

Eureka Journal of Language, Culture & Social Change (EJLCSC)

ISSN 2760-4926 (Online) Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2026



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<https://eurekaoa.com/index.php/3>

DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP IN STUDENTS THROUGH PROBLEMATIC SITUATIONS AND DECISION-MAKING SKILLS

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Abstract

The development of leadership skills in students through problematic situations and decision-making is a pressing task in modern pedagogy. In the 21st century, academic and social success depends on responsible decision-making and leadership competencies. Problem-based approaches enable students to analyze conditions, generate alternative solutions, and select the most effective decisions, fostering independent thinking, responsibility, and creativity. Pedagogical methods such as problem-based learning, group work, interactive methods, didactic games, simulations, project-based learning, and reflective practices provide practical opportunities for students to practice leadership. This approach not only strengthens cognitive, social, and emotional development but also prepares students for real-life situations. The study presents practical examples of applying these methods and highlights their effectiveness in forming leadership skills in students.

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Keywords: Leadership development, Problem-based learning, Decision-making skills, Independent thinking, Pedagogical methods, Student engagement, Reflective practice.

Introduction

In the modern pedagogical process, fostering leadership abilities in students is one of the most pressing tasks. In the context of the 21st century, an individual's academic and social success is closely linked to responsible decision-making and leadership skills. Developing leadership in students is important not only for their personal growth but also for effective teamwork and social integration.

Problematic situations in the pedagogical process provide students with the opportunity to analyze existing conditions, develop alternative solutions, and choose the most effective course of action. In this way, students are trained to apply independent thinking, responsibility, and creative approaches in practice.

Leadership is defined as an individual's ability to guide, motivate, and influence others. From a pedagogical perspective, it is closely connected with the cognitive, social, and emotional development of students.

Problematic situations develop the following skills in students:

Independent thinking: analyzing hypothetical or real situations and identifying alternative solutions.

Responsibility: anticipating the consequences of decisions and understanding accountability.

Social and communicative skills: working in a team, exchanging ideas, and resolving conflicts.

Decision-making skills enable students to evaluate options, predict outcomes, and select the optimal solution. These skills are a crucial factor in shaping leadership.

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Pedagogical Methods

Pedagogical methods play a significant role in developing leadership in students. These methods not only provide knowledge but also foster independent thinking, responsibility, creativity, and social activity skills.

Problem-Based Learning (PBL): Students are presented with real-life or hypothetical problems and encouraged to solve them independently. Example: “The school library needs to be reorganized. As the team leader, how would you allocate tasks?”

Outcome: development of strategic thinking, initiative, responsibility, and decision-making skills.

Group Work and Interactive Methods:

Group work: students analyze complex problems in small groups, develop solutions, and discuss them.

Debates and discussions: promote free expression, critical analysis, communication, and leadership skills.

Brainstorming: allows rapid and flexible generation of diverse solutions.

Cluster method: organizes and connects ideas graphically, fostering logical and systematic thinking.

Boomerang method: students build on each other’s ideas, updating and expanding their perspectives.

Didactic Games and Simulations: Games that assign leadership roles to students, such as “Team Leader” or “Working Group Project.”

Simulated situations allow students to practice decision-making and responsibility.

Example: “A new project is starting in the class. You are tasked with leading the group and allocating tasks.”

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Project-Based Learning (PBL): Students participate in school or community projects in leadership roles. Skills developed include prioritizing tasks, managing the team, allocating resources, and evaluating outcomes.

Question-and-Answer and Reflection Methods: Students analyze their decisions, consider alternative solutions, and evaluate their performance. Example: “If a team member fails to complete a task, what decision would you make?”

Outcome: self-awareness, responsibility, and strengthened leadership skills.

Integrated Methods: Using interdisciplinary approaches to develop leadership. For instance, analyzing examples of social leadership in history lessons or managing group projects in mathematics classes to teach decision-making. Outcome: students develop multifaceted thinking and a sense of responsibility.

Practical Examples

1. Real-life problematic situation: Students are tasked with reorganizing the school library. As team leaders, they must allocate tasks, plan time, and organize collaboration. This process develops strategic thinking, planning, and communication skills.

2. Group activities: Students analyze complex problems in small groups, develop various solutions, and discuss them. The teacher observes and guides, promoting student independence.

3. Project-based activities: Students participate in leadership roles in school or community projects, developing skills in task prioritization, team management, and outcome evaluation.

Developing leadership in students through problematic situations and decision-making skills is pedagogically effective. This approach strengthens independent thinking, responsibility, creative approaches, and social activity skills. It also plays an important role in preparing students for real-life situations.

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Recommendations:

Regularly incorporate problematic situations into the learning process.
Utilize group work and interactive methods.
Ensure reflection and self-assessment.
Adapt tasks at both individual and group levels.

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