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**Professional Culture of the Specialist of the Future**

**FORMING OF STUDENTS' ETHICAL LEADERSHIP UNDER THE  
CONDITION OF GLOCALIZATION**

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***Abstract***

Contemporary labour market is characterized by quick changes of professional requirements. In addition to professional competences modern universities alumni also need soft skills. It is believed a higher institution itself cannot provide students with “soft skills” which help to effectively and harmoniously interact with different people. However, there are many spheres of University students’ activity in the system of “students’ affairs” where they can use and practice these skills. Many researchers consider ethical leadership – an ability to be a moral authority for people - as an important component of “soft skills”. Ethical leadership may be developed spontaneously, but there exist some other mechanisms used in the higher education system. Such tools include the development of ethical leadership in the process of involving students into social activity - for instance, students’ government or volunteer work. We have analyzed ethical leadership development features of those involved in students’ government activity by using case analysis; as well as survey for those involved in the volunteer movement (sample - 38 team-leaders of Volunteers’ Center of FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russia™, host-city Saransk). One of the main features in developing the contemporary ethical leadership is a unique social environment which can be named a glocal one. In a University campus a person develops under the conditions of both global and local values. Ethical leader has to consider local traditions, values and norms, as well as global principles of responsible attitude to nature, future generations and people around them.

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**Keywords:** Ethical leadership, glocalization, students’ government, University campus, values, volunteering.



## 1. Introduction

Modern society presents to the professional field a number of requirements. Professionals to be aimed at “life-long learning”, persistent self-education, independent thinking and communication competences oriented at a public good. Contemporary labour market demand and transformation of social space-time continuum (glocalization) inevitably impact the higher education system. In conditions of global and local interaction, Universities pursuit to provide students not only with professional and cultural competences but also with soft skills. “Teaching flexibility and self-reflection, combination of fundamental knowledge and soft skills – these are the three basic trends in contemporary transformation of educational strategies” (Sogomonov, 2018, p. 118).

“Soft skills” relevance is determined by one more circumstance - change of demand in certain specialists. Colleges and Universities continue to teach specialties which in multiple researches are currently considered “outdated” (Konstantinovskii & Popova, 2016; Myagkov, 2016; Tikhonova & Karavay, 2018). It is difficult to find an educational institution that provides training in so-called “new” or “demanded” occupations. Nowadays, high technologies are changing human needs very quickly. Instead of “outdated” professions new ones are coming based on the interdisciplinary research. Furthermore, we can see a tendency of high demand in some specialties and high-class professionalism. Finding desirable occupation and professional development are very attractive to young people. However, taking into account rapid changes in occupation demand, a narrowly focused specialist can become a “hostage” of their specialty which will lead to difficult consequences in the future. There is a certain risk for a person to lose demand of narrow specialization and become unemployed.

Regarding these changes “Atlas of new professions” project postulates special significance of soft skills for new professionals: system thinking, skills of cross-industry communication, ability to manage projects and processes, programming of IT-decisions, client orientation, multilanguage and multiculture skills, ability to work with teams, groups and individuals, work in high uncertainty mode and quick change of tasks, creativity, good esthetic taste, economical production.

However, all these skills can be used improperly when a specialist is not an ethical leader, i.e. a person does not possess a moral authority among followers (members of an organization, associates, subordinates), does not take responsibility and make decisions in ambiguous situations.

## 2. Problem Statement

In this regard, the main objective of this paper is to study the conditions and methods of ethical leadership formation as an important element of the University soft skills system. First of all, we need to determine the content of the “ethical leadership” concept, its place in the system of soft skills, and analyze how it is formed within a University campus.

It is important to take into account that nowadays young people have many soft skills: they are ready to constantly learn something new, they possess creative thinking and acquire social skills through the years of participation in youth forums and various grant competitions. However, if young people are not ethical leaders, it makes soft skills system not so strong and durable.

### 3. Research Questions

- It is necessary to answer a number of research questions to study the issue of “ethical leadership” and its place in the system of “soft skills”:
- 1. What causes the relevance of the discussion about ethical leadership and soft skills in modern society?
- 2. What is the potential and resources of the higher education system, allowing to meet the social demand of the modern glocal society for ethical leadership and development of soft skills?
- 3. What methods of involving students in socially significant activities does the University use to form ethical leadership and other soft skills?

### 4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the given study is to describe how the higher education system creates conditions for the formation of students' values for ethical leadership and other soft skills by involving them into socially significant activities.

### 5. Research Methods

- The following methods were used to achieve the study goals:
- - analysis of situations of students involvement in various types of socially significant activities;
- - expert survey among 38 students (team-leaders) from the volunteers involved in the preparation and holding the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia in host-city Saransk.

### 6. Findings

#### 6.1. The concept of “ethical leadership” and the qualities of an ethical leader.

In the Russian philosophical discourse the term “ethical leadership” is formal because from the linguistic point of view it is a literal translation from its English counterpart. The word combinations like “moral leader” and “moral authority” are more frequently used in the analyzed discourse. In this regard, some issues arise as a result of terminological diversity and semantic content of these concepts.

The concept of “ethical leadership” has special significance in the system of organizational behavior, as it helps a person commit moral acts and take individual responsibility. There is a terminological ambiguity, an unjustified increase of terms that describe the moral content of leadership as a social and philosophical phenomenon. For instance, researcher Petrushikhina (2016, p. 46) in the article “Ethical leadership: the concept and problems of research” claims, that “ethical leadership does not represent a new approach in understanding leadership, but rather it considers the most important element of any conceptualization of leadership behaviour and leadership in general”.

As a rule, ethical leadership is studied by psychologists and specialists in the field of business ethics, who often turn to empirical methods of research, and as theoretical foundations they use the theories of organization, social learning and social exchange (Ko, Ma, Bartnik, Haney, & Kang, 2018; Bedi, Alpaslan, & Green, 2016), Bowlby theory of attachment (Haller, Fischer, & Frey, 2018), the concept of normative

acceptable behaviour by Brown, Treviño, & Harrison (2005) and others. These issues are also of interest to philosophers, but philosophical arguments concerning ethical leadership are not only apologetic but also sceptical. For example, basing on Hegel's philosophical views, Amiridis (2018) proves that a leader cannot avoid a tragic conflict between different but equally important values, so he or she must either stop being a believing leader, or give up his moral convictions. Therefore, a leader cannot be ethical. A similar idea is expressed by Rhodes and Badham (2018). They use Levinas' concept of imbalance between responsibility and reciprocity as conceptual grounds for their conclusions. It generates a paradox: ethical leadership is fundamentally necessary and fundamentally impossible. In our opinion, in this case moral scepticism can be rejected at least from the position of common sense: social practices show that the followers assess leader's actions and sensitively reacts to unethical behaviour which demands increased responsibility.

Brown et al. (2005) formed the following definition: ethical leadership is defined as “the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement and decision-making” (p. 120). Ethical behaviour is both legally and morally acceptable to the larger community (Trevino, 1986). Ethical dilemmas are present in uncertain situations, in which different interests, values, beliefs of multiple participants are in conflict (Mihelič, Lipičnik, & Tekavčič, 2010). Ethical leadership can be viewed in terms of healing and energizing powers of love, recognizing that leadership is a reciprocal relation with followers. Leader's mission is to serve and support their strive for leading comes from compassion (Kouzes & Posner, 1992).

Ethical leadership is based on respect, trust, honesty, openness and compassion (Mulder, 2017). According to Grace (1999), ethical leader represents Values, Vision, Voice and Virtue (4-V model). This model provides a framework that matches the internal factors (beliefs and values) with external beliefs (behaviour, actions), serving the common good.

One of the most important components in the system of “ethical leadership” is a “community of followers”. The community of followers expects their leader to adhere to ethical rules and demands. In return, a leader tries to follow moral principles. Only this community of followers decides if a leader possesses the status of “ethical” or not. Leading ethically is believed to be a process of inquiry – asking questions about what is right and what is wrong; as well as a mode of conduct – setting the example for followers and others about the rightness or wrongness of particular actions (Guy, 1990).

There are exist a variety approaches to the definition of the concept “ethical leadership” which is largely due to the interaction of “the global” and “the local”. This interaction is complicated by the fundamental contradictions between ethical universalism and ethical relativism. Ethical universalism emphasizes global values while theories of ethical relativism focus on local differences in the structure of the individual moral consciousness. We have to consider this contradiction in the development of methods for the formation of ethical leadership. Modern ethical leader should be able to navigate in the sphere of “the glocal”, to set value priorities in a correct manner, and have clear moral guidelines (Gashkova, Berezovskaya, & Shipunova, 2017). Each person should be aware of the world, individuals and place he or she take in the world.

The conditions for the formation of ethical leadership depend both on local features and global processes. The sphere of “the local” is the traditions, values and norms of a particular community. “The

global” focuses on the formation of responsible attitude to all people, nature and future generations. The education system should reproduce strategies for personal social development, taking into account the interpenetration and mutual exclusion of “the global” and “the local” in minds and lives of people. The process of leaders’ growth requires special attention.

Russian researchers identify peculiar moral qualities of the ethical leader, which are formed on the basis of motivation, authority and community trust: personality orientation, justice, responsibility and moderation. These qualities suggest the presence and development of leader’s communication skills, organizational skills, discipline, etc. All these skills are in demand in everyday life of students’ government.

Responsibility plays a special role in students’ community, because in the activities of any students’ organization there exist some situations when the leader is forced to take responsibility for what is happening even if not everything depend on them in a certain situation. Ciulla, Knights, Mabey, and Tomkins (2018, p. 5) provide the case about Airline CEO responsibility for airplane crash: “...it would not look good for the CEO to say, “it’s not my fault that the plane crashed, I wasn’t flying it.” While this is true, it sounds bad because we expect the CEO to take responsibility for it”.

However, by taking responsibility in such situations the leader learns to identify flaws and errors in the work of the organization, as well as to take measures to correct them, so that such mistakes can be avoided in the future.

An even greater degree of responsibility is taken by the leader who made a mistake, but due to the coincidence got a good result. This situation is called “moral luck” in ethics. The task of an ethical leader is to admit mistakes even if no one knows about an unethical decision, and it did not prevent to achieve the desired result. It is extremely important for an ethical leader to be honest with themselves, such quality is appreciated especially in the student youth environment. The community of followers that is convinced of the firmness of their leader in moral principles trusts him or her more; and as a result, such leader acquires invaluable social capital which is not wasted after graduating the University but continues to be an important starting resource for a professional career.

## **6.2. Social order for ethics leaders in the space of “the glocal”**

Modern society requires certain strategies for the development of an ethical leader personality which make them capable of harmonizing the global and the local, to eliminate the contradictions arising in the space of the glocal. There appear conflicts of norms and values, conflict of economic and resource interests, political and information conflicts. In order to resolve these conflicts professionals need to possess high-level soft skills.

There are two important trends to be considered: individual needs and social demand for “ethical leaders” emerging in different social contexts. The development and implementation of such strategies impose certain obligations on the system of higher education. As noted by Sogomonov (2018, p. 114), “Globalization does not undermine local cultures but dictates the rules of the game including labour market and the market of education”.

It should be noted that the system of higher education itself is internally contradictory. Sogomonov (2018, p. 114) describes “generational moral-psychological stress in the educational demand-and-supply, expectations-and-intentions”. In order to relieve such tension it would be better to take into account the needs of future specialists in soft skills, in particular, in the skills of ethical leadership.

Social demand in the formation of ethical leadership involves not only knowledge, but also skills that are acquired in the process of effectively organized social activity. Ethical leadership can be formed spontaneously. However, in our opinion, it is necessary to institutionalize the processes of forming an ethical leader. There is a demand of a special space, a system that includes relationships, institutions, processes and various forms of socially important activity. Such conditions can be successfully created in the system of higher education.

The University graduates have higher requirements for having soft skills than the professionals of another level. This is due to the requirements for their skills and availability of opportunities for self-expression in the University campus. Czech researchers Balcar, Šimek and Filipová (2018) emphasize that there is a difference between required level of soft skills for University graduates and for the general population: "...required level of these skills is 42% higher than that of the general population (the percentage of individuals who should have these skills at the highest levels is nearly 3 times higher in the case of University graduates)" (p. 58).

Thus, University campuses should become the main centres of soft skills development in general and ethical leadership in particular.

### **6.3. The University campus as a space for the formation of ethical leadership and other soft skills**

University campus provides students extensive opportunities to be engaged in social activity where they can master skills to lead with conscious moral principles. First of all, students' government embraces all spheres of students' life. It is very important for students to take part in activities of students' government: firstly, it is a system of good partnership in educational process with University administration; secondly, students obtain "extra-professional" competences which they cannot get in educational process; thirdly, students develop leadership potential in the framework of academic corporate culture while their University provides development of ethical aspects of their leadership potential.

We can determine the system of students' government as a leadership network of mutual relationship and reciprocal moral obligations. Students' teams implement a lot of social projects with the help of faculty. Organizational involvement of students' leaders in many University processes determines partnership relations with University administration. It helps students get a good vision of University life complex system, its' interconnections, interactions, interrelationship and interdependences. This way they are able learn University rules and laws on educational processes, scholarships, residence and so on. Students' leaders are full members of University government or similar institutions. They take part in the discussions about University life regulations, schedule, decision making and participate in process of fellowship and settling student residence.

For instance, students' government of Mordovia State University is arranged in accordance with the main functions of the University: education, science, culture, PR, students' recruitment, athletics, foreign students' relations, etc. There are many students' volunteer organizations. The system of students' government consists of corresponding units where students from different colleges are incorporated according their interests. It helps students acquire management skills, realize leadership potential and creativity. For example, a student from the engineering college can learn PR-technology while promoting

students' events in social-networking. For students concert they need those who can sing songs, dance, get theatre costumes, arrange video support, sell tickets for the concert, find sponsors and so on. Students demonstrate organizational skills in arranging performances, so they can enhance their project thinking, perfect communication skills and aesthetic sense.

Any students' event is a project. For example, for the organization of sports competition or intellectual battle students need to resolve project tasks and carry out project functions. During this process students' leaders acquire some important "extra-professional" competences or "soft skills" which will be in demand in future professional career: system thinking, competence in inter-sectoral communication, ability to manage projects and processes, experience to operate teams and individuals, work in conditions of high uncertainty and quick changing tasks, ability of artistic creativity, good aesthetic taste, cautious attitude to resources. Such competences are claimed to be in great demand by contemporary labour market.

The system of students' government is appropriate for creating special training situations, where positive impulses and interests will be implemented to stimulate socially-important activity. During this activity, the community way of life evolves as a practice of conduct and its moral and emotional mind-set. This activity is accompanied by the social process of value "interiorization" and personal moral development.

Important element of a leader's growth is a comprehension of social value and importance of association goals and individual responsibility for the results of that activity. The correlation of association goals with personal interests of a leader promotes the effectiveness of association activity and system of association rules. Reciprocal influence of leader's personality and association can be effective and is able to ensure steady development of an association, new members and new ethical leaders.

A leader has to understand his or her activity in the association as a consistent commission of moral acts. It consists of motives awareness, determination of action and inaction features, forecast of the actions results and evaluation of all involved individuals. An action is moral when the motives and actions correspond to moral norms and rules. Sometimes not every act of a leader can meet these criteria. There are situations when motives are not comprehended, actions are not correct and necessary, the results of actions cannot be seen distinctively and have adequate assessment. However, reflection about mistakes in the process of making decision promotes leader's moral consciousness development.

It is important for students to participate in social activity of the association. They develop moral consciousness in the way of following code of ethics and common moral principles to model their personal character features – they practice responsibility, discipline, respect to other people, truth, show trust, practical cooperation, etc. There is an optimal environment for positive interests and motives implementation in students' voluntary association; it forms moral principles, ability to social interaction, civil consciousness, social important skills and conduct, proficiency to obey community rules and defend their rights, personal and community interests correlation.

Consistent compliance with ethical principles and rules is important for students' association leader. Psychological features of young people include acute perception of injustice and dishonest of conduct. In case of leader's incorrect conduct association members might initiate a confrontation or a conflict. Other students could leave an association. It would be impossible to hire new staff because there could be no more

people to join. Students' association is a union of interests. Project activity needs teamwork, and a leader has to follow common moral standards which are accepted by all members of an association.

Participation in the students' government activity creates conditions for the possibility to choose the area of activity according to their interests and capacities, conditions for the formation of the competence to fulfil various social functions. Students acquire an experience of self-determination, self-affirmation and self-organization. There is a possibility to implement personal creative capability, to fulfil a necessity in communication, and create personal moral value system and socialization.

Participation in the students' government activity teaches young people to coordinate their own wishes with goals of another people, they learn goal-setting, introspection, planning, organization of activity for goals achievement. They acquire valuable experience to stand their ground and defend their points of view, consider interests of another people, learn to resolve conflicts, give adequate self-assessment and evaluation of the others using their skills to communicate.

It is important for a young person to have an opportunity to join a corporate culture. In this case it is a corporate culture of the University community where students' government is an integrated part. Corporate culture and corporate values of students' government are integral in corporate culture of the University. For example, the students' slogan of Mordovia State N.P Ogarev University is "The Ogarev student for ever!" showing this interconnection very brightly. Since young people have a necessity in cooperation for successful life, the University creates certain conditions for their socialization. Necessity in cooperation can be implemented by students in students' extracurricular activity as a resource of corporate spirit and corporate energy. Culture patterns are assimilated by students in the University, and they influence various parts of young person's life activity. Academic culture is based on enduring values. And this is also important for young person socialization.

One more advantage of taking part in the students' government is to acquire an experience of future professional activities which are necessary for developing professional skills. For instance, if a student participates in students' activities with the purpose to meet new friends and communicate with the peers, he or she will pay much attention and devote time to teambuilding with improving his or her soft skills. When a students' leader is interested in a certain field of action, much time will be devoted to getting knowledge, and that interest will be as a kind of "virus" for other participants and followers. The style of leading will be determined by this enthusiasm. Another advantage is that a leader joins students' association to obtain leadership experience necessary for his or her future carrier, and this leader will try to develop manager skills. So, we see many motives for a leader to take part in students' association to get a valid experience for future carrier.

Students' government leader skills include the following components: competence in social important activity, relevant knowledge about various experiences in social activity, communication skills, managing, genuine interest. It is very important for successful work of a students' government. This work does not give any financial benefits to its members including a leader. Therefore, presence of a genuine interest is a first factor to provide successful activity of a students' association.

What is important for students' government leader growth? It is necessary to say that factors which facilitate the professional manager growth have many similarities with the conditions of efficient life of students' association. Whereas the activity of any public association is based on principles of voluntary

participation, so it is important to organize this activity on a certain principles: frequency, openness of activities, diversity of events, variety of activities, involvement of all members, rational and precise allocation of responsibilities, presence of corporate culture in an association (symbols, slogans, flags, code of ethics, achievements, gifts, etc.), recognition of an association in the community.

Students' leader acquires the experience of a manager while following all these principles in the activity of an association. Sometimes a leader has no experience but creates a students' association with the help of his or her innate leadership and genuine interest. In the process of building an association – making a structure, distributing functions and duties among the members of association, arranging events – a leader learns social design, gets the experience, takes part in the contest of different funds to get money for the events. A leader develops project thinking and project skills that are necessary for the future profession as a manager. A leader improves communication skills, an ability to negotiate with members of the association, administration of the University, potential sponsors, leaders of another organizations, etc. It is necessary to study fundraising and financial planning of using resources to be successful in the project activity. So, in the process of carrying out social projects students, as association leaders, acquire knowledge and skills and in a short time because of genuine interest and unifying idea for all the followers.

Volunteering is another type of socially significant activity, which is most successfully implemented by University students. Volunteer activity allows a leader to express themselves, it produces an open and kind atmosphere with no risks but only positive effect. There is an environment for career and professional self-expression; students learn and acquire team work skills. Volunteering gives a person a chance to show organizational, leadership, communication qualities that he or she cannot show in ordinary life (or a workplace).

Research carried out by Adams & Deane (2009) and Anderson & Moore (1978) shows that an important component of the volunteer activity motive is selfless motivation to help other people. This is accompanied by the growth of moral consciousness, independent thinking and strengthening the will to defend their position, thereby gaining invaluable life experience. Students expand their perception of life, getting rid of many idealized ideas about their profession and most illusions, better understand what life goals they want to achieve, and in fact become mature people, which gives them an advantage in the eyes of a potential employer.

The results of the analysis method of the students' involvement situations in such socially important activities as volunteering are confirmed by the empirical data obtained as a result of an expert survey of 38 team leaders participating in the volunteer program of the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia in host-city Saransk. In our opinion, students' volunteering is a good illustration of soft skills formation including ethical leadership.

The leading motives for participating in the event as a volunteer were meeting with a large number of people and taking part in the popular event, but 22% of respondents indicated that they wanted to “do real good to people”. The desire to help, orientation on the other people benefit is a characteristic feature of an ethical leader. This personality trait is formed in the process of volunteering, but then this value is manifested in other contexts. Thus, 25% of respondents noted that they began to understand other people better, and 29% of the volunteer team leaders began to pay more attention to their loved ones.

The formation of the student leader's personal moral qualities is reflected in their attitude to professional activity. The survey showed the professional rethinking, as well as re-assessment of professional and social purposes. Almost half of the respondents (45%) noted that their plans and views on future professional activities have changed after they gained valuable experience of volunteering at the 2018 FIFA World Cup. This is primarily due to the fact that they have acquired soft skills and realized their value and necessity for future professional activities.

According to the results of the study the overwhelming number of surveyed volunteer leaders (79%) noted the growth of their leadership potential. Before the volunteer program 39% of respondents saw themselves primarily as ordinary performers and 69% - as leaders, then at the end of it 84% would like to be “organizers”, not just “ordinary performers”.

Thus, the involvement of students in volunteer activities allows to acquire such soft skills as cross-functionality, creative thinking, readiness for retraining, knowledge of several foreign languages, self-study, the ability to work with a large amount of information; it also contributes to the formation of a value-based attitude to ethical leadership.

## **7. Conclusion**

Thus, ethical leadership as an important element of the soft skills system which is most successfully formed in the University, because University infrastructure allows to take into account society and labour market demand in professionals of a certain type. Ethical leaders carry out professional and other socially significant activities in a unique global space that requires not only a large amount of knowledge, but also the skills to operate them in the process of solving complex problems.

Discussion on ethical leadership and other soft skills in modern society is especially relevant not only because of economic, social and political crises but also due to changes in the demands of labour market for professionals with meta-competencies. Such conditions are mainly created in the system of higher education. In the University within the framework of educational and extracurricular activities students form a value-based attitude to ethical leadership.

Therefore, participation in students' government activity in higher education period gives them an opportunity to practice moral rules and form ethical leadership. Students' association optimizes and accelerates the process of self-development of a young person, advances formation of social skills. The necessity to make decisions and search reasonable ways in extraordinary situations develop the following features: creativity, intelligence, acute observation, social mobility, moral and emotional resilience, tolerance, communicability, capacity, initiative, responsibility, independence, self-sufficiency, discipline, competitive ability, efficiency and activity. Young person has good conditions for self-expression in a students' association. A person feels membership affiliation to the social group, meets the needs in corporate solidarity and social importance of their deeds, finds opportunity for creative self-expression.

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