

## Public Welfare Governance Model with Social Justice Development Approach of Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare

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### Abstract

**Purpose:** The overall purpose of this study was to determine the public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare. This research was a kind of grounded-applied study.

**Methodology:** The research method is mixed and applied in terms of purpose and descriptive and correlational in terms of how to collect information. Data collection tools were semi-structured interviews and fifteen experts familiar with the topics were interviewed in order to collect data via using purposive sampling method. The statistical population included all employees of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Welfare of East-Azərbayjan province, which is equal to 98 people. The sampling method was stratified relative and the sample size was 80 people.

**Findings:** Eighteen categories were obtained by classifying 322 key concepts, which were placed in the form of 7 main categories such as participation, accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, approval and rule of law, managers' responsibility, transparency and justice.

**Conclusion:** In the para-permanent model of fighting corruption and central justice of the above category, transparency and fighting corruption of the underlying category, accountability and responsibility of the environmental category, participation and involvement of organizations in governing the strategic category and effectiveness and efficiency, the consequence category and the results are a model of public welfare governance.

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## 1. Introduction

The term “governance” has been used in many concepts such as global governance, governmental governance, corporate governance, information technology governance, participatory governance, higher education governance (Dadash Karimi, et al, 2019), but when it comes to public welfare, it receives more attention because of its importance (Bergamp and Exo, 2016). Today, the theoretical foundations of providing public security and welfare have transformed the role of governments in societies. They have created different types of structures of political regime depending on the extent and manner of securing and guaranteeing its functions through the exercise of sovereignty, ranging from welfare states to states based on the idea of good governance and public participation (Badini and Poshtdar, 2011). The results of research show that providing the welfare and improving the living standards of the people in the society has long been considered one of the pillars of national security of the countries and the degree of success of governments in achieving this goal is considered as one of the components of their power, such that ensuring the survival of society members and the realization of a good and prosperous life is one of the main tasks of governments (Danaifard, 2012). Public welfare means the realization of collective goals and the fulfillment of the wants, needs and demands raised by the majority of people in society (Fitzpatrick, 2016). Accordingly, programs, laws, regulations, organizations and systems have acted to achieve appropriate conditions of social life in order to excel material and spiritual level and are somehow involved in the realization of public and social welfare. In this case, public welfare is not merely considered the promotion of material status, and it has political, social, economic and biological dimensions while it has an objective and subjective aspect. In a society where public welfare is provided with the blissful approach in line with material and spiritual promotion, at least four functional goals are achieved through the provision of society welfare, including satisfaction, realization of justice, security and health promotion (Mousavi Dijoji and Zahedi Vafa, 2017).

With the studies conducted, it seems that Iran's public welfare still falls into the governance category, but it suffers from transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, and responsibility and justice. On the other hand, a review of the research literature shows that one of the ideological foundations in the field of public welfare refers back to Hegel's moral theory. According to this theory, the moral duty of the government is to maintain security and build public trust in the functions of society in order to protect the interests of individuals in society, in which justice plays an important role and when justice takes on a social dimension, the sense of security and welfare in individuals is becoming more stable, and in this regard Rawls (2005) argues that a society in which the distribution of resources is fair, has a better welfare situation than a society in which resources are not distributed fairly, and fair distribution means that it is desirable for the most deprived people. Thus, public welfare requires the elimination of unjust inequalities, not the mere elimination of inequality (Ghasemi, et al, 2013). The constitution, in its progressive principles, also sets out tasks for rulers and governments that must move towards the elimination of unjust social inequalities (Hezarjaribi, 2011).

Determining the relevant factors, dimensions and components, consequences and backgrounds of public welfare governance with a social justice approach can be a great help in solving problems related to lack of public welfare in the shadow of social injustice. The Ministry of Labor Cooperation and Social Welfare, as the body in charge of public welfare development, is more involved in this issue. Mission of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare is policy-making, planning, management, monitoring and supervision in order to regulate labor relations based on the principle of tripartism, protection of the workforce, development and empowerment of cooperatives, market balance and support for job stabilization and spreading social justice in the areas of insurance, supportive and empowerment by observing the comprehensiveness principles, adequacy and inclusiveness based on the insurance law, but nevertheless there is a big gap between performance results and goals, which there is an urgent need to thoroughly study the factors and design a model of public welfare governance and determine the main

categories related to it in order to develop social justice in these ministries. Also, problems such as poverty, inequality, discrimination, corruption, misuse and misallocation of material and human resources, unemployment, unbalanced expansion of the public sector, economic and political instability, high government spending, high inflation rate are some of among the challenges that our country is facing today, so paying attention to this issue of public welfare governance with the approach of developing social justice by the Ministry of Labor Cooperation and Social Welfare in order to reduce and solve such challenges seems necessary that less attention has been paid to this issue. The results of this study can lead to appropriate strategies to achieve public welfare with a social justice development approach. Studies have shown that despite the different models in the field of governance, no research has been conducted to examine the model of public welfare governance. Now the question is: What is the social justice of the Ministry of Labor Cooperation and Social Welfare? Since the formation of the first human civilizations, mankind has always been looking for a way to better manage public affairs and over the centuries, has gained various experiences in the field of governance. Various human advances and the spread of knowledge have made scientific theories a forum for critique and study of governance practices. One of the characteristics of these centuries is the emergence of international institutions and centers after the Second World War, which employs scientists around the world to claim decisions for the whole world. Another feature is that few countries in the world today can govern society exclusively and solely according to the interests of their rulers. Over the past years, a lot of research has been carried out to understand the development process and various theories have been expressed in this regard. They determine who is in power, how decisions are made, and how tasks are performed (Eivazi, et al, 2018).

It can be said that governance is a set of individual and institutional methods, public and private methods, that manage the common affairs of the people. Governance is a continuous process through which conflicting or diverse interests are harmonized and collaborative action is taken. Governance includes formal institutions and systems that have been empowered to ensure compliance with the law, as well as informal arrangements that people and institutions have agreed upon and perceive to be in their best interests (Naqibi Fard, 2010).

Despite the common use of the term “welfare”, it is certainly a vague word that does not exist any consensus in the relevant social literature, and the lack of this consensus has led many scholars in this field to err in many of their interpretations (Ghaffari and Habibpour, 2014). There has been a great deal of change and transformation in the definition of public welfare since the 1980s. Texts related to sociology and economics show that, at present, not only welfare and well-being, meaning a better life, is not limited to vulnerable groups or a specific group of people in society, but has also taken on wider dimensions. One of the important features of public welfare in recent definitions is that a person has a high sense of health, security and vitality (Hezarjaribi, et al, 2012).

Traditionally, public welfare literature is determined based on plans of each country's political planners and political community, and each government's policy for public welfare is different (Chandler, 2010). The term “public welfare” is born of European economic and social developments and relations from the nineteenth century onwards. Public welfare has different definitions like many social science concepts. The United Nations considers public welfare as a wide range of activities and programs that are carried out with the help and supervision of the government for the well-being of individuals in society. The International Social Security Union defines public welfare as "a system designed to serve" and help individuals to have better health and lives and to develop better relationships for the development of human talents and abilities (Yazdani, 2013).

The perspective of the sociological approach, the category of justice is a fundamental and necessary category in the idea of social structure or human society both based on theoretical meanings and because of its impact on society and the individual. Social science texts show that justice is considered something that, if observed, our lives will be better than it is (Justice, 2015).

Rawls (2009) consider justice as the virtue of individuals in their relationships with others as well as the virtue of social institutions. According to Plato, social justice is the individual being in his own class and enjoying the privileges of his own class and also playing his own role. Rawls is one of the latest loyalists of liberal thought who, in addition to his liberal and individualistic assumptions and concerns, seeks to keep an attention to weak. He argues for the neutrality of the government, meaning that the government should have the least interference in politics, culture, and economics, and should allow competencies to develop with the same rule of equality of opportunity. Contrary to the prevailing utilitarianism approach in the tradition of contractualism, he tries his best to distance himself from excessive individualism and hedonism in this approach and to enter the structural contexts in the form of social institutions. Some argue that John Rawls's plan is more a defense of liberalism than a plan of justice, and the modified tradition of the social contract is her structural view of the individual, and the freedoms and rights of the individual and society in the form of a balanced and reciprocal social cooperation plan are reduced to the individual and follow the methodological individualism (Heidari Sarban and Saeb, 2019).

The dominant discourse of social welfare until recent decades and before the "cultural turn" in social theory in the 1970s was "material discourse" and only those categories of material, quantitative, objective, measurable and economic were considered as factors that produce or hinder social welfare of a specific community or social groups. The fundamental change in the social welfare discourse began in the 1970s, when economic-oriented development theories faced social and cultural challenges, and in particular, "modernization theory" approaches failed to contribute in development of Third World countries. In general, there are three views or perspectives on social welfare, which the type of welfare system and the limits of government intervention in the field of social welfare are determined based on the choice of each of them. Perspective (in terms of structure and discourse) is the result of seeing, and because the concept of paradigm implies the view of scientists and agents, it has been proposed as an equivalent (Rafiei, 2010). In general, there are three views or perspectives on social welfare, which the type of welfare system and the limits of government intervention in the field of social welfare are determined based on the choice of each of them. Perspective (in terms of structure and discourse) is the result of seeing, and because the concept of paradigm implies the view of scientists and agents, it has been proposed as an equivalent (Rafiei, 2010).

In connection with the concept of justice, concepts such as homology, fairness and equality are also introduced, which are sometimes used synonymously with it and sometimes with a different concept. In fact, the realization of justice is considered as the cornerstone of the legitimacy of sovereignty and the basis for justifying the necessity of the existence of the government. In fact, justice is one of the concepts that the collective intellect of all human beings considers good. Justice as a concept, with a very high level of abstraction, has long occupied the human mind to the point that the debate over what justice is, also continues as one of the most central questions of political philosophy (Hezarjeribi, 2011).

Both philosophers and social scientists have paid close attention to the issue of justice. People's interest in justice stems from a basic natural need; individuals have different individual needs that are best met through interaction with others. These needs range from economic needs such as money and material possessions to relatively abstract emotional social needs such as personal attention and respect. Justice provides individuals with standards for judging whether these needs are met in often complex social settings (Pourezat and Taheri Attar, 2011).

One of the key elements of the concept of social justice is the element of equality, which is a comprehensible and tangible concept, but by combining it with other elements; we can achieve different definitions about the concept of social justice. For example, the definition of social justice, which is based on a combination of two elements of equality in opportunities and acceptance of competencies and capabilities, is completely different from the definition of single element of equality in all possibilities and privileges, and it leads to completely different and in many cases contradictory social policies (Bergkamp and Guangdong 2016).

A single model cannot be introduced for good governance, but the four main pillars of good governance are: - The public sector and the government, which is responsible for directing and guiding and establishing the rule of law. - The private sector, which is responsible for creating employment, revenue, production, trade and business duties. - Civil society that provides an opportunity for people and citizens to express themselves. - Local organizations that have the task of mobilizing, organizing and practicing indigenous cultures.

Sepehrnia et.al (2019) conducted a study entitled “Creative Model of Good Governance Transparency for Policy Organizations “in Iran. Method: The research method is combined in terms of data type and grounded in terms of purpose. Findings showed that the dimension of participation and transparency are more important among other dimensions and include 2 components; Objective value and subjective value, 3 sub-components and 13 indicators. The elements related to objective value were given more attention in organizations. Khastow and Yahaghi (2018) conducted a study entitled “Analysis and Evaluation of Social Welfare Indicators in Urban Areas with Emphasis on the Justice Approach in region 1 of Qazvin City”. The results show that social welfare indicators are not justly in region 1; therefore, in order to identify the most influential factor in establishing social welfare using Friedman test, all indicators are prioritized that the three indicators of per capita income, employment status and job satisfaction have the most effect, respectively.

## 2. Methodology

A qualitative research method has been used in order to achieve the purpose of the present study. In qualitative research, the data obtained from interviews, documents, participatory observations, library studies, etc. are used to understand and explain social phenomena. The following figure shows the research layers based on Saunders model. In this model, the research methodology from the paradigm layer to the data collection tool is examined.

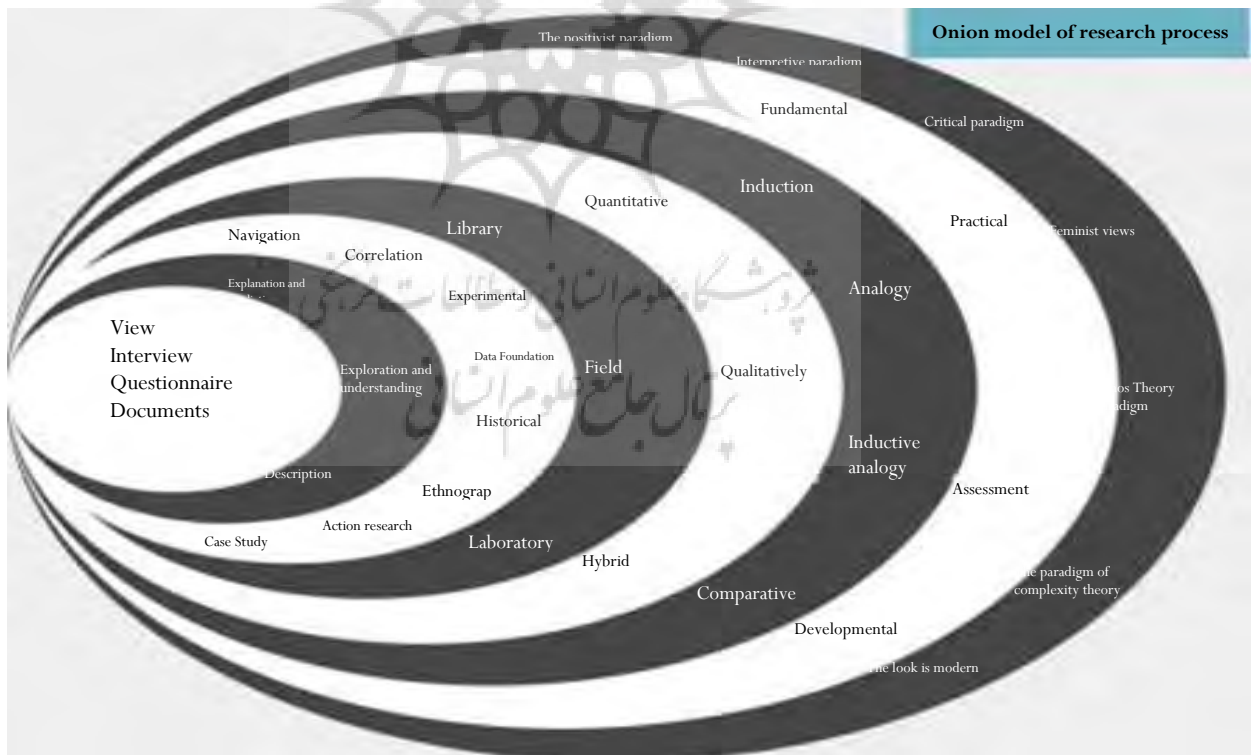


Figure1. Onion model of research process

Accordingly, the present study falls into the paradigm layer of meta-positivism and interpretation. Also, the present study is in the category of developmental research in terms of purpose. In terms of deductive

or inductive, it is an inductive research due to the qualitative approach of the research, also considering that this research has a qualitative approach, because it analyzes qualitative data and because the data is not in numbers but in the form of sentences, signs and symptoms, colors, facial expressions and behaviors of people and usually are collected by methods such as interviews and data observation, and on the other hand the researcher draws conclusions through numbers, so the present study is combined in this regard. It is also a library study in terms of collecting thematic literature and specialized backgrounds, and, it is a field research in terms of collecting qualitative data in a specific community. On the other hand, the strategy of the present study is grounded theorizing in which explore and understand a subject. On the other hand, the tool for collecting qualitative data in this research is interview.

Many methods have been proposed for the accuracy of the size model of analysis variables in recent decades. One of these methods is the structural equation model that has been used in this research. Structural equation model is a comprehensive statistical approach to test hypotheses about the relationships between observed variables and latent variables. Through this approach, the acceptability of theoretical models in specific societies can be tested, in other words, factor validity has been used to assess the validity of the questions. Factor validity is a form of structural validity that is obtained through factor analysis (Bazargan, 2002). Factor analysis is a statistical technique that is widely used in most humanities. In fact, it is necessary to use factor analysis in the branches in which the questionnaire is used and the variables are of the latent type (Klein, 2001).

Structural equation modeling is a very general and robust multivariate analysis technique from the multivariate regression family, and more precisely, it is the extension of the "general linear model". Structural equation modeling is a comprehensive approach to test hypotheses about the relationships of observed and latent variables. Through this method, the acceptability of theoretical models in specific societies can be tested using correlation, non-experimental and experimental data.

The statistical population includes all employees of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare in East Azerbaijan Province, whose number was 98 people. The sampling method was relative stratification to sample the experts of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare with regard to their number, which according to Morgan's table, 80 people is enough for communities with a statistical population of 98.

The data collection tool in this research is designed in the framework of a field method and a questionnaire with 38 items and Likert scale and using research literature and theoretical and practical backgrounds. According to the research literature, the models proposed in the field of public welfare governance with a social justice development approach have 7 main dimensions including 1: transparency, 2: accountability, 3: justice, 4: efficiency and effectiveness, 5: participation, 6: rule of law, 7: responsibility. After collecting the questionnaires, assign the values of 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 to the very low, low, medium, and high options, respectively, and in the next step, each of the seven dimensions is determined by the algebraic sum of the values of the options selected for the subjects. The scores obtained for each dimension are a number (distance variable).

### 3. Findings

In the qualitative part and in examining the dimensions of the public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach, finally 7 categories were counted and in the quantitative part, firstly it was tried to check demographic characteristics of the sample members including marital status, age, history of individuals in the sample community and then to check the accuracy of measurement models of analysis variables using *lisrel* software; which this matter was performed with the help of confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis is one of the oldest statistical methods that is used to examine the relationship between latent variables (obtained factors) and observed variables (questions). SPSS software

has been used to determine the approval or rejection of indicators of public welfare governance model with the approach of social justice development by the sample community.

**Marital status:** The information in the table below, which is about the marital status of the subjects, shows that 0.20% of the people participating in this quantitative part of the research are single and the rest are married.

**Table1.** Sociological information related to marital status.

| description | number | percent |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| Single      | 16     | 20      |
| Married     | 64     | 80      |
| total       | 80     | 100     |

**Degree:** The information written in the table below, which is about the degree of the subjects participating in the quantitative part of this study, shows that 26.2% of the subjects have a bachelor's degree, 55.0% of the subjects have a master's degree, 18/8% of the subjects have PhD.

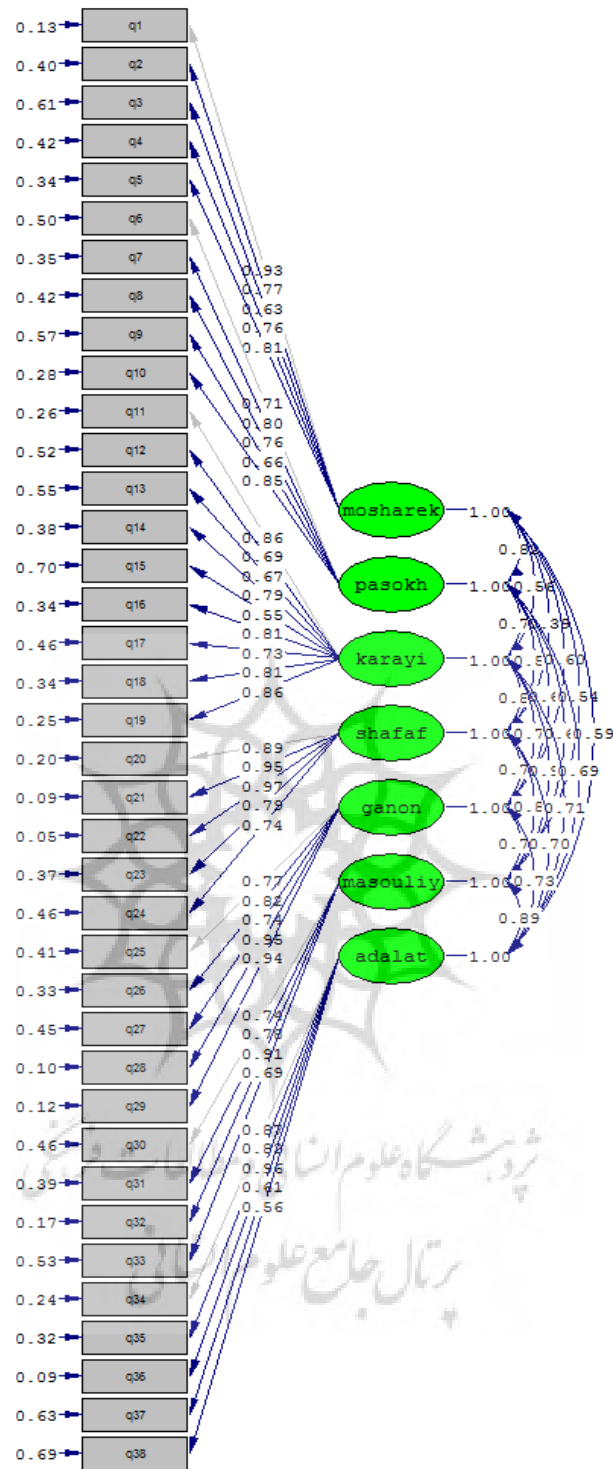
**Table2.** Sociological information related to educational status.

| description | number | percent |
|-------------|--------|---------|
| bachelor    | 21     | 26.2    |
| master      | 44     | 55      |
| PhD         | 15     | 18.8    |
| total       | 80     | 100     |

First, it is necessary to ensure the accuracy of the variable measurement models, so in the following, the variable measurement models are given, which has been performed by the first-order confirmatory factor analysis. LISREL 8.5 software was used to analyze the statistical data and factor load was used to determine the significant relationship between the research variables. As mentioned, the accuracy of measurement models of analysis variables must be ensured before doing anything, this is performed with the help of confirmatory factor analysis. Confirmatory factor analysis is one of the oldest statistical methods to examine the relationship between latent variables (the obtained factors) and observed variables (questions) and represent the measurement model.

**Confirmatory factor analysis of variables:** In confirmatory factor analysis, the relationship between common codes and concepts is called factor load. All factor and variable loads (each concept) must be greater than 0.5 to be accepted. Confirmatory factor analysis (standard estimation) of participation is presented in Figure 3. The standard factor load of confirmatory factor analysis measures and evaluates the strength of the relationship between structures with its observable variables (questionnaire items). The metrics of this component have a positive factor load based on the standard factor loads of latent variables (1: transparency 2: accountability 3: justice 4: efficiency and effectiveness 5: participation 6: rule of law 7: responsibility). The results of the relationships between the measures with the structure are shown in the figure below.

A significant test should be performed after calculating the standard factor load. In fact, the model of significant numbers is presented to know whether the relationship between the latent variables (the structures of 1: transparency 2: accountability 3: justice 4: efficiency and effectiveness 5: participation 6: rule of Law 7: creativity of managers) and observable variables are significant.

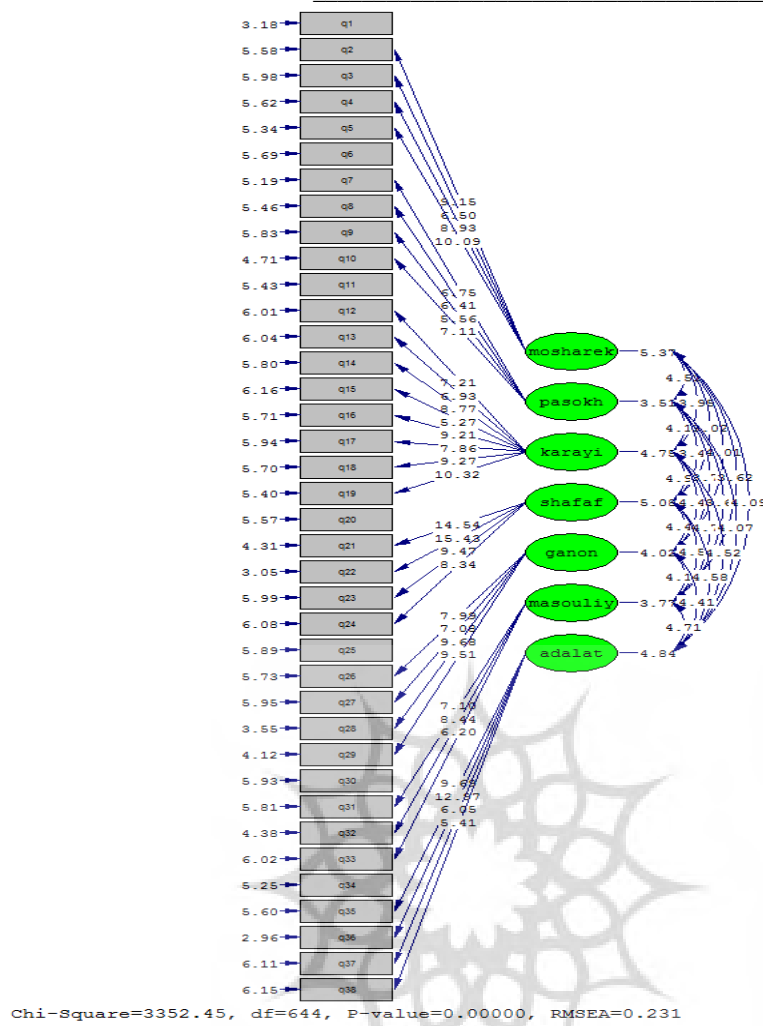


Chi-Square=3352.45, df=644, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.231

Figure2. Confirmatory factor analysis of variables in standard status

Figure 3 shows the model of significant numbers or T-Value and the significance of the relationship between each of their observable variables (questionnaire items) at the 95% confidence level. If its value is less than the absolute value of 1.96, so according to the results of confirmatory factor analysis and the significant number of items, it can be concluded that all participation items have a positive factor load and the calculated t value is more than 1.96 and indicates the validity of the items in measuring structures.





**Figure3.** Confirmatory factor analysis of significant participation

A one-sample t-test has been performed to examine the perspective of the sample community on the dimensions of the public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach of the *Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare*. As the results show, the upper and lower limits of the confidence interval obtained for the average score of the efficiency factor are lower than zero, which indicates the unfavorable situation of this macro category among the employees of the *Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare*. Also, the variables of participation, accountability, transparency, rule of law, responsibility, justice have a positive score that indicates the favorable situation of these indicators.

**Table3.** T-test information related to macro categories in the public welfare governance model.

| Variable        | Statistical t | Degrees of freedom | significance level | Mean | Mean difference | 95% confidence level |             |
|-----------------|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|------|-----------------|----------------------|-------------|
|                 |               |                    |                    |      |                 | Upper limit          | Lower limit |
| participation   | 23/2          | 79                 | /000               | 18.4 | 18.1            | 0.1                  | 2/1         |
| accountability  | 2418          | 79                 | /018               | 27.3 | /27             | /047                 | /49         |
| efficiency      | 0.670         | 79                 | /505               | 05.3 | /055            | -/19                 | /2207       |
| Transparency    | 2867          | 79                 | /005               | 16.3 | /165            | /0505                | /2795       |
| The rule of law | 2300          | 79                 | /024               | 20.3 | /2062           | /027                 | /3848       |
| Responsibility  | 2356          | 79                 | /021               | 19.3 | /1937           | /0301                | /3574       |
| Justice         | 3.88          | 79                 | 001                | 28.3 | /28             | /13                  | /42         |

#### 4. Discussion

The first hypothesis of the research indicates that responsibility plays a role in the public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach in the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare. The research findings show that responsibility can be effective in governing public welfare with a social justice development approach. The result is consistent with the results of the Wilcox study. In line with the mentioned result, the results of the Wilcox study show the fact that the more democratically and responsibly governed and the government represents the communities in leading the development project, the more communities will control their behavior and, if necessary, they will be able to change the rules of the game and the players in power, resulting in a greater sense of freedom and, consequently, a greater sense of security (Wilcox, 2015).

Another result of the present study shows that participation is one of the important categories of public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach. This result is consistent with the findings of Arai et.al (1396). The researcher seeks to identify policy recommendations for the realization of good governance in public administration. The results show that the four indicators of accountability, rule of law, transparency and participation are among the indicators of realization of good governance in public administration, respectively. In line with the mentioned result, Sepehrnia and et al (2019) have reached similar results in a study entitled Creative Model of Good Governance Transparency for Policy Organizations in Iran. Kardos (2015) has reached similar conclusions in a study.

Another finding of the present study is the accountability, the second main category of public welfare governance model with the approach of social justice development. In line with the mentioned result, Mousavi Dijoji and Zahedi Vafa (2017) in presenting and explaining the guiding elements of the public welfare strategic model, based on content analysis of Imam Khomeini's ideas and thoughts, has pointed to accountability. Also, in line with the presented results, Dayananadan (2018) conducted a study entitled Good Governance Measures for Better Performance of Social Organizations. The results showed that four predictor variables such as participation, accountability, transparency and rule of law are noticed by the stakeholders to maintain good governance measures.

Another finding of the research is that efficiency and effectiveness is another factor in the model of public welfare governance with the social justice development approach. In line with the results of Mukhbar and Mehrara (2003) and Kaufman (2010), they have mentioned the way of exercising power in managing economic and social resources in their research on efficiency and effectiveness. Knock (2013) also examined the relationship between governance of institutional quality, and economic growth and public welfare. These studies show that improving good governance indicators are affected by economic development and efficiency and effectiveness.

According to the findings of the present study, one of the categories of public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach is legitimacy and the rule of law. Consistent with this conclusion, the results of Chambers's studies showed that injustice, lawlessness and violence, inequality, homelessness, environmental degradation, war, hunger and poverty are among the variables that jeopardize public welfare governance with a social justice development approach. In line with the results presented, Osman et.al (2015) conducted a study entitled "Assessing the Public Welfare Services System in Comparison with the Deprived and Vulnerable Groups in the Government of Malaysia" (Case Study: Prak). The results showed that one of the key components to governance is achieving social stability, human security and the rule of law.

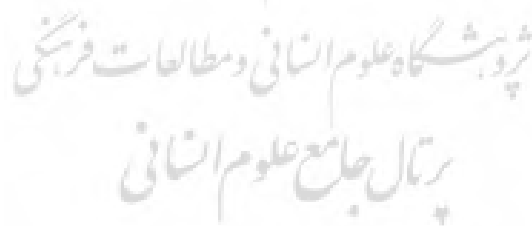
The sixth category is the model of transparency. The category of transparency refers to the factors of anti-corruption, freedom of the media. Consistent with Alexander's (2016) conclusion, justice is not only achieved through the pursuit of vital benefits, but also transparency and participation in the national decision-making process, attention to human rights and the dimensions of individual and collective identity are among other important factors to ensure public welfare governance, and achieving this will improve the sense of

social security. Bergkam and Guangdong (2016) also conducted a study on the design and implementation of governance systems to support public welfare, the environment and public health in China. The results showed that China must adopt political reforms and shift power from various levels of government to ordinary citizens and strive for transparency to realize public welfare and environmental governance with its full potential.

The category of justice is another major category of the public welfare governance model with the justice development approach. Golparvar et.al (2009) conducted a study entitled "The role of attitudes toward social welfare in the relationship between empathy and social orientation with social justice". The findings of this study indicate that welfare development is only for the equality approach to social justice and the population covered by welfare only need to mediate the role with social orientation.

Regarding that the result shows that each of the categories of transparency, accountability, justice, efficiency and effectiveness, participation, rule of law and creativity in the model of public welfare governance is effective with the social justice development approach of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare. Therefore, it is suggested that solutions be prepared by the senior managers of the mentioned ministry with the involvement of the mentioned categories.

Considering that the results of research showed that the responsibility of officials is effective in implementing the public welfare governance model with the social justice development approach of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare, therefore it is suggested that the component of responsibility should be considered as one of the factors in the appointment of managers of the studied ministry. It is also suggested that a committee should be formed in the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare to implement the public welfare governance model with a social justice development approach of the Ministry of Cooperatives, Labor and Social Welfare from the categories of transparency, accountability, justice, efficiency and effectiveness, participation, rule of law and creativity of managers.



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