



SOCIAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING THE FORMATION OF LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AMONG STUDENTS

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<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17465814>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 25th October 2025

Accepted: 26th October 2025

Online: 27th October 2025

KEYWORDS

leadership ability, student personality, socio-psychological factors, motivation, emotional intelligence.

ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the key socio-psychological factors influencing the development of leadership abilities among students. The findings indicate that motivational and emotional factors are the main determinants of leadership formation, and that psychological training, teamwork, and self-development programs play a crucial role in enhancing these competencies.

Introduction

In the current stage of socio-economic development of modern society, the formation of leadership abilities has become one of the priority directions of the education system. Today, fostering competitive, proactive, creative, and responsible youth is among the key objectives outlined in the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Education” and the “New Uzbekistan Development Strategy – 2030.” From this perspective, developing leadership qualities among university students is a crucial factor in enhancing their social activity, ability to find their role in a team, assume responsibility, think independently, and inspire others.

Leadership ability plays a central role in both personal and social development. From a psychological standpoint, leadership is a complex process that involves guiding oneself and others toward a goal, motivating, and relying on one’s level of emotional intelligence and communicative culture. Socio-psychological factors form the natural foundation of this process: family support, mutual trust among peers, motivational systems, and interactions with teachers and classmates all contribute to an environment that fosters leadership. In recent years, the concept of “leadership education” has been actively developing worldwide. International organizations such as UNESCO and the OECD have recognized the development of youth leadership competence as one of the most important educational priorities. In Uzbekistan’s higher education system, this issue has gained increasing attention, with initiatives such as “Student Leadership Schools,” “Leadership and Communication” courses, as well as numerous training programs and projects. However, within this context, the psychological factors—motivation, empathy, self-assessment, and communicative competence—remain insufficiently explored, which determines the scientific relevance of this topic.

Thus, conducting a scientific analysis of the socio-psychological factors influencing the formation of leadership abilities among students, identifying their interrelationships, and

developing effective mechanisms for their enhancement holds significant scientific and practical importance not only for educational psychology but also for youth policy, sociology, and pedagogy.

Main part

The phenomenon of leadership in social psychology is defined by an individual's status in a group, communicative activity, and influence. It is based on one's inner motivation, emotional stability, and ability to fulfill social roles. In the studies of A. Maslow, K. Lewin, R. Stogdill, J. Burns, and D. Goleman, the essence of leadership is interpreted as the interaction between personal characteristics, social context, and communicative systems (Burns, 1978; Goleman, 1995).

Uzbek scholars—R. Yuldoshev, M. Mukhamedova, Sh. Juraev, and others—have emphasized in their research the role of psychological support, group climate, and pedagogical collaboration in promoting students' social activity (Yuldoshev, 2019; Juraev, 2021). This approach defines the mechanism of naturally developing leadership traits among students.

The formation of leadership ability is a complex, multi-component psychological process that unfolds through the following stages (Stogdill, 1974; Katz & Kahn, 1978):

1. Motivational stage – formation of internal drive and initiative. At this stage, social values, family upbringing, and teacher encouragement play an essential role.

2. Cognitive stage – acquisition of knowledge about leadership, self-awareness, and understanding of social roles.

3. Emotional-regulatory stage – development of empathy, self-control, stress tolerance, and flexibility in communication (Goleman, 1998).

4. Behavioral stage – demonstration of initiative, management of group activities, and assuming personal responsibility.

These stages function in an integrated manner. Therefore, in the process of leadership development, both the social environment (trust within the group, peer communication, teacher-student relationships) and psychological factors (self-esteem, emotional intelligence, communicative skills) emerge as key determinants (Levine & Hogg, 2010).

System of socio-psychological factors

Research findings indicate that the formation of students' leadership abilities is directly influenced by the following key factors:

— Motivational factors – need for self-expression, achievement motivation, and desire for social recognition (McClelland, 1987);

— Emotional-psychological factors – self-control, empathy, confidence, and stress resilience;

— Cognitive factors – reflection, self-awareness, goal orientation, and critical thinking (Bandura, 1997);

— Social factors – group climate, quality of interaction with teachers, peer acceptance, and social support (Johnson & Johnson, 2014);

— Organizational-pedagogical factors – presence of group projects, debate clubs, training sessions, and leadership workshops in the learning process (OECD, 2023).

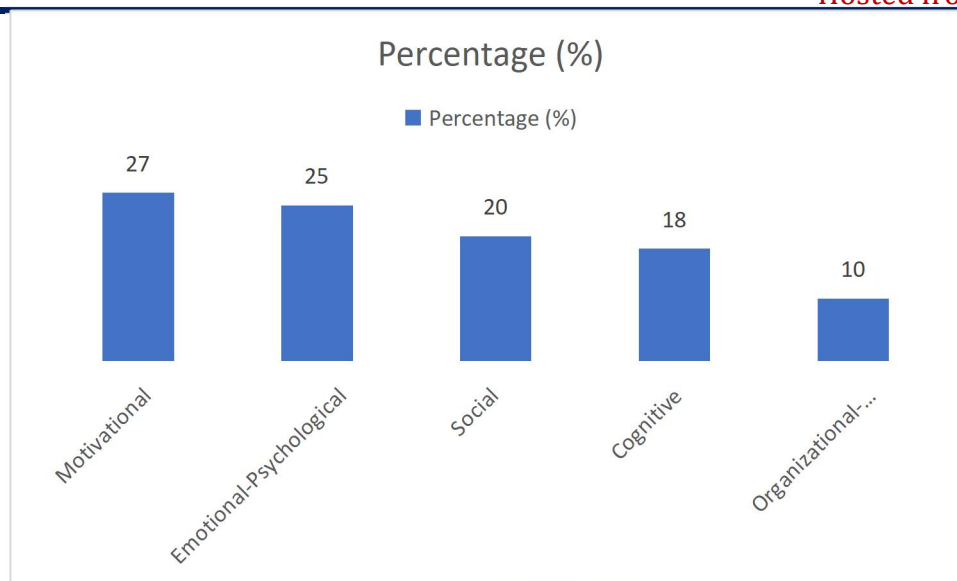


Figure 1. The Ratio of Factors Influencing Students' Leadership Abilities (diagram)

These factors form a complex and interrelated system. For instance, a student with high empathy and communicative competence tends to create a positive group climate, which in turn motivates other participants to become more active (Goleman, 2000). Thus, leadership ability should not be viewed merely as an individual trait, but rather as a mechanism of social interaction.

In recent years, numerous international studies (Tannenbaum et al., 2019; House, 2021) have identified emotional intelligence and social skills as the main predictors of youth leadership. Empirical research conducted within Uzbekistan's higher education institutions (Tashkent State Pedagogical University, 2023; Namangan State University, 2024) revealed that 68% of students considered themselves "creative," 53% "initiative-driven," yet only 29% believed they possessed "group management skills." This demonstrates the need for targeted programs aimed at developing leadership qualities.

Conclusion

The analysis shows that leadership ability among students is not innate but rather a complex process formed through deliberate social and psychological influences. Motivation, emotional intelligence, self-esteem, group climate, and pedagogical environment together constitute an interconnected system that drives leadership development. Therefore, higher education institutions must systematically introduce psychological training, group projects, and reflective practices to enhance students' leadership competencies effectively.

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