



Shared Public Governance and Civic Competence Education: From Communicative Rationality to Co-Creative Power

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Article DOI: 10.55677/SSHRB/2026-3050-0820

DOI URL: <https://doi.org/10.55677/SSHRB/2026-3050-0820>

KEYWORDS: shared public governance, communicative rationality, civic competence, political participation rights, civic education.

ABSTRACT: The expansion of public institutions, digital media, and governance techniques is occurring alongside a persistent gap between legal rights and citizens' capacity for substantive participation. This article aims to establish the theoretical foundations of shared public governance and clarify the role of education in the transformation from the right to political participation into a lived capability. The study adopts a human-sciences methodology and combines analytical, synthetic, deductive, inductive, logical, historical, critical, and structuralizing procedures. Its research materials include theoretical conceptions of participatory governance, collaborative governance, communicative rationality, civic education, participation rights, educational curricula, and school governance. The findings establish communicative rationality, the public sphere, citizenship, and co-creative power as constitutive elements of shared public governance; identify the crisis of rationality and the erosion of agency as major constraints on substantive participation; position the school as a public sphere for forming civic competence; and develop a mechanism for institutionalizing participation rights through curricula, educators, school practices, family, community, and assessment. The article concludes that shared public governance ultimately depends on the capacity to transform legally recognized rights into autonomous, reasoned, and accountable action, thereby enabling citizens to participate meaningfully in shaping the shared conditions of collective life in contemporary public life.

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Published: August 26, 2026

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INTRODUCTION

Contemporary political life is confronting an increasingly evident paradox: public institutions are expanding in scale and governance techniques, while citizens' capacity for substantive participation has not developed commensurately. The gap between rights recognized by law and the ability to exercise those rights in lived experience diminishes the meaning of citizenship and allows power to operate at a distance from the experience of those affected by it. The expansion of digital media, big data, and information-steering mechanisms continues to widen access to knowledge, but it also creates risks of oversimplifying problems, manipulating emotions, and replacing reasoned deliberation with immediate reactions (Lorenz-Spreen et al., 2023). The crisis of rationality is no longer confined to a lack of knowledge; its center of gravity has shifted toward the declining capacity to verify information, reflect critically on power, interpret conflict, and take responsibility for one's own judgments (Germano et al., 2026). When participation rights exist primarily as legal norms, while dialogue, critical engagement, and accountability lack conditions for practical exercise, shared public governance can easily be reduced to a technical operation rather than a process of co-creating common life. Education therefore becomes a decisive institutional field for transforming legal rights into lived capabilities, because schools directly shape how people use knowledge, engage with difference, and participate in collective decisions. Restoring civic agency becomes an urgent requirement.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Governance research has primarily focused on the legitimacy of public decisions, the effectiveness of coordination among actors, consultation mechanisms, and the expansion of accountability. Research on collaborative governance further develops questions concerning relationships among public authorities, communities, social organizations, and interest groups in policy formulation, implementation, and oversight (Saguin & Bali, 2026). Numerous studies have established participation as an important condition for reducing the distance between institutions and citizens, yet most still approach participation from the perspective of institutional design, administrative procedures, or policy effectiveness.

Another line of research focuses on civic education, political competence, and learners' participation rights. Studies in this area examine legal knowledge, critical thinking, dialogical competence, social responsibility, and participatory experience as components of citizenship (Bubikova-Moan et al., 2026). Schools are increasingly viewed as environments in which participatory competence is formed through discussion, cooperation, conflict resolution, and experience in collective decision-making (Figueroa, 2026). The limitation of this line of research lies in its tendency to separate civic education from the operational structure of public power, with the result that competence formation is not directly connected to the capacity for substantive participation in governance.

The research gap emerges at the intersection of these two domains. Governance research often assumes that citizens already possess the competence to participate, whereas educational research frequently stops at the formation of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Thus, "sustainability education must extend beyond the transmission of knowledge toward processes of becoming and acting" (Sejdiu & Ramadani, 2026, p. 13). The mechanism through which legal rights become civic competence, civic competence becomes participatory action, and participatory action becomes the capacity to influence public power still lacks a unified explanatory structure.

This article addresses that gap by establishing the intersubjective foundation of shared public governance; analyzing the crisis of rationality and the erosion of agency; positioning the school as a public sphere for the formation of civic competence; and developing a mechanism for institutionalizing political participation rights through curriculum, educators, school practices, family, community, and assessment systems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The article adopts a human-sciences methodology as its foundation, taking concrete human beings as the point of departure, the referential object, and the evaluative standard for relationships among power, education, and civic competence. Realist humanism, critical inquiry, interdisciplinarity, and the dialectical principle of transformation are integrated into the analysis to identify relationships between subjects and institutions, rights and the capacity to exercise them, knowledge and action, freedom and responsibility, and means and ends. Analytical, synthetic, deductive, inductive, logical, historical, critical, and structuralizing procedures are combined according to the function of each analytical task. Analysis is used to identify conceptual structures and operating mechanisms; synthesis reconstructs the relationships among shared public governance, communicative rationality, citizenship, and education; critique examines assumptions, institutional limits, and the possibility that power may reverse the proper relation between means and ends; and structuralization supports the construction of a model linking civic competence with political participation rights. The study draws on theoretical conceptions of participatory governance, collaborative governance, communicative rationality, civic education, participation rights, curriculum, and school governance. The discussion uses these materials to examine how legal rights can be transformed into civic competence, civic competence into participatory action, and participatory action into co-creative power.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Intersubjective Foundations of Shared Public Governance: Communicative Rationality, Citizenship, and Co-Creative Power

Shared public governance is conceptualized as a model for organizing public power on the basis of meaningful participation by those affected by collective decisions. The concept encompasses the identification of problems, formulation of options, justification of decisions, monitoring of implementation, and assignment of responsibility (Bengtson & Nielsen, 2026). The theoretical structure of the model goes beyond the objective of improving administrative efficiency because its evaluative criterion is directed toward the position of human beings within power relations. Power is legitimate when those affected are able to understand the grounds of decisions, articulate their interests, challenge inadequate reasons, and participate in shaping the conditions that affect common life. In this sense, power becomes a lived possibility when it is transformed into the subject's capacities for understanding, choosing, participating, and assuming responsibility.

Communicative rationality occupies a foundational position in this structure. It refers to the capacity to test the reasonableness of statements, claims, and norms through the exchange of reasons among subjects entitled to participate. Rationality, in this sense, is neither a self-contained attribute of the individual nor synonymous with the capacity to calculate efficiency. Its epistemic value is tested through the ability to provide grounds, receive objections, revise judgments, and acknowledge the limits of an argument (Abdollahi & Esmkhani, 2026). Communicative relations create an environment in which individual knowledge encounters different

experiences, thereby exposing unexamined assumptions, concealed interests, or unforeseen consequences. Mutual recognition among subjects becomes a condition for rationality to operate as a capacity for co-creating common life.

The public sphere provides the social structure within which communicative rationality can operate. It is understood as a field of interaction in which matters concerning the common interest are articulated, debated, tested, and translated into claims upon public decision-making. The extension of the concept is not limited to formal institutions of authority; it also includes forms of social communication capable of bringing lived experience into decision-making processes. The value of the public sphere depends more on the quality of participation than on the number of participants present. This approach requires examining "community engagement in a holistic way" (See et al., 2026, p. 58). A procedure that merely receives opinions but lacks meaningful feedback, accountability, or influence does not yet constitute a power-sharing relationship. The public sphere acquires political significance when difference becomes an object of reasoned debate and disagreement becomes a source of information for testing the limits of norms and informing decisions.

From this intersubjective foundation, citizenship must be distinguished from purely legal status. Legal status establishes a set of rights and obligations recognized by normative rules. Citizenship in a practical sense denotes the capacity to exercise rights, interpret interests, anticipate consequences, reflect on choices, and participate in constructing the common order. Rights that have not been transformed into a capacity for action remain primarily legal capacities. This distinction can also be understood through the shift "from the law in the books to the law in action" (Hertogh, 2024, p. 47). Citizenship becomes concrete when individuals are able to turn rights into voice, voice into reasons capable of being considered, and reasons into factors that enter the decision-making process. The transformation from formal rights to participatory competence clarifies the position of citizens as active subjects within shared public governance.

Participation, within the theoretical structure established above, is not an ancillary activity of the administrative apparatus. It constitutes a mode through which power is formed, limited, and controlled. Participation includes access to Information, articulation of needs, provision of reasons, contestation of alternatives, monitoring of implementation, and demands for accountability. The degree of power sharing depends on the capacity of participants to influence these stages. A mechanism that merely receives opinions while retaining exclusive authority to define problems, select criteria, and determine outcomes therefore preserves a substantial asymmetry between administrators and those affected. Shared public governance requires relationships in which decision-making authority is coupled with the duty to account for decisions, while participation rights are coupled with responsibility for the consequences of collective choices (Eyal & Fu, 2025).

The relationship between the state and citizens is likewise repositioned according to a functional principle. The state retains the capacity to organize public power, secure the legal framework, maintain conditions of access, and protect equal opportunities for participation. This organizing function does not confer institutional ownership over citizens' political life. Nor should citizens be reduced to recipients of public services or objects of compliance. The two sides enter a relationship structured by different forms of authority, yet both remain bound by the requirement of accountability to common life. Institutional power is a means; human security, freedom, development, and self-determination are the ends. The relation between means and ends is inverted when procedures, bureaucratic machinery, or efficiency are protected by narrowing the voice of those who bear the consequences.

On the basis of this relationship, co-creative power can be understood as a form of power generated through the coordination of institutional capacity and citizens' participatory capacity in the formation of collective decisions. The concept does not imply the elimination of functional differences between public authorities and citizens, nor does it assume that all subjects possess equal decision-making authority in every matter. Its core lies in allocating capacities to influence, challenge, monitor, and demand accountability in ways appropriate to each subject's position. Accordingly, co-creative power depends on institutional arrangements that distribute meaningful influence while preserving reciprocal accountability (Eyal & Fu, 2025). Power ceases to be shared when one side monopolizes problem definition, monopolizes legitimate language, or exempts itself from accountability. Power becomes co-creative when public decisions are formed through a structure that allows social experience to contribute to determining their grounds and evaluating their consequences.

At the theoretical level, the model of shared public governance represents a shift from understanding power as a capacity to dominate toward understanding power as a relationship that organizes the capacity for common action. Communicative rationality provides the principle for testing reasons; the public sphere provides the structure of interaction; citizenship provides the subject's competence; participation provides the mechanism of influence; and co-creative power organizes these elements into an accountable institutional relationship. The entire structure refers back to concrete human beings with needs, capacities, voices, rights of choice, and responsibility for consequences. Truth limits cognitive manipulation; creativity opens possibilities for organizing new relationships; freedom protects the capacity to participate; and responsibility links power to the consequences generated by decisions. Shared public governance acquires theoretical significance when it preserves the proper order between means and ends: institutions serve human capabilities for living, while power is tested by its capacity to broaden rational, free, and responsible participation in the co-creation of common life.

The Crisis of Rationality and the Erosion of Agency in Public Life

The crisis of contemporary political life is manifested in a rupture between human beings and their capacity to exercise agency over

shared relations. Institutions continue to exist, procedures continue to operate, and legal rights remain formally established, yet the capacity to transform rights into participatory action may decline. The gap between individual and common interests, and between institutional power and citizens' capacity to exert influence, reflects a form of political alienation: subjects live within an order created by human beings but gradually lose the capacity to understand, challenge, and transform that order. When rationality is detached from lived experience, it can shift from a capacity that orients action into an instrument serving technical, managerial, or other interests that exceed the control of those affected.

The crisis of rationality is understood as a decline in the capacity to identify problems, test grounds, distinguish truth from persuasive effects, anticipate consequences, and take responsibility for judgment. The concept is not equivalent to a lack of knowledge or low intellectual ability. It also concerns cognitive freedom: the practical capacity to question, assess, and revise the informational bases of judgment. An individual may receive vast quantities of information while still lacking the capacity to identify sources, test premises, or connect information with practical consequences. Rationality loses its emancipatory function when cognition is separated from the right to question, the right to object, and the capacity to participate in decisions. The fragmentation of rationality arises when knowledge, volition, and action are separated: the subject knows but lacks the capacity to influence; has the will but lacks grounds for verification; or acts without grasping the structure that produces consequences (Ecker et al., 2024).

This fragmentation is directly connected to the alienation of citizenship. Alienated citizenship describes a condition in which individuals possess legal status but have a diminished capacity to realize that status as participation in civic life. Rights exist at the normative level but do not in themselves guarantee the capacity to exercise them. Subjects who lack reliable information, argumentative competence, conditions of access, or feedback mechanisms can easily withdraw from the public sphere or participate only passively. Habitual voting, uncritical reception of slogans, immediate reactions to information flows, or repetition of ready-made judgments all reflect a separation between political behavior and reflective capacity. Procedural presence is not equivalent to substantive agency.

An agency deficit enables power to shift from a relationship of accountability toward a relationship of behavioral steering (Madsen et al., 2024). Control need not rely on direct coercion. Problem simplification, message repetition, information classification, restrictions on the language of debate, and emotional exploitation can narrow the field of choice, especially when algorithmic environments structure exposure and engagement (Gauthier et al., 2026). When subjects lack analytical tools, complex issues are easily reduced to simple oppositions; long-term interests readily yield to immediate reactions; and debate over reasons can turn into competition over emotions. Power gains greater capacity for domination when those affected cannot identify the mechanisms that steer their cognition.

The crisis of rationality, in the sense established above, is also a crisis in the relationship between law and the subject. Law organizes rights, obligations, limits on power, and mechanisms for resolving conflict. The practical value of law depends in part on citizens' capacity to understand, use, monitor, and challenge it. Norms detached from participatory competence can become external structures imposed upon life. Citizens who comply without the capacity to explain the grounds of their obligations will find it difficult to transform compliance into responsibility. Subjects who understand their rights but lack the means to protect them still face a gap between legal form and lived capability. The relationship between law and citizens must therefore be assessed by the extent to which rights are transformed into capacities for action and practical responsibility.

The need to restructure the relationship between human beings and the state arises from the contradiction analyzed above. Administrative effectiveness is insufficient to establish legitimacy when effectiveness is achieved by constraining the capacity to participate. Public power retains a humanistic meaning when it enables people to understand decisions affecting their lives, access the grounds for those decisions, articulate their experience, challenge alternatives, and demand accountability. Within the structure of shared public governance, the state assumes responsibility for securing conditions of participation, while citizens participate with the capacities to interpret, choose, and assume responsibility. Power relations thus move from one-way direction toward an interactive structure that can be scrutinized through reasons and consequences.

Restoring rationality requires a process of forming civic competence. Civic competence denotes the capacity to integrate knowledge, judgment, reflection, dialogue, legal understanding, and responsible action in matters of common concern. Such competence does not arise spontaneously from legal status. Its formation requires practical experience, encounters with difference, the capacity to argue through reasons, and opportunities to take responsibility for choices. Structured self-reflection can strengthen judgment and decision-making. Education plays a foundational role in constructing competence because it can connect knowledge with judgment and judgment with action. In the academic sense, civic education is concerned with forming subjects who can verify information, identify power relations, interpret conflict, and participate in common life through reasoned argument.

Education detached from reality can readily produce knowledge but has difficulty transforming it into lived capability. Content concerning rights, obligations, law, or public life acquires value only when learners practice analyzing problems, engaging in dialogue across differences, evaluating consequences, and defending judgments with reasons. This requirement does not imply the transmission of a fixed system of views. The objective is cognitive autonomy, the capacity for verification, and responsibility for one's choices. The boundary between education and imposition lies in the right to question, the right to debate, and the possibility of revising judgments in light of persuasive evidence.

The crisis of rationality must ultimately be assessed through the position of human beings in relation to institutions. When knowledge is separated from volition, rights from the capacity to exercise them, law from participatory competence, and power from responsibility, citizens can easily shift from co-creating subjects into objects of administration. Restoring rationality means re-establishing the relationship among cognition, freedom, and responsibility in public action. Truth provides grounds for judgment; freedom protects the capacity to choose and object; responsibility connects choices with consequences; and creative capacity opens possibilities for transforming structures that no longer correspond to life. Shared public governance depends on the presence of subjects capable of using rationality as a lived capacity and participating in the construction of common conditions through reasoned, autonomous, and responsible action.

The School as a Public Sphere: Building Civic Competence through Curriculum and School Practice The school should be positioned as a distinctive public sphere in which knowledge is transformed into the capacities for judgment, dialogue, choice, and responsibility toward common life (Budairi, 2026). The educational function extends beyond the transmission of knowledge or preparation for occupational competence. Schools participate in forming subjects who can identify common problems, interpret conflicts of interest, test the grounds of decisions, and engage in social relations through responsible argument. Civic competence, in the sense established here, expresses the unity of knowledge, reflection, communication, and action. Its scope includes the capacity to understand rights, exercise rights, respect their limits, defend positions on the basis of reasons, and assume responsibility for the consequences arising from choices.

The structure of school governance plays a direct role in the formation of civic competence. School leadership should not be reduced to an administrative apparatus, because the ways in which speaking rights are allocated, criticism is received, conflicts are resolved, and responsibility is organized within schools create learners' initial political experiences (Figueroa, 2026). The function of shared educational governance is to connect state requirements, pedagogical objectives, teachers' professional competence, students' experiences, and community needs within an interactive and accountable

Learners encounter the meaning of rights and responsibility through the way power is practiced in the educational environment itself.

Civic-oriented curriculum reform should be understood as a restructuring of the relationship between knowledge and life. Adding a number of topics on rights, law, or obligations is insufficient to form participatory competence. A curriculum fulfills a civic function only when knowledge is organized into opportunities to analyze problems, test evidence, identify interests, debate alternatives, and evaluate consequences. Students need to approach rights as lived relationships linked to use, limits, responsibility, and mechanisms of protection, rather than as a list of concepts to be memorized. Politics in education, in the academic sense, denotes the sphere in which people jointly define common problems, allocate decision-making authority, and assume responsibility for the consequences of collective order.

The tension between instrumental logic and the goal of forming citizens must be addressed in curriculum design. Instrumental logic prioritizes adaptation to the labor market, measurement of outcomes, and standardization of achievement. Civic education prioritizes the development of judgment, autonomy, cooperation, critical competence, and social responsibility. These orientations are not necessarily mutually exclusive, but the absolutization of competitiveness can reduce learners to economic resources. Education becomes unbalanced when occupational achievement becomes the primary criterion for defining development while the capacity to participate in common life is relegated to a supplementary position. The proper order of ends must be restored: occupational competence serves human life, while education develops subjects capable of using professional competence in relation to freedom and responsibility.

Civic competence should be organized as a cross-curricular axis rather than isolated from other fields of learning. Each subject can contribute a distinct dimension: language develops argumentation and interpretation; history trains learners to identify the origins, transformations, and limits of institutions; science strengthens the capacity to verify evidence; legal studies provide the structure of rights and obligations; and the arts broaden awareness of different experiences. Integration has value only when each learning activity is directed toward a specified competence and tested through actual behavior. Labeling content as "civic" without mechanisms for practice can easily produce merely formal integration.

Educational methods need to shift their emphasis from receiving answers to forming judgments. Debate scenarios, community problems, conflicts of rights and interests, simulations of collective decision-making, and accountability exercises provide environments in which students can practice rationality through communication. Learners must identify problems, seek evidence, present reasons, receive objections, revise positions, and evaluate the consequences of choices (Azevedo, 2026). Critical engagement within a pedagogical structure does not mean rejecting authority or encouraging confrontation. It denotes the capacity to request grounds, test consistency, and distinguish legitimate authority from unsupported claims. Teachers are responsible for organizing epistemic conditions, safeguarding fairness in dialogue, and maintaining the quality of argumentation.

The school environment must also provide practical experience of participation rights. A civic curriculum is unlikely to be effective when the structure of the school excludes learners from all decisions directly related to their learning lives. Student representation, consultation on school rules, feedback on learning methods, conflict resolution, and evaluation of shared activities create opportunities to transform knowledge of rights into experience in exercising rights. The degree of participation must correspond to

learners' age, competence, and scope of responsibility. Sharing educational power does not mean eliminating professional authority; rather, it means clarifying the grounds of that authority, limiting its exercise, and strengthening accountability.

Civic education under the model analyzed here does not aim to produce ideological consensus. Its academic objective is to develop cognitive autonomy and the capacity for cooperation among different subjects. Learners need to distinguish truth from belief, grounds from assertion, disagreement from hostility, and freedom from conduct that infringes the rights of others. Difference becomes a resource for testing judgment when the educational environment secures the right to speak, the duty to provide reasons, and responsibility for consequences.

As a public sphere, the school creates a bridge between education and shared public governance. The curriculum provides a structure of knowledge; learning methods form interpretive competence; school governance creates conditions for participation; and accountability mechanisms connect power with responsibility. These four dimensions together constitute an environment in which citizens are formed through practice rather than through legal designation. Education fulfills its social function when it helps people transform knowledge into the capacity for self-determination, rights into responsible action, and difference into cooperative relations capable of critical engagement. Through such a structure, the school becomes an institution that creates conditions for people to participate in common life through truth, creativity, freedom, and responsibility.

Institutionalizing Political Participation Rights in Curriculum and Educational Governance

Civic-oriented curriculum reform must affect the relationship among human beings, knowledge, and power rather than merely adjust a list of contents. A curriculum is a structure that distributes knowledge, time, speaking rights, assessment standards, and opportunities for learners to act. Every curricular choice embodies a conception of the subject to be formed. A curriculum that prioritizes memorization readily places learners in the position of recipients; a curriculum that organizes debate, verification, choice, and accountability creates conditions for developing agency. Substantive reform of civic education must transform rights from categories that are explained into capacities that are practiced.

The right to political participation should be established as a domain of learning with its own object, objectives, content, methods, and assessment criteria. Political participation rights refer to the capacity of individuals to access public information, form judgments, articulate interests, participate in discussion, influence decisions, and require holders of power to account for their actions (Enemuwe, 2026). The relative independence of this learning domain ensures that its content is not dissolved into subjects serving other cognitive functions. Its cross-curricular function is nevertheless maintained through connections among argumentation, verification, legal understanding, historical analysis, cooperation, and conflict resolution. The relationship between independence and integration creates a structure sufficiently clear to assign teaching responsibilities while remaining sufficiently open for civic knowledge to be applied across multiple contexts.

Curriculum design should establish a progression of competence development corresponding to successive stages of learning. The initial stage focuses on recognizing rights, obligations, common rules, and the capacity to express needs in appropriate language. The next stage develops the capacity to distinguish interests, analyze conflicts, verify information, and defend positions on the basis of reasons. At a more mature stage, learners move toward evaluating policy, analyzing power relations, participating in simulations of public decision-making, and assuming responsibility in collective activities. A continuous progression enables participation rights to move from conceptual knowledge into reflective habits and the capacity for responsible action.

Curricular structure creates only the possibility of development; the quality of implementation depends substantially on educators' professional competence. Teachers need knowledge of civic rights, the capacity to organize dialogue, skills for moderating disagreement, the ability to distinguish academic critique from personal confrontation, and the competence to assess arguments on the basis of reasons. Teacher education must incorporate these capacities into both initial preparation and continuing professional development (Barbosa de Moura et al., 2026). Teacher-education institutions have the function of connecting theories of civic education with pedagogical practice, enabling educators themselves to experience the modes of dialogue, reflection, and accountability that they will later organize for learners. A teacher trained primarily through a transmission model will find it difficult to create a learning environment grounded in participation rights merely by adding a few isolated discussion techniques.

Participation rights must also be institutionalized in school life. Student councils, mechanisms for commenting on school rules, discussion forums, consultation on learning activities, community projects, and conflict-resolution procedures provide appropriate fields of practice. Their educational value lies in the relationship between the right to speak and the duty to provide reasons, between the capacity to choose and responsibility for consequences, and between individual freedom and the rights of others. Experience from policy formulation shows that an important limitation arises when "formulation did not incorporate the needs, aspirations, or interests of workers, environmental activists, and academicians" (Hadi et al., 2023, p. 6). Degrees of participation should be allocated in accordance with competence and scope of responsibility, ensuring that learners gradually assume decision-making authority corresponding to their capacity for accountability. Repeated practical experience helps transform external content into the subject's own structure of action.

Family and community also play roles within an expanded educational structure. Parental participation is meaningful when organized through mechanisms for exchanging reasons, providing feedback, and sharing responsibility, rather than through arbitrary interference with professional authority. Social organizations, experts, public agencies, and local communities can provide cases,

data, experience, and spaces for learners to practice. Such linkages bring the curriculum into contact with living problems and prevent civic rights from being presented as a set of propositions detached from social experience.

Assessment mechanisms must correspond to both the object of assessment and the competences to be formed. Testing the ability to recall concepts is insufficient for determining participatory competence. Assessment should examine the capacity to find evidence, identify premises, construct arguments, receive objections, revise judgments, cooperate, and account for choices. Learning portfolios, projects, structured debates, decision-making simulations, and process assessment provide more appropriate evidence for complex competences. Transparent criteria help prevent assessment from becoming an instrument for imposing viewpoints. Learners should be assessed on the quality of their reasoning and their epistemic responsibility, not on the degree to which they agree with the teacher.

Governance of reform also requires a continuous feedback mechanism between the designed curriculum and the experience generated in practice. Assessment data should be used to identify gaps among objectives, implementation conditions, and outcomes in competence formation. Governing authorities are responsible for establishing minimum standards, securing resources, and ensuring access; schools need the autonomy to adjust modes of implementation to learner characteristics and community contexts. The relationship between common standards and professional autonomy must be bounded by criteria of transparency, learning quality, and learners' rights and interests.

Institutionalizing political participation rights in education creates a chain of transformation from knowledge to judgment, from judgment to action, and from action to responsibility. The curriculum establishes the domain of knowledge; teacher education ensures organizational competence; school governance provides experience in exercising rights; family and community expand the field of practice; and assessment verifies the degree to which competence has been formed. This interconnected structure enables civic education to move beyond symbolism and become a process for forming subjects capable of owning their judgments, exercising rights, respecting the limits of rights, and assuming responsibility toward common life (Ashford, 2026). Educational reform acquires social meaning when educational power becomes a means of expanding human truth, creativity, freedom, and responsibility.

CONCLUSION

This article conceptualizes shared public governance as a model for organizing power on the basis of citizens' capacity for meaningful participation. The analysis affirms that the legitimacy of public power depends on the capacity to access information, present reasons, critically challenge decisions, monitor implementation, and demand accountability. Communicative rationality provides the cognitive foundation for participation. Citizenship is expressed through the capacity to transform legal rights into responsible action. Schools occupy a pivotal position in forming this competence through curriculum, dialogue, critical engagement, the practice of rights, and accountability. Institutionalizing political participation rights requires linking the educational curriculum with teacher education, school governance, family, community, and assessment systems. This interconnected structure helps transform knowledge into judgment, judgment into action, action into responsibility, and responsibility into the capacity to influence public power. Shared public governance acquires humanistic value when institutions serve concrete human beings and power is held in check by truth, freedom, responsibility, and the subject's capacity to challenge it.

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