

THE ROLE OF YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP IN ENHANCING THE SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF YOUTH PIONEERS IN INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of youth participation and youth leadership on the social contributions of Pemuda Pelopor (Pioneering Youth) in Indonesia. The research employed a quantitative approach with a causal associative design. The study population consisted of Pemuda Pelopor registered in the 2023 program of the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Kemenpora), with a sample of 120 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using a Likert-scale questionnaire and analyzed with SPSS version 26, including validity and reliability tests, multiple linear regression, as well as F-test and t-test analyses. The results revealed that: (1) youth participation has a positive and significant effect on social contribution; (2) youth leadership has a positive and significant effect on social contribution; and (3) youth participation and youth leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on the social contribution of Pemuda Pelopor. These findings reinforce Social Participation Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory, emphasizing that active involvement and visionary leadership play crucial roles in fostering awareness and collective social action among youth. The study's outcomes are expected to serve as a reference for developing youth empowerment policies and programs that are more participatory, collaborative, and sustainable in Indonesia.

INTRODUCTION

Youth represent a strategic national asset with tremendous potential to drive social,

economic, and cultural transformation within society. In the context of national development, the role of youth extends beyond being mere successors of the nation; they are also *social change agents* capable of fostering innovation, solidarity, and a spirit of mutual cooperation amid the dynamics of globalization. The Government of Indonesia, through the Ministry of Youth and Sports (Kemenpora, 2023), emphasizes the significance of *Youth Pioneers* young individuals who make tangible contributions in the fields of education, socio-culture, environment, entrepreneurship, and appropriate technology. This program reflects the government's commitment to cultivating a young generation with strong social awareness, visionary leadership, and concrete actions for community advancement.

Within this context, youth social contribution serves as a crucial indicator to assess the extent to which young people's roles and participation generate a positive impact on their social environment. Social contribution reflects active involvement in activities that provide societal benefits, either directly or indirectly (Schwartz, 2010). Youth with a high level of social contribution typically demonstrate altruistic values, social empathy, and a strong sense of responsibility for community sustainability. In the context of *Youth Pioneers*, social contribution is not only measured by participation in community service but also by the ability to create innovation and sustain social initiatives that bring positive change at the community level (Saud, 2020).

One key factor influencing social contribution is youth participation. According to Arnstein (1969), participation is a process of active engagement in decision-making and actions that affect one's own life. In the youth context, participation encompasses involvement in social organizations, community activities, and public spaces that nurture a sense of belonging and social responsibility (Checkoway & Aldana, 2013). Research by Indriawati and Rochmaniah (2022) further reveals that the degree of youth participation is positively correlated with their ability to contribute to social development at the village and community levels. Therefore, the higher the level of youth participation, the greater the potential for sustainable social contributions to emerge.

In addition to participation, youth leadership plays an equally essential role. According to Northouse (2021), leadership is the process of influencing a group to achieve common goals. In the youth context, leadership does not always refer to formal positions, but rather the ability to inspire, mobilize, and guide peers to collectively contribute to society. Visionary and socially oriented young leaders are capable of creating a collaborative atmosphere that fosters joint social action. This aligns with the concept of *transformational youth leadership*, which emphasizes idealism, inspiration, and the enhancement of community social capacity (Komives et al., 2005).

Youth participation and leadership are believed to be strongly interrelated in strengthening social contribution. Participation enables young people to directly engage with social realities, while leadership provides direction, motivation, and role modeling necessary to achieve meaningful social change. Through the synergy of both, *Youth Pioneers* can become catalysts for sustainable social transformation in Indonesia.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of youth participation and leadership on the social contribution of *Youth Pioneers* in Indonesia. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions to the development of youth and social sciences and offer practical recommendations for youth development institutions and

policymakers in designing more effective and contextually relevant programs to enhance youth participation and leadership.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Youth Social Contribution

Youth social contribution refers to the extent to which young people make tangible and meaningful contributions to society through social activities, community innovation, and active participation in sustainable development initiatives. Socially contributive youth are not merely recipients of development policies but serve as *agents of change* who create new social value and strengthen community resilience.

According to Nugroho (2024), forms of youth social contribution in the digital era are increasingly reflected in online social movements (*digital activism*), which function as participatory channels for young people to voice public concerns and reinforce social solidarity within their communities. Meanwhile, Susilo, Lestari, and Boriboon (2022) emphasize that youth social contribution has a direct impact on achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the village level, particularly in community empowerment and sustainable development. Thus, youth social contribution can be understood as an *outcome* of social processes driven by active participation and effective leadership within their social environment.

Youth Participation

Youth participation is the process of active involvement in social, political, and economic activities aimed at improving community well-being. Based on participatory social theory, participation is not limited to mere attendance or membership; rather, it involves meaningful contributions through ideas, energy, and social actions that create real impact (Arnstein, 1969; as cited in Nugroho, 2024).

A study by Ilmar et al. (2024) in Indramayu revealed that youth participation in village development has a significant effect on local socio-economic progress. Similarly, Azis (2025) found that youth participation levels tend to increase when individuals possess strong personal motivation and a high sense of social responsibility toward their communities.

As youth participation increases, their opportunities to engage in social action and community innovation also expand. Therefore, it can be assumed that youth participation has a positive influence on social contribution. Accordingly, the first hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H1: Youth participation has a positive effect on youth social contribution.

Youth Leadership

Youth leadership refers to the ability of young individuals to guide, motivate, and inspire their peers toward achieving shared social goals. Within the framework of transformational leadership theory (Bass, 1985), visionary young leaders can foster collective enthusiasm, provide moral examples, and encourage positive societal change.

Romadhona and Mursyidah (2024) found that transformational leadership within

social organizations such as *Muhammadiyah* enhances community solidarity and strengthens members' social capacity. Similarly, Susilo et al. (2022) assert that leadership in youth organizations plays a vital role in integrating sustainable development values into community-based activities at the village level.

Effective leadership provides direction, creates a sense of belonging, and inspires sustained social engagement. Therefore, youth leadership is believed to have a significant effect on social contribution. Hence, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H2: Youth leadership has a positive effect on youth social contribution.

The Joint Relationship Between Participation and Leadership on Social Contribution

Youth participation and leadership are two interdependent elements that mutually reinforce each other. Participation offers opportunities for active engagement, while leadership provides direction and inspiration for collective social movements. When these two elements coexist, their combined impact on social contribution becomes more substantial and purposeful.

According to Susilo et al. (2022), the synergy between active participation and visionary leadership is a key factor in the success of youth-driven community development programs. Likewise, Nugroho (2024) explains that social movements led by inspiring young leaders exert greater influence in creating sustainable social change.

Based on this reasoning, the simultaneous relationship between youth participation and leadership is expected to significantly influence the social contribution of *Youth Pioneers* in Indonesia. Therefore, the third hypothesis is proposed as follows:

H3: Youth participation and leadership jointly have a positive effect on the social contribution of Youth Pioneers in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design and Type

This study employed a quantitative approach with an associative method, aiming to examine the influence of independent variables youth participation (X_1) and youth leadership (X_2) on the dependent variable, namely youth social contribution (Y). The quantitative approach was chosen because it enables the researcher to objectively measure the relationships among variables using numerical data and statistical analysis. The associative method was applied to determine the extent of relationships and influences between independent and dependent variables, both partially and simultaneously. Data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26.0.

Types and Sources of Data

This study used primary data obtained directly from respondents through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form, and secondary data collected from documents, reports, and relevant literature concerning *Youth Pioneer* programs, social participation, and youth leadership.

Data Collection Technique

The main research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The questionnaire consisted of three main sections, each representing one research variable, as follows:

- Youth Participation (X_1) adapted from Checkoway & Aldana (2013) and Ilmar et al. (2024), including indicators:
 1. Involvement in social activities,
 2. Participation in community decision-making,
 3. Sense of social responsibility,
 4. Activeness in community organizations.
- Youth Leadership (X_2) adapted from Komives et al. (2005) and Romadhona & Mursyidah (2024), including indicators:
 1. Ability to motivate peers,
 2. Integrity and moral example,
 3. Communication and coordination skills,
 4. Influence on social change.
- Youth Social Contribution (Y) adapted from Schwartz (2010) and Nugroho (2024), including indicators:
 1. Initiative in social activities,
 2. Concern for community issues,
 3. Social innovation,
 4. Sustainability of social actions.

Validity and Reliability Testing

Before the main analysis, the questionnaire was tested for validity and reliability to ensure the accuracy and consistency of measurement instruments.

- Validity Test was conducted using the Pearson Product-Moment correlation, where items with $r\text{-calculated} > r\text{-table}$ ($\alpha = 0.05$) were considered valid.
- Reliability Test was performed using Cronbach's Alpha, with a coefficient value of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ indicating satisfactory internal consistency (Hair et al., 2019).

Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26.0, following these stages:

1. Descriptive Statistical Analysis
Used to describe respondents' characteristics and the distribution of responses for each variable.
2. Classical Assumption Tests
Conducted to ensure that the regression model meets the BLUE (Best Linear Unbiased Estimator) criteria, including tests for normality, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity.
3. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis
Employed to determine the influence of youth participation (X_1) and youth leadership (X_2) on youth social contribution (Y), both partially and

simultaneously. The regression equation model is formulated as follows:

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \varepsilon$$

Y = Youth Social Contribution

X₁ = Youth Participation

X₂ = Youth Leadership

α = Constant

β₁, β₂ = Regression Coefficients

ε = Error Term

4. Partial Test (t-test)
Used to examine the individual effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable.
5. Simultaneous Test (F-test)
Used to test the combined influence of youth participation and leadership on social contribution.
6. Coefficient of Determination (R²)
Used to measure how much variation in youth social contribution can be explained by youth participation and leadership variables.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Findings

General Description of Respondents

This study involved 120 respondents, consisting of *Youth Pioneers (Pemuda Pelopor)* from various provinces across Indonesia. Based on the demographic data:

- 58% were male and 42% were female.
- The respondents' ages ranged from 19 to 29 years, with the majority between 23 and 25 years old (46%).
- Most respondents (62%) were actively engaged in social organizations or environmental communities, while 38% were involved in social entrepreneurship, education, and cultural activities.

These findings indicate that Indonesia's Youth Pioneers represent a diverse spectrum of social contribution fields, with broad backgrounds of community-based activities. This diversity reflects a strong spirit of participation and leadership among the nation's young change agents.

Hypothesis Testing

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the hypotheses regarding the partial influence of participation and leadership roles of the National Youth Pioneers on their social contributions in Indonesia. The results of the multiple linear regression model are presented in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Results of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.756	2.107		1.308	.195
	X1	.382	.164	.314	2.325	.023
	X2	.453	.151	.406	3.001	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Kontribusi Sosial

Source: processed data, 2025

Based on Table 1, the multiple linear regression equation in this study is formulated as follows:

$$Y = 2.756 + 0.382X_1 + 0.453X_2$$

where:

- **Y** = Social Contribution of Youth Pioneers
- **X₁** = Participation Role
- **X₂** = Leadership Role

1. Constant (a = 2.756)

The regression constant of 2.756 indicates that when the variables of participation and leadership are assumed to be zero, the social contribution of Youth Pioneers in Indonesia remains at a baseline value of 2.756. This means that even in the absence of these two factors, there is still a minimal inherent level of youth social contribution.

2. Regression Coefficient of X₁ (Participation = 0.382)

The positive coefficient value of 0.382 demonstrates that the participation role has a direct and positive influence on the social contribution of Youth Pioneers. This finding suggests that higher levels of youth engagement and involvement in community activities significantly enhance their contribution to social initiatives across Indonesia.

3. Regression Coefficient of X₂ (Leadership = 0.453)

The leadership role variable has a positive coefficient of 0.453, implying that effective youth leadership is positively associated with increased levels of social contribution. This means that as Youth Pioneers demonstrate stronger leadership qualities such as initiative, responsibility, and influence their capacity to contribute to social development also increases.

Coefficient of Determination (R²)

The coefficient of determination (R²) represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable (social contribution) that can be explained by the independent variables (participation and leadership of Youth Pioneers). The R² value can be observed in Table 2 below:

Tabel 2. Coefficient of Determination (R²)

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.681 ^a	.464	.450	2.57481
a. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1				
b. Dependent Variable: Kontribusi Sosial				

Source: processed data, 2025

Based on Table 2, the adjusted R Square value is 0.450, indicating that the combined effect of participation and leadership among National Youth Pioneers can explain 45% of the variation in the social contribution variable. This means that youth participation and leadership play a substantial role in shaping social contribution behaviors. Meanwhile, the remaining 55% of the variance is influenced by other factors not examined in this study, such as transparency, accountability, or other contextual and environmental variables that may also affect youth social engagement.

Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

The F-test was conducted to determine the overall significance of the independent variables participation and leadership in influencing the social contribution of National Youth Pioneers in Indonesia. The results of the F-test, which assess whether both variables collectively have a statistically significant impact on the dependent variable, are presented in Table 3 below:

Tabel 3. Simultaneous Test (F-Test)

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	435.742	2	217.871	32.863	.000 ^b
	Residual	503.853	76	6.630		
	Total	939.595	78			
a. Dependent Variable: kontribusi sosial						
b. Predictors: (Constant), X2, X1						

Source: processed data, 2025

Based on Table 3, the results show that the calculated F-value ($F_h = 32.863$) is greater than the critical F-table value ($F_t = 3.07$) at a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, with numerator degrees of freedom ($df_1 = 2$) and denominator degrees of freedom ($df_2 = 76$). Furthermore, the significance value ($p = 0.000$) is less than $\alpha = 0.05$, indicating that the test statistic falls within the rejection region of the null hypothesis (H_0). Therefore, H_1 is accepted, meaning that the independent variables youth participation and youth leadership jointly have a positive and significant influence on the social contribution of National Youth Pioneers in Indonesia.

This finding reinforces the notion that the synergy between active participation and effective leadership plays a critical role in driving meaningful social change and youth-led community initiatives across the nation.

Partial Test / t-Test

The partial test (t-test) is used to examine the effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable by employing the t-statistic and a significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of the partial hypothesis testing are presented in Table 4.

Tabel 4. Partial Test / t-Test

Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.756	2.107		1.308	.195
X1	.382	.164	.314	2.325	.023
X2	.453	.151	.406	3.001	.004

a. Dependent Variable: Kontribusi Sosial

Source: processed data, 2025

Based on Table 4, the results of the partial test are as follows:

1. The calculated t value for the youth participation variable is 2.325, which is greater than the t table value (1.65), or the t -significance value for youth participation (0.023) is smaller than alpha (0.05). Based on these results, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted for the participation variable. Thus, partially, youth participation has a positive and significant effect on enhancing social contribution. This indicates that youth participation has a tangible impact on improving social contribution.
2. The calculated t value for the National Pioneer Youth Leadership variable is 3.001, which is greater than the t -table value (1.65), or the t -significance value for National Pioneer Youth Leadership (0.004) is smaller than alpha (0.05). Based on these results, H_0 is rejected and H_1 is accepted for the National Pioneer Youth Leadership variable. Therefore, partially, National Pioneer Youth Leadership has a positive and significant effect on increasing social contribution. This implies that the presence of strong leadership among National Pioneer Youth has a real and measurable impact on enhancing social contribution.

The Influence of Participation and Leadership Roles of National Pioneer Youth on Enhancing Social Contribution

The results of this study show that participation and leadership roles of National Pioneer Youth simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on improving social contribution. This finding indicates that social contribution does not emerge solely from participation, but from the synergy between active participation and effective leadership. This aligns with the findings of Susilo et al. (2022), who revealed that collaboration between actively participating youth and inspiring community leaders can strengthen the social capacity of rural communities and accelerate the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

This finding emphasizes that in the context of Indonesia's Pioneer Youth, participation provides social mobility and engagement, while leadership provides direction and moral values for social action. Together, they form a collective force that determines the sustainability of youth social contribution.

The Influence of Participation Role on Enhancing the Social Contribution of Pioneer Youth

The partial test results indicate that the participation role has a positive and significant influence on enhancing social contribution. The participation of National Pioneer Youth refers to their involvement in various social, economic, and political activities. It is not merely about exercising voting rights in elections but also about engaging in decision-making processes at the levels of organizations, communities, institutions, and government.

This finding reinforces the social participation theory of Arnstein (1969), which emphasizes the importance of active individual involvement in social processes as the foundation for community development. It is also consistent with Ilmar et al. (2024), who found that youth participation in decision-making and social activities contributes directly to community well-being. Youth who actively participate demonstrate higher social awareness, a stronger sense of belonging to their environment, and the ability to initiate social activities independently.

The Influence of National Pioneer Youth Leadership on Enhancing Social Contribution in Indonesia

The partial test results also show that National Pioneer Youth Leadership has a positive and significant influence on improving social contribution. This supports the transformational leadership theory proposed by Bass (1985), which states that visionary and inspirational leaders can foster collective awareness to drive social change. Romadhona & Mursyidah (2024) further assert that young leaders who demonstrate exemplary behavior and effective communication are capable of strengthening social solidarity and mobilizing community participation.

In the context of the Pioneer Youth program, leadership is not only oriented toward individual achievement but also toward the ability to mobilize the social potential of groups for the benefit of the wider society. In other words, the stronger the leadership qualities possessed by youth, the greater their potential to generate meaningful social contributions within their communities.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzed the influence of youth participation and youth leadership on the social contribution of pioneer youths in Indonesia. Based on the analysis using SPSS version 26, several important findings were obtained:

1. Youth participation has a positive and significant effect on social contribution. This result indicates that the active involvement of young people in social activities and public decision-making strengthens social solidarity and a sense of responsibility toward their communities. This finding aligns with Hidayat and

Wibowo (2022), who found that social participation fosters prosocial behavior and collective awareness among the younger generation.

2. Youth leadership has a positive and significant effect on social contribution. This means that the higher a young person's leadership ability to guide, inspire, and mobilize others, the greater the social impact generated. This finding supports transformational leadership theory (Bass & Riggio, 2006) and is consistent with Raharjo and Lestari (2023), who emphasized that value- and vision-based leadership enhances community participation.
3. Youth participation and leadership simultaneously have a significant effect on social contribution.

Both factors interact synergistically, creating social dynamics that strengthen solidarity and collective action among pioneer youths. This finding supports Checkoway's (2018) concept of *collaborative social action*, which posits that the synergy between participation and leadership is central to community-based development.

Overall, this study affirms that the social contribution of Indonesia's pioneer youths is shaped not only by how frequently they engage in social activities but also by the quality of leadership they demonstrate. Youths who actively participate and lead with transformative values can become drivers of sustainable social change (Putnam, 2000; Yukl, 2013).

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