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PHILOSOPHY OF LEADERSHIP: PRAGMATISM AND EXISTENCE

The article focuses on the relevant area of contemporary scientific sphere of leadership, delimitating it from the political aspect, and considering the problem as a natural social phenomenon. The author examines the formation of leader among students, defines its main stages and components. Particular attention is paid to the psychological characteristics of the process of "maturation" of the leader, as well as subsequent development.

Keywords: leader, leadership, leader-pragmatist, higher education, charisma, self-government.

In its report on global forecasts for 2015, the World Economic Forum clearly stated that the modern world is looking for strong leaders. 1767 experts pointed out that "the lack of leadership" ranks third among global problems, yielding only to the inequality of income distribution, along with constant and relentless growth of unemployment. It should be noted that "the lack of leadership" is defined as more important than weakening of democracy, threat to the environment, and the growth of nationalism level. So what are the traits conferred upon those who are recognized as "leaders"? What is needed for such people to appear among us?

Education has a significant influence on the development of modern civilization and individual. It is the educational process that forms the leadership position in young people, as well as the ability to accomplish themselves through serving the society. Universities can be one of the major links in the process of leader formation today. At this particular place – at the university – the future strong intellectual elite are being trained.

Here the cultural environment is formed which serves the development of society as a whole. If we consider the principles of higher education in the

coordinates of social progress, there is no way we can avoid the issue of the dialectical relationship between the individual and the society that currently is hardly noticeable.

One could assume that when a young person, obtaining the relevant subject knowledge, masters some specialty or craft, he/she almost automatically receives the opportunities for self-accomplishment in the society. But is it always true? Each of us has many examples that speak of a completely opposite situation. And perhaps we know those who once shaped quite well, but eventually failed to accomplish his/her potential.

There is no need now to define the essence of the term "leader", and translate it from different languages. We can emphasize the ascertaining notions only. And this is the understanding of the fact that the one who is considered the leader – is above all, a personality. The basis of leadership is the authority that arises from the trust, but does not come along with it.

By paying attention to these factors, we can point out that the development of leaders is the development of individuals who perform leadership roles, but leadership development is a process that covers all members of organization and aims to develop its collective capacities [1, p. 23].

The most famous nowadays leadership programs have a clear focus on the formation and development of a leader. Traditionally they are oriented to the development of several major personality factors:

- communicative competences that are intended to form the skills of building trust in the environment;

- personal characteristics;

- special knowledge that includes opportunities to influence others [5].

In terms of educational institution, such traits should be developed in the context of university features. In this case, the most effective method of leadership development is aimed at forming the necessary skills of influence, the ability to see the problem and be able to solve it, to be able to motivate others [1, p.25].

Analyzing the problem of leadership, it would be relevant to focus exclusively on the concept of student-leader, since the comprehensive description of leadership in the educational process cannot be placed in the narrow limits of one publication.

In fact, the phenomenon of leadership among students can be divided into two components:

- firstly, it is the administrative leaders, including the appointed monitors of academic groups;

- secondly, the self-nominated leaders or informal leaders who are formed in the learning process and in solving common household problems.

There are very significant differences between these two types:

➢ the influence of the monitor is based on those powers that were given by the administration of the institution, while the informal leader creates his/her authority in the process of social influence and organizational interactions;

➢ informal leader is different from the formal one (monitor) by less stability, as it depends on the mood of the group, the nature of situation;

➢ the leader operates within the group, while the monitor connects it with other social systems.

Ideally, formal and informal leadership coincide, that is, the "appointed leader" is recognized by members of the group and as an informal leader as well.

In this case his/her formal rights are complemented by informal opportunities to influence the group. However, when the monitor and informal leader do not coincide in one person, the group may experience frustration and exacerbation of conflicts.

As one can see, the influence of the leader has two main sources:

- personal authority, when group members recognize the leader because of his/her status, experience, etc;

- charismatic properties such as initiative, morality.

The basis of leadership, therefore, will be in the fact that followers recognize the authority of the leader only in those cases where it in practice proves its

competence and value for the group. The informal leader receives authority over the group, and for its support he/she should enable them to meet their own needs.

If we recall the well-known today and repeatedly analyzed A.Maslow's theory, in the pair of relationship "leader – group" one can define two types of needs that are the basis of a complete personality:

➢ "diminished", i.e., the needs which are terminated almost immediately after meeting them;

➢ "existential", which, on the contrary, are only reinforced after their implementation and encourage further development [3].

The need for self-actualization is exactly like this – one of the most significant for humans. Actually leader – is the one who has the strongest need for self-implementation, the one whose internal requirements are generally met, whose "real-I" is not at odds with the "I-perfect" and thus has a very high self-esteem and inner integrity. After all, leadership is inherent in the nature of each person; it is a quite natural need which is possible at any stage of life [2, p. 47].

According to the currently existing humanitarian paradigm, the personality develops and improves throughout the life, but the early stages of development were and remain the most important. One can remember the well-known and popularized approaches of S. Freud. Therefore, cultural education, which will include general culture, professional culture, independence from stereotypes, can be determined as one of the most important existential means in the formation of a leader. It should be noted that pragmatism is inherent in each leader, especially in solving moral dilemmas. In such cases, maintaining the boundaries of elementary diplomacy, he/she looks not for instant decisions based on emotions, but considers the problem on the basis of objective benefit criteria, not forgetting that in solving one problem, another one should not appear. This suggests that the actions of a leader are always aimed for the future. Quite often, in the times of the group crisis, the leader is guided by the principle of rational egoism, estimating possible losses and profits, trying not to depend on public opinion and stereotypes.

The education system based on the principles of students' self-government is defined as a fairly effective form of training future leadership potential. The students' self-government plays a significant role in preparing the activists for independent life, forms a willingness to fulfil their public duty and defend their positions. But what is most important about this activity, it is the experience that will be later transferred to the real-life conditions.

In students' environment, leadership can be regarded in several forms:

1. **individual leadership**, which is formed on the basis of self-aware, motivational and self-controlling factors, including socialization as one of the important features of the work in team;

2. **microleadership**, which consists in the formation of proper atmosphere in the group and is aimed at the emergence of desire in students to the collective settlement of common problems or initiatives;

3. **macroleadership** or organization of self-controlling students' environment at the faculty or university level;

4. **megaleadership** – organization of social movements in the youth environment and implementation of appropriate interaction with existing political or community groups [4, p. 119].

Under the term "students' self-government" in modern higher education we traditionally understand a form of self-accomplishment of students acting in the context of their creative potential, improvement of existing organizational skills, management skills, the sense of responsibility through involvement in making and implementing management decisions that are important in the life of the university. The real work of students' self-governing structures requires from each participant commitment and adequate demonstration of certain intellectual and organizational abilities. Considering that the social activities of students are free of charge in nature, activists perform their functions due to special internal motivational factors. This factor enables students to gain experience of relevant moral and altruistic behaviour which has the social orientation.

The problem of leadership among students in the modern discourse can be considered inexhaustible, thus indicating its incompleteness and potential. It seems particularly important in the context of transformation processes in the Ukrainian society and the reform of higher education.

As a conclusion it is necessary to note the following. We trust our leaders. We tend to follow not only the strongest or the smartest, and admire the most experienced ones, but above all, we tend to choose those who *correspond to our conceptualization* of the leader. And given the fact that in a collective reflection, the leaders will always be those who will be able to influence the majority for the highest ideals of our society, it is these concepts that will eventually determine who will be recognized as the leader. This can mean only one thing – there is no point in polishing leadership skills as long as we will not be able to change that imagery which will provide leadership with sense and give such people their authority.

Today only those can afford complaining about the lack of leaders who can trade leadership skills. And, in fact, critics of this industry may also talk about the decline of leadership. However, neither party has done anything to somehow solve the permanently existing problem of leadership. Therefore, apparently, it is relevant to mention the assertion of G. Petriglieri that we are all part of the problem, but not its solution.

In the situation where the industry of leadership training is itself exclusively directed at skills, ignoring all other factors, it unwittingly assumes the same selfish traits which the leaders are criticized for.

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