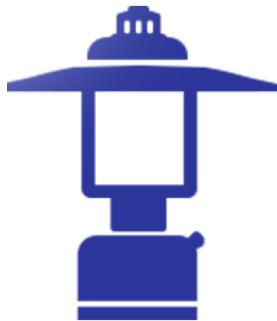


THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENTS ON SOCIO-POLITICAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS



EL IMPACTO DE LOS ENTORNOS EDUCATIVOS DIGITALES EN EL DESARROLLO DE LAS COMPETENCIAS SOCIOPOLÍTICAS DE LOS ESTUDIANTES

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ABSTRACT

Globalization and the expansion of the information society increasingly influence higher education systems and the socialization of university students. Under these conditions, educational institutions face the task of forming socio-political competence among students, particularly future teachers, as an essential component of professional and civic development. The purpose of this article is to identify and substantiate pedagogical conditions for the formation of socio-political competence of pedagogical students within the contemporary educational environment. The study is based on a qualitative review and analytical synthesis of scholarly literature, policy documents, and educational practices addressing civic education, political socialization, and digital learning environments. The analysis demonstrates that processes of globalization and digitalization significantly transform students' forms of socio-political participation and identity formation. The results indicate that socio-political competence is increasingly shaped through the pedagogical use of digital tools, university information environments, and guided forms of online engagement. It is concluded that higher education plays a decisive role in structuring students' socio-political experience, while traditional

educational approaches are gradually losing effectiveness in comparison with digitally mediated pedagogical practices.

Keywords:

Socio-political competence, Higher Education, Globalization, Digital Learning Environment, Civic Identity, Political Socialization.

RESUMEN

La globalización y la expansión de la sociedad de la información influyen cada vez más en los sistemas de educación superior y en la socialización del estudiantado universitario. En estas condiciones, las instituciones educativas se enfrentan a la tarea de desarrollar la competencia sociopolítica del estudiantado, en particular del futuro profesorado, como componente esencial del desarrollo profesional y cívico. El propósito de este artículo es identificar y fundamentar las condiciones pedagógicas para la formación de la competencia sociopolítica del estudiantado de pedagogía en el entorno educativo contemporáneo. El estudio se basa en una revisión cualitativa y una síntesis analítica de literatura académica, documentos de política y prácticas educativas que abordan la educación cívica,



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la socialización política y los entornos digitales de aprendizaje. El análisis demuestra que los procesos de globalización y digitalización transforman significativamente las formas de participación sociopolítica y la formación de la identidad del estudiantado. Los resultados indican que la competencia sociopolítica se configura cada vez más mediante el uso pedagógico de herramientas digitales, entornos de información universitarios y formas guiadas de interacción en línea. Se concluye que la educación superior desempeña un papel decisivo en la estructuración de la experiencia sociopolítica del estudiantado, mientras que los enfoques educativos tradicionales están perdiendo eficacia gradualmente en comparación con las prácticas pedagógicas mediadas digitalmente.

Palabras clave:

Competencia sociopolítica, Educación Superior, Globalización, Entorno de Aprendizaje Digital, Identidad Cívica, Socialización Política.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization and political transformations intensify their impact on the individual, society, and the state. The issue of the state of national and public security of the Russian Federation is becoming particularly acute. Within the framework of security provision, the responsibility for working with the individual and society is assigned to educational institutions at various levels and to teaching staff. This largely concerns socio-political work with students at universities. Their activities include elements of social policy. A personal example of socio-political competence has an educational influence on future generations of specialists, including future teachers. In the process of training and educating teaching staff, it is impossible to remain outside politics. Elements of teachers' socio-political competence are expressed in their socio-political positions and in their practical participation in relevant activities.

The basis of a cognitive and empirically verifiable indicator of socio-political competence should be attitudes toward socio-political processes and participation in them, which form the foundation of the socio-political experience of future teachers. Therefore, the foundations of socio-political competence should undoubtedly be formed within the system of higher education, relying on the principles of a systemic approach.

The content-related features of the educational and upbringing process at universities that train teaching staff are determined by their goals and standards of educational activity, which, in addition to professional training, should provide students with the necessary socio-political experience. Thus, the specificity of higher education is characterized by an expanded sphere of educational

activity, an increase in the number of communication channels through which the personality of future specialists is formed, as well as close proximity to the socio-political life of society through direct participation in pedagogical activity during university studies, teaching practice, and participation in the work of teachers' trade unions, all of which require socio-political activity from future teachers.

The foundation of such a system should consist of the learning process, the activities and engagement of the subjects and objects of the pedagogical process, as well as the conditions for the formation of socio-political competence.

A key element in the formation of socio-political competence of students—future teachers—is constituted by social and political disciplines, the content of which differs significantly from extracurricular educational work. These disciplines reflect the practical experience of socio-political activity of teaching staff and reveal the prevailing socio-political ideas of the pedagogical community.

The development of socio-political competence in university students is strongly mediated by both the digital skills of instructors and the technological infrastructure of the institution. Casimiro-Urcos et al. (2025) highlight that faculty digital competencies not only enable efficient management of virtual learning environments but also play a critical role in fostering students' active and reflective participation in digital learning spaces. Their research demonstrates that digitally competent educators create educational experiences that stimulate discussion, collaboration, and critical reflection—key factors for consolidating civic and political skills in higher education contexts. This perspective emphasizes that both instructor competence and technological mediation are strategic conditions for digital educational environments to effectively contribute to students' holistic development.

Moreover, Chávez-Cárdenas et al. (2025) show that educational web platforms and artificial intelligence transform contemporary teaching and learning processes by enabling content personalization and adaptation to students' individual needs. The pedagogical use of AI facilitates the identification of interaction patterns and provides timely feedback, enhancing critical thinking and analytical skills regarding social and political issues. The authors also stress that these digital tools can strengthen digital citizenship, promoting ethical awareness, responsibility, and active participation in socio-political discussions, provided that their use is integrated into well-planned and supervised pedagogical strategies.

Finally, León-González & Pire-Rojas (2025) offer evidence from research and neuroscience on how engagement with digital environments and artificial intelligence tools impacts student motivation, deep learning, and the internalization

of civic and socio-political values. According to the authors, an integral university education requires combining technological mediation with pedagogical strategies grounded in cognitive understanding and critical skills development. This approach allows not only the transmission of knowledge but also the construction of active socio-political identities capable of navigating the challenges posed by globalization and the digitalization of society.

These sources provide a robust theoretical framework supporting the notion that university students' socio-political competence is strengthened through structured engagement with digital educational environments, mediated by digitally competent instructors, adaptive technologies, and evidence-based pedagogical strategies.

An analysis of pedagogical practice at universities shows that teachers of social and political disciplines do not always possess sufficient theoretical and methodological knowledge for forming socio-political competence in the course of teaching, and often do not apply appropriate forms and methods of instruction and upbringing that would ensure proper conditions and increase the effectiveness of developing socio-political competence among future teachers. In addition, in the process of student upbringing, various forms and methods of extracurricular work with future teachers are delegated to social and educational affairs departments.

In the context of transformations in the socio-political space, students and other agents involved in the formation of socio-political competence experience shifts in social and political orientations. A problematic area is the formation of students' perceptions of appropriate socio-political attitudes and value orientations. Therefore, the study of young people's emotional reactions, responses, and behavior with regard to socio-political events, activities, and situations is particularly relevant.

Issues of socio-political activity among young people are closely associated with protest sentiments within this group. Under the influence of destructive online communications, young people may become prone to destructive and deviant behavior, primarily in the form of political deviance. Due to digitalization, the problem of forming the socio-political identity of student youth has become especially acute; traditionally, such identity formation has been associated with involving young people in various forms of political participation. The inability to improve one's socio-political situation through traditional forms and methods without project financing—such as those employed by political parties and political technologists—acts as a key trigger of protest sentiments among young people.

A situation has emerged in which student youth learn about current social and political events primarily through digital technologies and the internet, social networks, and

subscriptions. According to empirical research data, students have developed stable attitudes characterized by distrust and a critical perception of politics as a corrupt sphere in which all problems are resolved through money. Changing these attitudes requires systematic practical steps and appropriate pedagogical conditions. A certain proportion of young people tend to demonstrate socio-political activity in the digital space (Buechler, 2000).

Taking the above into account, it is important to study existing contemporary practices, forms, and methods for fostering socio-political activity among young people. Particular attention should be paid to forms of informal self-organization of youth. At present, destructive practices of civic and political activity among young people are implemented through mechanisms of co-participation and co-governance, which cannot be adequately realized by young people through existing traditional means of implementing political initiatives. That is, it may be assumed that such traditional ways of engaging in socio-political activity are losing competitiveness as being less in demand (Lerner et al., 2014).

Thus, the purpose of the article is to analyze the current issues in the formation of socio-political competence of students.

MATERIALES Y MÉTODOS

This study is based primarily on a qualitative literature review and analytical synthesis of scholarly sources devoted to the formation of socio-political competence, civic identity, and socio-political activity of students in the context of higher education and digitalization. The review included publications indexed in Scopus and Web of Science, as well as leading Russian academic databases. The literature search was conducted using key terms such as socio-political competence, civic identity, youth political participation, digital political socialization, higher education, and teacher education.

The selection of sources focused on peer-reviewed journal articles, monographs, and analytical reports that address theoretical models, educational practices, and policy-related perspectives. The collected materials were analyzed using comparative and system-structural approaches in order to identify dominant conceptual frameworks, points of debate, and current research trends. The integrative synthesis of the reviewed literature made it possible to substantiate the pedagogical conditions for the formation of socio-political competence of students who are preparing for teaching professions in contemporary socio-political and informational environments.

The problem addressed in the article has attracted the attention of representatives of various disciplines (pedagogy, psychology, history, military studies, etc.) at different

periods of history. Research on this issue has been conducted with diverse objectives and across different geographical contexts. However, under contemporary conditions of political and economic sanctions and isolation, the question of the conditions for forming socio-political competence among students of teacher-training programs is posed in a new way and requires scholarly reflection on the content of their education.

As is well known, socio-political activity is oriented toward the realization of social interests within the framework of law. This theoretical approach makes it possible to consider socio-political activity as a personality trait that takes into account an individual's orientation and socio-political experience and that can be formed through various forms and methods. Sociologists have identified different typologies of groups involved in socio-political participation, which make it possible to develop criteria for its measurement: alienated, peripheral, and sympathetic groups. This has enabled sociologists to compile a typical collective psychological portrait of a socio-political activist: successful, advanced, and mobile groups of society whose level and content of socio-political activism correspond to the social well-being and values of the population (Sedova, 2014). In addition, socio-political activity presupposes the leading role of public authorities in building dialogue with the population, a process to which digital communications largely contribute.

The subjectivity of student youth who are citizens of the Russian Federation, as participants in socio-political movements, is determined by their socio-political identity, that is, by a citizen's belonging to a family, a collective, a social class, and the people as a whole (Malakhov & Yakovleva, 2013). It is precisely the expression of socio-political identity by student youth in the public space that serves as the first necessary pedagogical condition for the realization of their legitimate socio-political rights and duties. Identity is formed around a specific group of values. In modern conditions, it is perceived as having a state-national character. According to Samsonova & Titov (2017), the state superstructure is perceived by contemporary Russians as functional, intended to stimulate citizens toward socio-political activity in various spheres.

The national component of identity among Russians, under conditions of transformation of the global Internet space, is represented by a set of heterogeneous virtual socio-political identities characterized by dynamism, a polycentric agenda, and situational reactions to political realities (Fakhretdinova et al., 2022). In other words, this refers to situational-event identity that arises against the background of events, through the selection and evaluation of which a mass identity of a negative character is formed (Samsonova & Titov, 2017). In modern conditions,

the Internet becomes a platform for searching for and activating identities that successfully compete with state-national identity. For example, communities emerge on social networks that focus on issues of ethnic and mythological self-identification. At the territorial level, identity-related problems are no less pronounced, manifesting themselves at the federal, regional, and municipal levels. The formation of a sense of unity with a civic nation based on a rich history, patriotism, and loyalty to the state still lies ahead. It should be acknowledged that this task is also assigned to the level of higher education.

Therefore, already today it is necessary among student youth—future teachers—to promote positive socio-political values and meanings (patriotism, volunteering, responsible political choice) and acceptable models of behavior in the Internet space. It should be emphasized that, in the long term, this step will ensure the value-cultural and psychological consolidation of society. For these reasons, the special role of socio-political education and upbringing implemented at universities (spiritual and moral, civic, and political) among future teachers increases, aimed at forming their state-national identity.

Under conditions of competition between traditional territorial identities and new virtual identities that have no close connection with territory or a common value dominant, the problem is further aggravated by the influence of transnational virtual identities and stable everyday social identities. In addition, a large number of communities on social networks produce autonomous spaces and related identities. While the former provide an escape from real problems, the latter offer socio-psychological support. That is, neither of these is sought by most citizens in society and the state, which is regarded as a habitual pattern.

As a consequence of these processes under conditions of informational globalization, a static and socially insignificant socio-political self-identification is formed among citizens of Russia. Therefore, of particular importance for the formation of socio-political competence (identity and attitudes) among student youth is the implementation of the second pedagogical condition: in the information and public space, informational and pedagogical components of state youth and educational policy must be realized. For these purposes, it is proposed to use the resources and content of the university's information educational environment and its presence on social networks, which are necessary as a "space for counteracting negative effects and as an instrument for ensuring the worldview security of students' personalities" (Brodovskaya et al., 2025).

As a resulting social effect, there will be a "conversion of socio-political activity into social practices that stimulate various forms of activity (assistance to participants of the Special Military Operation, patriotism, volunteering,

responsible political choice, environmental protection, and others" (Westheimer, 2006). Each of the listed discursive agendas in the information space is subject to excessive, most often negative politicization, socio-political pressure, protests, and contestation of decisions made by public authorities. As a result, socio-political media activism is formed in the information space, manipulation of which by the opposition leads to the formation of negative attitudes (Zakharova & Glazkova, 2024).

For example, according to foreign researchers, socio-political activists express and transmit an identity of an innovative type, structuring their socio-political activities around a clearly defined system of values (the fight against corruption, the shadow economy, human rights violations, environmental crimes, and other pressing issues). These activists display hostility toward activists who demonstrate a different identity and do not share their values (Mamedova et al., 2025).

In the context of interpreting socio-political activity on the basis of political and sociological methods, the concept of "socio-political competence" should be understood as a conscious need for active participation in public life, readiness for such activity in the interests of society or a group, and direct involvement in it, determined by an individual's socio-political position and the prevailing social situation. This makes it possible to model criteria of socio-political competence:

- inert competence, aimed at maintaining stability and sustainability;
- active competence, aimed at initiative and change;
- political competence, aimed at participation in the activities of online communities and the organization of elections;
- non-political competence, aimed at everyday life and the lawful interests of citizens, as well as charitable activities.

Researchers note a regularity according to which the level of citizens' political activity depends on their social well-being, system of value orientations, readiness to defend civil rights, and degree of involvement in social networks (Reshetnikov, 2012).

According to Zachlod et al. (2022) provide relevant evidence on how social media data analytics can enhance the understanding of individual behaviors and participation in digital environments, a finding directly applicable to the development of socio-political competence in university students. Their study demonstrates that systematic analysis of digital interactions allows for the identification of patterns of participation, attitudes, and trends, which in educational contexts can be translated into feedback

tools to assess students' civic and political engagement levels in online learning platforms.

Furthermore, the authors emphasize that data mining techniques and advanced analytics enable the anticipation of behaviors and their adaptation through personalized pedagogical strategies. This suggests that universities can leverage digital analytics not only to monitor student participation but also to design interventions that foster critical thinking, ethical reflection, and social responsibility, all of which are central components of socio-political competence.

Finally, Zachlod et al. (2022) highlight the predictive capacity of social data, which allows educational institutions not only to understand how students interact but also to anticipate participation trends and adjust digital learning environments to maximize the internalization of civic and political values. Collectively, this source supports the idea that integrating analytical tools into digital educational environments constitutes a strategic resource for strengthening students' socio-political development, complementing traditional teaching approaches and enhancing the effectiveness of higher education in the digital era.

Increasingly, in connection with specific problematic socio-political situations, one can observe actions, behaviors, and activity by individuals and groups in the Internet space that are characterized by a degree of awareness. The subject-moral position toward society and the state depends on the level of participation and is divided into the following types: nominal participation (manifested in a low level of initiative and the formal fulfillment of civic duty); ideal participation (manifested in social service and the realization of public values); participatory participation (manifested in effective involvement in various forms of socio-political activity such as volunteering, elections, public oversight, charity, protection of citizens' rights, etc.) (Krylov et al., 2025; Mironov, 2025). Its agenda strongly depends on the geography and age of activists. It should be emphasized that the core of youth political socialization is adherence to ideals as a leading motive, which prompts this demographic group to react acutely to inequality and injustice in society. Pan et al. (2024) provide evidence on the relationship between students' digital competence and their learning behavior, highlighting how individual digital skills influence active engagement, self-directed learning, and knowledge acquisition in digital educational environments. The study emphasizes that students with higher digital competence are better able to interact effectively with virtual platforms, online resources, and interactive tools, which enhances the internalization of complex content and supports critical participation in academic discussions, including the development of socio-political knowledge and attitudes.

The authors also note that students' personal innovativeness, defined as their willingness to adopt new technologies and learning strategies, amplifies the positive effects of digitalization on higher education quality. This indicates that the successful integration of digital environments depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on students' ability to adapt, explore, and engage with digital resources, thereby strengthening critical thinking and involvement in civic and political topics.

Finally, Pan et al. (2024) highlight the moderating role of institutional digitalization in higher education quality, showing that institutional policies and practices that facilitate access to digital tools and promote their pedagogical use enhance the effects of both digital competence and personal innovativeness. This suggests that universities fostering a well-structured digital ecosystem can effectively improve the development of students' socio-political competence by combining individual skills with strategic institutional support. For example, young people show a sharp reaction to cases of abuse of power and unjust ownership of large property, and similar phenomena (Surovov et al., 2019).

The assessment of the socio-political competence and activity of student youth, both at the national and regional levels, is regarded by public authorities, political scientists, and sociologists as unjustifiably low. This fact should not be ignored by higher education teachers responsible for social and youth work at universities. The solution to this problem should be associated with the selection of promising forms and methods for developing socio-political competence, as well as directions for its implementation. Researchers and practitioners acknowledge that dialogue between youth and public authorities occurs mainly in a fictitious and formal manner—merely “for show.” A promising mechanism for building interaction with public authorities is considered to be the development of such a form of youth self-governance as the institution of student self-government at the level of higher education. In the process of socio-political socialization within educational organizations, students mainly acquire social experience in managing social processes. Previously, it was believed that the most complete opportunity for self-realization was provided through the institution of youth parliamentarism. As of 2025, 61 youth parliaments and more than 3,000 municipal youth parliaments are functioning in Russia. However, according to researchers, this practice is insufficiently institutionalized (Gukova, 2022). Thus, one can state a crisis of representative forms of democracy, explained by a crisis of identity and the formation of absenteeism, which determine serious socio-cultural differences among Russians of different generations.

An analysis of global experience shows that in various regions of the world, protesting opposition movements increasingly resort to Internet resources, websites, thematic blogs, and social networks to mobilize supporters, stimulate protest-related destructive activity, and disseminate didactic instructional materials. Taken together, these resources actively influence the consciousness of young people through mediated online communication. The Internet is regarded as the predominant means of socio-political communication. Most often on social networks one can encounter such extremist manifestations as the creation of photo collages, dissemination of fake information, photo manipulation, and the posting of video and audio materials. Such content violates social norms of decency and constitutional legal rights of citizens, negatively affects public sentiment, and undermines the reputation of state institutions of power. From this follows, as a necessary preventive measure, the need to organize positive socio-political online activity among young people on social networks concerning socio-political events in the life of the region (municipality), including student youth. The author of the publication considers this to be the third pedagogical condition for the formation of socio-political competence among future teachers, the implementation of which in the Internet space will make it possible to ensure informal self-organization of students on issues of society, ecology, and the economy in the region of presence—a wide range of issues. Such an approach directs collective citizen participation toward solving socio-political problems in the form of network-based movements. There are sufficient examples of such practices in the country. Moreover, in recent years' Russian citizens have become accustomed to expressing their own socio-political positions on social networks, which contributes to the growth of socio-political initiatives (Yang, 2024).

CONCLUSIONS

Summarizing the article makes it possible to conclude that the socio-political competence of students, future teachers, as a result of social and political socialization in the conditions of the information society and the university educational environment is formed primarily through the Internet and digital technologies. An analysis of various viewpoints of representatives of social and political sciences made it possible to substantiate a number of pedagogical conditions that allow the formation of socio-political competence among future teachers, namely:

1. the formation of students' socio-political identity;
2. pedagogical stimulation of socio-political activity and social practices that motivate students toward various forms of volunteer activity (assistance to participants of the Special Military Operation, patriotism, volunteering,

responsible political choice, ecology and environmental protection, etc.);

3. the organization of positive socio-political online activity among young people on social networks concerning socio-political events in the life of the region.

With this approach, the concept of "socio-political competence" should be understood as a conscious need for active participation in public life, readiness for such activity in the interests of society or a group, and direct involvement in it, determined by an individual's socio-political position and the prevailing social situation.

The results obtained from the study make it possible to develop an understanding of what the model for implementing pedagogical conditions for the formation of socio-political competence of students will be, which constitutes the prospect for further research.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST:

The authors declare no conflict of interest

Authors' contributions

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Ilona Tarasova	Methodology and Analysis of Results
Alexey Kuznetsov	Theory, Methodology
Antonina Fomina	Analysis of Citations and References
Zoya Bezveselnaya	Theory, Analysis of Results
Andrey Galukhin	Analysis of Citations and References