Teaching personal and social responsibility: An analysis of TPSR-based behaviors in physical education

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ABSTRACT

Background: The rapid growth of online gaming among students has raised concerns regarding behavioral regulation, responsibility, and social interaction in educational contexts.

Objectives: This study aims to systematically review empirical research on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model and student behavioral outcomes, and to explore its potential implications for online gaming and digital behavior contexts.

Methods: A literature review was conducted using SAGE Journals and Taylor & Francis Online databases, selected due to their strong coverage of peer-reviewed research relevant to physical education and pedagogy. The search covered publications from 2014 to 2024 using the keywords "TPSR" AND "student" AND "behavior" AND ("online game" OR "gaming"). Inclusion criteria were: (1) peer-reviewed international journal articles, (2) empirical or review studies addressing TPSR and student behavior, (3) student populations, and (4) publication within the last ten years. Articles that did not explicitly address TPSR-based behavioral outcomes were excluded. From 43 initial records, 4 articles met the inclusion criteria and were synthesized using narrative synthesis.

Results: The included studies primarily focused on TPSR implementation in physical education contexts, emphasizing behavioral responsibility, psychosocial mechanisms, and pedagogical approaches. Of the four studies, two employed quasi-experimental designs, one used survey methods, and one adopted a literature review approach. Overall, the findings indicate that TPSR-based learning is associated with improvements in personal and social responsibility, positive behavior regulation, and supportive learning climates, although direct evidence linking TPSR to online gaming behavior remains limited.

Conclusions: The findings suggest that TPSR offers a promising pedagogical framework for fostering responsible behavior and social regulation among students in the digital era.

INTRODUCTION

Education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals holistically, encompassing moral, social, cognitive, and emotional dimensions (Nugraha, 2019). In many national contexts, including Indonesia, educational development is prioritized as a means of fostering responsible, democratic, and socially engaged citizens. However, recent educational discourse has increasingly highlighted concerns regarding students' character development and behavioral regulation, particularly amid rapid technological change and the growing prevalence of digital media in students' daily lives.

One of the most prominent manifestations of this transformation is the widespread engagement of students in online gaming. A growing body of literature suggests that intensive online game participation may be associated with behavioral challenges such as reduced self-regulation, social withdrawal, aggression, and tendencies toward problematic or addictive use (Mumtaz et al., 2021; Woods & Butler, 2025). Empirical accounts further describe how excessive gaming may disrupt daily routines, academic engagement, and social interaction among adolescents (Salakhova et al., 2019; Novianti & Garzia, 2020). These concerns are not limited to individual behavior but extend to broader educational and social implications, including bullying, deviant conduct, and diminished social responsibility (Ahsan, 2015; Zulkarnaen et al., 2025). Within this context, educators face increasing challenges in guiding students to navigate digital environments responsibly while maintaining positive social behavior.

Physical education has long been positioned as a pedagogical space for fostering holistic development, including moral values, self-control, cooperation, and social responsibility (Oktavec, 1934; Kumar, 2017). Through structured physical activity, students are expected to develop not only physical competence but also character traits essential for social coexistence and civic life. Prior studies have emphasized the role of physical education in addressing behavioral issues such as bullying and antisocial conduct by promoting respect, empathy, and self-regulation (Carbonell, 2012; Ministry of Education and Culture, 2014). Nevertheless, much of this literature has focused on traditional, face-to-face educational settings, with limited attention to how these pedagogical principles translate into digitally mediated contexts.

Among the pedagogical approaches developed to address character and behavior in physical education, the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model has received substantial scholarly attention. Grounded in the development of effort, self-regulation, respect, and care for others, TPSR emphasizes students' gradual assumption of personal and social responsibility through structured learning experiences (Hellison, 2015; Walsh & Wright, 2016). Empirical studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of TPSR in enhancing students' social interaction, responsibility, and behavioral outcomes within physical education contexts (Juliantine & Ramadhan, 2018). However, existing TPSR research has predominantly examined conventional instructional environments, with limited empirical focus on students' behavioral responsibility beyond the physical education setting itself.

Despite the growing body of research on online gaming and student behavior, existing studies have largely examined these phenomena independently, either focusing on the psychosocial effects of gaming or on pedagogical models within

traditional physical education settings (Mumtaz et al., 2021; Woods & Butler, 2025; Hellison, 2015). As a result, current scholarship provides limited integrative insight into how responsibility-based educational frameworks are discussed or applied in relation to students' behavior as online game players. Moreover, prior research is characterized by fragmented thematic emphases, varied conceptualizations of responsibility, and inconsistent methodological approaches, making it difficult to draw consolidated conclusions from the existing literature.

In response to this fragmented body of scholarship, the present study brings together research on Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR), student behavior, and online gaming contexts by synthesizing peer-reviewed international studies. Rather than examining TPSR solely as an instructional model within physical education, this review situates responsibility-based learning within digitally mediated and gaming-related environments. By doing so, the study offers a structured overview of how responsibility, behavior regulation, and social interaction are conceptualized across diverse research designs, contexts, and populations, thereby providing a clearer understanding of current research directions and limitations in this emerging field.

Accordingly, this study aims to examine research trends, thematic emphases, and methodological characteristics of TPSR-related studies that address student behavior in the context of online gaming, with particular attention to how responsibility and social behavior are framed within physical education and digital learning environments.

METHODS

Study Design and Participants

This study adopted a systematic literature review (SLR) approach to map and synthesize existing empirical research related to the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model in relation to student behavior within online gaming and digital contexts. The review followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 guidelines to ensure transparency, replicability, and methodological rigor.

Search Strategy

A systematic electronic search was conducted across SAGE Journals and Taylor & Francis Online, selected due to their strong coverage of peer-reviewed international journals in physical education, pedagogy, and social-behavioral studies. Although these databases are publisher-based rather than fully comprehensive indexing platforms, they were used to capture high-quality, discipline-specific research aligned with the scope of TPSR and physical education scholarship.

The search covered publications from 2014 to 2024 and employed Boolean logic, synonyms, and truncation to broaden retrieval. The following search string was applied: ("Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility" OR TPSR) AND (student OR pupil OR adolescent) AND ("online game" OR gaming OR "digital game"). Only articles published in peer-reviewed international journals were considered.

Eligibility Criteria

Studies were considered eligible for inclusion if they met several predefined criteria. Specifically, the review included empirical or review articles that explicitly addressed concepts related to Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) and involved student populations. Eligible studies were required to examine behavioral, social, or responsibility-related outcomes within educational or learning contexts. In addition, only articles published in English between 2014 and 2024 and appearing in accredited international peer-reviewed journals were included.

Studies were excluded if they did not explicitly engage with TPSR principles or if their primary focus was limited to online gaming without addressing behavioral, educational, or responsibility-related dimensions. Furthermore, gray literature, including theses, dissertations, conference proceedings, and other non–peer-reviewed sources, was excluded to ensure the methodological quality and academic rigor of the reviewed evidence.
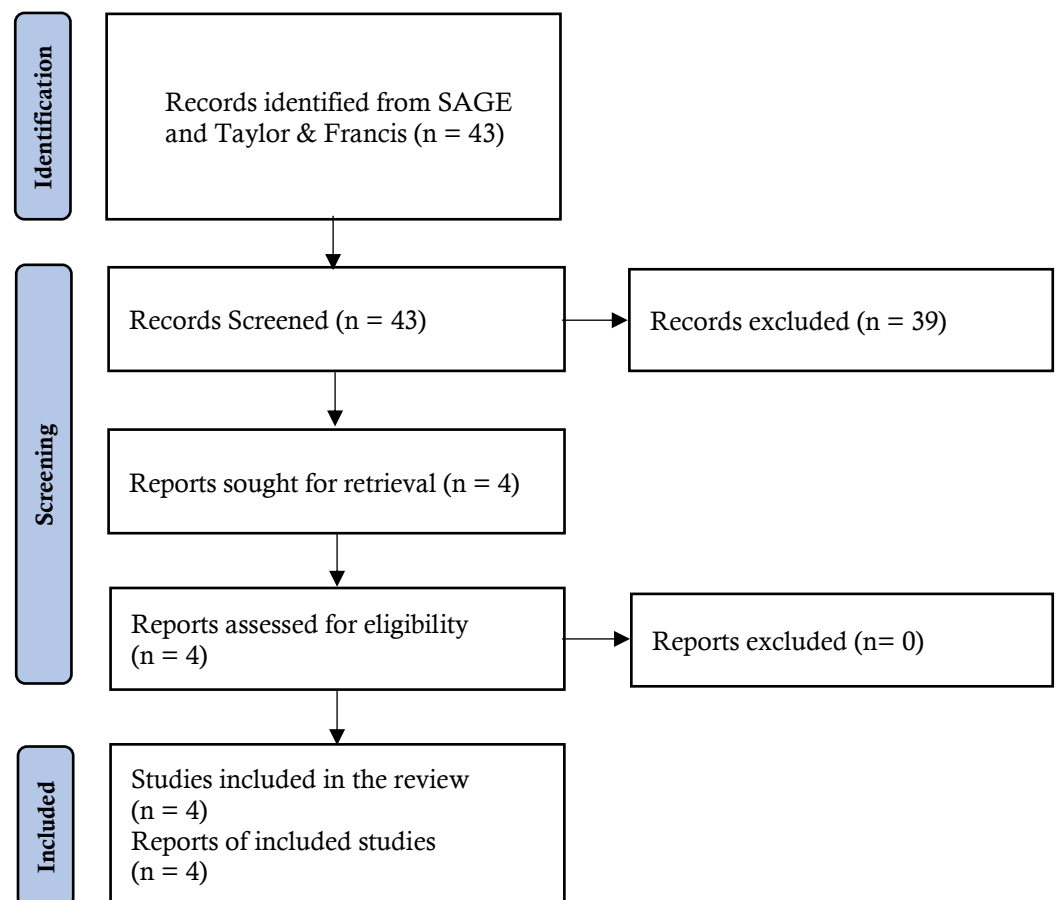

Figure 1. PRISMA diagram of literature review

The screening and selection process was conducted in accordance with the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. The initial database search yielded 43 records. Following title and abstract screening, 39 records were excluded because they did not align with the predefined keywords, scope, or inclusion criteria. Four full-text articles were subsequently retrieved and assessed for eligibility. All four articles met the inclusion criteria and were included in the final synthesis. The study selection process is summarized in the PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1). Screening and eligibility

assessment were conducted by the authors through consensus-based discussion to resolve any discrepancies.

Data Extraction

Data extraction was carried out using a structured matrix designed to systematically record key characteristics of the included study. The extracted information encompassed authorship and year of publication, research design, participant characteristics, the context in which the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model was implemented, behavioral outcomes examined, and the main findings reported. This structured approach facilitated consistent organization of the data and provided a clear foundation for subsequent synthesis and comparative analysis across the reviewed literature.

Quality Appraisal

Given the exploratory scope of the review and the inclusion of a limited number of eligible studies (n = 4), a formal risk-of-bias assessment was not applied. Instead, the methodological rigor of the included study was examined descriptively by considering study design, clarity of TPSR implementation, and the appropriateness of outcome measurement to support interpretation of the findings.

Data Synthesis

Due to the heterogeneity of study designs and the small number of eligible studies, a narrative synthesis approach was employed. The synthesis focused on identifying thematic patterns related to TPSR implementation, student behavioral outcomes, and the intersection between responsibility-based pedagogy and digital or gaming-related contexts.

RESULTS

Across the four included studies, TPSR was consistently associated with improvements in students' personal and social responsibility, behavioral engagement, and psychosocial outcomes within physical education contexts. Three studies employed experimental or quasi-experimental designs, while one adopted a narrative review approach. Although all studies demonstrated positive responsibility-related outcomes, none explicitly examined TPSR implementation in relation to online gaming or digital play behaviors. This indicates that current empirical evidence on TPSR remains largely confined to physical and school-based learning environments, highlighting a contextual gap regarding its application to digitally mediated student behaviors.

Table 1. Matrix of the Articles

Author (Year)	Study Design	Sample Size & Population	TPSR Implementation	Measurement Instruments	Outcomes Measured	Key Findings
Simonton & Shiver (2021)	Quasi-experimental (comparative)	n = 222 elementary students (Grades 2–3, USA)	TPSR-based physical education curriculum compared with traditional	Perceived Responsibility Scale; Emotion Scales (enjoyment, anger, boredom);	Personal responsibility, social responsibility, behavioral engagement,	Students exposed to the TPSR curriculum reported significantly higher enjoyment,

			multiactivity PE	Behavioral engagement measures	emotional regulation	perceived responsibility, and behavioral engagement compared with those in traditional PE. TPSR was positively associated with responsible behaviors and adaptive emotional responses; however, the study did not address digital or online gaming contexts.
Hsu et al. (2022)	Quasi-experimental	n = secondary school students (Taiwan)	TPSR integrated with moral disengagement minimization strategies in PE	Moral Disengagement Scale; Behavioral misbehavior checklist	Misbehavior reduction, moral reasoning, responsibility-related behaviors	Integrating TPSR with moral disengagement minimization strategies reduced student misbehavior and improved psychosocial mechanisms related to responsibility. The intervention focused on physical education settings and did not examine online or gaming-related behaviors.

Toivonen et al. (2019)	Experimental (program development and evaluation)	Pre-service and novice physical activity instructors (Finland)	TPSR-based instructor training program	Reflective journals; program evaluation tools; qualitative observation	Professional responsibility, instructional competence, social responsibility	TPSR training supported the development of responsibility-oriented teaching practices and enhanced instructors' capacity to foster positive social behaviors in learners. The study emphasized pedagogical preparation rather than student digital or gaming behaviors.
Baker et al. (2023)	Narrative literature review	Not applicable (review study)	Conceptual application of TPSR within social justice–oriented physical education	Conceptual synthesis of TPSR and social justice literature	Social responsibility, ethical awareness, civic engagement	The review highlighted TPSR as a flexible pedagogical model capable of promoting social justice and responsibility across diverse contexts. However, empirical evidence linking TPSR to online gaming or digital behavior regulation was not identified.

DISCUSSION

This systematic literature review found that the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model is consistently associated with positive outcomes related to students' personal responsibility, social responsibility, behavioral engagement, and psychosocial regulation within physical education contexts. Across the four included studies, TPSR-based interventions demonstrated benefits such as enhanced self-regulation, respectful social interaction, reduced misbehavior, and increased emotional engagement in learning activities. However, none of the reviewed studies explicitly examined TPSR implementation in relation to online gaming behavior or digitally mediated play. Consequently, the current evidence base positions TPSR as a robust pedagogical framework for responsibility development in school-based physical activity settings, while its potential relevance to online gaming behavior remains indirect and underexplored.

The findings of this review are largely consistent with prior TPSR literature emphasizing the model's effectiveness in fostering responsibility-oriented behaviors. For instance, Simonton & Shiver (2021) demonstrated that TPSR-based physical education curricula were associated with higher levels of perceived responsibility, enjoyment, and behavioral engagement compared with traditional multiactivity programs. Similarly, Hsu et al. (2022) reported that integrating TPSR with moral disengagement minimization strategies led to reductions in student misbehavior and improvements in psychosocial mechanisms related to responsibility. These findings align with Hellison's (2015, 2055) conceptualization of TPSR as a student-centered model that integrates affective, cognitive, and psychomotor learning domains.

In contrast, the review by Baker et al. (2023) highlighted TPSR's conceptual flexibility and relevance for social justice–oriented pedagogy, yet underscored the uneven empirical grounding of TPSR applications across diverse contexts. Meanwhile, Toivonen et al. (2019) focused on instructor training rather than direct student outcomes, indicating that the quality of TPSR implementation may depend substantially on teachers' pedagogical preparation and reflective capacity. Collectively, these studies suggest convergence regarding TPSR's role in responsibility development, while also revealing variation in study design, outcome measures, and implementation depth that complicate cross-study comparison.

Although the reviewed studies generally employed sound pedagogical frameworks, several methodological limitations warrant consideration. First, the predominance of quasi-experimental designs limits causal inference, particularly in the absence of randomized controlled trials. Second, outcome measures varied considerably across studies, ranging from self-reported responsibility scales to observational checklists and qualitative reflections, which constrained the feasibility of quantitative synthesis. Third, the absence of standardized instruments across studies raises concerns regarding measurement consistency and comparability.

Potential sources of bias also merit attention. Most studies were conducted within specific cultural and educational contexts (e.g., the United States, Taiwan, Finland), which may influence how responsibility is conceptualized, enacted, and assessed. Furthermore, publication bias cannot be ruled out, as the review was limited to articles published in English-language journals indexed within SAGE and Taylor & Francis. This restriction may have excluded relevant studies published in other databases or languages, thereby narrowing the evidentiary base.

The absence of direct investigation into online gaming behavior across the reviewed studies highlights the importance of contextual and confounding variables. Online gaming behavior is shaped by multiple interacting factors, including cultural norms, game genre (e.g., MMORPGs, competitive esports, simulation games), reward structures, and social affordances embedded within game design. Additionally, the quality and fidelity of TPSR implementation—such as teacher expertise, duration of intervention, and opportunities for student reflection—likely moderate observed outcomes.

Teacher support emerges as a particularly salient variable. As suggested by Toivonen et al. (2019), instructors' understanding of TPSR principles and their ability to model responsibility-oriented behaviors are critical to successful implementation. Without consistent pedagogical scaffolding, TPSR may yield uneven effects, especially when transferred from physical education settings to digitally mediated environments such as online gaming.

Despite the absence of direct evidence linking TPSR to online gaming behavior, the findings suggest several practical implications. For physical education teachers, TPSR offers a structured framework for cultivating self-regulation, respect, and responsible decision-making—competencies that are transferable to students' digital lives. Curriculum developers may consider embedding TPSR principles within broader character education initiatives, explicitly linking responsibility learned in physical activity contexts to responsible digital engagement.

For policymakers, the results highlight the need to support teacher professional development focused on responsibility-based pedagogies. Integrating TPSR-informed approaches into teacher education curricula may strengthen educators' capacity to address emerging behavioral challenges associated with digital media and gaming. Furthermore, educational game developers could draw on TPSR principles to design games that promote autonomy, competence, and social responsibility rather than solely competitive or reward-driven engagement.

Limitations of the study

This review has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the small number of included studies (n = 4) limits the generalizability of the findings. Second, the restriction to two major publishers introduces the possibility of publication and language bias. Third, the heterogeneity of study designs, populations, and outcome measures precluded meta-analysis. Finally, the absence of studies explicitly examining TPSR in online gaming contexts constrains the strength of conclusions regarding its applicability to digital behavior.

Future research should prioritize empirical studies that directly examine TPSR-based interventions in relation to online gaming behavior. Randomized controlled trials with clearly defined TPSR implementation protocols are needed to establish causal links. Researchers are encouraged to employ validated outcome measures of responsibility, self-regulation, and digital behavior, as well as to incorporate long-term follow-up assessments (e.g., 6–12 months) to examine sustainability of effects. Cross-cultural studies would further enhance understanding of TPSR's applicability across diverse educational and gaming contexts.

CONCLUSIONS

This systematic literature review examined the empirical evidence on the Teaching Personal and Social Responsibility (TPSR) model in relation to student behavior and responsibility development, with particular attention to its potential relevance in digitally mediated contexts. The review found that TPSR-based interventions consistently promote personal responsibility, social responsibility, behavioral regulation, and positive psychosocial outcomes within physical education settings. However, none of the included studies explicitly investigated TPSR implementation in relation to online gaming or digital play behaviors, indicating that existing evidence remains largely confined to school-based physical activity environments.

Despite this limitation, the findings suggest that the core principles of TPSR—autonomy, effort, respect, and care for others—align closely with the psychological and social competencies required to navigate digital and gaming environments responsibly. Therefore, TPSR holds promise as a transferable pedagogical framework for fostering self-regulation and responsible decision-making beyond physical education, including students' engagement with online games. For educational practice, integrating TPSR principles into teacher education programs and character-based curricula may strengthen students' capacity to balance the benefits and risks of digital gaming.

Future research should move beyond conceptual alignment and empirically test TPSR-informed interventions in digital and online gaming contexts using rigorous designs, validated outcome measures, and longitudinal follow-up. Such efforts are necessary to establish evidence-based strategies that support healthy, responsible, and developmentally meaningful student behavior in an increasingly digital learning landscape.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors hereby declare that this research is free from any conflict of interest with any party.

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