

**EdCW 2020****International Scientific and Practical Conference Education in a Changing World: Global Challenges and National Priorities****CONDITIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE  
SCHOOLCHILDREN LEADERSHIP QUALITIES**

Antonida Lukina (a)\*, Mariya Volkova (b), Olga Finogenova (c)

\*Corresponding author

(a) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, antonida\_lukina@mail.ru

(b) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, maryvol75@mail.ru

(c) Siberian Federal University, Krasnoyarsk, Russia, finogenova1971@mail.ru

**Abstract**

The article examines the conditions for the development of leadership skills among high school students in Russia. Leadership skills are understood through the concept of social creativity. The main question of the research is “What prompts a high school student to social creativity?” receives an answer through consideration of the adolescent's environment: creation of an optimal level of discomfort, rejection of existing conditions, and the development of needs to change them. These conditions for high school students can be created through their inclusion in school governing, which ensures: 1) the inclusion of adolescents in socially significant activity with their participation in planning; 2) recognition of the importance of this activity by adults and by the environment significant for the adolescent; 3) organization of special training programs of leadership skills developing. The study describes the organization of adolescence participating in school governing in the Oktyabrsky district of Krasnoyarsk, Siberia. To understand the values and leadership skills of high school students participating in school governing, a questionnaire survey was conducted among adolescents (60 school governing participants and 60 non-participants). The results showed that high school students participating in school governing have prosocial values, understand their deficits, and appreciate the role of the ability to interact with other people, in contrast to non-participants who prefer the prestige of education and profession.

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## 1. Introduction

New society needs leaders - people capable of social creativity. However, education is currently more focused on the development of academic success of students than on the development of their social competences and leadership skills. Therefore, the problem arises of finding and describing the conditions that contribute to the students' leadership skills development in the recent education system.

## 2. Problem Statement

Several concepts of leadership are distinguished in modern social psychology: the theory of personality traits, situational theories, personality-situational theories, and others. Thus, Daniels et al. (2019) propose to consider leadership as educational, situational, transformational, and others. Hierarchical leadership is giving way to "hidden", "network" in recent conditions; "self-organizing communities", "hidden leaders" arise thanks to Internet resources, which suddenly appear and just as suddenly disappear (Guseltseva & Asmolov, 2020).

Leadership development issues for school leaders and teachers have been explored in articles by Daniels et al. (2019), Liu and Hallinger (2018). These researches showed a positive impact of professional teacher training on the development of student learning leadership skills.

The age aspects of leadership development are highlighted in a number of studies. Coffey and Lavery (2018) discuss the age-related aspects of leadership development. Nicholson et al. (2020) touch upon various aspects of social justice, the influence of early development conditions on the formation of children's leadership qualities.

The development conditions of leadership skills and the implementation of social creativity are freedom and the possibility of a child's creative activity (Sternberg & Lubart, 1999; Yasvin, 2019), this makes it possible for the child to realize leadership and organizational functions without looking back at the permission or prohibition of the adult.

The idea of enriching the environment as a means of developing leadership skills presupposes its richness and heterogeneity; creating a situation of "challenge", provocation for independent activity; not competitiveness, not comparability of children; cooperation in joint activities; eventfulness, transformability, etc. Conditions for the development of social creativity: spatial, social, activity-technological and temporal (fullness, structuredness, etc.).

Sobkin and Adamchuk (2016) note the ambiguous attitude of parents and teachers to the problem of children's participation in school co-management. In our studies, students also pointed to misunderstanding on the part of parents as one of the barriers to participation in school government.

Wiewiora and Kowalkiewicz (2019) show that authentic assessment, combined with a reflection task, can help students develop their leadership skills.

Scientists and politicians from all over the world pay close attention to the socially significant activities of students as a means of developing leadership skills. The 2002 UN Special Session adopted the Resolution "A World Fit for Children" (2002), which emphasized the need to listen to children and ensure their participation in solving critical social issues. Pearce and Wood (2019) show how student

voices are driving the transformation of education policy in primary and secondary schools in a survey over the past 10 years. Mitra (2018) assesses the role of student voice in US high school reform and looks at ways to involve young people in these activities. It is shown that the real possibility of schoolchildren's influence on educational policy requires compliance with the conditions of dialog city and joint activity of representatives of different generations, the inclusion of young people, schoolchildren in various spheres of public life and educational activities, as well as the removal of boundaries between existing and new social spaces, which contributes to the transfer of samples future into their life. The authors have developed an evaluative procedure for taking into account the opinions of students, which can act as a reflective dialogue tool that guides teachers and students towards a true transformation of institutional structures and individual educational practices.

Such conditions can be achieved by the activities of children's public organizations and associations, school government, social projecting, some forms of additional education. The participation of schoolchildren in these types of social activity gives them meaningfulness of life, fullness of time and its regulation, allows them to gain experience in socially significant activities, to understand and expand the boundaries of their capabilities. Golitsina (2020) confirms the contribution of participation in school government of adolescence to the development of their leadership skills.

### **3. Research Questions**

In search of an answer to the question:

- "What conditions should be created in the education system for the development of students' leadership qualities?" raises questions of empirical research.
- What value orientations are inherent in high school students participating in school self-government?
- How do high school students participating in school government determine their deficits?

### **4. Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of the study is to identify the conditions necessary for the development of leadership qualities in schoolchildren in the educational system. To achieve this goal, we proceed from the hypothesis that such conditions are:

- adolescents include in socially significant activities as a full participants,
- this activity is recognized by authoritative adults as important,
- there is a place for specialized leadership training in this activity.

## 5. Research Methods

An assessment of the impact of participation in socially significant activities (school government) was carried out using a questionnaire survey. The survey covered students in grades 8-11 of schools in the Oktyabrsky district of Krasnoyarsk city, Siberia, 60 participants in school government and 60 students not included in school government. The questionnaire included the following blocks of questions: peculiarities of students' motivation to participate in school government and in school life; assessment by children of the conditions and opportunities existing in school government; features of the personal qualities and life values of students. Due to the current epidemiological situation, the survey was conducted remotely. In addition, an analysis of the websites of educational institutions in Krasnoyarsk was carried out. We also used the materials of the interregional study "Psychological comfort of education in a modern rural school".

## 6. Findings

One of the conditions of the educational system for the development of student's leadership qualities is a certain level of discomfort, which requires the manifestation of "super-situational" activities, rejection of existing conditions and the development of the need to change them (Byrne et al., 2018; Petrovsky, 2012). These conditions can lie both in the immediate environment of the individual, prompting him to perform individual actions, and in a broader sphere that requires the unification and joint activities of many people, as well as the manifestation of organizational, leadership qualities on the part of the individual. Our study finds out what the values of adolescents are. and how they perceive their deficiencies by participating in school management, if socially relevant, recognized by authoritative adults, and organizing leadership training.

We clarified the presence of the necessary conditions for the development of leadership qualities of adolescents participating in the school self-government of the research group. Firstly, in the Oktyabrsky District of Krasnoyarsk city, the ROSTOK District Council of High School Students has been established, which provides support to the district school authorities, the development of student's initiative, the training of high school students in project schools, the exchange of experience, the creation of conditions for informal communication of school activists, the implementation of common affairs. Traditional meetings - the district meeting of the Council of high school students, the Ball of high school students, the district festival of high school students and others - become noticeable events in the life of school students in the district. School government becomes the organizers of socially significant actions: environmental projects and sports events; assistance to veterans, orphans, disabled children. This indicates the inclusion of adolescents participating in school self-government in socially significant activities as full participants.

Secondly, the activities of adolescents participating in school governing of the research group are highly valued by adult school managers. We suggested above that participation in school government could become a good "channel" for the development of student leadership skills. The role and significance of these bodies as subjects of planning the educational work of the school is defined in the

amendments to the Russian Law "On Education", adopted in 2020. However, an analysis of the websites of educational organizations in Krasnoyarsk city (before the adoption of amendments to the Law) showed that only 5 out of 15 analyzed websites mention the school government and the role of the parental community in school management. We are not claiming that schools do not have these bodies; it is important that they are not given importance in real participation in the affairs of the school. The school leadership, which undoubtedly designed the content of the websites, developed educational programs, does not see real power in these bodies, does not consider them as real partners in the development of schools. Only one of the analyzed schools described a very interesting tradition "Breakfast with headmaster" - a meeting of the director with the student government over a "cup of tea", discussion of problems and prospects for the development of the school "through the eyes of children." In our case, adolescents participating in the school government of the research group regularly receive high-quality supportive feedback from current adult school managers.

Thirdly, in our practice, mutual training is carried out as an exchange of experience in organizational activities, joint participation in the preparation and conduct of events, followed by discussion. To this end, we conduct special training seminars, summer schools based on health camps, leadership development trainings, role and business games, project training. Jambunathan et al. (2019) describe the experience when specially trained peers (Peer-Led Leadership workshops) conduct seminars on leadership development among children. Meeting with famous people, politicians, successful businessmen, who at one time passed the school of student school government, contribute to an increase in motivation for socially significant activities and the status of participants in student government. Students see examples of successful people in front of them, learn from them how to solve complex organizational and life tasks, which, of course, affects the increase of their self-esteem and self-confidence, and allows them to expand the sphere of social communications.

When assessing the importance of various characteristics of the school environment for development and emotional well-being, the majority of the respondents (children, parents and teachers) put relationships with teachers and students, emotional comfort, and respect for the child in the first positions - they were named by more than half of all respondents. Such characteristics as "the opportunity to express their point of view", "the opportunity to show initiative, activity" were mentioned by less than a third of the respondents. Teachers rated the role of these parameters higher than others, unexpectedly. And it is these parameters that have received the highest assessment.

A survey of high school students - participants of school government showed that this activity has a significant impact on the development of value orientations, and on the development of their organizational and leadership abilities.

When analyzing the value orientations of students, the participants of school government occupied the first three positions by socio-value values: "a good, friendly family", "benefit to society, other people" and "respect of others, loyalty to friends. The students who are not included in school government occupied the first four positions by individualistic values: "material well-being", "friendly family", "social status, career" and "favorite work".

The school government participants consider "hard work, responsibility", "communication skills, the ability to negotiate and discuss" and "obtaining a prestigious specialty (profession)" as the most

important means of achieving goals. The students who are not included in school government choose "graduation from a prestigious university", "hard work", "knowledge, professionalism", and "obtaining a prestigious specialty". The most significant differences here are manifested in the fact that participants in self-government highly appreciate the role of the ability to interact with other people; schoolchildren who do not participate in self-government give more importance to external factors and circumstances.

Awareness of their own deficiencies in the field of organizational qualities - inability to organize others, to speak in public, lack of understanding on the part of comrades - is due precisely to the fact that school government participants have experience of such work, which was not always successful. Adolescents who have never participated in this work do not feel the need to develop these abilities and do not recognize their absence as their own deficit.

## 7. Conclusion

The results of the study show that the development of leadership skills of schoolchildren is possible with their participation in socially significant activities with recognition and meaningful support from the adult world. Using the example of school government, we have shown that participants of school government have a more mature system of values, including pro-social values; possess more adequate means of achieving goals, and have specific organizational skills.

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