

## A Survey of the Factors Influencing the Quality of Social Responsibility of Adolescents From the Perspective of Role Field Theory

SU Lan<sup>[a],\*</sup>; SU Chun<sup>[b]</sup>

<sup>[a]</sup>College of Education, Jiangxi Normal University Jiangxi Nanchang, China.

<sup>[b]</sup>Nanchang Normal University Jiangxi Nanchang, China.

\*Corresponding author.

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### Abstract

The evolvement of teenagers’ social responsibility quality is a long and complicated process influenced both internally and externally by a variety of factors.

Based on the field theory, the influence of roles such as the ascriptive role, achieved role and companion role on the teenagers’ social responsibility quality was reviewed from the perspective of the role field. Presenting the compound influence variables of teenagers’ social responsibility quality in a multi-angle and three-dimensional way.

**Key words:** Field; Teenagers; Social responsibility quality; Influencing factor

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“Field” is one of the representative concepts of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu’s sociological theory, which has been regarded by Bourdieu as an important tool for his “reflexive sociology” and social investigation. Bourdieu’s Field Theory was mainly influenced by psychological field theory and physical field theory of German psychologist Lewin. However, he constructed a unique field theory more from the perspective of objective social relations among human,

that is, the spatial configuration of social relations. He regards the “field” as a concept of “double ontological complicity” between history and society, and defines “a net-work or a configuration of objective relations between various positions” with the concept of “field” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2004). The field, as a place for communication practice and social activities of modern people, is the dynamic social network of people’s life, which constitutes people’s daily life and provides a necessary place for comparison, competition, transformation and reflection. The field evolves and adjusts constantly, which continually tests the quality of social responsibility of adolescents from the objective level, and shapes the way of adolescents’ existence. Since the essence of human being is “the sum of all social relations”, Bourdieu’s field theory reflects on the relationship and reveals the secret of maintaining and creating these relationships or structures hidden in various relationships. The field can influence the formation and development of adolescents’ social responsibility quality. Therefore, the factors influencing adolescents’ social responsibility quality are analyzed based on the perspective of field theory and from role field, social field and education field, which is conducive to presenting the dynamic process of development of social responsibility quality of adolescents in more three-dimensional way.

### 1. THEORETICAL REVIEW OF THE ROLE FIELD

In the field, it is always the status of the power relation between the actors that determines the structure of a certain field. The power relation is not only a specific capital, a relative power, but also a symbol. The function that the quantity and structure of the actor’s capital evolves with time is the function of his social trajectory.

According to the role field theory, the role is determined by people's social status and identity, which is closely related to individual status and identity. Because the role field is composed of a series of objective historical relationships between individual role positions attached to a form of capital. The role is a general behavior required by a certain social identity and the basis of its intrinsic attitude and values (Compiled by of Social Psychology in 13 universities nationwide, 2008). As the smallest unit in the social system, the proper role played by the individual determines the operation of the social system to some extent. "Social role refers to the personality orientation of each person in the space-time coordinates of specific social relations" (Huang, 2000). In Sociology, many roles played by each person are called role clusters or role groups, which fully reflect people's rich social activities and complex social relations. The role, as an individual factor of social responsibility quality, plays the most fundamental role in the influencing factors of the quality of social responsibility. From the perspective of role field, this paper examines individual roles from a dynamic perspective. It analyzes the influence of different roles on adolescents' social responsibility quality, thus to analyze the power of social responsibility control and the intensity of social responsibility practice implied by the influence of different roles, as well as the difference of the influence of different roles on the consequences of social responsibility behaviors. The analysis is conducive to better understand the role differences of adolescents in social life, better establish the direction of advance and explore the significance of life existence. Undoubtedly, the quality of social responsibility is closely related to the roles of adolescents. According to their sources, these roles can be divided into ascribed roles, achieved roles and accompanied roles. Each role influences the quality of social responsibility of adolescents from different levels and angles.

## 2. INFLUENCE OF ROLE FIELD ON ADOLESCENT SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY QUALITY

The role field reveals the power relation that adolescents have because of the role difference. In other words, the specific capital they hold is bound to be different, thus affecting the development of social responsibility quality of adolescents in the field. It mainly includes the following aspects:

### 2.1 Impact of the Ascribed Roles

Ascribed roles generally refer to the role of blood relationship, such as son, brother, sister, granddaughter and other roles, which are acquired by individuals from birth. Ascribed roles also include hereditary roles, such as marquis, princess, prince, etc., which originate from

individuals' hereditary to a certain social system and social status. With regard to responsibility, the religious theological determinism points out that the responsibility is God's will with God or God's will. The viewpoint of naturalism is represented by the view of nature or natural law of ancient Greeks. They believed that as the embodiment of true human nature, we are born with certain responsibilities. The quality of social responsibility of adolescents determined by the ascribed role is more a viewpoint of identity theory, which emphasizes that the social responsibility of adolescent is innate, and that social responsibility is related to adolescents' identity. After the human society comes into being, the social division of labor has gradually emerged to promote the survival and development of human beings. According to the differences of social division of labor, people in different social systems must fulfill their social responsibilities commensurate with their roles. The existence and performance of different roles embodies different social division of labor and social responsibilities (Spiro, 1999). Therefore, the ascribed roles enable adolescents to have different identities and corresponding social responsibilities, in which the social responsibilities given to adolescents by hereditary roles has an important influence on the development of adolescents' social responsibility quality.

### 2.2 Impact of the Achieved Roles

According to the role field theory, social actors are not "particles" mechanically pushed around by external forces. On the contrary, they are the carriers of capital, and they have a tendency to act actively in the field (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2004). Therefore, adolescents will develop themselves through achieved roles in the role field. Achieved roles refer to the roles acquired by individuals through their efforts and struggles in social activities, such as doctors, teachers, engineers, managers, etc., as well as the role designated or appointed by social organs, social organizations, government departments, etc. The influence of achieved roles on the quality of social responsibility of adolescents shows that different achieved roles have different social responsibilities, and the degree of difference in social responsibility quality caused by achieved roles is also different. That's why achieved roles reflect the development and difference of social responsibility quality. The Book of Diverse Crafts, the Rites of Zhou written in the Warring States Period of China indicates that people at that time have realized the different characteristics of social responsibility formed by different roles, and put forward six occupations including the nobility, literati and officialdom, craftsman, business man, farmers and women workers and their social responsibilities. The quality of individual social responsibility determined by the ascribed roles reflects the viewpoint of identity theory, which emphasizes that the social responsibility of adolescents originates from

identity. With the collapse of feudal hierarchy and the establishment of a democratic and legal society, the relationship between people is no longer in the form of identity but in the form of contract, and accordingly the identity responsibility given by the ascribed roles is transformed into contractual responsibility. Adolescents, as an independent and free subject, assume a certain achieved role and fulfill a corresponding contractual commitment accordingly, which is the commitment to the social relations represented by the contract and the social responsibilities endowed by the contract.

### 2.3 Impact of the Accompanied Roles

Accompanied roles appear with some common social activities of people. For example, the classmate relations formed with the education activities of adolescents; The comrades-in-arms and teammates formed with the experience of adolescents joining the army; The roles such as customers, passengers, parties, etc., which are formed on specific occasions in adolescents' social life. In Sociology, according to role theory, once an individual is in a certain social status or has achieved a certain social role, the public may expect the individual to behave in a certain way, fulfill and assume corresponding social responsibilities, which is role expectation. The ascribed role is more of a reflection of the responsibility from the ascribed identity, while the achieved role the responsibility from the contract, and the accompanied role the responsibility from the adolescents' behavior. Since the social responsibility derived from behavior is determined by the free choice of adolescents, they need to take social responsibility for their behavior and its consequences. The transitional, diverse and situational characteristics of accompanied roles have complicated influence on the quality of social responsibility of adolescents.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the perspective of analysis, it is the role difference that objectively defines the individual's position, thus forming various objective relationships of individual capital or power in the role field, such as dominance, subordination and structural correspondence. The difference of roles also makes the quality of social responsibility, the basic moral quality of adolescents, reflect different moral abilities and social responsibility abilities. The ability of social responsibility can be seen from three aspects, which is the ability of adolescents to control social responsibility, the intensity of practicing social responsibility by adolescents and the commitment of adolescents to the consequences of social responsibility behavior.

**First, the ability of adolescents to control social responsibility.** The ability of adolescents to control social responsibility can be regarded as a function of individual knowledge and strength. For any society,

if some people acquire knowledge, skills or special power, their behavior will have a greater impact on society than others, so they should shoulder more social responsibilities than others. For example, scientists, doctors, news media worker, public figures and other people need to shoulder more social responsibilities than ordinary people. Influenced by adolescents' roles, different adolescents can have different abilities to control social responsibility. Adolescents should take responsibility for certain social responsibility behaviors, provided that the behaviors must be controllable for the actors. The moral evaluation of social responsibility behavior should be subject to the adolescents' ability of controlling social responsibility.

**Second, the intensity of practicing social responsibility by adolescents.** The intensity of practicing social responsibility by adolescents refers to the intensity and depth when performing social responsibility by adolescents. The most common moral requirement for adolescents is their cognition of their social responsibility behavior and necessary control of their behavior. In reality, people tend to pay attention to evaluating social subjects' irresponsible behavior, and objectively add social responsibility to social subjects. Actually, this behavior has a potential premise, which is that the social subjects should be aware of their own social responsibility and have the ability to control. However, being aware of social responsibility and having control over it does not mean that adolescents are conscientious in fulfilling their social responsibilities because there are differences in the intensity for adolescents practicing social responsibility. The factors that affect the intensity of social responsibility of adolescents at least include the following three abilities: Firstly, value capacity, that is, adolescents understand the value of the event itself and compare it with the corresponding value; Secondly, ability of professional knowledge, that is, adolescents understand the knowledge related to events and can predict the results of behaviors; Thirdly, action capability, that is, adolescents can form a pattern for behaviors under the control of their own social responsibility, which is consistent with the corresponding value needs. Among the actual social responsibility behaviors of adolescents, these three abilities will directly or indirectly affect the degree of adolescents performing their social responsibility.

**Third, the commitment of adolescents to the consequences of social responsibility behavior.** This refers to adolescents' volunteering for the social consequences caused by social responsibility behavior. If the subjective factors that affect the quality of adolescents' social responsibility are the self-conscious control over the good and evil nature of a specific social responsibility behavior and the seriousness of the behavior execution, the commitment to the consequences of their social responsibility behavior is not only subjective but also objective. Because no matter how serious the

subject is in controlling the good and evil of his own behavior and executing it, he must be responsible for the consequences of social responsibility behavior. Adolescents' commitment to the consequences of social responsibility behavior includes the ability to remedy the failure of social responsibility and the ability to reflect on social responsibility behavior. First of all, the ability to remedy the failure of social responsibility requires adolescents to be brave and dare to bear the social responsibility of failures. Secondly, they should actively find ways to remedy and recover the losses, minimize the losses caused by the failure of social responsibility, and undertake the consequences of social responsibility behaviors with a positive attitude. The ability to reflect on social responsibility refers to the summary of actions on social responsibility by adolescents, and their attitude and reflection on social responsibility behavior, which is an important symbol to measure the quality of social

responsibility of adolescents, and also an important symbol to measure their ideological and moral level.

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