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## **Section 4.**

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### **STUDIES ON LEADERSHIP**

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## **FORMATION OF LEADERSHIP AS A VALUE AMONG STUDENTS IN POLAND**

**Abstract:** *The paper explains the content of 'leadership' on the basis of the considerations of Polish scholars. Leadership is observed on the basis of social, ethical, moral grounds and of accepted human values as well. The problem of shaping leadership qualities as essential in personality development is considered. The author notes the important role of leadership in solving the problems of the modern world. In Polish higher education, the subject of leaders as people who have valuable potential for the group has been initiated. A combination of personality features and values generally accepted by society determines the content of the 'leader' concept in Polish higher education. The conditions for a successful formation of leaders are clarified. The necessity of shaping leadership qualities in students as future professionals is proved. The author argues that the education of a new intellectual elite, professionals and leaders, is one of the main tasks of Polish higher education.*

**Key words:** leadership, leader, value, Polish students, education

The problem of leadership has been a subject of investigation of many disciplines, such as pedagogy, psychology, philosophy, political science, sociology, and economy. Modern civilization changes along with technological developments, the appearance of the information society and globalization of economics, which demands a revision of what constitutes a leader.

Today Poland is running into a global crisis of leadership in all spheres of social life. At the roots of the leadership crisis lies a crisis of values. Integration with Europe brings new demands for the professional training of young specialists. The global, social changes in the contemporary world require from the youth the ability to adapt to new conditions, practically speaking, to become a subject of social changes. Therefore, nowadays, we can observe a necessity to train professionally competent young specialists. The modern world needs new, value-oriented young leaders, capable of innovative ideas, ready to take decisions and responsibility for themselves and their activity.

Values form personalities and determine all directions of human activity: political, social and business; and they are a necessary condition for the creation of the successful leadership that will be able to overcome the problems of the contemporary world. This question acquires special importance during the period of youth, when young people have to choose their place in life and achieve their status in society.

Pedagogues and psychologists of different countries actively investigate the problem of forming leadership qualities, since leadership is necessary in human and economic development. The solution to this problem in the process of bringing a person up will promote the formation of such leadership qualities with whose help a person can feel confident, develop harmoniously, take an active stand in life, set bold goals and positively influence the surrounding people, and resist the cruel conditions of competitiveness.

However, it should be observed that, up to now, there has been no clear identification of the term ‘leadership,’ its nature and substance. In particular, the pedagogical aspect of this problem has been investigated in the works of numerous Polish academics: A. Barabasz, R. Dorczak, I. Koźmińska, K. Manthey, S. Lachowski, G. Mazurkiewicz, A. Sokol, A. Gozdek, I. Figurska, W. Starzyński, E. Olszewska, E. Wilmanowicz, H. Taborska, M. Chmielewski, P. Mazurkiewicz, L. Bergquist, J. Barrowicz, P. Owczarek.

During a period of globalization and integration, the modern world is experiencing a greater shortage of quality leadership than ever. To solve this problem it is important to develop social education together with subject training, in order to provide personal determination and reveal the leadership potential of students. The attitude of modern youth to the world increasingly forms the emotions, the desire for freedom and self-realization, in which significant importance belongs to individual systems of values.

Leadership reflects a system of values that defines the relationship to oneself through sources of satisfaction, reactions to success and failure, relationships with other people (family, friends, employees). In this case, self-evaluation allows choosing core values that define the character of a leader. Leadership is formed within a person, leadership behavior is a natural consequence of the answers to the following questions: who am I, what do I want, what is important to me and what do I want to achieve?

Characterizing leadership as one of the fundamental values, A. Chodubski calls it a governor of human lives (Chodubski, 2014).

H. Taborska specifies that “leadership is one of the key elements of human praxis.” Being “the most prominent issue of cultural anthropology,”

leadership reveals important aspects of the cultural experience of human beings:

- 1) material aspect, which results from the cultivation of the natural environment;
- 2) social aspect, which is related to social structure, behavior, communication and management models;
- 3) spiritual aspect, which is expressed through symbols, in the systems of religious, philosophical and artistic values (Taborska, 2007).

The Polish teacher K. Manthey characterizes leadership as a dominant attitude towards oneself and others; a predominant way of thinking and acting that is reflected in a body of knowledge and beliefs, feelings, emotions and behavior (Manthey).

Many psychologists and educators consider leadership as a characteristic of adults, at the same time, it is worth noting that leadership development starts in childhood and early adolescence. The same happens with the personality traits necessary to perform the role of a leader, or good habits, which are formed easily from the early years of life.

Teaching of leadership is relevant from an early age, through the development of personality on the basis of values derived from ethical norms and individual interests. The foundations of leadership are laid together with the system of values, but the formation takes place in youth.

As argued by K. Koźmińska and E. Olszewska, the shaping of values is the beginning and the most effective method of studying leadership, hence, “the inculcation of values consciously and expediently is the most important thing we can do for the development and happiness of a child. A strong system of values is an effective tool for success in life, as well as a protection against many poor choices and unfavorable influences from the outside. Every child deserves such life equipment, a navigational tool” (Koźmińska, Olszewska, 2011). Parents, educators, and peers form the system of values and the life of young people, their aspirations and goals, which become their guides in adulthood, in the longer term. Education, self-education, and experience strengthen the consciousness, and without doubt, enrich our system of values, but do not change its substance. Considering this, the authors presuppose that a good system of education and training, values in family, kindergarten, primary school and secondary school are more effective methods of teaching leadership than university educational modules and professional training (Koźmińska, Olszewska, 2011). At the same time, the formation of leadership in adulthood has its own meaning and its drawbacks, as you cannot change the earlier formed system of values.

It should be stressed that the Polish researcher S. Lachowski has made a significant contribution to the understanding of leadership as a value. He believes that leadership is a characteristic of all individuals, that it is not exclusive, either from the point of view of functionality, or from the point of view of skills. It is general, because everybody, at least for a moment, becomes a leader; fulfilling various roles, such as father, mother, captain of a sports team, organizer of civic initiatives, project manager, director, president or prime minister (Lachowski, 2013).

People cannot but control, communicate and exchange the information with other people. Therefore, we may assert that leadership, as well as communication, is a characteristic of a human being.

S. Lachowski argues that leadership, as a value in shaping the personality, is important, and in many cases, is even of existential importance, as it impacts decisively on the lives of others. The most effective platform for the formation of leadership qualities, in his opinion, is to possess a set of values that provides for the emotional involvement and empathic ability of all participants. The effectiveness of values is the best fuel for the development of leadership. Such generally accepted values as kindness, understanding, openness, willingness to help others and responsibility allow individuals to overcome limitations, to quickly improve their knowledge and skills, and as a result, to achieve their goals. In line with this approach, the researcher describes leadership as the ability to see and implement joint objectives using the talents of other people and their potential. However, S. Lachowski emphasizes that leadership is the ability to create positive changes and growth through collaboration with others (Lachowski, 2013).

This thought is shared by the Polish professor, G. Mazurkiewicz. He calls leadership the ability to create a path for talented persons to perform the tasks assigned to them to their very best, on the basis of prudence, dignity, respect for others and satisfaction (Mazurkiewicz, 2011).

The point of view of the Polish psychologist R. Dorczak, who examines leadership in the context of group activities, is interesting in this regard. According to him, leadership is a process of attraction and combination of energies, it is something that creates the conditions for the personal growth of all employees and organizational growth of the institution, but not a result of the actions controlled by a leader. The author describes leadership as something that:

- is built on values such as autonomy, mutual respect, trust and responsibility for others;

- appreciates social development and teamwork as key elements in the context of personal and organizational development;
- allows everyone to be heard, while creating the conditions for good interpersonal and professional communication;
- gives everyone the space and opportunities for personal and professional development in a group;
- assumes continuous, constant change and development of a personality, a group or an organizational structure (Dorczak, 2011).

With respect to the ideas of Polish researchers, then, we may state that leaders are people who can convert their workers into their adherents or followers. So, the point of leadership lies in the availability of followers (Zerebova, 1973).

Analyzing the problem of the crisis of leadership from an academic angle, S. Lachowski comes to the conclusion that, of late, universities, business schools and consulting companies have made teaching of leadership into a business. Almost every university has specialized departments and institutes associated with business ethics and the formation of leadership qualities, all of which argue for the development of a doctrine about what leadership is and how to achieve it.

Lachowski critically perceives the teaching of leadership in the programs of well-known American universities. In his study, he gives an example of the most famous business school in the USA, Harvard Business School, that defines its mission as “to develop leaders who are changing the world” (Lachowski, 2013).

The author calls this approach a serious “New York mistake,” because the training and the results have not met expectations. The rapid growth of the popularity of teachings about leadership and the demand for leadership training have led to a low level of the development of theories and methods of training leaders. The number of books, research and publications, courses, seminars and conferences on the issues of leadership vary widely in quality. So, leadership should not be a way to complete successive stages of a career, nor an approach simply to win a race. Leadership as a value is a philosophy of action, but not a method of control (Lachowski, 2013).

However, in Poland, S. Lachowski notes, leadership in education gives a way to more traditional approach which focuses on teaching professional skills. Leadership as a value is an inner conviction of things which are of the greatest importance in life, in professional activities and in the activities of society. Teaching leadership makes the most sense and effi-

ciency if it allows you to develop the identity of the individual's system of values and trains the habit of self-reflection. Lachowski defines leadership as a process that requires keeping the following rules:

- periodic self-examination;
- concern about the formation of self-consciousness;
- definition of the values needed; and
- work in accordance with the accepted values (Lachowski, 2013).

As a result, we have increased interest in leadership as a value. Leadership shows itself through personal, social and professional relationships. S. Lachowski affirms that real leadership lies in the identification of leaders with their own spiritual and professional standards. Every person is guided in their activity by individual values, consciously and subconsciously. Values guide our behavior more than commands, instructions, prohibitions, rules or regulations. Leadership begins with open communication and certain achievements in personal, social and professional life – leading to self-estimation. Leadership as a value in professional development is characterized by the involvement of supporters or adherents, professing the same values, which provides a unified system of personal and professional values for the whole group, allowing you to define the shared purpose of the work and coordination of the implementation method (Lachowski, 2013).

It is safe to say that the Polish researchers believe that generally accepted human values are determinable not only in family relations, but in the social and professional development of a person. At the same time, certain values define us as leaders in these spheres. Namely: honesty, integrity, professionalism, trust, integrity, growth, passion and efficiency determine who we really are in our family, social and professional relationships.

The Polish sociologists A. Sokol, A. Gozdek and I. Figurska add to the list of personal values such features as innovation and creativity, which are important in the formation of leadership qualities among today's youth (Sokol, Gozdek, Figurska, 2015).

Diagnosing the present situation in Europe, H. Taborska focuses on the following questions. "Where is Europe heading? What do Europeans want to achieve? What are their forecasts and visions?" The author describes today's Europeans as skeptical and too rationalistic. In this context, she expresses the idea of strengthening the theological dimension of the concept of leadership (Taborska, 2007).

Taking this important aspect into account, the Polish scholars H. Taborska, M. Chmielewski, P. Mazurkiewicz, L. Bergquist, J. Barrowicz and

P. Owczarek concede the historic spiritual role of John Paul II in the world (Taborska, Chmielewski, Mazurkiewicz, Bergquist, Barrowicz, Owczarek, 2007). The scholars comply with John Paul II's vision of European culture, the core of which is "defined by the understanding of the human being as a person. They support his understanding in forming a personality based on universal and timeless values." In the analysis of John Paul II's personality as a leader, the scholars contemplate his concepts as being indissolubly in conjunction with his leadership practices. In this regard, such values as sanctity, perfection, spiritual development, empathy and compassion are crucial, which, in their opinion, are "scarce in academic discourse and in the context of the common forms and aims of today's leadership practices" (Taborska, 2007).

To come to the point, we may also stress that universal values are a necessary condition for creating true leadership. Only in the case where a leader and the people whom he leads, have similar values, does an efficient relationship between that leader and his followers or subordinates appear. We can only agree with those Polish researchers who emphasize that actual leadership is not based on authority, but on personal authority derived from professional competence, moral and ethical standards. Also, real leadership has as its basis a system of values that is voluntarily recognized by the whole group as generally accepted (Sokol, Gozdek, Figurska, 2015).

Taking into account such an understanding of the problem, S. Lachowski notices that only the combination of such conditions, as the similarity of system of values, coordination of goals and the vision for their unified implementation leads to successful leadership in a team (Lachowski, 2013).

Thanks to this understanding of leadership by Polish researchers, we can state that the community of values ensures the integrity of the culture of an organization, which, under successful leadership, is resistant to internal and external crises, ensuring its survival in the long run.

So, today's world requires leaders who respect the values of other people, their followers, colleagues and subordinates, and have universal values in their base. Consequently, leadership becomes a function of the individual character of a person and his or her values, which are in harmony with the values of their followers and subordinates. S. Lachowski emphasizes that leadership as a value requires courage and makes it possible to solve problems of the modern world: it provides a balance between personal and professional life, helps in finding a solution to the personal

and professional dilemmas, allows people to find a meaning for their actions and to specify the right way to achieve a goal, ensures the achievement of professional success, and also allows people to find a direction of self-development (Lachowski, 2013).

The development of leadership requires self-reflection, which allows us to develop the consciousness of what is important, so that it is not subject to compromise in everyday life. Self-estimation should be a required practice of every leader, periodically monitoring the results that are achieved, giving an assessment of the methods used in carrying out tasks, the presence of one's own strengths and weaknesses, and verifying the accordance of the goals and actions with commonly accepted values.

Leaders determine the goals themselves and use them to change the relations of their followers towards the matter. Leaders may develop new and unequal solutions to a problem. Once a problem is settled, leaders take on the responsibility, as well as the burden, of new problems. Leaders work according to their goals, rely on their followers, use emotions, and stimulate others, because the foundation of their actions is values. V. Starzyński referred to a leader as a man who knows how to set goals, is able to specify the way to achieve them, who motivates others by his vision and implements it in life (Starzyński).

Speaking about the efficiency of leadership, A. Chodubski considers a leader an enterprising, quick-witted, sober-minded, energetic, ambitious person with the ability to predict future outcomes (Chodubski, 2014).

A separate line of thinking on the features of personality involved in leadership is introduced by H. Taborska. She defines a leader as “a spiritual giver endowed with internal ethics and generosity in offering spiritual values, and unselfishly serving other people” (Taborska, 2007).

Thinking of the “inborn or acquired personality traits” of a leader, Z. Pełczyński emphasizes the “special, unusual, even extraordinary features of an individual, that clearly distinguish them from thousands or even millions of individuals who do not possess them” (Pełczyński, p. 267). In the scholar’s opinion, “inborn” qualities play a decisive role in the formation of leadership qualities of a person.

However, A. Barabasz and M. Szpringiel determine a leader as a person who relies on his or her knowledge, skills and values. According to his observations, a true leader:

- is an ambitious and highly educated person;
- loves and knows how to work in a team;
- is an open and results-oriented person;

- is firm and enables personal development;
- gives a good example;
- is able to deliver his or her knowledge and practical skills;
- has the talent to change him- or herself, as well as the team;
- has the courage to make decisions (Barabasz, 2012).

In addition, S. Lachowski expresses an opinion that the majority of states in the world today are headed by leaders who care primarily about their image, and not about the interests of the people, proclaim populist slogans and are hungry for power. But leadership, according to the academic, should not be the satisfaction of one's own ambitions or the realization of one's individual goals as a leader. According to S. Lachowski, leadership based on formal authority is put into practice by bureaucratic commands and prohibitions, and does not take into account individual characteristics, restricts the freedom of subordinates, and through that becomes less effective. The ability to influence other people, supporters and subordinates, largely depends on the understanding and appreciation of the values of a leader. The values of a leader should be clear and obvious so that his or her supporters are able to clearly determine what is most important for him or her.

Important, as well, is the problem of understanding the concept of what makes a leader by students, and the meaning of leadership in the process of their formation as future specialists. High school sets new goals and tasks before young people who have their ambitions, but may not always realize them. Entering university, a person becomes part of an environment where he or she needs to demonstrate initiative, take responsibility, unite people around, stand up for his or her own interests, and, of course, manage people. Becoming a student, a person should be ready for the new demands of life in order to study efficiently and apprehend the new rules of the game. University becomes a microworld, where a person forms positive or negative character traits, ideals, values and norms of behavior. The socialization of a student takes place during communication and interaction with different groups of people. Hence, in this regard, leadership plays an important role, helping the student to become an individual. Thus, we may speak about the concept of the self as a key component of the leadership potential of a person.

In studying leadership, it is also important to differentiate the qualities of formal and informal leaders. To study this issue, a questionnaire was randomly proposed to students of the Faculty of Political Science and Journalism and the Faculty of Educational Studies of Adam Mickiewicz

University in Poznan. The questionnaire was conducted in academic year 2015/2016 (autumn semester). To explore the topic, the questions: "Who is a leader?", "How can you characterize a formal leader?", "What features characterize an informal leader?" were openly addressed to about 30 students of each faculty.

After processing the students' answers, the main characteristics distinguishing a formal and informal leader were identified. From them, it emerged that a formal leader is an appointed person, who has legal responsibility. An informal leader is chosen and has more duties. A formal leader is a professional, unlike an informal leader, who is an enthusiast. Formal leaders have more rights, rely on a system, use arguments, control, support others, and take decisions themselves. By contrast, informal leaders have moral responsibility, rely on the team, use emotions, stimulate others. According to the students' definition, formal leaders entrust others with tasks and work according to the goals of others. Informal leaders inspire others to take on tasks and express the thoughts of a team or group. Thus, formal leaders are respected, while informal leaders are loved. One more important thing that was expressed by the students was that a formal leader is guided by an action plan, in contrast to an informal leader, who is guided by a vision of the situation.

Hence, we can acknowledge from our survey that formal and informal leaders are different personalities. The situation where a leader is appointed will not favor the successful activity of a team or the harmonization of interpersonal relations. Constant contradictions and misunderstandings may be harmful for a team. At the same time, if a leader is guided by generally accepted values, the people will work as a team, devoted to their leader. This will be the most efficient team from the point of view of the activity, and the most harmonious one from the interpersonal relations point of view.

As a result of the questionnaire it was revealed that students clearly understand the meaning of leadership. In their views, leaders are those who can see further, higher, deeper, act faster, more effectively, more creatively, have an ability to take responsibility, improvise and create. They generate ideas, crystallize their own thoughts, perfecting them in communication with a team, perceive the collective's ideas as their own and help in their realization. Essentially, we may define leaders as people who inspire their team, give enthusiasm to their followers, delivering their vision of the future to them.

With respect to the above, let us recount the qualities of a leader. A leader is a person who:

- works in favor of a team, not in favor of his or her own interests;
- understands that they are responsible for their deeds to those people who chose them;
- considers the needs and advice of all members of a collective;
- shares achievements, success and recognition with the whole team;
- works together with others;
- gives an example of those values they follow themselves.

The process of forming leadership qualities is complicated and lasting one requiring the efforts of both teachers and students.

Setting the goal of educating leadership, one should not forget its national aspects. In this context, A. Chodubski identifies the model of a Polish community leader. In his belief, a leader is a person who “effectively resolves his own problems and those of his environment; strong personality; a defender of tradition and cultural heritage; a pragmatist who links the Polish community’s interests with the reality of the domicile” (Chodubski, 2014).

The achievements of Polish academics in the study of the concepts of leadership determine that leadership consists primarily of ethical, moral and personal values. The latter, in turn, relate more to individual differences. Thus, the formation of leadership as a value should be made on the basis of ethical, moral principles through the education of universal human values.

Taking into consideration the points outlined above, we can notice that studying problems of forming the leadership qualities is an important part of contemporary Polish pedagogical science. Generating leadership qualities in young people allows their trainers to create optimal conditions for the development of each personality and to determine the direction of development in order to achieve professional success. In the context of the reforming of higher education in Poland, the problem of forming a new intellectual elite for the nation to become the leaders in the modern socio-cultural transformations, is still standing. Therefore, their training is one of the main tasks of the Polish higher schools.

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### ***Streszczenie***

Tekst wyjaśnia znaczenie pojęcia "przywództwo" w oparciu o refleksję polskich badaczy. Przywództwo postrzega się w znaczeniu społecznym, etycznym, moralnym, a także przez przywat szeroko akceptowanych wartości humanistycznych. W tekście ukazano problem kształtowania wartości przywódczych jako istotne zagadnienie z zakresu rozwoju osobistego jednostek. Oprócz rozumienia przywództwa w ścisłym powiązaniu z problematyką aksjologiczną, zwrócono również uwagę na jego istotną rolę w rozwiązywaniu problemów współczesności.

W polskim szkolnictwie wyższym kwestią lidera jako osoby dysponującej cennym potencjałem była już przedmiotem badań. Treść pojęcia "lidera" określana jest głównie poprzez wskazanie jego cech osobowych, co wiąże się z odniesieniem do ogólnie akceptowanych wartości społecznych.

W artykule przedstawiono również warunki efektywnego formowania liderów. Wykazano również konieczność kształtowania cech przywódczych studentów jako przyszłych specjalistów. Autor twierdzi, że kształcenie nowej elity intelektualnej, profesjonalistów i liderów, jest jednym z głównych zadań polskiego szkolnictwa wyższego.

**Słowa kluczowe:** przywództwo, lider, wartość, polscy studenci, edukacja

### ***Резюме***

В статье рассматривается содержание понятия „лидерство“ с точки зрения польских исследователей в социальном, этическом, нравственном измерениях, а также в контексте общечеловеческих ценностей. Освещена проблема формирования лидерства у студентов как важный вопрос их личностного развития. Рассматривая лидерство в аксиологическом контексте, автор также обращает внимание на его важную роль в решении проблем современности. В польском высшем образовании вопрос формирования личности-лидера с ценностным потенциалом уже был предметом исследования. В статье приведены также условия эффективного формирования у студентов лидерства. Автор утверждает, что воспитание новой интеллектуальной элиты, профессионалов и лидеров, является одной из главных задач польского высшего образования.

**Ключевые слова:** лидерство, лидер, ценность, польские студенты, образование

### ***Анотація***

У статті розглядається зміст поняття „лідерство“ з точки зору польських дослідників у соціальному, етичному, моральному вимірах, а також у контексті

загальнолюдських цінностей. Висвітлена проблема формування лідерства у студентів як важливого аспекта їх особистісного розвитку. Розглядаючи лідерство в аксіологічному контексті, автор також звертає увагу на його важливу роль у вирішенні проблем сучасності.

У польській вищій освіті питання формування особистості-лідера з ціннісним потенціалом вже було предметом дослідження.

У статті наведено також умови ефективного формування у студентів лідерства. Автор стверджує, що виховання нової інтелектуальної еліти, професіоналів та лідерів, є одним з головних завдань польської вищої освіти.

**Ключові слова:** лідерство, лідер, цінності, польські студенти, освіта