

SOCIAL PREFERENCES IN ACHIEVING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF THE WATER RESOURCES CASE

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The relationship between responsible citizen behaviour and sustainable development is key to the long-term well-being of societies. Responsible citizen behaviour encompasses actions and attitudes that contribute positively to the community, the environment, and societal progress. When individuals act responsibly, they play a crucial role in advancing the principles and goals of sustainable development. There are several aspects of this relationship that can be highlighted:

1. **Environmental Stewardship.** Responsible citizens *exhibit environmentally conscious behaviours*, such as reducing waste, conserving resources, and adopting sustainable practices. By doing so, they contribute to preserving ecosystems, biodiversity, and natural resources, aligning with the environmental dimension of sustainable development.
2. **Social Equity and Inclusion.** Responsible citizen behaviour includes promoting social justice, inclusivity, and equal opportunities for all members of society. Supporting diversity and actively participating in efforts to reduce inequalities contribute to the social aspects of sustainable development.
3. **Community Engagement.** Responsible citizens actively engage with their communities, fostering social cohesion and resilience. Community involvement and volunteering are examples of responsible behaviour that strengthen the social fabric, a crucial element for sustainable development.
4. **Ethical Consumption.** Responsible citizens make ethical choices in their consumption patterns, supporting businesses and products that adhere to sustainable and ethical practices. This behaviour promotes economic sustainability by encouraging responsible production and consumption.
5. **Advocacy for Change.** Responsible citizens often advocate for policies and practices that align with sustainable development goals. Whether through community initiatives, grassroots movements, or political engagement, advocating for positive change at local and global levels contributes to the advancement of sustainability.
6. **Education and Awareness.** Responsible citizens actively seek and share information about sustainable practices, raising awareness about environmental, social, and economic issues. Education is a powerful tool for empowering individuals to make informed decisions that support sustainable development.
7. **Long-Term Thinking.** Responsible citizen behaviour involves considering the long-term impacts of individual actions on future generations. This forward-thinking approach aligns with the principle of intergenerational equity, a key element of sustainable development.

8. Responsible Governance. Responsible citizenship includes holding governments and institutions accountable for their decisions and policies. Citizens contribute to sustainable development by participating in democratic processes and advocating for policies prioritising environmental conservation, social well-being, and economic stability.

In short, responsible citizen behaviour and sustainable development are intertwined. Individuals who embrace responsible practices contribute to a collective effort that addresses environmental challenges, promotes social well-being, and supports economic sustainability, ultimately fostering a more sustainable and resilient society.

This paper focuses on the roots of the responsible behavior, more precisely, about the relationship between social welfare preferences and responsible behavior. This relationship is complex and interconnected, reflecting the intricate interplay between personal values, societal norms, and ethical considerations. Several key aspects highlight the relations between these two constructs:

1. Values and Ethics. Individual social welfare preferences are often rooted in personal values and ethical beliefs. Responsible behaviour is influenced by an individual's adherence to fairness, justice, and compassion. When individuals prioritise the well-being of others and the broader community, they are more likely to engage in responsible actions.
2. Social Responsibility. Individuals who prioritise social welfare often feel a sense of social responsibility.
3. Empathy and Altruism. Individuals with a strong focus on social welfare tend to exhibit higher levels of empathy and altruism. These traits contribute to responsible behaviour as individuals actively consider the impact of their actions on others and the community, fostering a sense of shared responsibility.
4. Community Engagement. Responsible behaviour manifests in active participation within the community, whether through civic involvement, community service, or collaboration with others to address shared challenges.
5. Environmental Stewardship. Individuals who value the well-being of future generations and the broader ecosystem are likely to engage in responsible environmental behaviour, such as sustainable practices and conservation efforts.
6. Cultural and Social Norms. Cultural and social norms also shape social welfare preferences. Societal expectations may reinforce responsible behaviour, and individuals adhering to these norms contribute to the collective well-being.

In sum, a symbiotic relationship exists between individual social welfare preferences and responsible behaviour. As individuals prioritise the well-being of others and the broader community, their actions contribute to a culture of responsibility, creating a positive feedback loop that reinforces both personal values and societal well-being.

Taking all this into account, this paper aims to reveal the relationship between social preferences and countries' successful achievement of sustainable development goals. This is exemplified through a detailed examination of a particular sustainable development goal (SDG 6). A quantitative assessment of these relationships will determine the main success factors in achieving sustainable development goals from the perspective of considering social preferences for well-being. An empirical approach has been developed to

assess interrelationships and social preferences' impact on sustainable development in terms of SDG 6. This approach is based on combining multivariate data analysis techniques.

Our theoretical model is based on Caraballo et al. (2023), Fehr and Schmidt (2006), Mármol et al. (2017) and Zapata et al. (2023). We also take into account several aspects of social diversity (Buitrago and Caraballo, 2022) that can affect social preferences. Moreover, we use data from several waves of the World Values Surveys. To analyse the data and the relationships, we use Explanatory Factor Analysis (EFA). This is a statistical technique used in multivariate analysis to identify underlying relationships between observed variables. Furthermore, as EFA is exploratory, we also use Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

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