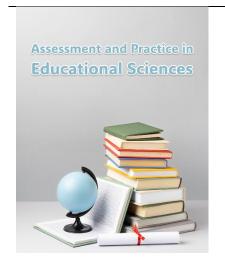
Assessment and Practice in Educational Sciences





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Presenting a Model of Strategies Influencing School Social Responsibility with Emphasis on Student Participation in School Activities

ABSTRACT

The present study aims to develop a model of strategies influencing students' social responsibility with a particular emphasis on their participation in school activities. This study is an applied research project using a quantitative approach. The statistical population included all teachers and students in the city of Larestan. Stratified random sampling was employed, and based on Morgan's table, 357 students and 181 teachers were selected as the sample. Data collection was carried out using a researcher-developed questionnaire, which was constructed based on initial qualitative findings and evaluated using a fivepoint Likert scale. Data analysis was performed using SPSS and PLS software. The results of the measurement model analysis showed that all factor loadings were above 0.40 and all t-values were greater than 1.96, indicating the significance of the relationships between items and constructs at the 95% confidence level. Additionally, composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha, and convergent validity for all dimensions exceeded the acceptable thresholds. The final conceptual model included components such as delegation of authority, trust in students, the role of the family, reinforcement of leadership traits, and encouragement of responsibility-all of which had significant effects in explaining social responsibility. The findings indicated that genuine student participation in school affairs and the creation of democratic environments play a key role in enhancing their social responsibility. The model proposed in this study can serve as a foundation for designing educational policies based on participation, trust, and effective citizenship education.

Keywords: Social responsibility, student participation, school, citizenship education, educational strategies.

Introduction

In contemporary societies, the school is not merely an institution for the transmission of knowledge; rather, it serves as the principal setting for the formation of civic behavior, the enhancement of social responsibility, and the cultivation of active citizenship among students. In the transformational context of the 21st century, citizenship education has transcended its symbolic role and emerged as a key strategic objective within education systems, aiming to nurture individuals who are informed, participatory, and socially responsible (1). Student participation in school activities is one of the effective

mechanisms for enhancing this sense of responsibility, as it provides practical opportunities for them to experience and practice social skills, responsibility, and commitment to collective well-being (2). In other words, the school, as a laboratory of citizenship, can serve as the main environment for participatory and responsibility-centered education—a role that, especially in the digital age, is accompanied by novel complexities and opportunities (3).

Recent studies in the field of citizenship education emphasize that providing meaningful opportunities for student participation in school leads to the development of a sense of belonging and social awareness (4, 5). In this context, the role of teachers as facilitators of social learning processes is crucial. If the experience of participatory education in the classroom is grounded in a democratic approach, it paves the way for fostering civic self-efficacy (6). Within this framework, education based on dialogue, collective decision-making, and mutual respect not only fulfills educational functions but also enhances the formative role of the school as an institution (7).

Numerous studies, including those conducted on participatory education in the education systems of Australia and Scandinavia, have shown that schools can promote active citizenship through the establishment of participatory structures such as student councils and participatory budgeting (8, 9). In such structures, students not only learn to express their voices but also engage directly in collective decision-making processes and experience their outcomes. This experiential learning approach, in contrast to traditional methods of citizenship education, strengthens critical thinking, responsibility, and cooperative spirit (10).

However, social responsibility education is not limited to the creation of participatory structures; it is also dependent on the school's organizational culture, teacher attitudes, and macro educational policies. In many cases, student participation in schools remains symbolic, with little real influence in actual decision-making processes (11). Such circumstances result in discouragement, lack of motivation, and the development of passive identities among students (12). Therefore, it is essential that student participation is institutionalized as an educational process at all levels of the school rather than being treated as a ceremonial activity. To achieve this goal, the design of systematic and evidence-based models can play a key role (13).

In this regard, the present study seeks to propose a strategic model of factors influencing students' social responsibility, with an emphasis on their genuine participation in school activities. This model must be capable of addressing various educational, cultural, structural, and communicative dimensions of the school, while also being responsive to the changing social and technological conditions of today's world (14, 15). For example, in many countries, the use of digital technologies to enhance citizenship education and social responsibility has gained attention, whereby digital participatory platforms serve as effective tools for fostering civic agency among adolescents (16).

On the other hand, the concept of social responsibility in students should not be confined solely to volunteer work or event-based activities. Rather, it must be embedded within the curriculum, teaching methods, and daily interactions between teachers and students (17, 18). In other words, social responsibility is not merely an educational content but a school lifestyle that should be reflected in all aspects of institutional and individual behavior (19). From this perspective, attention must also be paid to the role of family, the social environment, and cultural factors in shaping this responsibility (20).

Attention to specific student groups is also critical in this context. For instance, recent research has demonstrated that students with special needs can also meaningfully engage in social responsibility processes if appropriate teaching methods are utilized (3). This necessitates the design of inclusive and flexible educational policies and models that respect the diversity of students' abilities, experiences, and cultural backgrounds (5, 21).

Moreover, the research literature indicates that enhancing students' sense of self-worth, personal autonomy, and social competence is a fundamental prerequisite for their adoption of social responsibility (22, 23). In this regard, the school must create an environment where students can not only express their voices but also feel seen, heard, and experience the success

that stems from their social engagement (9). These experiences contribute to the formation of a civic identity that will influence their future social lives (24).

Given all the above, there is a growing necessity for the development of a comprehensive model that systematically and contextually identifies and explains the factors influencing students' social responsibility. Such a model must incorporate not only the institutional variables within schools but also cultural, technological, communicative, and individual variables—and through meaningful student participation, contribute to sustainable social development. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim of presenting a model of strategies that influence school social responsibility, with an emphasis on student participation in school activities.

Methods and Materials

This study, conducted using a quantitative approach, involved a statistical population comprising all male and female teachers and students who participated in school activities in the city of Larestan. The population included approximately 5,000 individuals, consisting of 2,535 female students, 2,128 male students, 191 female teachers, and 146 male teachers. To select a representative sample from this population, stratified random sampling was employed in order to preserve gender proportions and professional roles in the sampling process. The sample size was determined using Morgan's table. Based on this table and considering the student population of 4,663 individuals, a sample of 357 students was selected. Additionally, out of 337 available teachers, 181 were chosen as the final sample to ensure sufficient precision for statistical analysis.

The data collection instrument in this study was a researcher-developed questionnaire, the structure and content of which were based on the findings and themes extracted from the qualitative phase of the research. The questionnaire was designed using a five-point Likert scale, allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each item. The scale included the following options: "Very High" (score 5), "High" (score 4), "Moderate" (score 3), "Low" (score 2), and "Very Low" (score 1). After the initial design, the questionnaire was reviewed and refined by several experts in the fields of education and educational psychology to ensure content validity. Furthermore, the reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha test, the results of which indicated a high level of reliability for the instrument used.

For the analysis of data obtained from the questionnaires, two statistical software packages—SPSS and PLS—were utilized. Preliminary analyses, such as descriptive statistics, normality checks, and correlation assessments, were conducted using SPSS. Subsequently, to examine the conceptual model of the research and test the relationships between latent variables, structural equation modeling (SEM) was performed using PLS software. All statistical analyses were conducted with a 95% confidence level, and the results were interpreted accordingly. The use of this combined statistical approach enabled the study to benefit from both the exploratory analysis capabilities of SPSS and the predictive power and complexity-handling capacity of PLS in model testing.

Findings and Results

In the sample of this study, which included 357 students, 147 individuals (41.2%) were female and 210 individuals (58.8%) were male, indicating that the majority of participants were male students. Regarding grade level, 21.6% of students were in 10th grade, 32.2% in 11th grade, and 46.2% in 12th grade, demonstrating that 12th-grade students comprised the majority. In terms of age, 21.6% were 16 years old, 32.2% were 17 years old, and 46.2% were 18 years old, indicating the highest frequency was in the 18-year-old group.

In the teacher sample of 181 participants, 52 individuals (28.7%) were female and 129 individuals (71.3%) were male, showing that male teachers were the majority. Additionally, 132 teachers (72.9%) were married and 49 teachers (27.1%) were

single, indicating the predominance of married individuals in this group. Regarding educational attainment, 11 teachers (6.1%) held doctoral degrees, 89 teachers (49.2%) held master's degrees, 61 teachers (33.7%) held bachelor's degrees, and 20 teachers (11.0%) had associate degrees, indicating that the highest frequency was among those with master's degrees. In terms of age groups, 18 teachers (9.9%) were under 30 years old, 28 teachers (15.5%) were aged 31–35, 63 teachers (34.8%) were aged 36–40, 35 teachers (19.3%) were aged 41–45, 23 teachers (12.7%) were aged 46–50, and 14 teachers (7.7%) were over 50 years old, with the highest proportion falling within the 36–40 age range.

Based on the results from the measurement model analysis for the variable "strategic condition factors," and as illustrated in Figure 1, all t-statistics for the relationships between items and constructs exceeded the critical value of 1.96. This indicates that the factor loadings are statistically significant, confirming that the items appropriately represent their respective constructs at a 95% confidence level. In other words, all items used to assess the dimensions of strategic condition factors showed statistically significant relationships with their latent constructs and were validated statistically.

Subsequently, the standardized measurement model for the variable "strategic condition factors" is presented in Figure 2. This model provides the factor loading values (λ) for each item related to various constructs. According to the model results, all factor loadings exceeded the threshold of 0.40, and all t-values were reported to be greater than 1.96, indicating that all items are statistically valid for measuring the respective constructs. These findings confirm the desirable quality of the measurement indicators within the conceptual model of the study.

To assess the reliability and validity of the latent variables more precisely, the reliability coefficients of various constructs were calculated and presented in Table 1. In this table, Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values for all subscales exceeded the threshold of 0.70, demonstrating high internal consistency of the measurement instrument. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs surpassed the 0.50 benchmark, indicating that a significant portion of the variance in the items was explained by the latent variables, and their convergent validity is acceptable. For example, the subscale "delegation of authority to students for fulfilling their responsibilities" had the highest AVE at 0.851 and a composite reliability of 0.945, indicating very strong validity and reliability for this dimension.

Table 1. Reliability Coefficients for Constructs of the Strategic Condition Factors Variable

Subscale	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reliability	AVE
Enhancing the Sense of Independence and Importance	0.846	0.849	0.897	0.685
Trust in Students by Assigning Tasks and Responsibilities	0.916	0.916	0.937	0.748
Delegation of Authority to Students for Fulfilling Responsibilities	0.912	0.913	0.945	0.851
Importance and Role of the Family in Developing Responsibility	0.898	0.899	0.929	0.766
Instilling a Sense of Responsibility in Students at School	0.890	0.891	0.924	0.752
Encouragement and Motivation Toward Responsibility	0.828	0.829	0.921	0.854
Strengthening Students' Sense of Responsibility	0.903	0.805	0.932	0.774
Enhancing Students' Participatory Power at School	0.916	0.920	0.931	0.630
Developing and Strengthening Students' Leadership Personality	0.867	0.967	0.954	0.790
Effective Strategies for Teaching Social Responsibility to Students	0.953	0.967	0.954	0.567
Recognizing Students' Potential for Responsibility	0.817	0.842	0.948	0.654

After confirming convergent validity, the next step involved assessing the discriminant validity of the constructs to ensure that each construct is clearly distinguishable from the others. For this purpose, the Fornell-Larcker matrix was used, in which the square root of the AVE for each construct is placed along the main diagonal of the table. According to Table 2, the value of these square roots exceeds the inter-construct correlation coefficients in all cases, confirming the presence of satisfactory discriminant validity and adequate construct distinctiveness. For example, the diagonal value of the subscale "trust in students by assigning tasks and responsibilities" is 0.865, while its highest correlation with other constructs is less than this value. This

pattern holds true for the other subscales as well, indicating that the measurement model is reliably validated in terms of discriminant validity.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Matrix Using Fornell-Larcker Criterion for Constructs of the Strategic Condition
Factors Variable

Subscale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Enhancing the Sense of Independence and Importance	0.827										
Trust in Students by Assigning Tasks and Responsibilities	0.233	0.865									
Delegation of Authority to Students	0.214	0.624	0.922								
Importance and Role of the Family in Developing Responsibility	0.191	0.781	0.611	0.875							
Instilling a Sense of Responsibility in School	0.163	0.685	0.781	0.707	0.867						
Encouragement and Motivation Toward Responsibility	0.154	0.701	0.696	0.691	0.840	0.924					
Strengthening Students' Sense of Responsibility	0.167	0.688	0.633	0.742	0.806	0.842	0.880				
Enhancing Students' Participatory Power in School	0.624	0.161	0.150	0.117	0.099	0.110	0.081	0.793			
Developing and Strengthening Students' Leadership Personality	0.709	0.205	0.255	0.201	0.171	0.158	0.161	0.827	0.889		
Effective Strategies for Teaching Social Responsibility	0.403	0.850	0.793	0.860	0.873	0.855	0.860	0.347	0.424	0.906	
Recognizing Students' Potential for Responsibility	0.345	0.621	0.538	0.759	0.656	0.645	0.676	0.258	0.335	0.808	0.877

Overall, the results obtained from the measurement model analysis indicate that the variable *strategic condition factors* is in a desirable state in terms of factor loadings, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Moreover, the designed measurement model possesses sufficient statistical adequacy to proceed to the structural analysis stage and can be utilized to examine the influence of various variables on students' social responsibility.

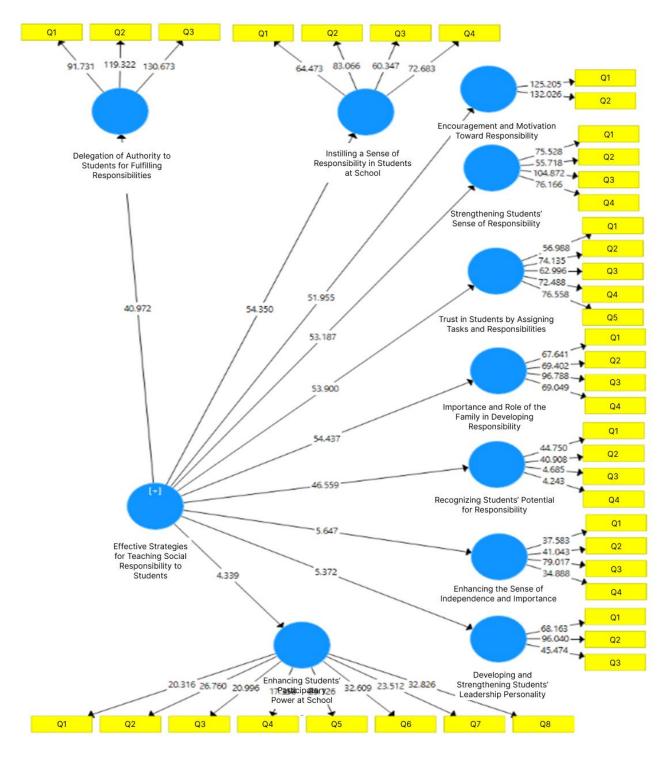


Figure 1. Measurement Model of Strategic Condition Factors (Significance Mode)

This diagram presents the factor loadings and *t*-statistics, all of which exceed the threshold value of 1.96. This confirms the significance of the relationships between the items and constructs at the 95% confidence level.

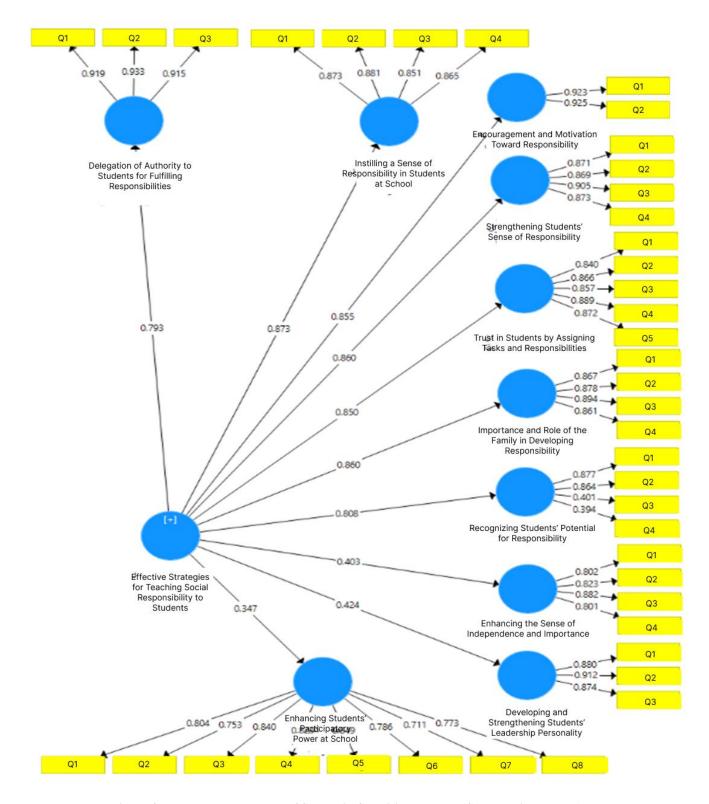


Figure 2. Measurement Model of Strategic Condition Factors (Standardized Mode)

This diagram displays the standardized factor loading values for the observed variables. All factor loadings exceed the threshold of 0.40, indicating that the items effectively represent their respective latent constructs. The model provides the necessary indicators for confirming the good fit of the measurement model.

Discussion and Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that multiple factors contribute to enhancing students' social responsibility, with genuine participation in school activities emerging as one of the most influential variables. The results of the measurement model analysis indicated that dimensions such as "encouragement of responsibility," "delegation of authority," "trust in students," "the role of the family," and "strengthening leadership personality" play fundamental roles in the formation of social responsibility. High factor loadings, strong composite reliability, and confirmed convergent and discriminant validity demonstrate that these variables accurately measure the latent construct, and the measurement model possesses high scientific quality. These findings suggest that social responsibility in schools is not merely a behavioral phenomenon but a constellation of internalized actions and values shaped within the framework of human relationships, school culture, and participatory structures.

These results are consistent with studies that emphasize the importance of teaching social responsibility through active participation. For instance, the research by Bartlett and Schugurensky found that participatory budgeting in schools enhances civic literacy and students' sense of belonging, providing a real context for practicing responsibility (8). Similarly, Afrilihadi views the school as a laboratory for exercising citizenship roles that must be reinforced through interactive and participatory structures (2). One of the most important findings of the present study is the pivotal role of the variable "delegation of authority." Students who feel they play a role in school decision-making demonstrate greater internalization of social responsibilities, a phenomenon also reported in Thelma's research, which shows that democratic and open schools offer a more suitable environment for the development of social values (10).

Furthermore, the findings indicated that the component "trust in students through task delegation" had one of the highest factor loadings. This aligns with the results of the study by Jung and Bae, which showed that supportive and trust-based relationships among peers and with teachers strengthen children's civic identity and social responsibility (22). The present study also highlights the significance of the family institution in developing this type of responsibility; the more interaction there is between the school and the family, the more likely it is that responsible values will be transmitted. This conclusion is consistent with research on the connection between formal education and informal social upbringing, including studies by Sitompul and colleagues (15).

Another significant finding of this study is the role of "strengthening leadership personality in students." Students who are responsible for decision-making and implementation processes feel empowered at an individual level and are also more influential in group settings. This corresponds to theories of transformative education, which emphasize the school's role in nurturing change agents (4, 5). It also aligns with the findings of Puspitaningrum, who emphasized that responsibility education must focus on the development of personal skills such as leadership, self-efficacy, and decision-making—especially for students with special needs who are often excluded from social processes (3).

The importance of the component "encouragement and reinforcement of responsibility" was also clearly evident in the findings. The role of encouragement as a behavioral reinforcer has long been recognized in educational psychology, and in the field of citizenship education, prior research—such as Mahilum's study—has confirmed its relevance. Continuous encouragement from teachers not only increases students' intrinsic motivation but also improves their attitudes toward responsibility (6).

Moreover, the findings indicated that discriminant validity among components was properly maintained. In other words, each construct was distinct from others. This confirms that students' social responsibility is a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be analyzed through a single factor. For example, the research by Christensen and colleagues emphasized that

combining digital, interactive, and cultural dimensions of citizenship education leads to the formation of a complex yet stable identity in adolescents (9). Similarly, Niewiadomski highlighted that citizenship education in multicultural societies requires a model responsive to cultural and linguistic differences while reinforcing a shared sense of responsibility (20).

In general, the findings of this study underscore that social responsibility in students results from a combination of educational, psychological, cultural, and structural factors. Within the framework of this research, emphasis on genuine student participation was identified as a primary strategy in citizenship education—a theme echoed in many recent studies (16, 21). The model presented in this study can serve as a conceptual map for educational policymakers, school administrators, and teachers in designing coherent and goal-oriented programs to foster social responsibility. Especially considering its focus on participation, dialogue, and trust, the results of this research can lay the groundwork for a fundamental shift toward decentralized and democratic methods of education in schools (12).

Although this study sought to present a comprehensive model of the factors influencing students' social responsibility using rigorous methodology and valid instruments, it faced certain limitations. First, the study focused solely on the statistical population of the city of Larestan, and generalizing the findings to other regions should be done with caution. Second, the use of self-report questionnaires may be subject to biases such as social desirability. Third, the research focused on students and teachers, without directly incorporating the perspectives of parents and school principals—an omission that could impact the comprehensiveness of the analysis.

To enrich the literature in this field, it is recommended that future studies employ qualitative and mixed-methods approaches to explore deeper dimensions of students' lived experiences regarding social responsibility. Additionally, examining the impact of participatory intervention programs on enhancing responsibility could improve understanding of the long-term effects of participation. Cross-cultural comparisons could also help identify behavioral similarities and differences in responsibility within various educational systems. Research on parental attitudes and their influence on informal responsibility education remains an underexplored topic that future studies could address.

The findings of this study can serve as practical guidance for curriculum designers, school administrators, and teachers. It is recommended that schools strengthen participatory mechanisms such as student councils, responsibility committees, and peer education programs to create real opportunities for practicing responsibility. Furthermore, teacher training in student empowerment, leadership development, and facilitation of participation—through workshops and in-service training—should be prioritized. Finally, a structured connection must be established between schools and families so that responsibility can emerge as a shared and continuous value within students' educational environments.

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Authors' Contributions

All authors equally contributed to this study.

Declaration of Interest

The authors of this article declared no conflict of interest.

Ethical Considerations

All ethical principles were adheried in conducting and writing this article.

Transparency of Data

In accordance with the principles of transparency and open research, we declare that all data and materials used in this study are available upon request.

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