



## Assessing the Feasibility of Rural Participation Based on Good Governance Indicators (Case Study: Abarkooh County)

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### Abstract

**Purpose-** since governance has a direct and close relation to democracy and socio-economic development everywhere, and it is considered to be the main discussion of the discourse of sustainable rural development, the purpose of the present study is to examine the position of governance indicators in rural areas of Abarkooh County and its impact on the villagers' higher participation.

**Methodology-** the present research has been conducted using a descriptive-analytical method and the data were obtained through survey methods. The statistical population of this study were rural district governors, members of Islamic councils and residents of Abarkooh County. Chi-square test, Wilcoxon signed-rank test, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression coefficient were used to analyze the data.

**Research findings-** the results indicate that the villagers had the highest participation of villagers is in manpower and participation in land donation is in the second place and financial aids is in the last place due to the weak financial strength of the villagers. According to the results of the T-test, the scores of the items related to the indicators of rural governance in Abarkooh County are at a desired level and the highest values belong to social trust and social justice indicators and the lowest value belongs to rule of law indicator. The results of Wilcoxon test show that, the impact of feasibility of governance indicators on public participation in this area has been at a high level. Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used to examine each of the governance indicators "transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, social justice, awareness, social trust, rule of law, acceptance of participation" as independent variables on villagers' participation in the dimensions of "manpower, financial assistance, land donation, (which were aggregated) as dependent variables and determine the effect of each of these dimensions. The correlation test value equal to 0.712 shows a significant, positive and direct relationship between independent and dependent variables of the present research. The modified determination coefficient indicates that, 69.4% changes in villagers' participation level is related to feasibility of principles of governance in the study area; therefore, holding meetings for rural people, rural district governors and members of councils for more interaction and informing people about their rights, clarification of financial and income issues and identification of capabilities of human society can play an essential role in feasibility of this matter.

**Keywords:** Participation, Good governance, Governance indicators, Abarkooh County.

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## 1. Introduction

Rural development is a multidimensional process and ensures continuous improvement of life and its quality in rural society; in other words, rural development is a strategy that has been developed to improve socio-economic lives of poor villagers (Norouzi & Ebrahimi, 2018).

This approach which was raised in literature of development especially in developing countries align with establishment and institutionalization of civil society in 1990<sup>th</sup>, has a special place and is identified as one of the requirements of regional and local sustainable development which cultivates the two concepts of empowerment and participation (Sarraf & Taghizadeh, 2008). Today most rural development experts believe that, achieving sustainable development is not possible without the participation of the majority of people and without any doubt with public participation the development transition period will be facilitated, accelerated and less expensive (Asadi, et al, 2016). Considering the issues and problems due to centralized planning in recent years, fundamentals of rural planning have shifted to participatory planning and the basic concept of rural planning has changed from planning for people to planning with people (Seydaei et al., 2013). The novel approach is based primarily on decentralization and transfer of responsibility to local governments and lower levels of rural management. In this planning method, the role of people and non-governmental organizations is fully highlighted and becomes central not just superficial. In fact, the concept of public participation is interrelated with the concepts of efficiency, decentralization and local governments and introduces the local governments as the superior and impressive option (Ghademarzi & Jamini, 2017). In this regard, the World Bank in its 2017 report, considers that, achieving all development goals requires a correct understanding of governance (World Bank, 2017).

According to the report of United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the best sign of good governance is the degree to which it leads to advancement of human rights including civil rights. Resolution 64 of the Human Rights Commission has clearly linked the governance to an environment which is able to establish human rights and promotes the sustainable human development (Ghademarzi & Jamini, 2017).

Governance has a direct and close relationship with democracy and socio-economic development and today it is the main discussion of the development discourse or in other words, rural governance is considered to be the essence of the process of sustainable rural development, as United Nations has called it as the only important factor in reducing and eliminating poverty and advancing development (Hesam et al., 2015).

Josef Stiglitz believe that, today the development goals have been expanded and include sustainable development and equal and democratic development (Heidari Sarban, 2019). Regarding good governance it can be noted that, thoughtful leadership and management of the community which is correct and efficient, within the framework of rule of law, rational and fair decision making with accountability and responsibility, public participation and similar strategies are created through correct interaction between citizens and socio-political forces of civil society with the government (Sardarnia, 2011). Good governance has been proposed in various studies with the aim of achieving sustainable human development which emphasize on reduction of poverty, creating sustainable jobs and prosperity, environmental protection and regeneration and growth and development of the society, especially women, which all of these are feasible through good governance (Bemile & Boateng, 2015). This is one of the newest and most popular approaches which have been proposed in the field of sustainable rural development management and is based on three main pillars of government, private sector and civil society; it emphasizes on active and effective presence of these pillars in the shadow of participation, accountability, rule of law, efficiency and effectiveness, responsibility, consensus and human monitoring and development (Murdoch & Abram, 1998). Also, today the advancement of good government approach requires rural people and communities to be organized in civil organizations in the form of small social networks so that, they can use and manage their capabilities, talents and creativities properly (Roknodin Eftekhari et al., 2012). Also, in this model the direct operational responsibility of the manager becomes less and a better possibility is provided for bottom-up planning and control by private and public institutions under the title of public participation (McGill, 1998). It can be noted to emphasize the participatory role of people in management affairs

that, experience has shown that, public participation in managing affairs not only improves efficiency and allocation of costs in the field of social priorities and infrastructural projects, but also it is a kind of decentralization in management that increases human development, equality and realization of social and political justice (Hekmatnia & Mousavi, 2002). These cases show that, in today's rural management, the desired development and sustainability cannot be achieved without public cooperation and participation (Rabbani et al., 2007); but in this regard, it must be acknowledged that, villagers' participation in rural affairs are influenced by several factors and without considering these factors one cannot expect the participation of the villagers in the rural events. Education, economic level, income status, job satisfaction, social capital and gender are the factors which influence public participation and have been noticed and studied by researchers from a long time ago; but there are other factors which also play an important role in rural participation and enhance people's participatory roles including the existence of trust among villagers and governors, justice in distribution of resources in villages, transparency and accountability of managers about villages' issues, informing villagers about their rights, ongoing plans and the impact of villagers' opinions on the project planning process, rule of law of village governors in relation to their resources and power. Thus, it can be stated that, as villagers' participation plays a vital role in improving the management of the villages in solving villagers' issues, applying the principles of good governance can also be effective in the participation of the villagers.

The historical experience of our country, while emphasizing the application of top-down strategy in development, shows its failure in the process of rural development; therefore, based on this experience and increasing the field of knowledge and science, it is necessary for society to put the headline of its programs and measures to pay attention to rural development with a focus on public participation.

Abarkooh town with a population of 43000 people in 34 rural areas is among the rural parts of the country which over the years, their management has been entrusted to rural district governors and councils. It seems that, after nearly two decades of the new rural management system, in order to evaluate their performance within the framework of a good governance, it is necessary to conduct studies in this field to achieve executive solutions; therefore this

study tries to examine and analyze the extent and how to achieve good governance indicators in rural areas of Abarkooh town, also examine the participation factor and evaluate its impact and seeks to answer these questions:

To what extent the indicators of good governance have been feasible in the rural areas of Abarkooh town?

What has been the effect of establishing good governance indicators in the target areas on the participation of rural people?

## 2. Research Theoretical Literature

In order to achieve the theoretical foundations of the research, considering the importance of participation and governance in this study, it can be mentioned that, public participation is : a basic process during which people wisely and consciously and willingly accept a part of the responsibility of affairs as a group and try to satisfy the spiritual and psychological needs of individuals and groups and in order to achieve predetermined goals based on real needs and with considering the possibilities and limitations, they try to gain individual and collective identity in the society (Yaghfouri et al., 2014). Oakley states three interpretations to define participation which are: participation as a share, participation as organization and participation as empowerment (Salimi, 2010). Glass believes that, participation is: providing opportunities for people to take part in governmental decisions or planning processes (Glass, 1979). Governance is: exercising political, administrative and economic power in managing the affairs of countries in various levels (macro to local levels) by which individuals and groups can achieve their interests in the form of a process (Weldeabrha, 2017). Halfani et al., identify governance as the relationship between civil society and the government, between the rulers and the ruled, government and governed (Halfani et al., 1995). Indeed, good governance is the efficient management of public affair through establishing a legitimate government and legal rules in line with the advancement of social values of individuals and groups (Plumptre & Graham, 1999). In this definition the normative dimension of governance has been considered, but its political dimension (adherence of the government to the public interest) and technical-administrative dimension (Bureaucratic capability) have been ignored; since not only government includes governmental institutions, but also it includes unofficial and non-governmental mechanisms too; mechanisms through which

individuals and organizations meet their needs and satisfy their demands (Atkinson, 1998). Since 1980 which governance was proposed by urban researchers, it was implicitly considered as a basically urban phenomenon for a while, but similar processes were operating unofficially in rural areas too. However, before the mid-1990s the perspective of good rural governance was also revealed (Norouzi & Ebrahimi, 2018). In fact, good rural governance has been established on sustainability-based development theories and planning with a bottom-up approach. Good rural governance is the effectiveness of all rural pillars involving in rural management, with all mechanisms with which we can move towards the excellence and development of the village and the rural people; in other words, good governance means: implementing decisions and policies of the rural people, in line with their interests and also national, regional and local interests. Meanwhile, the role of governments is mostly limited to a framework for providing hardware and software platforms including harmonization and protection of national laws and treaties, and direct government intervention in decision making, as well as the management of people's lives, is reduced (Roknodin Eftekhari et al., 2012). In 2003, United Nations Development Programme has presented indicators as the main indicators of good governance and considers the realization of development to require their implementation. These indicators include: transparency (expresses the establishment of mutual trust between the government and the public through the provision of information), rule of law, accountability, justice (providing equal opportunities for all citizens), responsibility (increasing government managers' sensitivity to public demands), efficiency and effectiveness (ensuring the provision of services to the public with the optimal and wise use of resources) and participation (UN-HABITAT, 2009). Moreover, in the same year, Daniel Kaufmann, Art Krury, Pablo Zoid, and Lobaton have presented indicators such as the right to comment and accountability, social trust, political stability, government's effectiveness, the quality of law and rules, rule of law and control of corruption as the main bases of good governance (Kaufmann et al., 2007).

Also, the presented theories related to good rural governance in the form of empowering approaches which emphasize on three main elements of "growth and awareness along with criticism", "developing

capacities for effective transformation based on the facts", "strengthening organizations and organizing people", include participatory development approach, capacity development approach including institutionalization, institutional strengthening and development, development management, developing human resources and new institutionalism, environmental management approach, and institutional development approach, and each of which has some kind of specific principles. Rose (2006) has shown in their studies that, the existence of trust is necessary to increase people's participation in managing various affairs. In other words, in the millennium which postmodernist thoughts have emerged, indicators such as institutional trust, social satisfaction, health satisfaction, and other humanistic concepts like social welfare have come together and all depend on citizen participation resulted from trust in management (Giddens, 2006; Bannet, 2004). Heidari Sarban (2019) conducted research with the aim of assessment and evaluation of local management patterns based on the good governance indicators in rural areas of Meshkin Shahr city. The results showed that, the indicators of social trust and responsibility have positive effects on the formation of desired pattern of rural local government in Meshkin Shahr and the rural local government of this city is in a good status in terms of the indicators of good governance. Norouzi and Ebrahimi (2018) have conducted research in which they examined 8 indicators related to good governance in sample villages of Lenjan town and concluded that, the realization of good governance in these areas was below the desired level and not all the indicators were favorable. Also, there is a significant difference between the villages in terms of feasibility of good governance. Ahmadi and Cheraghi (2017) have examined the effective factors on the feasibility of good governance in villages of Zanjan city according to the performance of rural district governors and the results show that, people's satisfaction with their performance is not at the desired level. Rahmani Fazli et al., (2017) evaluated the status of rural management based on good governance approach in sustainable rural development in two central parts of Koohdasht and Lavasanat and concluded that, there is a considerable difference between the two study areas in terms of management based on good governance approach and sustainability level of settlements, so that, in both areas, the villages with a good governance status are more sustainable. Haji Alizadeh

et al., (2016) conducted a study on analysis of correlation between governance patterns and citizen participation in Shiraz and concluded that, there is a significant relationship with 99% confidence between governance indicators and citizens' participation. Rahmani Fazli et al., (2017) in their research examined the theoretical foundations of good governance in the process of modern rural management and found out that, governance with various indicators such as transparency and accountability, social justice, trust, awareness, acceptance, and providing grounds for participation, etc. can present a desirable approach to constructing modern rural management and play an impellent role in the process of sustainable rural development through providing participatory grounds for different rural strata including poor villagers, creating jobs, and enhancing economic and social growth. Among the foreign studies. Mdee and Thorley (2016) examined governance in Tanzania according to development program 2025, Young et al., (2011) investigated the application of good local governance in implementation of rural development programs. Rudra (2011) studied good governance and human development in states of India and the results showed that, good governance and human development in previous eras determine the present human development in India. As is clear, in most studies, theoretical discussions of governance and good rural governance have been stated. In practical cases also, the impact of this approach (reduction of poverty,

creating welfare, etc.) and or effective factors (individual characteristics, training, participation, etc.) are examined; therefore, the purposes and process of this study is consistent with the studies of Norouzi & Ebrahimi (2018), Ahmadi & Cheraghi (2017). Yet the difference is that, in this study more emphasis was placed on participation and the effects of the feasibility of good governance in rural areas and the theoretical framework of the study was designed in a way that, the improvement of local management based on indicators of good governance have been evaluated and attempt has been made to take this topic that has not been paid attention to in other studies and despite the previous studies in which only the relationship between the two variables of governance and development was investigated.

### 3. Research Methodology

#### 3.1 Geographical Scope of the Research

Abarkooh town with an area of 5641 square kilometers is located in the distance of  $52^{\circ} 50'$  to  $54^{\circ} 51'$  east longitude and  $30^{\circ} 30'$  to  $31^{\circ} 35'$  north latitude in the west of Yazd province. This city is limited to Taft city from the north, Isfahan province from the northwest, Mehriz city from the east, and Fars province from the southwest. This region has a hot and dry semi-desert climate. The average annual rainfall of this city is 68 mm. according to 2016 census the population of Abarkooh is 51552 people (National Statistical Portal f Iran, 2016). (fig.1)

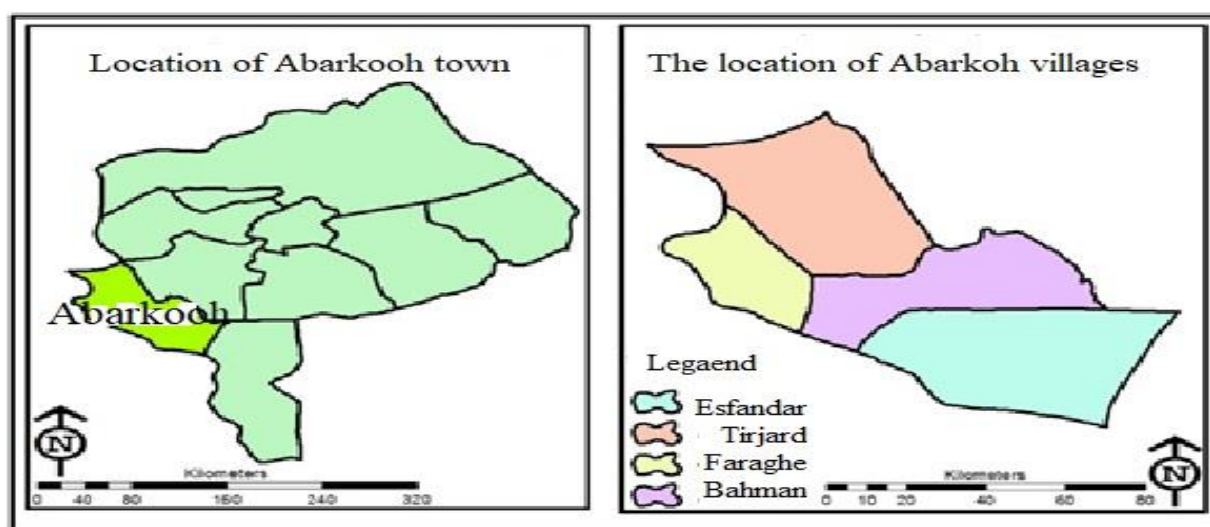


figure 1. Geographical location of the studied area (Abarkooh County)

**Table 1. Educational status of the respondents**

Level of Education	Managers		people	
	Frequency%	frequency	Frequency%	frequency
illiterate	0	0	4.33	12
elementary	0	0	35.38	98
guidance	31.25	10	29.96	83
diploma	37.5	12	19.14	53
Bachelor's degree and higher	25	8	11.19	31
Total	100	32	100	277

The present theoretical study is conducted with applied purposes using the descriptive-analytical method and its data were collected through library resources (taking notes, internet) and field method (questionnaire, interview). The statistical population of the research were the residents of all villages of Abarkooh, rural district governors, and members of Islamic rural council of this town. In the 2016 census this city had 34 inhabited villages with 11660 households and a population of 42610 people. Based on modified Cochran's formula (about limited population) 25% of villages considering Abarkooh districts (4 districts) as statistical classes were selected by random class system which included 8 villages of Ahmad Abad, Harouk, Shams Abad, Deh Arab, Harouni, Shahr Abad, Asad Abad Sofla, and Sadegh Abad. These 8 villages had a total population of 3511 people and 993 households. Then Cochran formula was used to achieve the reasonable volume of sample population. Given the statistical population volume (8 selected villages) 277 households were selected randomly with error level 0.05. Since, in addition to rural households, rural district governors and council members are also influential in governance and participation, an attempt has been made to sample this community as well; on this basis, a total of 32

samples were determined (all council members and rural district governors of 8 villages under study). Specific questions were designed in dimensions of transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, social justice, awareness, social trust, rule of law, acceptance of participation and the questions were designed as a 5-point Likert scale. The validity of the questionnaire was evaluated according to experts' opinions and Cronbach's alpha method was used to determine the reliability of the questionnaire using SPSS and the obtained coefficient was 0.87. descriptive statistics (frequency, frequency %, mean) and inferential statistics (one-sample T-test, Chi-square test, wilcaxon test, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression determination coefficient) were used for data analysis. According to theoretical foundations of the study, in order to achieve the purposes of this research, 7 indicators and 24 items were used in the form of [table 1](#) and in order to evaluate the impact of rural governance on each rural participatory items as a modern rural management approach, 15 items were raised in this regard. ([table 2](#))

**Table 2. Indicators and objects used in the research**

indicator	object	indicator	object
transparency and accountability	Informing the villagers about various issues in the village	awareness	Informing people about their citizenship rights
	Requesting opinions from residents regarding rural programs and plans		Informing people about their duties
	Clarity of procedures and responsibilities in various rural matters	social trust	Criticism of officials
	Creating facilities to receive public complaints		Honesty of officials

	Disclosure of income and assets through holding meetings		Trustworthiness of officials
efficiency and effectiveness	Estimating villagers' satisfaction with the provision of rural services	rule of law	Spend the credits within the budget
	The level of efficiency in achieving the goals of the projects after implementation		Managers' use of authority for the benefit of relatives and friends
	The amount of use of available resources to improve the lives of villagers		Action within the framework of the program and tasks
	The program is centered on villagers and members of the Islamic Council	acceptance of participation	The power of villagers to influence decisions and general issues of the village
Participation of the deprived classes in the administration of affairs	The share of villagers in the management power of the village		
Fair distribution of resources among villagers	Forming the local elected council		
social justice	The use of female consultants in the administration of affairs		The election of the local village manager

## 4. Research Findings

### 4.1. descriptive findings

The results of describing the characteristics of the statistical Population showed that, the most age group of respondents among residents and managers were between 30 to 40 years old. 94.7% of total sample respondent villagers were male and 5.3% were female and 89% of managers were male and 11% of them were female. The average household dimensions for residents and managers were 3.1 and 3 respectively. The literacy status of the respondents are given in [table \(2\)](#).

### 4.2. inferential findings

The inferential findings of the research include several steps; determining the participation rate of villagers, determining the feasibility level of governance in Abarkooh city; identifying significance level and impact of governance indicators on the villagers' participation separately for each index;

explaining the impact rate of governance principles on the items related to rural participation; analyzing the relationship between governance and the villagers' participation.

#### 4.2.1. identifying the rate of the villagers' participation

In order to examine the dimensions of participation among rural community, attempts were made to examine this important matter in various dimensions such as participation in the field of human force (intellectual, cultural, and physical consultation), financial aid (investment, helping in construction), and land donation.

The results of [table 3](#) indicates that, the highest rate of villagers' participation was in the field of human forces and participation in land donation was in second place and financial aid took the last place due to weak financial base of villagers.

**Table 3. The level of participation of the rural people of Abarkooh city in different dimensions**

Type of participation	Very much		much		medium		little		Very little	
	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number
human resource	22.74	63	30.23	84	32.5	90	9.02	25	5.4	15
Financial aid	14.4	40	25.9	72	19.8	55	21.7	60	18.05	50
Donation of land	13.35	37	28.9	80	27.07	75	18.05	50	12.6	35

#### 4.2.2. assessing feasibility of governance indicators

In order to determine the feasibility of rural governance indicators in Abarkooh town, two

cases were taken into consideration. First, the acceptance of governance indicators in the target society was analyzed by t-test and in the next step, Wilcoxon test was used to confirm the feasibility

of governance in the target society in two modes of participation without the influence of governance indicators and participation along with governance.

In the first case, since T-test is a parametric test, it is necessary to check the normality of data distribution before performing it. To investigate this, Kolmogorov Smirnov test was used, and its sig value at the error level of 0.05 equals 0.988 and indicates that, the data have a uniform distribution. T test deals with this issue that, how much the average of a population is less or more than a fixed value. To find out that, the average of the population is higher or less than the tested value, one should refer to the upper limit and lower limit in the test output. If the upper limit and lower limit are both positive, the average of population of that variable is more than the tested value. Also, if the first one is positive and the second one is negative, the average of population is almost equal to tested value. And if both values are negative, the average of the target variable of the population is less than the tested value and

these variables are at a low level in the study population (Seydaii et al., 2013).

According to the results of one sample T-test at 0.95% confidence, the scores of items related to rural governance indicators in Abarkooh town are at a desired level. From 24 items related to 7 studied indicators, only 3 items of disclosure of income and assets through holding meetings with a statistical value of 1.613, related to the indicator of transparency and accountability, the item of program-oriented rural district governors and members of Islamic Council with a value of 1.305, related to the indicator of efficiency and effectiveness and the item of informing people about their citizenship rights with a value of 1.351, related to the indicator of awareness were evaluated at a medium level (table 4).

Also, the final scores of governance indicators according to table 5 show that, from all studied indicators, social trust with a value of 7.149 and social justice with a value of 6.017 are at the highest levels and the indicator of rule of law with a value of 4.041 is at the lowest level (table 5).

**Table 4. The results of one sample T-test of the governance indicator in Abarkooh town**

indicator	object	T test statistic	probability value	Average value	95% confidence interval	
					upper limit	lower limit
transparency and accountability	Informing the villagers about various issues in the village	6.497	0.000	0.4602	0.5997	0.3207
	Requesting opinions from residents regarding rural programs and plans	6.457	0.000	0.4416	0.5763	0.3070
	Clarity of procedures and responsibilities in various rural matters	4.963	0.000	0.4490	0.6272	0.2709
	Creating facilities to receive public complaints	2.728	0.007	0.2260	0.3891	0.0629
	Disclosure of income and assets through holding meetings	1.613	0.012	0.1553	0.3451	-0.034
efficiency and effectiveness	Estimating villagers' satisfaction with the provision of rural services	3.644	0.000	0.2669	0.4111	0.1227
	The level of efficiency in achieving the goals of the projects after implementation	6.363	0.000	0.5791	0.7548	0.4000
	The amount of use of available resources to improve the lives of villagers	3.054	0.000	0.2408	0.3962	0.0856
	The program is centered on villagers and members of the Islamic Council	1.305	0.017	0.0996	0.2500	-0.050
social justice	Participation of the deprived classes in the administration of affairs	5.288	0.000	0.3895	0.5346	0.2445



indicator	object	T test statistic	probability value	Average value	95% confidence interval	
					upper limit	lower limit
	Fair distribution of resources among villagers	8.467	0.000	0.5605	0.6910	0.4302
	The use of female consultants in the administration of affairs	2.92	0.000	0.2037	0.3411	0.0663
awareness	Informing people about their citizenship rights	1.351	0.017	0.1070	0.2631	-0.049
	Informing people about their duties	3.658	0.000	0.2386	0.4839	0.1934
social trust	Criticism of officials	6.872	0.000	0.4862	0.6256	0.3469
	Honesty of officials	4.06	0.000	0.3078	0.4570	0.1586
	Trustworthiness of officials	8.703	0.000	0.6869	0.8424	0.5316
rule of law	Spend the credits within the budget	6.907	0.000	0.5345	0.6870	0.3822
	Managers' use of authority for the benefit of relatives and friends	6.446	0.000	0.5829	0.7609	0.4049
	Action within the framework of the program and tasks	5.440	0.000	0.4007	0.5458	0.2557
acceptance of participation	The power of villagers to influence decisions and general issues of the village	4.887	0.000	0.4379	0.6143	0.2615
	The share of villagers in the management power of the village	7.275	0.000	0.2855	0.3628	0.2082
	Formation of local elected council	6.114	0.000	0.3412	0.4512	0.2314
	The election of the local village manager	2.808	0.005	0.1442	0.2454	0.0431

**Table 5. The final scores of governance indicators based on t-test in Abarkooh town**

indicator	T test statistic	Significance level	Average value	99% confidence interval	
				upper limit	lower limit
transparency and accountability	5.382	0.000	0.2416	0.3300	0.1532
efficiency and effectiveness	4.458	0.000	0.2713	0.3912	0.1515
social justice	6.017	0.000	0.3048	0.4046	0.2051
awareness	4.494	0.000	0.1970	0.2833	0.1107
social trust	7.419	0.000	0.3866	0.4892	0.2840
rule of law	4.041	0.000	0.1747	0.2599	0.0896
acceptance of participation	5.779	0.000	0.2119	0.2841	0.1397

In order to compare the rate of people's participation in rural affairs of Abarkooh town, Wilcoxon rank test was used before and after applying governance approach (table 6).

To find this out, all indicators were desired and based on this, the sum of the answers given to each indicator was compared before and after applying governance approach. The average rate of participation before identifying governance was

2.35 and it was 2.14 after that. And based on this test, the calculated P at 0.05 alpha level with 95% confidence was greater than 0.05 alpha level and thus there is a significant difference between

people's participation before and after identifying governance approach and it shows that, the impact of feasibility of governance indicators on people's participation is at a high level.

**Table 6. Wilcoxon test for the significance of the difference in the participation rate before and after the governance**

Components	Wilcoxon test results
Rank average before governance	2.35
Rank average after governance	2.14
Calculated Z	-1.152
level of significance	0.248

**4. 2. 3. evaluating significance level of the governance indicators' impact on villagers' participation**

Chi-square test was used to assess the significance of governance indicators' impact on villagers' participation in Abarkooh town. The results of this test at a 99% confidence level showed a significant impact of rural governance indicators on villagers' participation in rural affairs of Abarkooh town. Since, according to test output, the significance of all indicators was evaluated less than 0.01; according to Chi-square test rules, it showed a significant impact of

indicators on villagers' participation. Based on Chi-square output, two indicators of transparency and accountability had the highest impact on people's participation and the indicator of awareness with a statistical value of 76.391 had the lowest impact. From all studied indicators, the indicator of managers' acceptance of villagers' participation with a value of 138.404 was in the second rank of influence, indicator of rule of law with a value of 109.193 and social trust with a value of 102.956 were in third and fourth places of influence respectively (table 7).

**Table 7. The significance of the influence of governance indicators on the participation of villagers**

indicator	Chi-square statistics	df	Significance level
transparency and accountability	148.130	4	0.000
efficiency and effectiveness	82.333	3	0.000
social justice	102.956	2	0.000
awareness	76.391	3	0.000
social trust	85.26	3	0.000
rule of law	109.193	4	0.000
acceptance of participation	138.404	4	0.000

In the following, given the significance of rural governance indicators' impact on villagers' participation, single sample T-test was used to assess the impact of rural governance on villagers' participatory items as a modern rural management approach. The results of this test at a 95% confidence level first confirms the results of Chi-square and significance of governance indicators' impact on the dependent variable of the research; since the statistics, upper and lower limits of 13 out of 15 investigated variables were positive and all items were significant at a 0.05 level. Second,

the results showed that, from 15 studied items, the statistical population has evaluated the influence of rural governance on only two variables of participation in financing the cost of carrying out rural projects with a value of -0.717 and participation in the form of free human resources with a value of 0.362 as moderate. In other words, the statistical population has evaluated the impact of rural governance on 13 out of 15 items of rural participation as strong and only two of them as moderate. It is worth mentioning that, among 15 items, the item of villagers' participation in village

construction activities with a value of 9.54 was at the highest level of influence by governance and financing the cost of carrying out rural projects with a value of -0.717 was at the lowest level; therefore, according to T-test output and estimating the statistical values, 12 items were

above the average level and positive (upper and lower limits were positive); thus, it can be concluded that, the feasibility of governance in the study area has led to attracting villagers' participation in rural affairs (table 8).

**Table 8. Measuring the effectiveness of villagers' participation in rural governance**

Indicators of villagers' participation	T test statistic	Significance level	Average value	95% confidence interval	
				upper limit	lower limit
Participation in village construction activities	9.540	0.000	0.7434	1.8970	0.5899
Participating in activities related to revitalizing the environment	4.147	0.000	0.4174	0.2152	0.2500
Participation in activities related to rural services	4.175	0.000	0.4425	0.7471	0.5322
Providing suggestions and comments to managers and planners	3.958	0.009	0.1130	0.3455	0.1194
Participation in local decision-making	8.101	0.000	0.8652	1.0757	0.6548
Participation in village elections (Islamic Council)	2.663	0.008	0.0782	0.3110	0.1544
Monitoring the activities of councils and village councils	2.595	0.002	0.1913	0.2450	0.4276
Criticizing the performance of plans and decisions	8.753	0.000	0.8956	1.0973	0.6940
Informing the problems of the village	7.968	0.000	0.5478	0.6833	0.4124
Criticizing the performance of village officials	5.152	0.000	0.5869	0.8115	0.3625
Membership in non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	2.568	0.004	0.2696	0.3716	0.3107
Participation in village meetings to solve problems	3.643	0.001	0.3783	0.4616	0.3181
Financing the cost of carrying out rural projects	-0.717	0.027	-0.0869	0.1519	-0.3259
Supply Human Resources	-0.362	0.019	-0.0851	0.3884	-0.5288
Providing the necessary physical tools and equipment	2.990	0.029	0.2127	0.2199	0.6454

#### 4. 2. 4. Measuring the relationship between rural governance and villagers' participation

Pearson correlation coefficient and regression analysis were used to carefully examine the effect of each of the indicators of governance "transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, social justice, awareness, social trust, rule of law, acceptance of participation" as independent variables

on villagers' participation in the dimensions of "human resources, financial aid, and land donation" which are (aggregated) as dependent variable and determine the impact of each of these dimensions. Regression analysis is a method for studying the contribution of one or more independent variables in predicting a dependent variable. The correlation test value of 0.712 shows a significant, positive and direct

relationship between the independent and dependent variables of the research. The coefficient of determination and generalized coefficient of determination indicate that, what percentage of changes was explained through the independent variable and this regression model. Here, using a modified coefficient of determination, it can be said

that, 69.4% of changes in villagers' participation is related to feasibility of governance principles in the study area; in other words, it can be claimed that, the total of seven independent governance variables estimates more than half of the rural participation variable at the sample level (table 9).

**Table 9. Correlation coefficient (R) of regression between governance and participation of villagers**

correlation coefficient	coefficient of determination	Adjusted coefficient of determination	Estimated error rate	Sig
0.712	0.694	0.710	0.45286	<0.001

Table 10 shows the results related to the impact rate of each variable in the model and also, the degree of correlation between them based on the B beta coefficient. This coefficient indicates the standardized regression coefficient of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable of the research. Therefore, by using it, it is possible to determine the relative contribution of each independent variable in the model.

Comparing variables reveals that, first, the impact of 5 variables of transparency and accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, awareness, social trust, and acceptance of participation on the dependent variable is significant, while the variables of rule of law and social justice had little or no impact on rural participation due to the fact

that, the error level of their t test was higher than 0.05. Second, the variables of transparency and accountability with a score of 0.271, efficiency and effectiveness with a score of 0.245, awareness with a score of 0.146, social trust with a score of 0.145, and acceptance of participation with a score of 0.109 had the highest impact on the dependent variable.

In general, beta B coefficient shows that for an increase of one standard deviation (for example) in the variable of efficiency and effectiveness, the standard deviation of the rural participation will increase by 0.245, and the rest of the independent variables of governance can also be interpreted in the same way.

**Table 10. Examining the significance level of independent variables on the dependent variable**

indicator	significance level	t	Standard coefficients	Non-standard coefficients	
			Beta coefficient	standard error	B
transparency and accountability	0.000	4.124	0.271	0.03	0.115
efficiency and effectiveness	0.000	4.304	0.245	0.042	0.185
social justice	0.016	2.418	0.146	0.039	0.093
awareness	0.007	2.705	0.145	0.04	0.109
social trust	0.006	1.632	0.109	0.045	0.075
rule of law	0.547	0.602	0.028	0.047	0.028
acceptance of participation	0.227	1.21	0.075	0.047	0.057
dependent variable	0.000	12.856	-	0.082	1.116

According to the results obtained from multivariate regression, it can be said that, there is a significant relationship between the indicators of rural participation and good governance. This means that, there is no significant correlation only between the indicators of rule of law and social justice, while other indicators have a significant correlation, and this

shows the connection and alignment between rural participation and good governance.

### 5. Discussion and conclusion

Today, in progressive societies, the approach of policy makers is transforming from planning for people to planning with people. The tendency to such an approach may be due to the negative impact and

negative results of lack of attention to the role of beneficiaries in centralized decisions. As a result, participation is one of the most important success criteria in planning and without considering its importance, we cannot have much hope for the effectiveness of executive activities. This research has examined the role and position of feasibility of governance in attracting people's participation in Abarkooh city. Indicators such as social trust among villagers and rural managers, social justice in applying villagers' opinions without considering economic status and gender, rule of law, transparency and accountability, awareness, acceptance of villagers' participation and providing participatory grounds by rural managers, and finally efficiency and effectiveness of rural management are important factors in attracting villagers' participation and the approach of rural governance as a modern rural management method has more impact on this matter.

This research is in line with the studies of Heidari Sarban (2019), Norouzi & Ebrahimi (2018), Ahmadi & Cheraghi (2017), Rahmani Fazli et al., (2015) in terms of good rural governance; however,

in this study the relation between governance and participation has been examined from a different point of view. According to the results of this study, it was determined that, the highest rate of villagers' participation was in the field of human resources participation and land donation was in second place and financial aid was in the last place due to weak financial base of villagers. Based on single sample T-test, the acceptance level of rural governance indicators in Abarkooh town is at the desired level and it was at a high level for most indicators, especially for indicators of transparency and accountability. According to Wilcoxon test, governance has led to higher participation of rural people in the duties than before. Also, the correlation coefficient above 0.7 and regression coefficient of 0.69 show that, there is a direct and significant relationship between two

variables of rural governance and villagers' participation at 99% level. Also, according to Chi-square test it was revealed that, the governance indicators had significant impact on villagers' participation in Abarkooh town. The regression determination coefficient shows that, 69.4% of changes in the total level of rural participation is dependent to the

feasibility of governance in Abarkooh town. On this basis, although rural people of Abarkooh Town do not have a strong economic base for financial affairs and investment, they can play an important role in the field of human resources participation such as intellectual consultation, physical assistance and also creation of local institutions, and they can also be helpful in solving the problems of their living environment and physical and cultural reforms by interacting with rural district governors and council members. Without a doubt, creating a cooperative socio-cultural platform among villagers' through conducting meetings and informing them about the advantages and benefits of participation in rural affairs; providing grounds for acceptance of rural participation in plans and decisions by institutions and authorities and applying people's opinions and suggestions in decision making and planning can play a crucial role in the feasibility of governance in the villages and increasing villagers' participation. Transparency and accountability in executive performance of rural district governors and informing people could be among other solutions in this field.

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#### **Authors' contributions**

The authors equally contributed to the preparation of this article.

#### **Conflict of interest**

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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## ارزیابی تحقق‌پذیری مشارکت روستایی مبتنی بر شاخص‌های حکمروایی خوب (مورد مطالعه: شهرستان ابرکوه)

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### چکیده مبسوط

#### ۱. مقدمه

توسعه روستایی، فرایندی چندبعدی و متضمن بهبود مستمر زندگی و کیفیت آن در جامعه روستایی است؛ به بیان دیگر توسعه روستایی، راهبردی است که برای بهبود زندگی اقتصادی و اجتماعی روستاییان فقیر تدوین شده است. امروزه بیشتر صاحب‌نظران توسعه روستایی معتقدند که دستیابی به توسعه پایدار بدون مشارکت آحاد مردم ممکن نیست و بدون تردید با مشارکت مردم دوره گذار توسعه، تسهیل، تسریع و کم هزینه تر می‌شود. حکمروایی با مردم‌سالاری و توسعه اجتماعی اقتصادی، ارتباط مستقیم و تنگاتنگی دارد و امروزه بحث اصلی در گفتمان توسعه به حساب می‌آید یا به عبارت دیگر، حکمروایی روستایی را امری جوهری در فرآیند توسعه پایدار روستایی به حساب آورده‌اند تا آنجا که سازمان ملل، آن را تنها عامل مهم در کاهش و محو فقر و پیشبرد توسعه به شمار آورده است.

این پژوهش سعی دارد که ضمن بررسی و تحلیل میزان و چگونگی تحقق شاخص‌های حکمروایی خوب در نواحی روستایی شهرستان ابرکوه، عامل مشارکت را نیز مورد بررسی قرار داده و تأثیر و تأثرات آن را مورد ارزیابی قرار دهد و به دنبال پاسخگویی به این سؤالات خواهد بود:

تا چه حد شاخص‌های حکمروایی خوب در نواحی روستایی شهرستان ابرکوه تحقق یافته است؟

تأثیر استقرار شاخص‌های حکمروایی خوب در نواحی مورد نظر بر مشارکت مردم روستایی چه اندازه بوده است؟

#### ۲. مبانی نظری تحقیق

برای تعریف مشارکت، به بیان سه تفسیر در خصوص مشارکت می‌پردازد که عبارت‌اند از: مشارکت به عنوان سهم داشتن، مشارکت به عنوان سازمان‌دهی و مشارکت به عنوان توانمندسازی. حکمروایی، اعمال قدرت سیاسی، اداری و اقتصادی در مدیریت امور کشورها و در سطوح مختلف (کلان تا محلی) است که در قالب یک فرآیند، افراد و گروه‌ها می‌توانند به منافع خود دست یابند. در واقع حکمرانی خوب، مدیریت کارآمد امور عمومی از راه برپا کردن یک حکومت و قواعد مشروع و قانونی در راستای پیشبرد ارزش‌های اجتماعی افراد و گروه‌ها است. حکمروایی خوب روستایی عبارت است از تأثیرگذاری همه‌ارکان دخیل روستایی بر مدیریت روستایی، با تمام سازوکارهایی که با آن‌ها بتوان به سوی تعالی و پیشرفت روستا و مردم روستایی حرکت کرد؛ به عبارت دیگر، به اجرا درآوردن تصمیمات و سیاست‌های مردم روستایی، هم سو با منافعشان و سازگار با منافع ملی، منطقه‌ای و محلی است.

در این میان نقش دولت‌ها بیشتر در چارچوب فراهم‌کننده بسترهای سخت‌افزاری و نرم‌افزاری، از جمله هماهنگ‌سازی و پاسداری از قوانین و میثاق‌های ملی محدود می‌شود و از دخالت مستقیم در تصمیم‌گیری و همچنین اداره و اجرای امور مربوط به زندگی مردم کاسته می‌شود.

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### ۳. روش تحقیق

پژوهش حاضر از نظر ماهیت کاربردی می‌باشد. روش تحقیق آن توصیفی-تحلیلی و داده‌های آن از طریق منابع کتابخانه‌ای شامل (فیش‌برداری، اینترنت) و میدانی (پرسشنامه، مصاحبه) فراهم گردیده است. جامعه آماری تحقیق شامل ساکنین کلیه روستاهای شهرستان ابرکوه، دهیاران و اعضای شورای اسلامی روستایی این شهرستان می‌باشند. پرسشنامه‌ها از دو بخش سؤالات عمومی و اختصاصی تشکیل شده است. سؤالات اختصاصی در ابعاد شفافیت و پاسخگویی، کارایی و اثربخشی، عدالت اجتماعی، آگاهی، اعتماد اجتماعی، قانون‌مداری، پذیرش مشارکت و به‌صورت طیف پنج‌گزینه‌ای لیکرت طراحی شده است. روایی پرسشنامه بر اساس نظر کارشناسان بررسی و از روش آلفای کرونباخ برای تعیین پایایی پرسشنامه با استفاده از نرم‌افزار SPSS استفاده شده که ضریب به دست آمده ۰/۸۷ بوده است. برای تجزیه و تحلیل داده‌ها نیز از آمار توصیفی (فراوانی، درصد فراوانی، میانگین) و آمار استنباطی (آزمون T تک نمونه‌ای، آزمون خی دو، ویلکاکسون، ضریب همبستگی پیرسون و ضریب تعیین رگرسیون) استفاده شده است.

### ۴. یافته‌های تحقیق

بر اساس نتایج به دست آمده از رگرسیون چندمتغیره می‌توان گفت، بین شاخص‌های مشارکت روستایی و حکمروایی خوب، رابطه معناداری وجود دارد. بدین معنا که فقط در شاخص‌های قانون-مداری و عدالت اجتماعی همبستگی معناداری دیده نمی‌شود، در حالی که سایر شاخص‌ها از همبستگی معناداری برخوردارند و این امر نشان‌دهنده ارتباط و همسویی بین مشارکت روستایی و حکمروایی خوب است.

### ۵. بحث و نتیجه‌گیری

در این پژوهش به بررسی نقش و جایگاه تحقق حکمروایی بر جذب مشارکت مردم شهرستان ابرکوه پرداخته شده است. شاخص‌هایی همچون اعتماد اجتماعی مابین روستاییان و مدیران روستایی، عدالت اجتماعی در کاربست نظرات روستاییان بدون در نظر گرفتن

جایگاه اقتصادی و جنسیت، قانون‌مداری، شفافیت و پاسخگویی، آگاهی، پذیرش مشارکت روستاییان و فراهم نمودن زمینه مشارکتی روستاییان از طریق مدیران روستایی و در نهایت کارا و اثربخش بودن مدیریت روستایی از عوامل مهم در جذب مشارکت روستاییان بوده و رویکرد حکمروایی روستایی به‌عنوان روش نوین مدیریت روستایی بر این امر تاثیر بیشتری دارد.

بر اساس آزمون T تک نمونه‌ای، سطح پذیرش شاخص‌های حکمروایی روستایی در شهرستان ابرکوه در سطح مطلوبی قرار دارد و در عمده شاخص‌ها بخصوص شاخص شفافیت و پاسخگویی در حد بالایی بوده و بر اساس آزمون ویلکاکسون، حکمروایی توانسته باعث مشارکت بیشتر مردم روستایی در امور محوله نسبت به قبل گردد. همچنین ضریب همبستگی بالای ۰/۷ و ضریب رگرسیون ۰/۶۹ نشان می‌دهد که مابین دو متغیر حکمروایی روستایی و سطح مشارکتی روستاییان در سطح ۹۹ درصد رابطه مستقیم و معناداری وجود دارد. همچنین بر اساس آزمون خی دو مشخص گردید که شاخص‌های حکمروایی تأثیر معناداری بر مشارکت روستاییان در شهرستان ابرکوه داشته‌اند. ضریب تعیین رگرسیون نیز نشان می‌دهد که ۶۹،۴ درصد تغییر در سطح کل مشارکت روستاییان به سطح تحقق حکمروایی در شهرستان ابرکوه وابسته است.

بر این مبنا اگرچه مردم روستایی شهرستان ابرکوه، بنیه اقتصادی زیادی برای مشارکت در امور مالی و سرمایه‌گذاری ندارند، ولی در زمینه مشارکت نیروی انسانی اعم از مشورت فکری، کمک فیزیکی و همچنین ایجاد نهادهای محلی می‌توانند در تعامل با دهیاران و اعضای شوراها در رفع مشکلات محیط زندگی خود و اصلاحات کالبدی و فرهنگی نقش داشته باشند.

**کلید واژه‌ها:** مشارکت، حکمروایی خوب، معیارهای حکمروایی، شهرستان ابرکوه.

### تشکر و قدردانی

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