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Leadership Development in Higher Education Institutions of Ukraine as a Key Factor in the Innovative Activities of the Person

Rozwój przywództwa w instutcjach szkolnictwa wyższego w Ukrainie jako kluczowy czynnik innowacyjnej aktywności jednostki

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the primary concerns regarding the use of leadership in the operations of higher education institutions, as well as to investigate the ways of their application for successful leadership . This study investigates leadership development in Ukraine as a key factor in fostering innovative activities among individuals. The research questions focus on identifying the most effective practices for cultivating leadership skills and determining how these skills influence innovation in academic settings. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, involving surveys and interviews with educators and students across multiple universities, encompassing a sample size of 600 participants. Key findings indicate that interactive and reflective teaching methods, such as workshops, online sessions, and mentoring, significantly enhance leadership qualities and, consequently, innovative activities. The author summarizes existing literature on leadership theories, emphasizing the relationship between inherent personal qualities and learned skills in effective leadership. It discusses various models of leadership, including transformational, transactional, and situational leadership, and their relevance in the context of higher education. The paper highlights the importance of balancing intrinsic attributes, such as charisma and intellectual abilities, with acquired competencies, such as strategic decision-making and emotional intelligence, to develop well-rounded leaders capable of driving innovation. The findings that were collected demonstrated that it is possible to incorporate leadership development technology into the process of professional training for students.

Keywords: leadership; innovative activites; process of developing a leader

INTRODUCTION

In the present day, it is essential for Ukraine to find leadership and to work together as a team. Not only does the leader possess the ability to comprehend systems, but they also possess the ability to manage them. In addition to playing an important part in comprehending complex systems, leaders also play a crucial part in controlling them.

Higher education institutions in Ukraine are making a concerted effort to identify students who have the potential to become future leaders. This finding is one of the most important tasks in the field of higher education professionalism. Throughout the course of the methods, we employed a variety of research approaches, including those that were academic, theoretical, and practice-oriented (for example, we carried out surveys, SWOT analyses, focus interviews, leadership evaluations in terms of professional development, reconstruction technologies, and so on). Let us analyse the challenges that Ukrainian educational institutions face before forming a leader:

– there exists a mismatch between the demand for organizational leaders and the dearth of individuals who possess social training and are capable of engaging in leadership training;
– one of the contradictions that arises is the impossibility to perform comprehensive training for a leader-organizer, despite the fact that there are numerous educational prerequisites for such a person;
– when it comes to leadership training programmers, there is a need to update educational programmer, and another problem is the lack of development of educational components necessary for their training. For this purpose, it is necessary to rethink some approaches to the content and technologies of leadership development in the process of professional training of future teachers in higher education in Ukraine.

Because of this, it is necessary to reevaluate the methods that are taken to the content and technologies of leadership formation during the process of professional training for future teachers in higher education, as well as to conduct an in-depth analysis of these techniques.

ANALYSIS OF RECENT PUBLICATIONS

In the context of scientific research in Ukraine, the problem of leadership is of utmost importance. In legislative documents such as Strategy for the Development of the Sphere of Innovation Activity for the Period up to 2030 (2019), the primary needs for the formation of leadership skills among students in higher education are reflected. These papers are relevant to the formation of leadership skills. In the context of the post-war development of the country,

they place an emphasis on training leaders and managers who would be able to adapt to changing circumstances and make judgements that are appropriate. Methodological approaches to leadership have been studied in detail by, for example, Nestulia (2019). The concept of leadership, based on hermeneutical and cultural principles, was analysed by Vasyanovych. He identified the main ideas of its formation. He argues that "a true leader-pedagogue in the course of his practical activity should take into account: a certain »lack of sight«, »closeness« of a person; a departure from paternalism and the focus of thinking on interaction; the right to »misunderstanding«, etc." (Vasyanovych, 2020, p. 50).

An in-depth analysis of the theoretical and methodological foundations of the formation of leadership qualities in students is provided by Nestulia. She places a strong emphasis on the necessity of "developing leadership qualities in three contexts: socio-economic, scientific and methodological, and personal and professional" (Nestulia, 2019, p. 10). Semenova reveals the psychological and pedagogical technologies of communication that a modern leader employs. She emphasises the significance of mastering the technique of speech as a component of culture and a prerequisite for positive perception by others. This is not only a component of his culture, but it is also a prerequisite for positive perception by others (Semenova, 2019, p. 82). Continuing the authors' publishing cycle, this paper is a continuation of their previous work (Chepil, Prokopiv, 2021).

ANALYSIS OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

At the present time, there are numerous concepts concerning the efficient production of leadership traits. It is important to remember that the definition of leadership in the explanatory dictionary is "the position, duties, and activities of a leader" (*Slovnyk…*, n.d.).

We compared the search for technologies of leader formation in vocational education with similar ones in European and American higher education. Leadership is defined as "the position, duties, and activities of a leader" (*ibid.*). To compare the technologies of leadership development in professional education, we turned to European and American practices. For example, Mescon et al. (1988) emphasise that a leader is able to influence individuals and groups, directing their efforts to achieve the goals of the organisation (p. 464). Nestulia (2019), in her argument, asserts that "a leader is a person who must be responsible to himself, to his followers, and, ultimately, to society and the future" (p. 69). This interpretation will be utilised in the subsequent section.

The concept that leadership is linked to innate personality traits that enable one to effectively influence and lead other people is supported by a large number of well-known scholars. Many of these scholars have emphasised that the social activities of true leaders should be aimed at the good. For instance, Skibitska

(2009) believes that a leader is able to destroy values that are no longer relevant and create new values that are more progressive (p. 14). Leadership is defined by Mescon et al. (1988) as "the ability of a person to influence individuals and groups, directing their efforts to achieve the goals of the organisation" (p. 464). They emphasise that every manager, who is considered a formal leader, should try to become an informal leader as well. A similar opinion is expressed by a well-known expert on leadership – Meneghetti. He defines the phenomenon of leadership as the ability to make "necessary and timely decisions", to avoid losses, based on intuition and rational awareness (Meneghetti, 2019, p. 65). Meneghetti argues that a true leader in the role of an official manager should have the following properties: potential natural superiority (significantly expressed natural abilities); rational development of natural potential (its rational evolution is assumed); real ambitions (increased need for active action); love for one's own work; high level of professional awareness; transcendence of functional utilitarianism and "rationality of intuition" (ability to combine intuition with logical thinking) (*ibid*., pp. 119–121).

As a result, the notions of leadership were created inside the framework of management theories, which is where the concepts of management and leadership were frequently identified. It was demonstrated through the examination of the source base as well as through our own practical work in educational institutions of higher learning that the following characteristics ought to be taken into consideration in order to improve the desire for leadership: excellent knowledge of how to manage one's time, the capacity to highlight intermediate goals, the ability to recognise achievements, the ability to provide unexpected encouragement, the ability to provide the student leader the opportunity to feel like a winner, self-control, the ability to create an environment of understanding. Another factor is internal rivalry (Berezovska, Pukish, 2015). Thus, theoretical approaches have prompted us to conduct practice-oriented research in higher education institutions.

ANALYSIS OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

To determine the peculiarities of working with leaders, we conducted a representative study among higher education students of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University and Drohobych State University (about 600 respondents) based on SWOT and SMART analyses and an online survey using LimeSurvey.

In order to enhance the leadership abilities of students, controversial or even conflict scenarios were utilised. These events were sometimes modelled as a teaching assignment, which included the acquisition of the ability to resolve misconceptions, clearly explain one's perspective on a particular topic, select

powerful reasons to support it, and so on. In stimulating students' reflective attitudes towards leadership, the process of self-knowledge and understanding by other students is important. It is known that the results of self-knowledge of a person make up his/her "self-concept". At all stages of the implementation of leader formation technologies, considerable attention was paid to the reflective attitude to this process. The study organised self-observation of students' behaviour, relationships, and self-assessment of the level of development of certain leadership qualities. Only 30% of respondents identified leadership qualities.

When we helped students with their self-improvement, we drew their attention to the fact that self-reflection should not turn into self-accusation. Their own complexes also pose a danger to proper self-esteem. Sometimes, to break the "vicious circle" situation, we used trainings and interactive exercises to understand how attitudes "work", how complexes arise, and how internal barriers develop. It was emphasised that proper self-esteem makes it possible to rebuild one's own image and build adequate interpersonal relationships.

Methods for monitoring the level of leadership skills were reflected in the assessment by students (self-assessment) or teachers (lecturers) of independent activities and relationships between students. These methods were used not only during classroom work, but also during practical, scientific, social and educational activities of students. It was important to determine the extent to which students are able to act as leaders in certain situations, take initiative, achieve goals and interact with the team.

Project-based learning is another key tool for building leadership skills. It requires students to do difficult tasks that require the integration of information from a variety of disciplines. Additionally, it requires students to be able to work together as a team, organise and coordinate the activities of other members of the group.

The transfer of experience from more senior and experienced colleagues to younger colleagues is one of the ways in which mentoring and mentoring contribute to the formation of leaders. This allows students to receive support and advice in challenging situations, as well as to develop their leadership skills through activities that are more practical. Oxford debates, discussions, role-playing games, simulations, and other interactive methods that allow students to feel the role of leaders and develop their communication, organisation, and management skills are all examples of active learning activities. The utilisation of trainings, business games, and interactive approaches that help to uncover the necessary leadership attributes in circumstances that are as similar to real life as possible should be utilised in order to motivate leaders. We also used controversial or even conflict situations to improve the leadership skills of our students. These situations sometimes arose spontaneously and sometimes were modelled as a pedagogical task (as a kind of "court"): acquiring the ability to resolve misunderstandings,

clearly explain one's position on a particular issue, select strong arguments to support it, and several other similar skills. Students in higher education should be encouraged to develop a reflective attitude towards the leader through the process of self-knowledge and understanding of the leader by other students. It is common knowledge that the outcomes of a person's self-knowledge create the "self-concept" of that individual.

Active learning encompasses a wide range of forms and methods of work that contribute to the development of leadership skills. In order for students to better understand their own emotions as well as the emotions of others, which is essential for effective leadership, the development of emotional intelligence is an integral part of the process of leadership development. Emotional intelligence encompasses the ability to effectively manage one's own emotions, empathise with others, and communicate with colleagues. Through participation in group projects and collaboration, students are able to acquire skills of cooperation and coordination within a team. This enables them to learn how to work together with others, how to divide up chores and responsibilities, how to effectively handle disagreements, and how to make choices collectively.

Leadership training is another key instrument for improving leadership abilities. Students are able to receive theoretical information about leadership through these trainings, and they also get the opportunity to practise the skills that are necessary for effective management and organisation of activities. Through active participation in the social life of the university, students have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills through participation in student organisations and clubs. This may include the organisation of events, participation in decision-making, interaction with other students and faculty, and the development of skills in communication and management. Additionally, it is essential to take into account the individual characteristics of each student, as well as to create conditions for their self-development and self-improvement. Only under these conditions is it possible to educate true leaders who are capable of working effectively in modern conditions and contributing to the development of society. Therefore, the development of leadership qualities in students who are enrolled in higher education is a complex process that includes a variety of methods and technologies. The results showed that only 10% of the respondents demonstrated a high level of these qualities, which indicates that the number of leaders in the educational environment is relatively low. We have identified promising methods that will contribute to the formation of a leader in the educational process of higher education institutions. These are important:
–   techniques for the development of motivation; encouraging a thoughtful attitude on the part of the pupils towards the leader;
–   the methods that are used to monitor the level of leadership qualities that pupils possess;

- project-based learning is the process of involving students in projects that are rooted in the real world, which enables them to develop skills in leadership, responsibility, and teamwork;
- mentorship and mentorship refers to the activities in which more experienced students or alumni act as mentors for younger students. This facilitates the transfer of knowledge and the development of leadership abilities;
- active learning is defined as the utilisation of Oxford debates, discussions, role-playing, and simulations to assist in the development of leadership and critical thinking skills;
- the development of emotional intelligence is accomplished through the incorporation of courses and trainings on emotional competence into the educational curriculum. This enables students to increase their capacity for successful communication and management of teams, collaboration and participation in tasks involving multiple people;
- leadership training entails the organisation of specialised seminars and workshops that are devoted to the development of leadership abilities such as decision-making, motivation, and time management.

Encouragement of student participation in student groups, which provide students with opportunities to assume leadership roles and put their ideas into action with the help of student organisations and clubs. Let me to provide a more in-depth analysis of these technologies. Leadership development technologies involve working on organisational and business traits that enable you to actively influence the behaviour of others and coordinate collaborative efforts to solve challenges. When it comes to methods of motivation, it is usual practice to acknowledge the significance of educational content, to establish settings that encourage independence and initiative, to instill a sense of accomplishment, and so on. The analysis of scientific sources and our own practical activities in higher education institutions have shown that in order to increase the desire for leadership, the following features should be taken into account: mastery of time management, the ability to set intermediate goals, encouragement of achievements, unexpected encouragement, giving the student leader the opportunity to feel like a winner, self-control, creating an attitude of understanding, and reasonable internal competition. The leader should be motivated through the use of trainings, business games and interactive methods that help to identify the necessary leadership qualities in situations as close to real as possible.

A significant amount of attention was paid to a reflective attitude towards this process In the course of assisting applicants in the process of self-improvement, we brought to their attention the fact that self-reflection should not be transformed into self-accusation. Personal complexes also pose a threat to healthy self-esteem. As a result, we suggested that every individual who is engaged in self-improvement should be aware that minor shortcomings do not diminish individual value.

A significant step in the process of improving the reflective attitude was to compare the teachers' assessments of the level of leadership skills with the students' self-assessments. This analysis helped to increase self-criticism in young people, which resulted in the formation of a more responsible attitude towards the study of their personal characteristics. Future teachers' reflection on constant self-observation and the desire to improve their leadership skills become necessary prerequisites for the acquisition of professional skills.

Conversations with students revealed the following typical shortcomings of a leader: emotional reaction to failure, disorganisation, and inability to manage an online group. It was discovered that 54% of respondents have difficulty communicating, and 38% have problems in relationships. Furthermore, 90% of people point to constant overload (both mental and physical), inability to properly organise their time, and other similar issues. Students were given a significant number of different tasks to complete in order to foster the development of flexibility, analytical skills, productivity, originality, and intellectual and creative qualities. These tasks included situations with a balance, a shortage, and unclear conditions, as well as situations with ambiguously correct solutions. In order to find a solution to the problem, it was recommended that future teachers follow the scheme that we proposed (see Figure. 1)
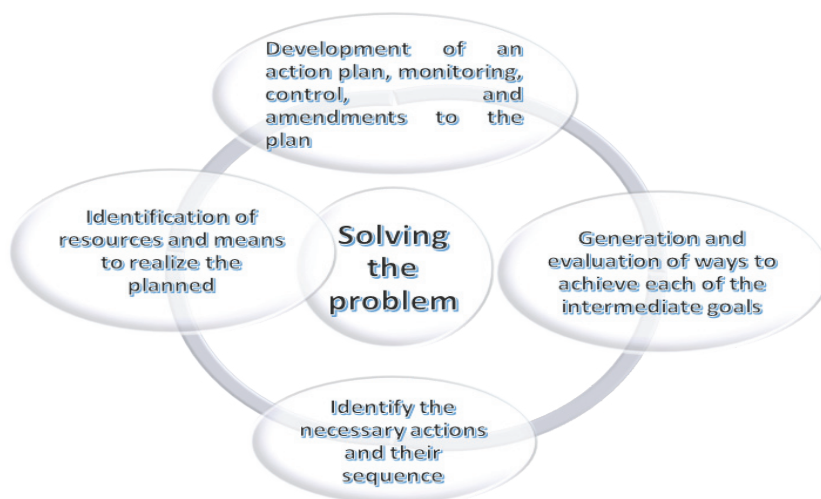

Figure 1. Scheme of planning the stages of problem resolution

Source: Author's own study.

The formation of leadership qualities involves the development of organisational and business skills. Students are introduced to methods such as brainstorming, the Delphi method, and others that help them make the best decisions in different situations. Teachers use a wide range of persuasive

techniques, including advice, demands, guidelines, and argumentation, which helps students gain experience in applying such techniques.

An important component for students is learning different methods of persuasion: two-sided argumentation (focusing on the strengths and weaknesses of the interlocutor's position, which encourages its rethinking), the method of positive answers (Socratic method), the method of comparison (using counterarguments and analysing the negative aspects of the partner's position), the method of drawing conclusions (encouraging the partner to realise the fallacy of their own arguments through a sequence of questions), the method of contradictions (identifying weaknesses in the partner's position), the "Yes, but..." method (demonstration of preliminary agreement with the interlocutor's position with its further criticism), boomerang method (refutation of the interlocutor's position with the help of his/her own evidence).

Leadership training also included the development of effective communication skills. Students participate in exercises, role-playing and business games, and trainings that help them gain experience in interacting with people. A systematic comparison of real perceptions of themselves, ideal perceptions, and "mirror images" allows them to improve their self-knowledge and develop their leadership skills.

We believe that effective monitoring is an important aspect of the development of leaders. Pedagogical diagnostics requires attention and sensitivity on the part of the teacher. In order to develop leadership qualities in educational activities, we analyzed the experience of involving Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University students in various activities. Effective in this direction are the activities of student self-government bodies involving students in competitions ("Miss and Mister University"), organization of business ideas, artistic activities ("PNU Has Talents"), contacts with public organizations, interaction with the "Agents of Change" center, and conducting trainings for students and teachers of the university "Leadership and Team Building". The specifics of leader formation in professional training are the introduction of innovative technologies, a high level of student independence, modeling of pedagogical situations that contribute to the improvement of emotional and volitional spheres, and pedagogical skills.

Teamwork is important, and it should be planned and phased:

Stage I: Adequate selection of the form, topic, best option, justification of tasks, coordination of joint efforts, forecasting of results, etc.

Stage II: Coordination of requirements. Online classes are an active technology for leader development. For example, collective planning of the video bridge "What a successful manager should be: the vision of the parties". We analysed the peculiarities of training students-leaders of the second (master's) level of the programme "Educational and Pedagogical Sciences", revealing the importance of leadership qualities for successful professional activity. We organised a general discussion of the work plan, made suggestions and comments. Other

"large-scale" technologies include a public speaking competition among students of the Primary Education programme "Have you signed up to be a leader?", an online magazine "What is a leader like?", etc. In the process of conducting such classes, we developed a series of questions and tasks about leadership, and tried to analyse how well the class was organised.

Among the typical methods of leadership development and team building, where formal and informal power is divided, are forums. The role of the leader in such a situation is to bring together speakers and the audience to find optimal solutions. Examples of forums include public hearings, working discussion groups, debates (formal and informal), brainstorming sessions, games, etc. Pedagogical practice is the main means of forming a leader. In our opinion, the development of leadership qualities at this stage has its own characteristic features. Pedagogical practice contains many surprises, as students often behave completely differently from what was planned in the classroom. The first teaching experience is not always successful. An important element of this work is that students not only familiarize themselves with the problems, but also learn an algorithm that can be used to effectively learn from successful leaders their professional secrets. That is why during the teaching practice, we organized collective and individual consultations, where typical difficulties were discussed in social networks and groups (Viber, Telegram).

Online e-education technologies play a significant role in the formation of a leader. These technologies include virtual and mobile education, the utilisation of neural networks, augmented reality technologies, and other similar technologies. Social networks assist students in organising teams and improving their critical thinking skills. In order to determine the levels of use of education for the formation of a leader-teacher, we conducted a content analysis with four groups of students who were enrolled in the second level of their master's degree programme. We made sure that the most common activities included team modelling through Google Classroom, creating their own projects on social media, applying startups, and utilising cloud services.

Students are able to organise teams, improve their critical thinking, and develop their leadership skills through the use of social media and e-learning. A content analysis conducted with four groups of master's students revealed that the most common methods include using Google Classroom for team modelling, creating their own projects on social media, and utilising startups and cloud services. Therefore, the development of leadership qualities in students who are enrolled in higher education is a complicated and multi-faceted process that involves a wide range of approaches, technologies, and practices. One of the most important aspects of this process is the integration of theoretical knowledge with practical skills, which enables students to effectively realise their potential in professional activities.

Other "large-scale" technologies include a public speaking competition among students of the Primary Education programme where they were asked "Have you signed up to be a leader?". We organised a general discussion of the work plan, offered recommendations, and made comments. An online publication titled *What Is It Like to Be a Leader?*

Among the typical methods of leadership development and team building, where formal and informal power is divided, are forums. The role of a leader in such a situation is to bring together speakers and the audience to find optimal solutions. The authors consider public hearings, working discussion groups, debates (formal and informal), brainstorming sessions, games, etc. to be their own examples of forums. A substantial part of the formation of a leader-teacher is played by the utilisation of various online e-learning technologies. These technologies include the utilisation of neural networks, augmented reality technologies, and virtual and mobile education technology. Students are able to improve their critical thinking and organise themselves into teams as a result of the use of social media. In order to determine the levels of use of education for the formation of a leader-teacher, we conducted a content analysis with four groups of students who were enrolled in the second level of their master's degree programme. We discovered that the most common activities include team modelling through Google Classroom, creating their own projects on social media, launching startups, and using cloud services (see Figure 2).

During the course of our educational endeavours, we made use of mobile blogs, also known as moblogging. These blogs helped to establish "communities of like-minded people" and offered opportunities for meaningful interaction. In
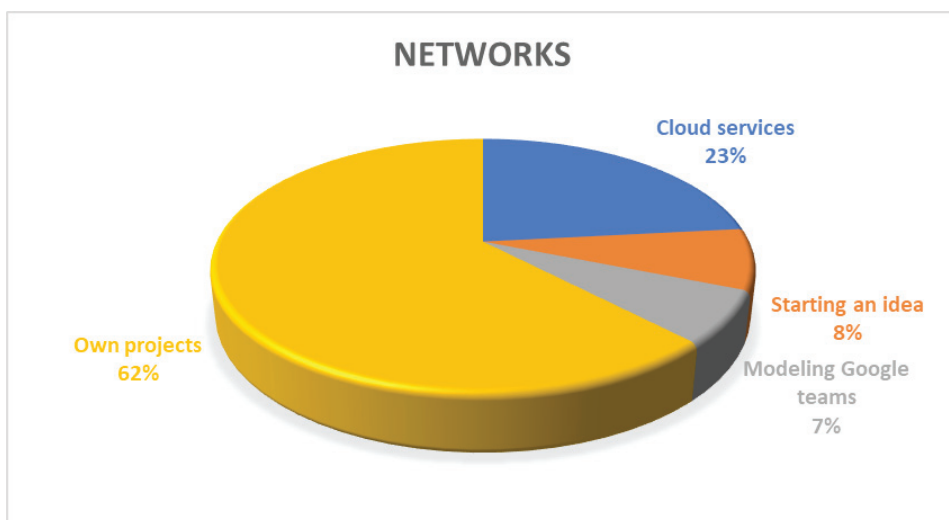

Figure 2. Typical online technologies for leader formation

Source: Author's own study.

this context, "network magazines", which are websites that are specialised on a particular subject, were promising. Some of the most popular platforms include Blogger.com, Microsoft Office cloud service, and others.

Using our analysis, we have determined the strengths and weaknesses of leadership development in higher education institutions. Some of the strengths include the utilisation of innovative technologies, systematic work on the development of leadership skills, and the involvement of students in the educational process. On the other hand, some of the weaknesses include insufficient support from the administration of the university and limited resources for the implementation of leadership programmes.

CONCLUSIONS

The result of a leader's formation is the realisation of the unity of certain factors, such as intellectual abilities, charisma and acquired skills. Leader formation technologies play a significant role in the educational process of modern higher education institutions. Therefore, it is necessary to continue working on their development through the introduction of innovations. The online environment is particularly favourable for this. Our analysis of leader formation in the professional environment of higher education institutions was based on the data that we obtained, and we demonstrated that were effective. To be the most effective were trainings, online classes, webinars, meetings, individual work, and other similar activities. Furthermore, a promising area for further research is to investigate the peculiarities of using information technology to improve leadership competence. In the context of the dynamic development of modern society and the growing demands for the professional training of future specialists, Ukrainian higher education institutions are actively searching for effective methods and approaches regarding the development of leadership skills in students. Among the trends observed in this area are the following: the use of digital platforms, online courses and webinars is becoming an integral part of the educational process, contributing to the development of leadership skills and competencies; involving students in real projects and tasks helps to develop responsibility, initiative and teamwork; creating a mentoring system where older students or graduates share their experience with younger ones helps to develop their leadership skills. Include emotional competence courses in the curriculum to help students communicate and lead teams more effectively; use debates, discussions, role plays, and simulations to develop critical thinking and leadership skills; and support student organizations and clubs. The perspective for our study is the comparative aspect of leadership development in Polish and Ukrainian higher education institutions.

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ABSTRAKT

Celem badania jest zbadanie głównych problemów związanych z wykorzystaniem przywództwa w działaniach instytucji szkolnictwa wyższego oraz zbadanie sposobów ich zastosowania dla skutecznego przywództwa. Badanie to analizuje rozwój przywództwa w Ukrainie jako kluczowy czynnik wspierający innowacyjne działania jednostek. Pytania badawcze koncentrują się na identyfikacji najefektywniejszych praktyk kształtowania umiejętności przywódczych oraz na określeniu, w jaki sposób te umiejętności wpływają na innowacje w środowisku akademickim. W badanie zastosowano podejście typu mieszanego, obejmujące badania ankietowe i wywiady z edukatorami oraz studentami z różnych uniwersytetów na próbie 600 uczestników. Kluczowe wyniki wskazują, że interaktywne i refleksyjne metody nauczania, takie jak warsztaty, sesje online i mentoring, istotnie zwiększają cechy przywódcze i w konsekwencji działania innowacyjne. Podsumowano istniejącą literaturę dotyczącą teorii przywództwa, podkreślając związek między

wrodzonymi cechami osobistymi a nabytymi umiejętnościami w efektywnym przywództwie. Omówiono różne modele przywództwa, w tym transformacyjne, transakcyjne i sytuacyjne, oraz ich znaczenie w kontekście szkolnictwa wyższego. Artykuł podkreśla znaczenie równoważenia cech wrodzonych, takich jak charyzma i zdolności intelektualne, z nabytymi kompetencjami, takimi jak strategiczne podejmowanie decyzji i inteligencja emocjonalna, w celu rozwijania wszechstronnych liderów zdolnych do wspierania innowacji. Zebrane wyniki pokazują, że możliwe jest włączenie technologii rozwoju przywództwa do procesu szkolenia zawodowego studentów.

Słowa kluczowe: przywództwo; działania innowacyjne; proces rozwoju lidera