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## Identification of Key Drivers of Social Responsibility Based on Employee Health and Well-being

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** The objective of this study was to identify the key drivers of social responsibility based on the health and well-being of employees at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences.

**Methods and Materials:** The study was applied in terms of purpose and used a quantitative research approach with the cross-impact matrix method. The statistical population included all managers, deputies, and administrative staff at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, who have expertise in the areas of management, human resources, health, and well-being, and who were employed in the administrative, clinical, educational, research, and technology sectors during the academic year 2023–2024. Based on sample size determination using structural equation modeling, 237 individuals were selected through a convenience sampling method. The research tool was a questionnaire derived from interview data. The validity of the questionnaire was confirmed based on content, face, and construct validity. Additionally, the reliability of the scale was reported with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.94. For data analysis, confirmatory factor analysis and the cross-impact matrix method were employed using LISREL and MICMAC software.

**Findings:** Based on the results of MICMAC software and 16 factors extracted from the opinions of experts, seven major factors were identified as key drivers of the social responsibility model based on employee health and well-being at the university: attention to human resource well-being and health, organizational attitude and commitment, laws and regulations, effective management, evaluation and supervision, cultural promotion, and individual characteristics.

**Conclusion:** The results indicated that the model of key drivers of social responsibility based on health and well-being had good fit, and the key drivers exerted a relatively strong indirect impact on each other.

**Keywords:** *Social responsibility, health and well-being, medical staff*

## 1. Introduction

Today, organizations are significant social entities due to their ability to mobilize productive resources and create new wealth. However, an organization's legitimacy depends not only on its success in generating wealth but also on its ability to meet the expectations of various stakeholders who contribute to its existence and success (Bocean et al., 2022). In this context, social responsibility refers to the implementation of ethical behavior and attitudes within an organization, providing a perspective on core values and organizational culture to promote responsible behavior toward employees (Zizek et al., 2021). This responsibility includes economic, legal, ethical, and humanitarian aspects that society expects every organization to fulfill. As ethical and environmental issues have emerged as primary concerns in modern society, the importance of social responsibility has been consistently emphasized. As a result, numerous studies have been conducted on social responsibility, accumulating knowledge about its essence, how it impacts various stakeholders (such as students, employees, and the community), and how social responsibility functions within an organization or university (Kim et al., 2018).

Therefore, social responsibility is a commitment of organizations to make responsible decisions and take actions in alignment with the goals and values of society. Currently, social responsibility is viewed as the continuous commitment of organizations to ethical behavior and contributing to the economic development of the community and society in which the organization operates by improving the quality of human well-being, engaging in local community initiatives. Social responsibility is the foundation of sustainability, competitiveness, innovation, and strategic advantage for any organization (Guo et al., 2021; Kent et al., 2020). Furthermore, internal social responsibility also focuses on strategies and practices aimed at improving the health and well-being of employees (Macassa, 2023; Macassa et al., 2021). Given the potential impact of organizations on the well-being and health of employees and the communities in which they operate, social responsibility plays a significant role in the overall well-being and health of employees (Al-bdour et al., 2010).

The concepts of health and well-being are often used together and sometimes interchangeably. However, health refers to an individual's physiological or psychological indicators, while well-being is a more comprehensive concept aimed at describing a person's overall status within a social context. Well-being appropriately includes non-

textual life indicators (e.g., life satisfaction, happiness), general considerations (such as job satisfaction), and more specific dimensions (e.g., satisfaction with wages, a good workplace) (Bocean et al., 2022; Keramati, 2021; Maarefvand & Shafiabady, 2024; Mahdian et al., 2021; Ofem, 2023; Sadat Mousavi & Ebrahimi, 2024). Therefore, as a dimension of relationships and social position, employee health and well-being can be considered one of the goals of social responsibility in relation to human resources and their working environment (Steiner & Steiner, 2012). It has been demonstrated that internal social responsibility strategies and processes are directly related to employee well-being and health through indicators such as job satisfaction, which assess employees' expectations of their organization (Al-bdour et al., 2010; Yousaf et al., 2016).

On the other hand, contemporary changes emphasize that universities and organizations, with their contributions to social welfare, have an increasing responsibility for social responsibility. For this reason, organizations play a critical role in shaping responsible global citizens in the post-modern world (Marinescu et al., 2010). Furthermore, the role of medical universities in social development for a knowledge-based economy, assuming a strategic role in the welfare and health of the community and healthcare staff, is essential. Therefore, social responsibility represents an opportunity to promote social development from the heart of medical universities. In other words, social responsibility is an opportunity for social development in all their practical roles and in the domain of their multiple impacts, such as organizational, educational, knowledge-based, and social fields (Nwobu, 2021). Implicitly, this concept can also apply to the staff of hospitals and medical departments at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, who have primarily been concerned with patient care and other individuals. As an educational and research institution, medical universities respond to numerous students, colleagues, staff, and faculty members. Given their broad access and audiences, students, professionals, and employees, the concept of social responsibility among the staff of medical universities can be one of the most cost-effective investments for improving relationships with others and community members while maintaining and nurturing the highest standards in services, education, research, as well as employee health and well-being. Therefore, the present study was designed to develop a model of social responsibility based on the health and well-being of employees at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences.

## 2. Methods and Materials

This study is an applied developmental research and is based on a quantitative research approach. The statistical population of the research includes all managers, deputies, and administrative staff at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences, who are experts in the fields of management, human resources, health, and well-being, and were employed in the administrative, clinical, educational, research, and technology sectors during the academic year 2023–2024. Based on the research method using structural equation modeling, the minimum sample size was determined according to latent variables, with 20 samples required for each factor (latent variable), which were selected through a convenience sampling method. Ultimately, after collecting the questionnaires, 237 individuals were selected as the final sample.

The research tool used in this study was a 16-item questionnaire covering seven dimensions: human resource well-being and health, organizational attitude and commitment, effective management, evaluation and supervision, cultural promotion, laws, and individual characteristics. The questionnaire was designed based on interview data and the number of identified categories, and was measured using a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 to 5). After completing the questionnaire, it was collected, and the most important components were identified using the Delphi method.

In the first round, the questionnaire was distributed to all 16 members of the panel to express their opinions on the components. Subsequently, the Kendall coefficient was calculated as 0.77, indicating that approximately 77% of the views were in agreement, and this value was statistically significant. This value reflects a strong consensus among the expert panel members. Finally, after completing the Delphi rounds, all the indicators were agreed upon and confirmed by the panel members.

Next, the model was developed based on the qualitative section and the experts' opinions in the Delphi panel. The model was then evaluated for fit using confirmatory factor analysis. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL software indicated that the factor loadings for all the factors related to the social responsibility model based on health and well-being were above 0.5, which indicates that all factors have good explanatory power.

Finally, the Cronbach's alpha results showed that the alpha coefficient was 0.94, which is higher than the acceptable threshold of 0.7. Therefore, the factors demonstrate acceptable internal consistency. For inferential data analysis and to confirm the indicators, confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL software and the cross-impact matrix method with MICMAC software were employed to identify the key drivers of the research model.

## 3. Findings and Results

Initially, based on the results obtained from the qualitative phase of the study, the social responsibility model based on the health and well-being of employees at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences was categorized into themes related to human resource well-being and health, individual characteristics, cultural promotion, evaluation and supervision, efficient management, organizational attitude and commitment, and regulations. According to the results of the thematic analysis, 16 categories were identified, including proper selection of managers and staff, provision of welfare services, commitment, attitude, having policies in social responsibilities, laws and regulations, role conflict avoidance, support and participation, evaluation, transparency, improvement of working conditions, cultural development, supervision, individual characteristics, a value-based approach to human capital, and awareness in designing the social responsibility model based on health and well-being for employees at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences.

Following the screening and validation of the indicators and components obtained by the Delphi panel and the confirmatory factor analysis, the cross-impact matrix method and MICMAC software were used to identify the key drivers of the research model. Table 1 shows the set of determining variables for social responsibilities based on well-being and health. In the cross-impact matrix, the sum of the row numbers for each factor indicates its influence, while the sum of the column numbers for each factor indicates its susceptibility to influence from other factors. Along with the diagram, the degree of influence and dependency of the variables is derived from the sum of the rows and columns of the elements in the matrix.

**Table 1**

*Results of the direct influence-impact factors of key drivers*

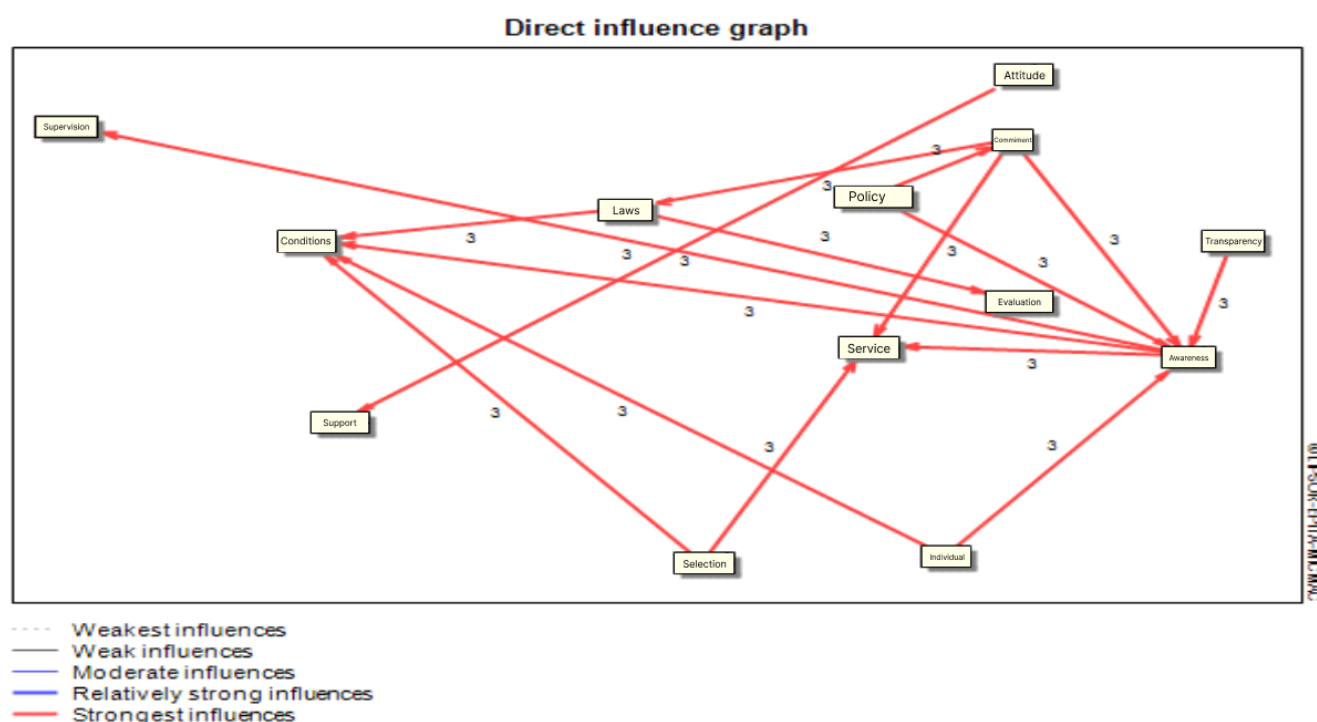
Component	Influence	Susceptibility	Net Influence
1. Selection of managers and employees based on experience and efficiency	29	27	2
2. Provision of justice-based welfare services	2	34	-32
3. University commitment to employee health and well-being	38	21	17
4. University's attitude towards employee health and well-being	31	11	20
5. Having policies in social responsibilities based on health and well-being	22	18	4
6. Laws and regulations governing employee health and well-being	31	14	17
7. Avoidance of role conflict in employees' duties, interests, and abilities	17	27	-10
8. Value-based approach to human capital	30	11	19
9. Support and participation of managers and staff in social, welfare, and health programs	31	20	11
10. Evaluation of the work environment, employee health and well-being	21	22	-1
11. Transparency in activities and accountability of managers	24	24	0
12. Improving employees' working conditions to enhance health and well-being	0	40	-40
13. Cultural development respecting employees' values and norms	20	19	1
14. Establishing an integrated systematic supervisory system	15	30	-15
15. Individual characteristics of managers and employees	32	16	16
16. Gaining awareness in various fields	21	30	-9

A comparison of the scatter plots of direct effects and indirect effects reveals that in the case of indirect effects, factors such as the university's attitude towards employee health and well-being, role conflict avoidance in employees' duties, interests, and abilities, and evaluation of the work environment, employee health, and well-being fall into the fifth region, the intermediate zone. However, other key factors do not show significant changes in their placement.

Additionally, the MICMAC software is capable of plotting the influence of factors affecting social responsibility based on health and well-being. Figures below illustrate the direct influences between factors, indicating that these factors influence each other directly without any interference from other factors, as shown by the strong mutual influence of variables.

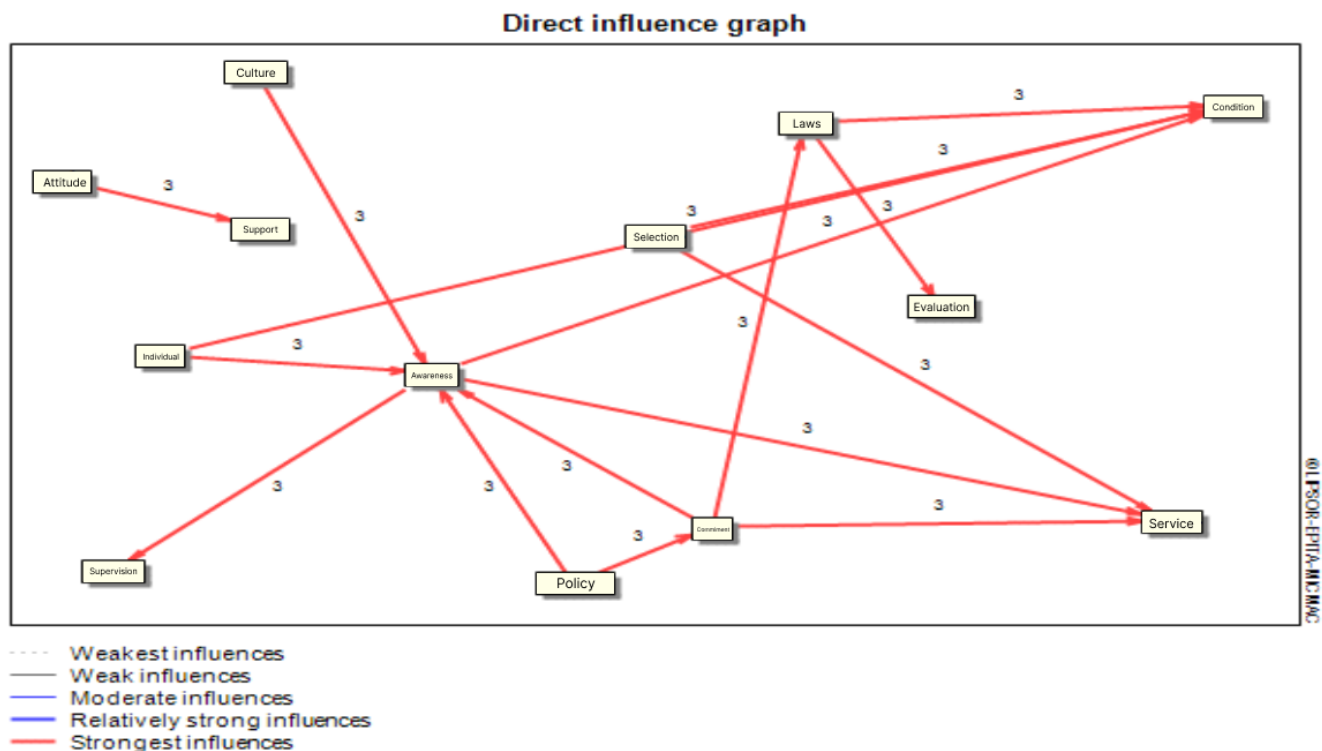
**Figure 1**

*Direct effects diagram A*



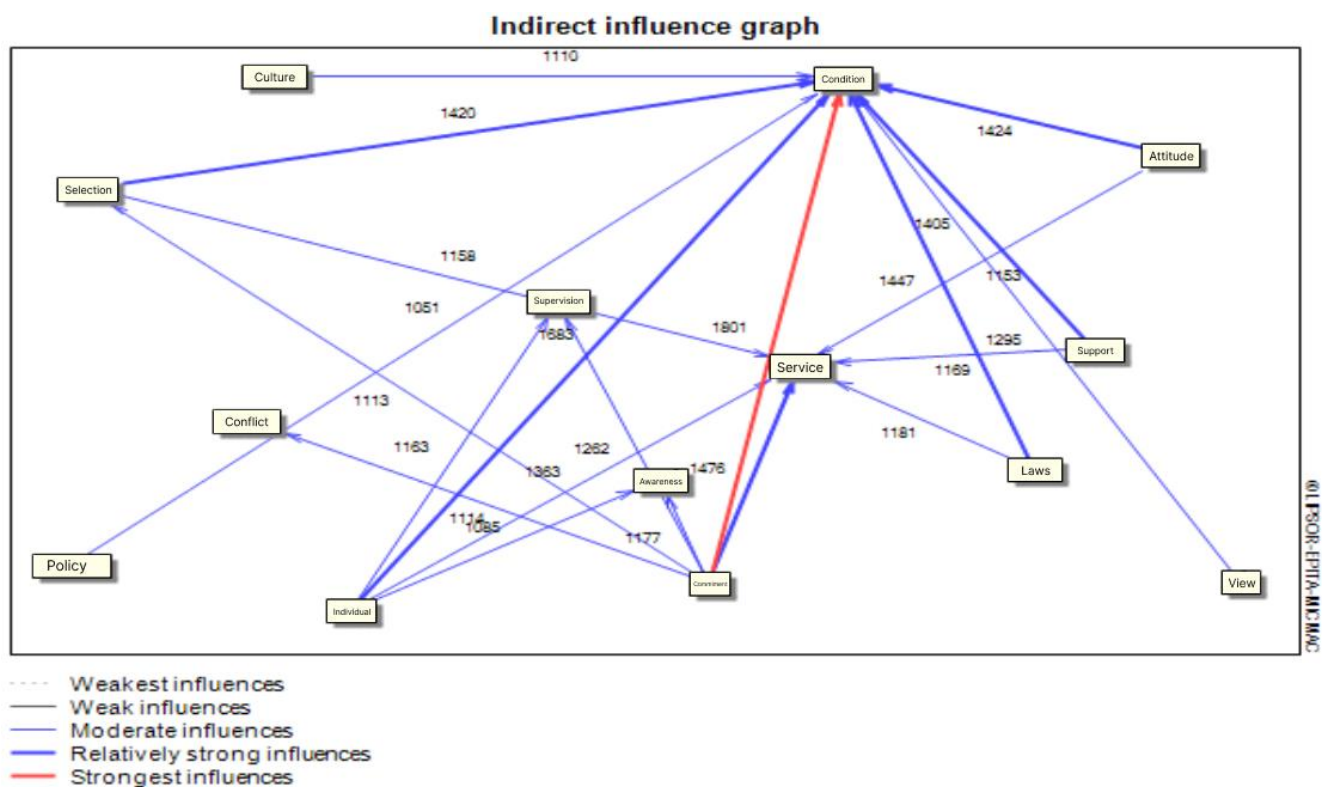
**Figure 2**

*Direct effects diagram B*



**Figure 3**

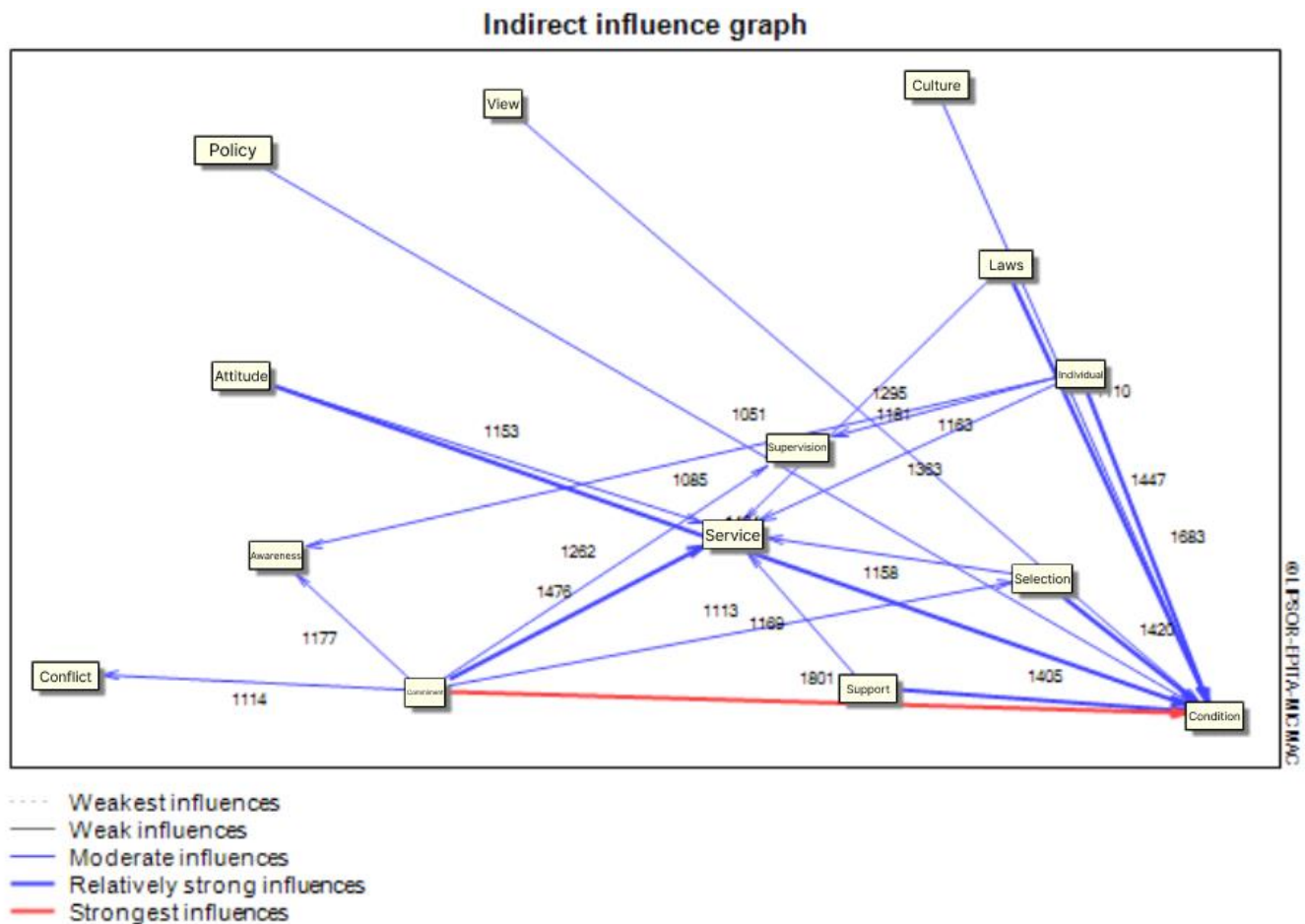
*Indirect effects diagram A*





**Figure 4**

Indirect effects diagram B



These figures indicate that the factors exert relatively strong indirect effects on each other.

Finally, based on the results from the MICMAC software and the 16 factors extracted from the opinions of experts and specialists, as shown in Table 2, seven major factors—attention to human resource well-being and health,

organizational attitude and commitment, laws and regulations, efficient management, evaluation and supervision, cultural promotion, and individual characteristics—were identified as the key factors in the social responsibility model based on the health and well-being of employees at the university.

**Table 2**

*Categorization of drivers and final indicators*

Dimensions	Indicators
Human Resource Well-being and Health	Provision of justice-based welfare services Improving working conditions to enhance health and well-being
Organizational Attitude and Commitment	University commitment to employee health and well-being The university's attitude towards employee health and well-being
Laws and Regulations	Having policies in social responsibilities based on health and well-being Laws and regulations governing employee health and well-being at the university
Efficient Management	Avoidance of role conflict in employees' duties, interests, and abilities Support and participation of managers and employees in social, welfare, and health programs Selection of managers and employees based on experience and efficiency Gaining awareness in various fields

Evaluation and Supervision	Transparency in activities and accountability of managers Evaluation of the work environment, employee health, and well-being Establishing an integrated systematic supervisory system
Cultural Promotion	Cultural development respecting employees' values and norms Value-based approach to human capital
Individual Characteristics	Personal and personality traits of managers and employees

**Figure 5**

*Final Model of Social Responsibility Based on Health and Well-being*



#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to identify the key drivers of social responsibility based on the health and well-being of employees at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences. Based on the results of the thematic analysis, 16 categories were identified, including the correct selection of managers and employees, provision of welfare services, commitment, attitude, having policies in social responsibility, laws and regulations, role conflict avoidance, support and participation, evaluation, transparency, improving working conditions, cultural development, supervision, individual characteristics, value-based approach to human capital, and awareness in designing the social responsibility model based on the health and well-being of university employees. Furthermore, based on the results from the MICMAC software and the factors extracted from the experts' opinions, seven major factors were identified as the key drivers of the model: attention to human resource well-being and health,

organizational attitude and commitment, laws and regulations, efficient management, evaluation and supervision, cultural promotion, and individual characteristics. These factors were recognized as the key components of the social responsibility model based on health and well-being at the university. Additionally, the results from factor analysis equations showed that the research model has good fit. The findings are consistent with previous research (Bayati et al., 2022; Bocean et al., 2022; Bodaghi et al., 2022; Chang, 2024; Chaudhary, 2017; Hiswåls et al., 2020; Krémer, 2019; Macassa, 2023; Zanko & Dawson, 2012; Zhang & Su, 2023). In this context, Ahmed et al. (2023) also addressed corporate social responsibility for employee well-being, demonstrating that organizations with strong social responsibility practices may reduce employee burnout. Additionally, the relationship between social responsibility and burnout was mediated by subjective well-being and compassion (Ahmed et al., 2020). Bocean et al. (2022) examined the impact of social responsibility and organizational ethics on employee well-

being, emphasizing the positive effect of ethical and responsible organizational behavior on employee well-being (Bocean et al., 2022). The results from Bayati et al. (2022) highlighted seven dimensions—economic, ethical, environmental, employee-related, regulatory bodies, society, and governance institutions—of the social responsibility model. Managers and organizational leaders can use the identified dimensions in this study to enhance social responsibility within their organizations (Bayati et al., 2022). Bodaghi et al. (2022) also designed an Islamic-Iranian model for social responsibility in the Social Security Organization. In the qualitative section of their study, five dimensions were identified: altruism, economics, legal adherence, justice, and mental health, along with 35 indicators. In the quantitative section, all dimensions except the economic dimension were rated below average in terms of implementation. The results showed that the identified dimensions and indicators can be utilized to promote social responsibility in the Social Security Organization. Moreover, the evidence from the current study indicates that employees expect their organizations to demonstrate social responsibility through recognition, rewards, personal development opportunities, work-life balance, empowerment, organizational participation, and retirement benefits (Bodaghi et al., 2022). Social responsibility is directly linked to employee well-being and can be measured through indicators of job satisfaction that address employees' expectations of the organization. In this context, job satisfaction is one of the most extensively studied outcomes that strengthens the idea that many organizations prioritize the well-being and health of internal stakeholders (Chaudhary, 2017; Krémer, 2019). In line with this, Ahmad et al. (2020) found a significant direct effect between social responsibility and employee well-being. Furthermore, Macassa et al. (2021) stated that corporate social responsibility can contribute to the triple bottom line—economic, social, and environmental performance—while also promoting employee health and well-being. Regarding the results, it can be argued that social responsibility is an organizational commitment to responsible decision-making and action in pursuit of community goals and values (Macassa et al., 2021). Currently, social responsibility is seen as a continuous commitment to ethical behavior and contributing to economic and social development within the community through improved human welfare quality, community involvement, and as a strategic advantage leading to improved employee well-being (Zhang & Su, 2023). Additionally, social responsibility focuses on

strategies and practices aimed at improving employee health and well-being (Macassa, 2023). Given the potential impact of medical universities on the well-being and health of employees and the community in which they operate, social responsibility is of significant importance for the overall health and well-being of university staff (Nwobu, 2021).

Overall, it is argued that organizations, including medical universities, are increasingly interested in how social responsibility strategies can help them engage and retain current employees, attract new staff, retain customers, and, most importantly, enhance their brand image to improve employee health and well-being (Yousaf et al., 2016). The interpretation of results can be framed within social identity theory and organizational identity mechanisms, which are widely used to explain individual responses to social responsibility (Gond et al., 2017). Social identity theory assumes that individuals are more likely to identify with an organization they perceive as highly credible and possessing an attractive and positive image. For instance, Gond et al. (2017) suggested that employees with a positive perception of an organization are more likely to stay within it (Gond et al., 2017). Therefore, social responsibility can be seen as a unique opportunity for Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences to develop frameworks for managing and potentially reducing psychosocial risks by improving the work environment at both the employee and organizational levels. A better understanding of how social responsibility affects employee health and well-being may be important for other types of organizations and medical universities across the country.

In summary, the results indicated that the social responsibility model based on employee health and well-being at Mazandaran University of Medical Sciences includes factors such as human resource well-being and health, individual characteristics, cultural promotion, evaluation and supervision, efficient management, organizational attitude and commitment, and laws and regulations. This study faced several limitations. The absence of similar research in this field made it difficult for the researcher to find studies directly addressing this topic, despite extensive efforts. Therefore, it is recommended that similar studies be conducted at other medical universities across the country. Additionally, it is recommended that the managers of medical universities give more attention to the dimensions and activities of social responsibility aimed at improving employee health and well-being and include these activities in their long-term plans. Furthermore, it is suggested that the managers and employees of medical



universities pay attention to the identified dimensions and components in this study and align their programs accordingly.

### Authors' Contributions

All authors significantly contributed to this study.

### Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

### Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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### Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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### Ethical Considerations

In this study, to observe ethical considerations, participants were informed about the goals and importance of the research before the start of the interview and participated in the research with informed consent.

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