



## DEVELOPING STUDENTS' SOCIO-MORAL COMPETENCIES: PROBLEMS AND SOLUTIONS

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### ABSTRACT

*This article examines the key problems that arise in the process of developing students' socio-moral competencies and the ways to address them based on a theoretical and methodological analysis. The relevance of the topic is justified by the growing need in modern higher education to shape young people as socially responsible, morally mature individuals with a strong civic stance. The study is based on a systematic analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature, which identifies the factors that reduce the effectiveness of the educational process and substantiates conceptual approaches and methodological directions aimed at overcoming these challenges. As a result, a set of pedagogical solutions aimed at developing students' socio-moral competencies is proposed. The proposed approach has scientific and practical significance for improving the effectiveness of educational work in higher education institutions.*

**Introduction.** In the modern higher education system, ensuring students' socio-moral development is regarded as an important component of educational outcomes. In the context of globalization and the digital environment, the demands placed on young people's value systems, civic positions, and moral behavior are increasing. Therefore, higher education institutions should organize the educational process as a systematic activity aimed at developing students'

social responsibility and active participation in social life [1], [6].

In the national pedagogical heritage, the socio-moral content of education is grounded in the necessity of shaping personal development in harmony with the interests of society [2]. In the studies of contemporary Uzbek scholars, socio-moral development is interpreted within the framework of the competency-based approach as a unity of knowledge, attitudes, and behavior [3], and the effectiveness of educational work in higher education is associated with



learner-centered education and the promotion of social activity [4].

In foreign research, students' socio-moral development is explained through the internalization of social experience and the processes of moral decision-making [5], [6]. However, in modern higher education practice, the fragmentation of educational work, declining motivation, and the influence of the digital environment create challenges in ensuring students' socio-moral development.

Normative and legal documents also define the strengthening of the educational process in higher education and the development of young people's social activity and moral culture as priority tasks [7], [8]. Therefore, identifying the problems that hinder students' socio-moral development and substantiating pedagogical solutions to address them are defined as the main objectives of this article.

**Literature Review.** The problem of students' socio-moral development is interpreted in pedagogical and psychological literature based on various approaches. In the national pedagogical heritage, education is recognized as the main factor of personal development, and the formation of social responsibility and moral culture is considered in close connection with social progress (Avloniy) [2]. In the studies of contemporary Uzbek scholars, socio-moral development is explained within the framework of the competency-based approach as a unity of knowledge, attitudes, and behavior, and the necessity of improving the effectiveness of educational work in higher education is

substantiated (To'raqulov; Bozorova and co-authors) [3], [4].

In foreign studies, socio-moral development of the individual is explained through the internalization of social experience, learning, and self-regulation mechanisms. In particular, within Bandura's social-cognitive theory, it is emphasized that individual behavior is formed through observation and modeling [6]. Rest's model of moral development interprets the process of moral decision-making as a unity of motivation, moral reasoning, and moral action [5]. Biesta recognizes the ethical and political dimensions of education and substantiates the importance of the educational function in higher education [1].

Normative and legal documents define the strengthening of the educational process in the higher education system and the development of young people's social activity and moral culture as priority directions [7], [8]. These documents serve as a regulatory basis for the systematic organization of educational work in higher education institutions. However, the analysis of the literature shows that existing approaches mostly remain at the level of general principles and that methodological solutions aimed at comprehensively addressing the problems specific to students' socio-moral development in modern higher education (the influence of the digital environment, declining motivation, fragmentation of educational work) are not sufficiently systematized.

In this regard, in this article, on the basis of generalizing existing approaches, the systematic analysis of



the problems arising in students' socio-moral development and the conceptual substantiation of pedagogical solutions aimed at addressing them are defined as a scientific task.

**Research Methodology.** This study was conducted in a theoretical and methodological direction and aimed to conceptually substantiate pedagogical solutions focused on identifying the problems characteristic of students' socio-moral development in the context of modern higher education and addressing them. The study employed methods of systematic analysis of pedagogical and psychological literature, comparison and generalization, content analysis, and conceptual synthesis. As a methodological basis, the integration of the competency-based approach, the learner-centered education concept, and theories of socialization and moral development was adopted [1], [3], [5], [6].

In the course of the study, factors characteristic of the modern higher education environment (the influence of the digital environment, the fragmentation of educational work, and the decline in student motivation) were conceptually analyzed to identify the problems affecting students' socio-moral development. Pedagogical solutions aimed at addressing these problems were generalized in the directions of strengthening the educational function of education, organizing educational work on the basis of interdisciplinary integration, and developing an educational environment that supports students' social activity.

Methodologically, the study applied not logical modeling but a conceptual

analysis approach that reveals the logical interrelation between problems and solutions. In this process, interpreting the pedagogical process on the basis of a systemic approach and substantiating methodological directions that serve to improve the effectiveness of educational work were adopted as methodological criteria. The results of the study serve as a theoretical basis for developing practical recommendations aimed at supporting students' socio-moral development in the context of modern higher education.

**Analysis and Results.** The results of the theoretical analysis show that, in the context of modern higher education, the problems affecting students' socio-moral development are complex in nature. First, the intensification of the digital environment leads to the mediation of social relations among students, resulting in the weakening of empathy and direct communication skills [6]. Second, the fragmentation of educational work and its frequent reduction to event-based activities do not create sufficient conditions for the consistent formation of students' social responsibility and moral behavior [4]. Third, the insufficient integration of the educational component into the content of academic disciplines leads to a lack of a systemic approach to ensuring students' socio-moral development [1].

Based on the analysis, pedagogical solutions aimed at supporting students' socio-moral development were systematized. First, it is recommended to link educational work closely with the learning process by discussing issues of social responsibility and moral challenges within the content of





academic disciplines. Second, expanding collective and project-based activities aimed at increasing students' social engagement contributes to the development of their civic position and empathy [5]. Third, strengthening a reflective approach in the educational process (debates, discussion of moral dilemmas, self-analysis) enables the development of students' moral decision-making skills [5], [6].

The results indicate that students' socio-moral development largely depends on the quality of the educational environment created in higher education institutions, the systematic nature of educational work, and the pedagogical competence of teachers in educational activities. Therefore, when planning the educational process, goals aimed at socio-moral development should be clearly defined, and methodological directions serving to achieve them should be integrated into the content of academic disciplines. The obtained theoretical results substantiate the necessity of a comprehensive pedagogical approach to ensuring students' socio-moral development in the context of modern higher education.

**Conclusion and Recommendations.** This article presented a theoretical and methodological analysis of the problems characteristic of students' socio-moral development in the context of modern higher education and the ways to address them. The results of the analysis showed that the intensification of the digital environment, the fragmentation of educational work, and the insufficient integration of the educational

component into the learning process are the main problems in ensuring students' socio-moral development. At the same time, it was found that existing pedagogical approaches are not sufficiently oriented toward comprehensively addressing these problems.

Based on the theoretical conclusions, the following pedagogical solutions aimed at supporting students' socio-moral development were proposed: first, integrating educational work closely with the learning process and systematically discussing socio-moral issues within the content of academic disciplines; second, developing students' social engagement and civic position by expanding collective and project-based activities; third, developing students' moral decision-making skills by more widely applying reflective methods (moral dilemmas, debates, self-analysis) in the educational process.

These recommendations contribute to improving the effectiveness of educational work in higher education institutions, systematically supporting students' socio-moral development, and strengthening the educational function of education. As a перспективное направление for future research, it is recommended to empirically test the proposed pedagogical solutions, conduct a comparative analysis of their effectiveness across different educational institutions, and develop innovative forms of supporting students' socio-moral development in the digital environment.



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