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PROSPECTS FOR DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP QUALITIES IN JUNIOR OFFICERS (SERGEANTS) OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

Rakhmanov Shukhrat Zokhirovich

Senior Lecturer, Department of Tactics and Special Disciplines
Institute of Military Aviation University of Military Security and
Defense of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Abstract

This article provides a rationale for the relevance of developing leadership qualities in junior commanders (sergeants) of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Based on an analysis of the primary scientific approaches to studying the phenomenon of leadership development, priority areas were identified for determining the essential characteristics and pedagogical conditions necessary for fostering leadership qualities in junior commanders (sergeants) of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

Keywords: leader, leadership, management, social adaptation, activity, development, personality traits, competence.

Introduction

In order to become a **leader-manager**, it is necessary to constantly devote time to one's development - both professional and personal. However, the majority of junior commanders (sergeants) believe that since they are commanders (superiors), they are automatically leaders. Yet, authority cannot be automatically acquired simply by appointment to a leadership position. Therefore, for junior



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commanders (sergeants), holding the status of a manager only provides the opportunity for the commander to become a leader within the military collective. According to Ralph Stogdill, the term “leader” itself originated in the English language around the year 1300, while the term “leadership” appeared approximately in 1800. In Anglo-Saxon etymology, the word “lead” signifies a “path” or “road”. The verb “leaden” means “to travel”. Thus, a leader is one who, by going out in front, shows the way to their fellow travelers.

R.L. Krichevsky, when examining the definitions of leadership and management, drew attention to several key points. In foreign literature (primarily English-language), the term "leadership" is used in a dual sense: both to describe an informal, predominantly psychological phenomenon - leadership itself - and to describe a formally established, predominantly social phenomenon - management. In domestic literature, there is a very distinct separation between the terms "leadership" and "management" based on the specific subject matter assigned to each: psychological in the case of leadership, and social in the case of management.

The process of adaptation during the first command appointment plays a particularly vital role in the professional development of young junior commanders (sergeants). This period is one of the most critical and challenging stages in the life and professional growth of a junior commander (sergeant). Social adaptation is an integrative indicator of an individual's (commander's) state, reflecting their capacity to perform specific biosocial functions:

- Adequate perception of the surrounding reality and one's own organism;
- An adequate system of relationships and communication with others;
- The capacity for labor, learning, and the organization of leisure and recreation;
- The capacity for self-care and mutual support within the family and the collective, as well as behavioral adaptability in accordance with the role expectations of others.

Modern practice shows that graduates of military



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educational institutions face a number of challenges during the adaptation process:

- Integration into a new social environment;
- A fairly wide age range of subordinates under their command;
- A significant discrepancy in the level of practical service skills among subordinates performing their duties;
- Gender differences;
- Diverse social and ethnic composition, etc.

As a rule, an individual (commander) typically becomes a leader by approximately 30–35 years of age; if leadership qualities are not developed, they will diminish, just like any other ability. This means that from the very first day of service, while holding a leadership position, a junior commander must constantly develop their leadership qualities. Based on this, it can be suggested that in order to become a leader-manager within a military collective, a young junior commander (sergeant) must enhance their level of professionalism through the continuous development of competencies formed during their time at a military educational institution. The effectiveness of such development directly depends on the quality of the functioning of the training and education system for junior commanders (sergeants). As noted, the system for educating junior commanders (sergeants) is implemented in two key directions:

1. Improving the personal qualities of the junior commander (sergeant) as a service member with a unique military-social status and recognizing the social significance of their activities as both a manager and a military specialist.
2. Strengthening the cohesion of the subordinate collective and increasing the power of its educational influence on the entire personnel of the unit. It is important to note that in modern domestic leadership studies, scholars distinguish between the two concepts of leadership and management. However, it can be suggested that this line has rather blurred boundaries. For example, successful management is preceded not only by professional excellence but also by relevant



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personal characteristics. Similarly, leadership is preceded by a high level of professionalism in one's activities, as well as specific personality traits. It follows that the professionalism of a junior commander, as one of the most vital components of both leadership and management, consists of both high personal potential and the effective execution of their duties.

In the process of a young junior commander's development, thanks to correctly coordinated engagement in their activities, not only will their personal qualities evolve, but so will their professionalism as a whole. It is well known that through the process of activity, an individual tends to demonstrate and acquire professional and personal qualities, which, in turn, prompts society to vest them with a specific status. For example, a woman who gives birth to a child automatically receives the formal status of a mother however, society vests this status upon a woman who has raised and educated a child, even if not her own. It follows that a young junior commander receives a certain formal status upon appointment to a leadership position, but the status of an actual leader-manager can only be acquired through the course of their service activities. An analysis of foreign and domestic scientific approaches has made it possible to define the primary directions for researching the phenomenon of leadership among young junior commanders, which can be summarized as follows:

Firstly, relying on the somewhat flawed theory that emerged within the personalistic approach, a leader must possess a specific set of personality traits; however, it is essential to consider the activities performed by the group, the nature of the interaction between the leader and their followers, and the critical role of the environmental conditions in which leadership occurs. For this reason, the search for specific leadership traits - dependent on the particular activity in which a potential leader is engaged - remains perpetually relevant. Consequently, taking into account all the achievements of trait theory, one of the criteria for understanding the phenomenon of leadership among junior commanders of the Armed Forces will be the identification of a commander's personality traits, while



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considering their professional orientation, environmental conditions, the specifics of their activities, and other relevant factors.

Secondly, according to the situational approach, the leadership of young junior commanders should be understood as an activity occurring in the process of interaction with a group (subordinates), utilizing a set of leadership qualities that will be effective in a given situation. Therefore, it is critically important not only to research the specific nature of the professional activities of young junior commanders (sergeants) during their formative period but also to account for the group's subjective perception and conceptualization of the leader's image.

Thirdly, within the behavioral approach - where behavior was the object of study - research focused on identifying leadership styles, and later, leadership was viewed as an intragroup interaction between leaders and followers. In 1955, R. Stogdill and C. Shartle proposed viewing leadership not merely as a characteristic of a single individual, but as the result of interaction between the individuals who make up a given group. In this approach, leadership was examined from the standpoint of status, interaction, and the behavior of individuals in the context of relationships with other group members. Based on this, the leadership of junior commanders (sergeants) can be presented as an intragroup interaction determined by the extent to which the leader's behavior satisfies the expectations of the followers. In other words, the behavioral traits, actions, and deeds manifested in the service activities of a junior commander (sergeant) must meet the expectations of colleagues, subordinates, and the military collective as a whole.

Fourthly, to correctly formulate an understanding of the leadership phenomenon among junior commanders (sergeants), it is necessary - in addition to traditional methods - to pay attention to new approaches and modern trends in leadership research. These include attribution theory (the causal-analytical approach), as well as the concepts of the transformational leader and the charismatic leader. Studying the phenomenon of leadership within these frameworks will allow for the determination of the dominant qualities and behavioral stereotypes required



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by a junior commander as a leader-manager during their professional development, depending on the specific organizational and group environment in which they carry out their service activities.

Fifthly, the very dynamics of research priorities reflect the interest of scholars in the two components of the phenomenon: the social (management) and the psychological (leadership).

Conclusion

In summary, it should be noted that today, interest specifically in leadership has significantly decreased, while interest in management has substantially increased. This is due to the fact that over the last decade, global educational needs have focused primarily on the quality of personnel training in the fields of business and the military. Therefore, a more in-depth study of the specifics of the leadership development process among young junior commanders (sergeants) in the context of their professional growth - both from the perspective of the personal-activity approach and in light of traditional and modern concepts of leadership studies - can be considered one of the most high-priority directions for researching the pedagogical conditions for developing the leadership qualities of young junior commanders (sergeants) in the Armed Forces today.

This translation maintains the philosophical and psychological depth of your text, ensuring that terms like “self-development” and “social orientation” are used correctly in a military-pedagogical context.

This demonstrates that self-education plays a vital role in the development of leadership qualities during the training of junior commanders. Thus, self-development is a cumulative combination of regulatory and organizational activities, serving as a quality of intellectual growth, as well as a means of acquiring new knowledge and navigating within society. Furthermore, self-development is a multi-level process that involves the formation of motivation, a drive toward self-education, and the use of various forms of monitoring



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outcomes. A critical element of self-development is the transfer of existing, processed knowledge into new life situations of cognitive and practical activity. Self-education consists of shaping one's own "Ego" into a real, stable personality capable of orienting toward new socio-economic and political conditions and significantly influencing the process of improving social life, professional activities, and oneself. Self-development is a creative process, as its ultimate result is the formation of an exceptional personality. True self-development is only possible under the condition of a well-formed system of intellectually sound methods of mental activity, which includes mechanisms for receiving, assimilating, processing, and transmitting knowledge. Organizing this process requires a high level of development in perception, attention, imagination, memory, thinking, all components of self-regulation, and creativity.

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