

# Educational Ethics: The Role of the Democratic School in Primary Education

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** Considering that a large part of the individual and social development of individuals is done by the official institution of education; Educational ethics is very important. In this regard, the institution of education has a key role in educating democratic citizens and educating and developing human rights. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to present a model of a democratic school in the primary education system.

**Material and Methods:** This research was conducted qualitatively and thematically. The statistical population included all managers and deputies working in education and teacher training centres in the provinces of Iran, and 12 managers and deputies from the provinces of Tehran, Isfahan, Khuzestan and Hamedan were selected in a targeted and non-probable manner. Qualitative data were collected through interviews and finally analysed by Corbin and Strauss qualitative analysis model in the form of triple coding with MAXQDA software.

**Results:** The results of the study showed that the components of critical thinking, participation and cooperation, legalism, freedom, equality, mutual respect, responsibility, right to choose and decide, rationality, social ethics and culturalism as The hallmarks of democratically oriented schools have been identified.

**Conclusions:** Schools can educate democratic citizens for tomorrow's society by emphasizing educational ethics. By emphasizing human individuality and emphasizing rationality and morality, the democratic school nurtures students who have the ability to think critically and strive for freedom and equality with a proper understanding of their rights.

**Keywords:** Educational ethics, Democratic school, Education

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## INTRODUCTION

The educational institution of a country has a fundamental role in educating the citizens of that society and educating and developing human rights. Most of the individual and social development of individuals is done by the official institution of education. In fact, education through formal institutions is one of the most important and purposeful parts of human education, the effects of which can be comprehensively reflected in human life and in various dimensions; Their intellectual, social, religious, artistic and moral views were observed, discussed and examined [1].

Since educating children gives them the ability to move independently towards their goals and find a special identity in society, it is of undeniable importance to philosophers [2]. Childhood sociology has begun to shape adults' perceptions of childhood images and how

they change over time and in society. Children's views need to be taken seriously because they change from "a non-judgmental being from an adult perspective to a competent and active social participant" [3]. What we need to consider is what kind of citizenship a society wants and the consequent use of appropriate education in families, communities and social institutions such as schools [4]. If society seeks democratic citizens, the education system must focus on democracy. Emphasize and design democratic schools. Democratic schools provide an environment in which bureaucracy is taught, gender equality is promoted, multicultural curricula are promoted, participatory learning is promoted, and learning groups are activated, schools in the student listens. However, students must also learn how to live in a free society and be aware of their rights and

responsibilities. Therefore, the model of a democratic school and education should include assignments and exercises with which the principles of democracy are experienced.

Educational democracy is a manifestation of educational ethics. Democracy is a way of life morally and logically individually and socially. According to this model, each individual is required to grow morally, personality and achieve human relationships. The basis of its principles is the development of human strength and talents for social interaction and adaptation to human society. Accordingly, John Dewey sees school democracy as the explicit conscience of collective life, because some people work together and pursue a common effort and goal, and move toward effective outcomes that lead to the growth of the individual and society [5].

In the new modernist society, the development and survival of democratic education and democracy requires the training of conscious, tolerant, developed and very free-thinking people. Free and creative education cannot be achieved until human beings become moral human beings. Schools, which are themselves a small example of society, can have completely democratic laws and programs [6]. The school as an education system can accommodate all the real and natural functions of the society, provided that the planning of education, teaching methods and management models in terms of development and having a democratic atmosphere, the ability to include elements. The school can educate a democratic citizen for tomorrow's society [7]. With democracy, modern education breaks out of the constraints of time and space and expands its scope and scope in interaction with the needs of the international community. Democracy can change the origin, structure and position of education if liberate a closed system and dogmatism and transform it into an organized, efficient, open and flexible military. Researchers believe that in a democratic system, the task of education is to enable young people to become members of society and take an active part [6]. In short, democracy and education have always stood side by side and have tried to free human beings from individual and social hardships and ills. To grow freely, because there is no society of freedom without the existence of free persons, and on the other hand, there will be no freedom of the individual outside the community and outside a social complex [8]. Democratic schools are more productive for students, teachers and society. These schools are self-renewed and establish a democratic relationship with the outside world and the larger world

beyond [9]. The most important functions of democratic education are:

1) Socialization of individuals and personality development: Socialization is a process through which individuals acquire knowledge, skills, values and behavioral patterns of their society [10] if society is to enjoy balance and stability, and People should work together to achieve common goals. We should teach them to live socially and think socially. We should move the people of the society from mass thinking to citizenship.

2) Culture transmission: Through education, culture or values and attitudes, knowledge and skills are transmitted from one generation to another or from one society to another [11, 12].

3) Social solidarity and cohesion: Education provides the means of homogeneity and social cohesion by transmitting values and behavioral patterns, laws and regulations in the same way at all levels of society and through the school institution. The education system by teaching the official language is an important factor in national unity and the creation of common values and the same social concepts between different groups, subcultures and ethnic groups of society and thus is an important factor in social solidarity and cohesion [13].

Given what has been said, undoubtedly the development of any country is influenced by educational methods in the face of manpower. Manpower is the driving force of development and is considered as the cornerstone of comprehensive, symmetrical, balanced and sustainable development. Today, according to many theorists and researchers in the field of educational sciences, academic achievement and its basic components, namely motivational factors, competencies and educational mechanisms, need to explain a comprehensive and systematic model around the three axes of "home-school-society". Due to this important role of schools in educating democratic citizens, the present study was formed with the aim of presenting a model of a democratic school in the primary education system.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

This research was an applied research and according to the exploratory method. This research was conducted by qualitative method and thematic content analysis (foundation data). The statistical population included all managers and deputies working in education and teacher training centers in the provinces of Iran and 12 managers and deputies from Tehran, Isfahan, Khuzestan and Hamedan provinces according to areas with and without social and educational facilities. The country was chosen

purposefully and improbably. Qualitative data were collected through interviews. Interviews were conducted and conducted in person between (15 to 30 minutes) and

finally analyzed with the Corbin and Strauss qualitative analysis model in the form of triple coding with MAXQDA software.

**Table 1.** Key Points Are Conceptualized in the form of Abstract Concepts. Explanation and Connection between Concepts

Row	Main categories (Democratic School)	Subcategories (Democratic School)
1	Critical thinking	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The optimal level of skepticism</li> <li>2. Strong and fundamental data on the issue</li> <li>3. Logical reasons for each topic</li> <li>4. Gather all the opinions about the aspects related to an issue</li> <li>5. Different thoughts on the issue</li> <li>6. Critical education with quantitative and qualitative growth in the process of healthy reflection and skepticism and flexibility</li> <li>7. Critical training based on problem solving approach</li> </ol>
2	Cooperation and participation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Cooperation in affairs by creating mutual trust</li> <li>2. Participation and cooperation with the condition of commitment to the goal</li> <li>3. The participation of all members in drawing a common future</li> <li>4. Existence of the spirit of unity and solidarity causes participation and cooperation</li> <li>5. Significant participation, discussion and consultation for the parties</li> <li>6. Collective effort and hearing each other's voices cause synergy in participation</li> <li>7. Participation means cohesion and cultural and social interaction</li> <li>8. Critical participation with critique of social issues in a reasoned manner during the interaction</li> </ol>
3	Legitimacy	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Generality of law means legalism</li> <li>2. Learning to adhere to rules of conduct in general</li> <li>3. Deep understanding of law and desirable social norms</li> <li>4. The legalism of the model of social justice</li> <li>5. Beliefs and views of individuals in legalism</li> <li>6. Respect for the law along with the development of values and ethics in society</li> </ol>
4	Freedom	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Express thoughts and ideas freely</li> <li>2. Contemplation and synergy must be free for all members of society</li> <li>3. Equal opportunities for individuals in freedom</li> <li>4. Freedom subject to law and rationality</li> </ol>
5	Equality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All members of a community have equal opportunities</li> <li>2. Elimination of certain inequalities</li> <li>3. Equal access to information, education and security for all members of the community</li> <li>4. Regardless of gender, religion, race, etc.</li> <li>5. The principle of equality means hearing the voice of all, equality of quality of life and well-being</li> </ol>
6	Mutual respect	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Respect for human rights</li> <li>2. Respect for the privacy of individuals</li> <li>3. Respect for cultural diversity and the choices of others</li> <li>4. Respect for the privacy of individuals</li> <li>5. Respect means an inner commitment to peace, security and reconciliation</li> </ol>
7	Responsibility	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Accountability means social responsibility and cohesion</li> <li>2. A sense of responsibility towards moral commitment to others</li> <li>3. The supportive role of the responsible person</li> <li>4. Responsible person</li> <li>5. Responsibility of the responsible person</li> <li>6. Commitment of the responsible person to the assigned affairs</li> </ol>
8	Right to choose and decision-making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Participate and make informed and free decisions</li> <li>2. Evaluate and evaluate the arguments before making a decision</li> <li>3. Having the right to vote and to choose from the basic rights of all members</li> <li>4. Maximum efficiency in decision making</li> <li>5. Decision making means the right of consultation for all</li> </ol>
9	Rationality	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rationality means self-awareness</li> <li>2. A person with a characteristic of reasoning</li> <li>3. Level of awareness of all aspects</li> <li>4. Experiences from, real life</li> <li>5. Demanding and questioning the people of a society</li> <li>6. Self-governing and self-learning people</li> </ol>
10	Social ethics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The rise of human virtues in society</li> <li>2. People with moral virtues voluntarily serve the public interest</li> <li>3. Cultivating moral virtues and avoiding vices among citizens</li> <li>4. Moral people with a commitment to justice and human rights</li> <li>5. Ethics means the development of democratic values</li> <li>6. Developed morality, reform of lifestyle and commitment to the rights of others</li> </ol>
11	Acculturation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The existence of culture with the aim of forming social structures</li> <li>2. Acceptance of cultural diversity as a principle in the world of technology</li> <li>3. Making sense of culture in the path of intellectual reform</li> <li>4. Development of democratic identities, a developed form of cultural structure</li> </ol>

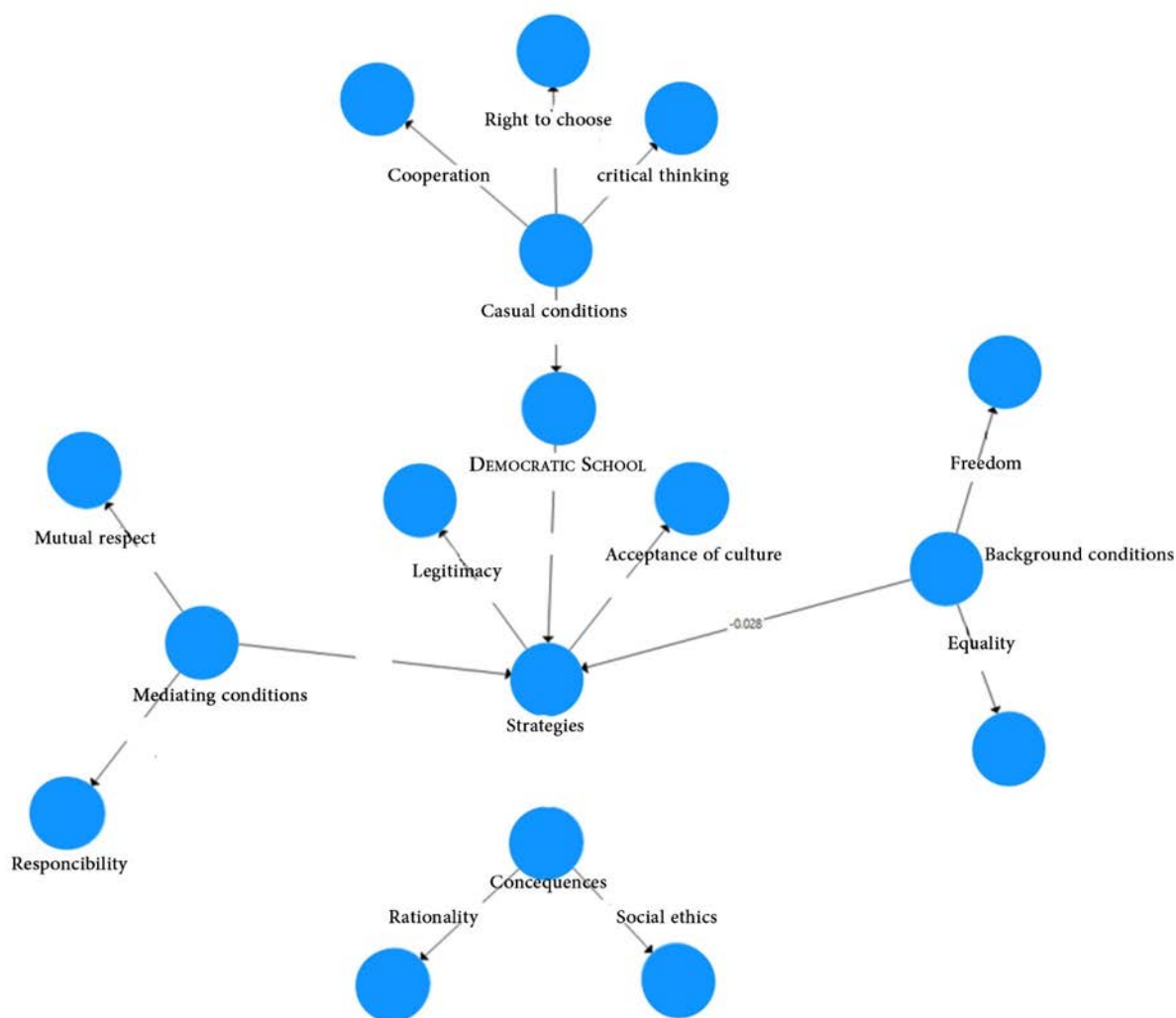


Figure 1. The Conceptual Model of a Democratic School

## RESULTS

Qualitative data were first collected through interviews and then analyzed. Among the 12 interviews conducted, a total of 100 key points were identified with marker codes. These key points are conceptualized in the form of abstract concepts. Explanation and connection between concepts, they formed them in the form of categories (Table 1). Accordingly, the following conceptual pattern was formed in the selective coding stage.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the results of the present study, the components of critical thinking, participation and cooperation, and the right to choose and decide act as causal conditions for achieving democratic schools. This result is consistent with the opinion of some researchers [14]. They believe that critical thinking is a skill that all individuals can acquire as long as educational institutions provide and

teach how to do it. In other words, the more open the atmosphere of the school and classrooms is, the more students can present their ideas on various educational issues to the members of the class and school without any fear and allow further criticism. Because, students in the open school atmosphere are encouraged to evaluate the plans and actions of school staff and identify their strengths and weaknesses and work to improve school and progress. Open-minded schools even provide opportunities for group discussion, and students develop their critical thinking skills day by day while constructively evaluating and criticizing others. Therefore, the social atmosphere of schools can be used as an important factor to develop the ability to develop and critical thinking in students. Also, according to the results of the present study, one of the important components in democratic learning is participation and cooperation. Collaborative learning at all levels of education, from preschool to post-high school, becomes

a successful educational strategy; collaborative learning groups do not segregate students by class, race, or gender. Collaborative learning is a peer-to-peer approach that enhances academic performance and establishes positive social relationships. In the participatory learning method, students acquire social skills through participation in group activities, because the group is where students learn how to listen to others. Collaborative learning allows students to argue, ask each other questions, and support each other where needed. The reason for this collaboration is that solidarity, individual responsiveness and equal interaction are included in the structure of participatory learning. In most cases, students receive immediate feedback from their peers. The teacher also has the opportunity to visit the groups at the same time as the students involved and to interact with them more, it seems that this interaction enables the students to learn more, to exchange more, to be more involved. Activities and ultimately lead to their academic progress. Collaborative learning Forming groups and learning instruction both meets the needs of students to be together and thus helps students who have difficulty understanding the curriculum. Because learning groups in the participatory learning method are obliged to ensure that all members of the group learn the material [15]. The results of the interviews showed that informed choice and the right to choose as an important element for the democratic approach to education in primary schools is necessary, which is consistent with the research of some researchers [16].

Based on the results of the present study, it was also found that patriarchal culture and legalism are considered as a strategy to achieve democratic schools, which is consistent with the results of some studies [17, 18]. Mutual respect and responsibility are also considered as mediating conditions and freedom and equality as underlying conditions. Mutual respect is one of the main variables of democratic schools. The result is consistent with the research results of some researchers [19-21]. Regarding the component of paternal responsibility, several studies support the results of the present study [22]. According to the results of the present study, freedom and equality have an important role in the formation of democratic schools, which is in line with the results of some studies in this field [23].

According to the results of the present study, one of the main consequences of the formation of democratic schools is morality and rationality, which is in line with numerous studies in this field [24, 25].

Based on the findings of the present study, in order to establish democracy in schools, it is suggested that we

involve students in various matters of the classroom and the school environment in schools as well. In general, the focus is on skills based on informed, efficient and responsible participation in society. These skills require interaction and collaboration with others. Interactions such as questioning and answering, measuring social justice and civil rights are a way to build unity and solidarity and to control conflicts in a calm and just manner. The establishment of student councils paved the way for their participation in various school affairs and demonstrated the concept of democracy in practice. With the activation of student councils in schools, students have enjoyed a participatory position in the executive affairs of schools. By participating in the elections of these councils, students become acquainted with important areas of society, especially social, cultural and political issues.

Another way is to create student organizations, which are an ideal place to learn democracy; in an educational system, the wider the level of student organizations, the more educational the system can be called democratic, and therefore the more the field of education of social people in these schools. After home, school is the best place to teach justice and law to students. In schools, one of the important goals is to create equal citizenship rights among all students. In fact, the more schools that can have students with equal rights, the more socially inclusive the democratic environment will be. Students enter the community under the guise of their rights and learn to be responsible.

Management based on participation and human relations, decentralization and school-centered in the education system, attracting practical participation and active presence of students in the decision-making process and school administration with regard to new approaches to education to create more democracy in education. School-centered or participatory school decision-making is a review of schools, especially public schools, that monopolizes decision-making power from a central area to a school to improve that school's performance. This process leads to an increase in school involvement. In its management office.

## CONCLUSION

According to the findings of this study, considering the basic role of schools and the methods that govern them, schools should be organized in such a way that students are involved in issues that they face in real life instead of storing scientific facts. What needs to be considered in today's society is careful planning and the mandatory inclusion of courses and content that promote critical

thinking among members of society. In this, education has the most important and key role. Because he has the upbringing of the next generation in his work plan. Education to nurture a critical student, we must make the most of teachers who are highly qualified in this field. And abandon traditional methods and use new ones instead. Dear teachers who are considered flagships in this field should be familiar with such methods and approaches and use them in class management and teaching various courses. In the final analysis, it can be said that the task and function of traditional education was to maintain the status quo, but because today's education has become so intertwined with different economics, politics, culture and beliefs, its nature can no longer be understood in the same way as before it was defined and limited, it was defined; Therefore, the main problem of those involved in education will be how to design and implement education efforts and activities to build a democratic and egalitarian society that will reduce or eliminate antagonism and discrimination in that society. Critical theorists believe that with a repressed and domineering human being, society cannot be led to a desirable society and they believe that new relationships should be replaced by old ones in order to

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