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TECHNIQUE OF ASSESSING FUTURE MANAGERS' LEADERSHIP QUALITIES IN MODERN SOCIO-CULTURAL ENVIRONMENT

The article deals with the issue of the formation of leadership qualities of future specialists in the field of management in modern socio-cultural environment. The urgency of the considered topic is determined by the significant change of external conditions of the development of personality in the last decade, characterized by a shift in emphasis from individual thinking to collective one, the transition of the organization of social interaction from hierarchical to network one. The purpose of the article is to substantiate theoretical, methodological and practical principles for assessing leadership qualities of future managers in modern socio-cultural environment. The main tendencies and phenomena in the development of the socio-cultural environment of modern young people from the point of view of the possibility of forming leadership qualities of future managers are revealed: unlimited expansion of reference groups; the weakening of critical thinking, displayed in the absence of "visual" cynicism and overestimation of achievements; "the crisis of individuality", that is, the leveling of a personality; changing the hierarchy of needs: from personal to group ones; self-structuring of the society. Experimental study was conducted in two stages. The task of the first stage was to obtain factors that determine the manifestation of their leadership qualities baed on self-assessment. The task of the second stage was to identify the leaders in the group and assess their impact on the result of teamwork. As a result of the pilot study, there have been distinguished 5 students with mature leadership qualities out of 48 respondents. As a result of the study, a perspective direction of the development of management as a science was formulated, which is the formation of organizational and managerial principles of the individual work in the group (personality management).

Keywords: *leadership, management, socio-cultural environment, individuality, team, social activity, self-esteem, expectations.*

Introduction

A traditional approach to training specialists in the field of management and improving their professional qualities makes the development of such a personal characteristic as leadership almost impossible.

Leadership is known as the process of social influence, through which the leader gets support from other members of the community to achieve the desired goal [1]. In management, this impact is regarded as a kind of managerial interaction, or the process of organizing teamwork [2].

The traditional approach to training managers involves the development of leadership qualities, since it is believed that a formal leader cannot ensure the achievement of goals set for the team. According to I. Hryshchenko, only a real, group-recognized leader can consolidate the team's efforts [3].

However, leadership skills, as it is known from the works of some psychologists [4], are peculiar not for everyone. The attempts to develop them without appropriate deposits are often infertile, and the applicants who do not meet the requirements of "leadership" often do not pass professional qualifications, and are forced to abandon the career of a manager.

At the same time, the expansion and complication of the hierarchy of modern business structures, especially large national and international corporations, lead to the increase in the role of administrators, reduction in creative activity and leadership ambitions of staff.

Many professionals, in particular Ron Alsop [5] and Alan Travis [6], point out that the characteristic feature of the modern generation of young people, the so-called "Y generation", is general passivity, the lack of leadership ambitions, motivation for adversity and manifestation, due to this, personal leadership qualities. This is especial-

ly important in the context of an over-expectation of future employment, which in the long run leads to disappointment and decline in the business activity of the younger generation of professionals.

Thus, the following question arises: how significant is the influence of socio-cultural environment on the formation of leadership qualities? The answer to this question makes it possible to adapt approaches to the training of managers, to make them adequate to the realities of the present.

Investigating the works of scientists on the issue of the impact of the socio-cultural environment on the development of personal qualities of future specialists in the field of organization and management, it can be stated that it is explored fragmentarily. The main efforts of researchers are aimed at identifying general tendencies in the development of socio-cultural environment, without being tied to the specific personal and professional characteristics of a person. The main tendency on which the attention of researchers is focused is the interconnection and simultaneous aggravation of group conflicts in the course of global and local processes of transformation of the socio-cultural environment. These processes are considered in terms of their impact on the national, social, gender, age groups of people. That is, their influence on the personality characteristics of an individual in terms of the formation of his/her professional qualities is beyond the attention of most researchers. This is especially true for the people who are professionally trained in the field of management, because it is these professionals who will shape not only the professional but also the socio-cultural environment of business in the coming decades. Summarizing the information above, it can be stated that the perspective direction of the research is to determine the impact of socio-cultural environment on the formation of personal characteristics of specialists in management, in particular their key characteristics – leadership.

The **purpose** of the article is to substantiate theoretical, methodological and practical principles for assessing leadership qualities of future managers in modern socio-cultural environment.

The **tasks**, the fulfillment of which allows to achieve the set goal, is to identify current trends in the development of the socio-cultural environment of future specialists, to formulate methodological principles and conduct the assessment of future managers' leadership qualities according to the designed technique.

Research methods

Leadership as a specific phenomenon and an inalienable feature of a person is not measurable. Therefore, expert methods are the most adequate according to the tasks of the research. An empirical study was carried out using a method that combines the approaches of various methods of expert evaluation in a comprehensive way, in particular, a combination of procedures for individual and collective evaluation was used. The peculiarity of the methodology is the interconnection of the procedures of students' self-assessment of the influence of the socio-cultural environment on their lives, their role in it and their leadership ambitions (based on questionnaires) and external independent evaluation of the results of the tasks performed by students.

An empirical study was carried out on the basis of the Kherson National Technical University. The study involved the students of the 3rd-4th years of study majoring in Management of Organizations and Marketing in a total number of 58 people. The expert group consisted of five persons: three lecturers teaching the profile disciplines, and two practitioners-the head of the company and the representative of the Kherson Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The roles of experts were distributed as follows: the teachers acted as analysts-referees to assess the data, business representatives - as analysts-auditors to assess the conditions of the experiment and its results.

According to the methodology, the study was conducted in two stages.

At the first stage, the method of questioning was used to make students assess the factors that determine the manifestation of their leadership qualities. The questionnaire proposed to the respondents contained three groups of questions, which allow to generalize the level of their social activity, self-esteem of leadership qualities and level of expectations from the future. The evaluation of personality characteristics was performed in dimensionless values (points).

The task of the first stage was to obtain, in the most generalized form of self-assessment by students, the factors that determine the manifestation of their leadership qualities.

The students were asked to answer the following questions:

1. Social activity:

- Do you think you are a socially active person? How is it manifested in real and "virtual" life?

- In which informal groups do you participate?

- Whose opinion is authoritative for you, why?

- Are there any interpersonal conflicts in your group? Are you a member of them, are you involved in resolving the conflicts of other members of the group?

- Are you protecting the interests of the group?

- How do you act when your personal interests go against the interests of the group?

- Are you a follower of any subculture?

- What are your hobbies? Do you participate in relevant events, discussions, contests?

2. Self-esteem:

- What is your status in formal and informal groups (leader, antagonist, "core", 'periphery", outsider, etc.)? Does the status of the group match your interests?

- Do you consider yourself a creative person? What kind of creative activity are you doing?

- How do you evaluate your personal (creative, professional) achievements? Do you compare them with the achievements of other people?

- How do other people perceive you? Is the assessment of your achievements adequate?

- How do you evaluate your intellectual abilities?
- What are your advantages compared to others?

3. Expectations:

- What place do you want to occupy in the hierarchy of management (manager of the organization, department manager, specialist)?

- What status do you want to gain in the team?

- What is more attractive to you: work in a large team, own business or being a freelancer?

- What life needs and personal desires do you want to satisfy first of all?

- What level of remuneration do you consider adequate to your abilities and experience?

At the second stage, the method of "commissions", as a means that allows individuals to show their leadership qualities, was used. It is based on the formation of special expert groups (commissions), who discuss the tasks for harmonization of different points of view and elaboration of the integrated thought during "round tables". During the thematic roundtables, a group of experts monitored the teamwork of the students, which allowed them to identify the actual leaders and to assess the factors that contributed to the manifestation of their leadership qualities.

At the second stage the students were offered to perform their professional tasks in small groups within their professional training, namely: using expert assessment methods (brainstorming and questionnaires) to identify and evaluate the parameters of certain managerial, economic and market processes. Students were invited to discuss the problem in the group, to put their own marks and to assess the coherence of the results with the help of the methods of mathematical statistics. Thus, the task involved several stages of diverse work in the group – the discussion, the synthesis of the results of the discussion, the organization of questionnaires, the collection and processing of information.

The main, but not obvious for the students themselves, condition for the task was self-organization of work in the formed small groups. The need for such a complex and multi-stage task led to the emergence of one or several leaders in the groups, who independently assumed responsibilities in organizing the teamwork.

If the obvious leader in the group was not found (there was a parity work or the leader was appointed without his/her own initiative), the group's transformation was carried out and the experiment was repeated. That is, when performing similar tasks, changes were made in the formation of the groups, namely, some students were withdrawn from the group in turn, new members of the group were invited, and the process of group work was evaluated in different versions of their acquisition.

The comparison of the results of self-assessment with actual results has allowed to reveal the specific factors of the influence of the socio-cultural environment on the formation of leadership qualities and generalize the errors in the self-presentation of students.

Results of theoretical study

Under today's conditions, the trends in the development of leadership qualities of managers are largely influenced by socio-cultural environment in which the formation of professional competences and their implementation take place. In this regard, we consider it necessary to examine the main trends and phenomena in the development of socio-cultural environment of the modern young man in terms of the possibility of forming leadership qualities of future managers:

1. The unlimited expansion of reference groups. The development of information technologies, mass access to information and the spread of informal communication, in particular in social networks, leads to the formation of quantitatively unbounded reference groups, whose influence on the formation of the individual is constantly increasing. The world perception of a modern person is formed not only under the influence of familiar people, but also by strangers. When communicating with family members, friends, teachers, employees, people can in a certain way appreciate their personal qualities and form a circle of people whose opinions are authoritative, then when dealing with people on the Internet, their collective opinions are often not critically reinterpreted and perceived as true. The reference groups in the network are formed on the principle of similarity of thoughts, perception and interpretation of facts. If a person drastically disagrees with the group's opinion, he/she will be eliminated from communication. Hence the following phenomenon follows.

2. The lack of "visual" cynicism. Critical thinking, as it is known, is considered a prerequisite for the civilized development of the society [7, 8]. However, right now the whole generation of people is undergoing a process of refusing to criticize phenomena and processes. This is clearly traced in the confidential perception of any information and its dissemination without an appropriate assessment, or by admiring the achievements of other people without critical reflection on their motives and the real results achieved.

3. The overestimation of achievements. This phenomenon is closely linked to the previous one and proves itself in the fact that people are accustomed to overestimate the results they achieved. On the one hand, it gives them certain benefits in communicating within the interested groups, which, as we have already indicated, do not challenge these achievements if they do not contradict the general ideology of the group. On the other hand, this overstatement is no longer in order to gain authority in a group, and often unconsciously, since a person is accustomed to positive evaluations of any of his/her achievements.

This is especially surprising in terms of the information society, when the collection, accumulation and verification of information has greatly facilitated and any achievement can be compared with others, more perfect ones. But the reality is that people do not want to be compared. It is not the winning, it is the taking part.

Not a leader, but a group, that is a team.

4. The crisis of individuality. Two or three decades ago, the ability for creativity was considered the prerogative of a small number of gifted people whom the society was trying to identify and give an opportunity to show their talents. At present, creative impulses are characteristic of many people. The number of creative individuals is growing so rapidly that in their mass it is harder to find those who really have creative skills. This tendency is explained by the desire of modern people to demonstrate their uniqueness. Hence – the constant change of subcultural flows in the society, the desire for external effects, undisguised self-love and mutual compliments, the openness and publicity of personal life (which is usually served in a positive way), etc. But the paradox is that people, in their quest of individuality, behave in the same way. They are led by the same motives, and they do the same things. The accumulated critical mass of individuals turns into a "grey mass" of people with the same needs. So there is a personality leveling, the submission to the motives of the group.

5. The change of the hierarchy of needs. As it is known, the theory of hierarchy of needs, despite its low validity, has become widely distributed in the science of management [9]. On the background of substitution of their motives by the motives of the groups the hierarchy of people's needs is changing. This is manifested in the fact that more and more people who have not reached the right (and sometimes vital) level of satisfaction of their own needs, are concerned with the satisfaction of others' needs. As an example, people with a low level of quality of life, instead of solving pressing problems, are concerned with the protection of animals in other parts of the world. People even sacrifice their health and life for the sake of not always fully aware ideals of people unfamiliar to them.

6. The self-structuring of the society. The history of mankind indicates the constant aspiration of the elites to create a certain hierarchy of the society, to form classes or groups of people who would be easy to lead and control. From time to time these attempts appeared to be successful, but more often, the society resisted the attempts to structure, leading to significant socio-political and economic fluctuations and revolutionary phenomena [10]. Today, the phenomenon of self-structuring of the society on a global scale is taking place. People themselves enter the formal and informal groups, they are concerned with their ideas and motives of behavior. These groups are large collective consumers of certain types of real goods and information products. Manipulating such groups, motivating them to certain actions becomes easier. It is only necessary to subjugate a real or imaginary threat to the foundations of the existence of the group and it stands up for their protection. And so these groups can be controlled and managed.

Every person today is a member of not one but a few groups that can be directly related to each other or have no direct points of contact. Thus, a certain global network of groups is formed that are connected by its members. And this is a "pure network", that is, the hierarchy of groups can not be traced.

Consequently, the self-structuring of the society is largely followed by the way the business goes – from the hierarchy to the networks. The change of priorities "personality - group-network" is the main factor influencing the behavior of future managers.

Results of empirical study

The received students' answers were elaborated in details and generalized assessments were made on the identified groups of questions. Summarized results of the first stage of the study are presented in fig. 1.
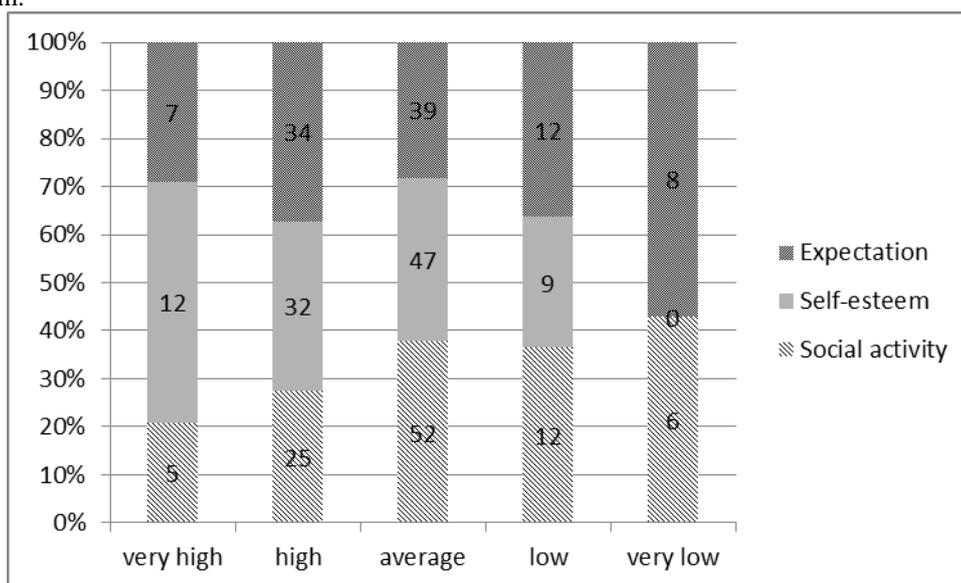

Fig. 1. Summarized Results of the Questionnaire,% of the Total Number of the Respondents

Thus, 52% of the respondents assessed social activity to be average. Analyzing the issues of self-esteem and expectations, most of the students consider them to be average as well – 47% and 39% respectively. However, 34% of them assessed the expectations to be high.

The task of the second stage was to identify the leaders in the group and assess their impact on the result of group work. The algorithm of the second stage of the study is presented in fig. 2.
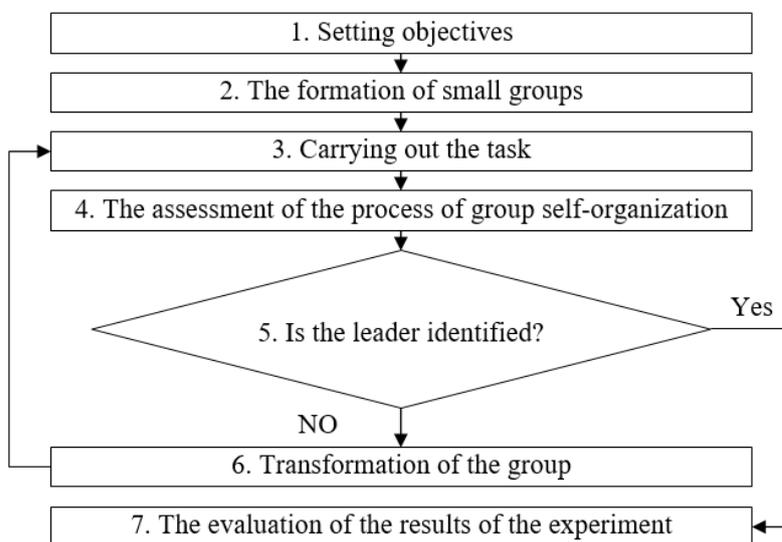

Fig. 2. Algorithm for Identifying Leaders in the Process of Self-Organization of the Teamwork.

Conducted consecutive iterations have allowed to identify specific individuals from the group who took responsibility for organizing work in the group.

The results show that in the process of working in small groups, only 8.6% of the students who participated in the study (that is 5 out of 58) showed high leadership qualities (fig. 3).
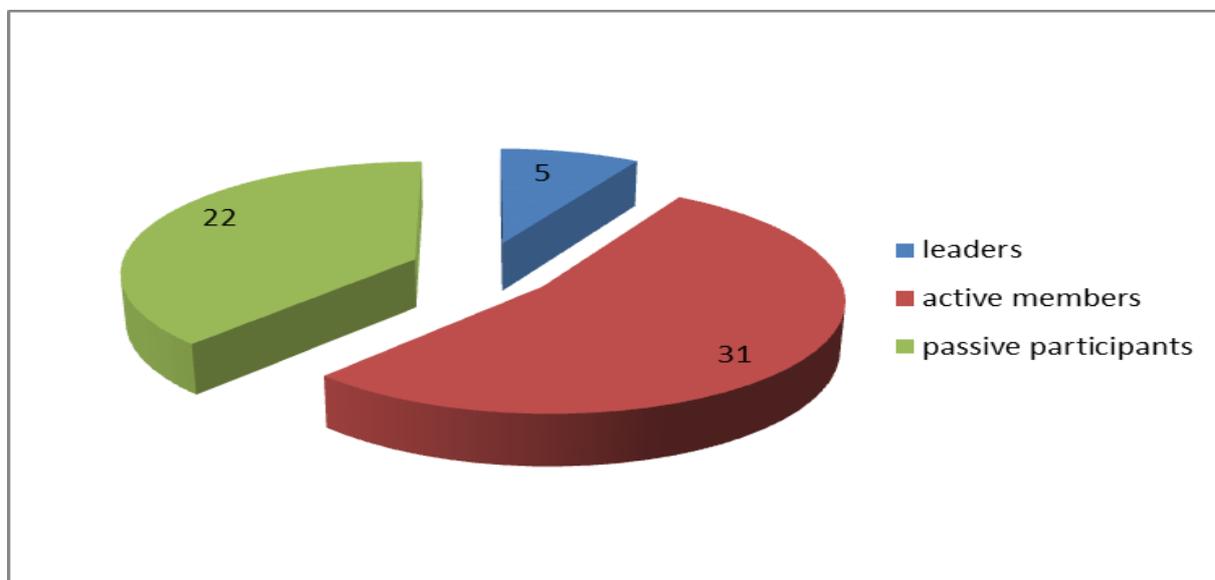

Fig. 3. The structure of the Group of Participants, %.

It was also found that 31% of the students took an active part in group tasks, that is, they were a part of the "core" of the group. The rest (22%) were passive participants in the process.

The comparison of the results obtained at the first and second stages of the study allows us to state the following:

1. The students who have shown leadership qualities in practice, have a high level of social activity, are engaged in creative activity, adequately assess their abilities but have obviously inflated expectations.

2. Leaders do not always have a high level of

professional training and are distinguished by their diligence. So, among five students who have shown clear leadership qualities, only two have high academic ratings.

3. In the implementation of group work, students did not always correctly perform the tasks set and adequately assessed the economic market processes, although the tasks corresponded to their level of training. Such cases were 32% of the number of tasks performed, and this is too much for the specialists in management and it is unacceptable for practical activity. It should be noted that the wrong decision, in the vast majority of cases, was offered not by a leader, but generated by the 'collective mind' of the core of the group.

4. There were 9% students with low self-esteem of leadership qualities according to the questionnaire results but in reality there were 22% of such students. At the same time, the percentage of obvious leaders is significantly different – 8.6%, against 12% according to their self-esteem results. That is, there is a significant overestimation of self-esteem.

5. Most students belonging to a group of passive participants have an adequate notion about the future work, evaluate the prospects in a realistic scenario.

Conclusion

In the presented research the substantiation of theoretical, methodological and practical principles of assessing leadership qualities of future specialists in management in modern socio-cultural environment was presented. As a result of the assessment we have distinguished 5 leaders out of 58 respondents. It is worth noting that there is relationship between the level of social and creative activity of a students and the manifestation of leadership qualities by him/her. Current trends in the development of socio-cultural environment of future managers (in particular, the transition from the hierarchy to networks, from individuality to groups), unfortunately, suppress the role of the leader and focus on the "collective opinion", which reduces the effectiveness of the team. Thus, in the process of training managers one should pay attention to the development of the individuality, teach future professionals critical thinking and the ability to form their opinions, even under conditions of the hard influence of the group. Today it is necessary to form the organizational and managerial principles of the individual's work in the group. This should become the main direction of the development of modern management education. That is, the science of management should be transformed from "management of the organization" into "personality management".

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МЕТОДИКА ОЦІНЮВАННЯ ЛІДЕРСЬКИХ ЯКОСТЕЙ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ З МЕНЕДЖМЕНТУ У СУЧАСНОМУ СОЦІОКУЛЬТУРНОМУ СЕРЕДОВИЩІ

У статті розглядається проблема оцінювання лідерських якостей майбутніх фахівців з менеджменту під впливом соціокультурного середовища. Актуальність розглянутої проблеми зумовлюється суттєвою зміною в останнє десятиліття зовнішніх умов розвитку особистості, що характеризуються трансформацією акцентів з індивідуального мислення до колективного, переходом організації суспільної взаємодії від ієрархічної форми до мережевої. Метою статті є обґрунтування теоретичних, методичних та практичних засад оцінки лідерських якостей майбутніх менеджерів під впливом соціокультурного середовища. При виконанні дослідження використано експертні методи, зокрема метод анкетування та метод «комісій». Виявлено основні тенденції та явища у розвитку соціокультурного середовища сучасної молодої людини з точки зору можливості формування лідерських якостей майбутніх управлінців: необмежене розширення референтних груп; послаблення критичності мислення, що проявляється у відсутності «зорового» цинізму та завищенні досягнень; «криза індивідуальності», тобто нівелювання особистості, її підкорення мотивам групи; зміна ієрархії потреб: від особистих – до групових; самоструктуризація суспільства. Експериментальне дослідження проводилося у два етапи. Завданням першого етапу було отримання у найбільш узагальненому вигляді самооцінки студентами факторів, що зумовлюють прояв їх лідерських якостей. Завданням другого етапу було виявлення лідерів у групі та оцінка їх впливу на результат групової роботи. В результаті проведеного експериментального дослідження було виокремлено 5 лідерів із 58 респондентів та обґрунтовано перспективний напрямок розвитку науки управління – формування організаційно-управлінських засад роботи індивідуума в групі («менеджмент особистості»).

Ключові слова: лідерство, менеджмент, соціокультурне середовище, індивідуальність, команда, соціальна активність, самооцінка, очікування.

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