation takes place. The ontological direction, from their point of view, lies in the very essence of an authoritarian personality's formation. From this position, the authoritarian personality is an extremely complex and contradictory phenomenon, based on the neurotic development of the individual, connected with the authoritarian style of parenting. In this case, in the structure of the youthful personality, one's own "self" becomes the criterion for evaluating all that exists, and if we do not control the development of this kind of narcissistic tendencies, then the destructiveness of such a person in relation to the world and to itself only increases (Vyalykh et al., 2015).

Philosophy studies an authoritarian personality as a subject that is subjected to significant deformations rooted in his psyche, and these deformations cause contradictions and disturbances in her activities. At the youthful age, due to the growing internal contradictions arising from the impossibility to realize their needs in the desired way, the value orientations are changing. His Super-Ego becomes so great that it is almost impossible for him to cope with it.

The axiological direction of the study of an authoritarian personality's formation is based on the study of values that are significant for this type of personality. Freedom is not an absolute value for this personality; furthermore, it wants to avoid it. This was described in detail by E. Fromm (2017) in his famous book, "Escape from Freedom," where the notion of "authoritarian character" was also defined by him. He defined the authoritarian nature as a specific type of social character, which is the psychological basis of Nazism, and analyzed its structure in detail. Significant features of the authoritarian personality are, from Fromm's point of view, such social and psychological characteristics as love and respect for the strong and hatred of the weak; limited and stingy in everything, down to asceticism; aggressiveness, which is associated with a general increased anxiety and is for this type of personality the predominant way of psychological protection; narrowness of horizons; suspicion; xenophobia (fear of all "strange" and unfamiliar, perceived as a source of danger); weakness and indecisiveness; the worship of the historical past, connected with the inability to feel himself a full-fledged person in the present tense. The most important element in the structure of an authoritarian nature is a specific attitude toward power (love of power in itself and contemptuous attitude towards powerless people and organizations that do not have power).

The basis of the epistemological trend in the study of adolescence's authoritarian personality formation is the perception of the world and the recognition of one's place in it. Personal practice of cognition and all experience, knowledge and skills that the subject receives in adolescence are superimposed on his distorted consciousness. Any information finds an interpretation according to the desired one, without reference to reality. The main problem here is the growing conservatism and bias in relation to experience and knowledge, the difficulty in perceiving the new, the assertion of axioms and constants, which are introduced into the rank of the absolute. And it is these constants that determine the further fate of the information received. Thus, self-analysis of an authoritarian personality is extremely distorted, inadequate and subjective, usually not correlated with reality. According to A. Adler (1997a, 1997b), one of the main aspirations of an authoritarian personality is also "the will to power". A.A. Bodalev (1988), D.I. Feldstein (1989) believed that the formation of an authoritarian personality is associated with improper education, which results to an internal conflict and leads to the fact that the authoritarian personality becomes aggressive towards the world.

5. Conclusion

In recent decades, the problem of preventing the propensity to extremist activity and the associated propensity to psychological violence and other forms of destructive behavior among university students has become acute. Authoritarianism and a tendency to dominate as socio-psychological phenomena are factors that contribute to increasing the propensity to psychological violence in interpersonal communication, which actualizes their study. This paper analyzes the interconnection between an authoritarian style of behavior and a

tendency to dominate and control both in interpersonal communication and as a feature of personal orientation among university students. The leading theoretical method to investigate this problem is the content analysis of scientific papers related to the research problem, which allows us to consider the analysis of factors contributing to psychological violence. Empirical methods were conducted of the study using valid diagnostic techniques corresponding to the purpose of the study, such as the technique of diagnosing interpersonal relations of Leary to measure the propensity to dominate in interpersonal communication; to measure the propensity to dominate as an orientation of the personality, a personal questionnaire of activity and propensity to dominate was used (extraction from the Kud technique by E. Kudlachkova, P. Osetsky, V. Smezhala and S. Kratokhvila); to measure the authoritarian degree of the personality, the F-scale of T. Adorno (2001) was used, which allows to describe an authoritarian personality, statistical analysis and generalization of the results obtained. The paper presents the results of an empirical study of the prevalence and interconnection of authoritarianism and the propensity to dominate among university students in the educational environment. It is established that the most common among university students are such features of an authoritarian personality as authoritarian aggression and authoritarian submission. The propensity to domination is associated with such manifestations of authoritarianism as conservatism, authoritarian aggression, anti-intracception, destructiveness and cynicism, authority mania and stereotypy. Thus, the propensity for domination is associated with such features of an authoritarian personality as: strong support for the values of the middle class; uncritical desire to be subordinated to authority (parents, elders, leaders, supernatural power), the need for a strong leader, servility for state power; the propensity to condemn, reject and punish people who do not respect traditional values, the need for an external object to discharge the aggressive impulses suppressed in their own social group; rejection of all subjective, creative, suppression of fantasy and imagination, fear of genuine feelings' manifestation and loss of self-control, devaluation of a person and giving a special significance to objective reality; faith in the mystical destiny of life; propensity to superstition, transfer of responsibility to external forces, rigidity of thinking; thinking in such categories as domination-submission, strong-weak, leader-followers; Identifying one-self with images that embody strength; exposing the strength and hardness, exaggeration of the importance of character's strength and firmness; general hostility, denigration of human nature, evaluation of hostility towards outsiders as natural thing. Thus, it can be concluded that the tendency to dominate has a connection with most of the characteristics of an authoritarian personality.

The materials of the paper reveal the targets of prevention of these socio-psychological phenomena and are of practical value for the development of psychological and pedagogical programs aimed at the prevention of psychological violence, authoritarianism and a tendency to dominate in the educational environment.

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