

Identification and Prioritization of Factors Affecting the Cultural Model of Good Governance in Bodies Overseeing Government Performance Using Fuzzy ANP Method

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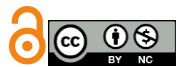
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ABSTRACT

Objective: The aim of the current research is to identify the effective factors on the cultural model of good governance in government performance monitoring agencies using the Fuzzy ANP method.

Methodology: This research is considered applied in terms of its goal and is of a mixed nature. The research population, in a qualitative framework, consists of academic experts and specialists in government performance monitoring agencies, of which 10 individuals were selected through purposive judgment sampling. The data collection tool in this research is the Delphi questionnaire.

Findings: The main factors affecting good cultural governance were identified based on the research background and expert opinions, based on structure, law, and value, and a total of 11 sub-criteria were also determined for the main factors.

Conclusion: The results of the research indicate that the legal dimension was the most significant factor affecting the cultural model of good governance in government performance monitoring agencies, followed by value and structural factors in subsequent ranks. The main reasons affecting good governance based on culture relate to professional ethics, the suitability of culture with requirements, and the presence of a value system. In this regard, the enumeration of ethical principles in the organization and their institutionalization can be effective.

Keywords: Good governance, Culture, Fuzzy ANP, Government performance monitoring agencies

1 Introduction

Following the numerous ups and downs in the evolution of development thought, the theory of good governance, i.e., the manner of governing a country,

decision-making processes, and the nature of interaction between the government and the people, has been proposed as the foundation of development (Amir et al., 2023; Barbier & Tengeh, 2023; Karyatun et al., 2023). International financial institutions such as the World Bank and the

International Monetary Fund all believe that good governance is a vital necessity for facilitating the realization of development programs. In recent decades, especially in the 2010s, extensive research has been conducted on public administration and selecting the best governance framework, among which the World Bank's research holds a special place (Peyghan et al., 2022; Rezaei Lori et al., 2022; Su et al., 2023). Governance is a broad concept that is directly related to areas such as the economic environment or, in other words, economic security, politics, society, and law.

In good governance, there is a close relationship between the three main pillars: the government, civil society, and the private sector. The existing partnership ensures that public affairs are managed more correctly and optimally. The correct relationship between the mentioned three pillars facilitates the realization of good governance in various dimensions. In good governance, these three pillars are considered as the main elements (Deghati et al., 2021; Kaufmann & Lafarre, 2021).

Good governance, with the mentioned characteristics, does not form in a vacuum but requires opportunities and favorable conditions such as elite consensus, development-oriented will in the government, a development-seeking society, value and cultural cohesion in society, consensus on fundamental goals in the development process, and strengthening supervisory mechanisms (Panahy et al., 2022; Peyghan et al., 2022). Due to the cultural diversity in countries and the difference between governance styles in developed and developing countries, introducing cultural indicators into the body of good governance and the correlation between culture and politics can create the necessary foundation for optimal governance, especially in terms of supervision (Massey, 2022; Nabaviyan et al., 2021; Zareei & Araei, 2021).

Unfortunately, what is evident is the diminishing role of cultural indicators in the process of implementing good governance and merely focusing on universal principles in this governance style without integrating it with cultural indicators. In the Islamic Republic of Iran, due to the characteristics of republicanism, Islamism, and religious democracy, good governance holds a special place. In such a government, emphasizing cultural participation, creating confidence, cultural justice, and intercultural tendencies are among the issues that should be considered. The problem here is that these concepts remain merely slogans, and in practice, the mentioned cultural values are ignored in the process of executive activities and the manner of supervision and governance, especially in governmental supervisory

organizations. Attention to cultural values and establishing a connection with politics and governance methods in human societies will lead to growth, excellence, and optimal performance (Nabaviyan et al., 2021). Due to the unique culture of the country and also the emphasis on political culture rooted in the beliefs and political values of the people of this country, the manner of performance, governance, and supervision should naturally have a specific cultural flavor to be understandable and implementable by officials and acceptable and obeyable by citizens, or in other words, applicants (Nabaviyan et al., 2021; Payste et al., 2020). Culture is not just something common among members of a cultural society but is assumed by members of this society. Also, since culture is distributive, not all components of a cultural system are evenly distributed among all members of a cultural group but rather a kind of intelligent division of labor occurs. In other words, each person possesses specific individual knowledge that enables him to individually participate in the collective actions of a cultural society (Morshedzad, 2017; Sepehrnia et al., 2019).

Unfortunately, the bureaucratic malaise in supervisory organizations and the lack of internalization of good governance indicators, even the lack of familiarity of the implementers, have led to the lofty goals of good governance not being properly implemented due to not being localized and mixed with cultural components, and the role of culture and its affinity with politics and governance components can be very helpful in this context. Good governance is the comprehensive management and guidance of a country within the framework of national interests. Therefore, achieving a desirable governance based on values, ideologies, and the national culture of the country can play a significant role in directing and guiding the manner of supervision in a direction that does not conflict with the values and ideals of the system as well as the national culture (Gholipor et al., 2020; Nabaviyan et al., 2021; Rahnavaard & Abbaspour, 2007).

Good governance must accept the rule of supervision as an important precondition for efficiency and accountability and, on the other hand, demonstrate and continue its commitment to this issue in practice. To date, the role of culture in good governance and the interaction of culture with the pillars of good governance and its impact on good governance has not been investigated. In good governance, formal external independent supervisory institutions should be considered complementary and accompanying in optimal management, engaged in supervisory duties, and regularly convey systemic and performance errors to decision-makers

and management actors (Panahy et al., 2022; Zareei & Araei, 2021). However, it seems that supervisory institutions such as the Court of Audit and the General Inspection Organization, within the framework of official rules and regulations without the support of the community's culture and without creating appropriate culture-building, cannot implement the pillars of good governance in their own agencies and supervised executive agencies, and it seems that designing a cultural model can recognize the role of culture while analyzing and presenting necessary analyses regarding its priorities. With this definition of the cultural model, it must be seen what good governance means within the cultural model of the society under study. What are its indicators?

Given the existing theoretical and intellectual gaps regarding cultural models, the purpose of conducting this research is to identify and prioritize the factors affecting good governance based on culture in government performance monitoring agencies. Accordingly, the main research questions are as follows:

What elements affect good governance based on culture in government performance monitoring agencies?

How are these elements prioritized and ordered?

2 Methods and Materials

This study is applied in purpose and employs a mixed-method research approach. The first part of the research consists of interviews with experts. Experts are selected based on recommendations from academic experts, thesis advisors, consultants, and individuals with at least 10 years of work experience in government performance monitoring agencies, familiarity with good governance and the research topic, availability, and holding a minimum of a doctoral degree, using purposive sampling and excluding irrelevant cases. A total of 10 experts are identified and selected.

The Analytic Hierarchy Process (AHP), one of the most famous techniques for multi-criteria decision making, was developed by Thomas L. Saaty in the 1970s. The ability to analyze a decision-making problem into a hierarchical structure is fundamental to the use of the AHP method, and it requires that the preferences at one level be independent of the elements at lower levels. However, decision levels are not always independent and are usually interactive. Given this, AHP may produce unreliable results. Because the AHP

method lacked comprehensiveness, Saaty introduced an extended method called the Analytic Network Process (ANP) in 1980. Indeed, he presented the ANP as an extension of the AHP. In the real world, many multi-criteria decision-making issues cannot be considered in a hierarchical structure due to internal and external dependencies and relationships and interactions between the elements at decision-making levels. Therefore, ANP, with its comprehensive and inclusive framework, can consider all interactions and relationships between decision-making levels that form a network structure. In recent years, the ANP method has been extensively discussed in multi-purpose decision-making and for solving complex decision-making problems. The ANP feedback approach replaces the hierarchical structure with a network structure because the hierarchical structure with top-down linear relationships may not be suitable for complex systems. In the ANP method, the positions of options and criteria can be interchanged, meaning that options can also be presented as criteria. The AHP method is suggested for solving problems where there is independence between options and criteria, and the ANP method is for solving problems where dependencies exist between options or criteria. As AHP provides a basis for hierarchical structures with one-way relationships, ANP also allows for complex internal relationships between different decision levels and criteria.

The ANP method also uses pairwise comparison matrices to rate and rank preferences, where the input data are definitive numbers. In cases where the input data are ambiguous, this matrix cannot be used. To address this issue, researchers have presented a model that utilizes the ANP method in a fuzzy environment. The difference between the presented model and the usual ANP method lies in the extraction of importance weights from the pairwise comparison matrix, and the other steps are identical to the usual ANP method.

3 Findings and Results

Given the thorough and appropriate understanding of the research experts about the research field and the questions posed therein, initially, the extracted criteria and sub-criteria were provided to them, thereby obtaining the final criteria and sub-criteria. Subsequently, these final criteria and sub-criteria were examined and prioritized by the staff.

Table 1

Criteria and Sub-criteria

Main Criterion	Sub-criterion
Legal Dimensions	Adherence to norms
	Transparency in organizational norms
	Consistency in organizational norms
	Strength of organizational norms
	Decisiveness of organizational norms
Value Dimensions	Professional ethics
	Compatibility of culture with requirements
	Presence of a value system
Structural Dimensions	Ability in change management
	Organic structuring
	Compatibility of leadership style with requirements

Based on the questionnaire questions and the defined linguistic variables, the fuzzy mean of each component was calculated using the following relationships: Furthermore, using the Minkowski formula ($\mu_{df}(R)=(a+2b+c)/4$), the

obtained fuzzy numbers were converted into definite numbers (de-fuzzified mean). Table 2 displays the results from analyzing the responses to Questionnaire One (First Round).

Table 2

Expert Opinions Mean (First Round)

No.	Dimension	Component	Mean	Fuzzy Mean	De-fuzzified Mean
1	Legal Dimension	Adherence to norms	4.42	(0.96, 0.85, 0.60)	0.818
2		Transparency in organizational norms	4.50	(0.98, 0.88, 0.63)	0.839
3		Consistency in organizational norms	4.33	(0.98, 0.83, 0.58)	0.807
4		Strength of organizational norms	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
5		Decisiveness of organizational norms	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
6	Value Dimension	Professional ethics	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
7		Compatibility of culture with requirements	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
8		Presence of a value system	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
9	Structural Dimension	Ability in change management	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
10		Organic structuring	4.42	(1.00, 0.85, 0.60)	0.828
11		Compatibility of leadership style with requirements	4.50	(1.00, 0.88, 0.63)	0.844

In the next step, the mean opinion of the experts along with Questionnaire One (Second Round) was sent back to the individuals. Essentially, based on this approach, each

expert can compare their opinion with the average opinions and, if desired, modify their previous opinions. Table 3 shows the results of Questionnaire One (Second Round).

Table 3

Expert Opinions Mean (Second Round)

No.	Dimension	Component	Mean	Fuzzy Mean	De-fuzzified Mean
1	Legal Dimension	Adherence to norms	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
2		Transparency in organizational norms	4.50	(1.00, 0.88, 0.63)	0.844
3		Consistency in organizational norms	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
4		Strength of organizational norms	4.67	(1.00, 0.92, 0.67)	0.875
5		Decisiveness of organizational norms	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
6	Value Dimension	Professional ethics	4.75	(1.00, 0.94, 0.69)	0.891
7		Compatibility of culture with requirements	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
8		Presence of a value system	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
9	Structural Dimension	Ability in change management	4.67	(1.00, 0.92, 0.67)	0.875
10		Organic structuring	4.58	(1.00, 0.90, 0.65)	0.859
11		Compatibility of leadership style with requirements	4.50	(1.00, 0.88, 0.63)	0.844

In the third phase, the degree of difference in experts' opinions (the difference between the first and second round fuzzy means) was calculated. If the calculated difference is

less than 0.2, the Fuzzy Delphi process is stopped; otherwise, the process continues. Table 4 shows the difference in experts' opinions mean.

Table 4

Difference in Expert Opinions in Questionnaire One

No.	Factors	Components	De-fuzzified Mean (1)	De-fuzzified Mean (2)	Difference in Opinions
1	Legal Dimension	Adherence to norms	0.818	0.859	0.041
2		Transparency in organizational norms	0.839	0.844	0.005
3		Consistency in organizational norms	0.807	0.859	0.052
4		Strength of organizational norms	0.828	0.875	0.047
5		Decisiveness of organizational norms	0.828	0.859	0.031
6	Value Dimension	Professional ethics	0.828	0.891	0.063
7		Compatibility of culture with requirements	0.828	0.859	0.031
8		Presence of a value system	0.828	0.875	0.047
9	Structural Dimension	Ability in change management	0.828	0.859	0.031
10		Organic structuring	0.859	0.891	0.032
11		Compatibility of leadership style with requirements	0.828	0.859	0.031

Given that the difference in the mean of all components is less than 0.2, it can be concluded that there is a good consensus among experts, and there is no further need to resend the questionnaire. Finally, to extract components, a threshold for acceptance or rejection of those components is determined. In this study, based on the 80-20 rule, the acceptable limit for the components is approximately 0.8. If the de-fuzzified value of the triangular fuzzy number, according to expert opinion, is close to 0.8 or higher, it is accepted as a component; otherwise, it is not accepted. Thus,

all items were confirmed by experts as effective factors on good governance based on culture.

To investigate the cause-and-effect relationships (influence and susceptibility) among the factors affecting good governance based on culture, the same group of experts was asked to make pairwise comparisons, and these opinions were converted to corresponding fuzzy linguistic values, eventually calculating the fuzzy mean of expert opinions according to the following formula.

Table 5 shows the direct fuzzy relationship matrix of factors affecting good governance based on culture.

Table 5

Direct Fuzzy Relationship Matrix of Factors Affecting Good Governance Based on Culture

DM	Factors	C1	C2	C3
C1	Legal Dimension	(0.25, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.73, 0.48, 0.23)	(0.75, 0.50, 0.25)
C2	Value Dimension	(0.48, 0.23, 0.00)	(0.25, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.60, 0.35, 0.10)
C3	Structural Dimension	(0.69, 0.44, 0.19)	(0.69, 0.44, 0.19)	(0.25, 0.00, 0.00)

After creating the direct fuzzy relationship matrix of factors affecting good governance based on culture, this matrix should be transformed into a normalized direct

relationship matrix. Table 6 shows the normalized direct relationship matrix of factors affecting good cultural governance.

Table 6

Normalized Direct Relationship Matrix of Factors Affecting Good Governance Based on Culture

DM	Factors	C1	C2	C3
C1	Legal Dimension	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.29, 0.19, 0.09)	(0.30, 0.20, 0.10)
C2	Value Dimension	(0.19, 0.09, 0.00)	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.24, 0.14, 0.04)
C3	Structural Dimension	(0.27, 0.17, 0.07)	(0.27, 0.17, 0.07)	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)

After calculating the normalized direct relationship matrix of factors affecting good governance based on

culture, the collective relationship matrix of factors affecting good governance based on culture is computed.

Table 7

Collective Relationship Matrix of Factors Affecting Good Governance Based on Culture

DM	Factors	C1	C2	C3	Ri
C1	Legal Dimension	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.29, 0.19, 0.09)	(0.30, 0.20, 0.10)	(0.31, 0.21, 0.12)
C2	Value Dimension	(0.19, 0.09, 0.00)	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.24, 0.14, 0.04)	(0.31, 0.21, 0.12)
C3	Structural Dimension	(0.27, 0.17, 0.07)	(0.27, 0.17, 0.07)	(0.10, 0.00, 0.00)	(0.31, 0.21, 0.12)
Di		(0.26, 0.16, 0.06)	(0.26, 0.16, 0.06)	(0.26, 0.16, 0.06)	(0.26, 0.16, 0.06)

Subsequently, using the collective relationship matrix of factors affecting good governance based on culture, the

values which correspond to the sum of rows and columns of the collective relationship matrix of factors are calculated.

Table 8

$\tilde{R}_i, \tilde{D}_i, \tilde{R}_i + \tilde{D}_i, \tilde{R}_i - \tilde{D}_i, (\tilde{R}_i + \tilde{D}_i)^{def}, (\tilde{R}_i - \tilde{D}_i)^{def}$ Values

Factors	Legal Dimension	Value Dimension	Structural Dimension
\tilde{R}	(8.71, 2.12, 0.35)	(6.09, 0.70, 0.15)	(6.65, 0.88, 0.18)
\tilde{D}	(7.63, 1.82, 0.15)	(7.78, 1.05, 0.32)	(7.71, 0.96, 0.05)
$\tilde{R} + \tilde{D}$	(16.34, 3.94, 0.50)	(13.88, 1.75, 0.47)	(13.85, 1.83, 0.43)
$\tilde{R} - \tilde{D}$	(0.19, 0.09, 0.00)	(0.26, 0.16, 0.06)	(0.30, 0.20, 0.10)
$(\tilde{R} + \tilde{D})^{def}$	6.93	5.37	5.37
$(\tilde{R} - \tilde{D})^{def}$	0.53	-0.74	-0.24

If the value of any factor becomes positive, the factor belongs to the cause group and is definitely an influencing element. However, if the value becomes negative, the factor belongs to the effect group and is considered an influenced element. Also, represents the total intensity of an element (along the axis of lengths) both as an influencer and as being influenced.

The pairwise comparison of the four factors based on the 9-point quantitative scale is conducted according to the Fuzzy Analytic Hierarchy Process (FAHP). The prioritization result (fuzzy and definite weights) of factors, the inconsistency rate based on the Gogus and Boucher method (less than 0.1), and the resultant weighted vector, W21, are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

Prioritization (Weight) of Factors, Consistency Ratio, and Weighted Vector (W21)

Inconsistency Rate	Definite Weight	Fuzzy Weight	Factors Affecting Good Governance Based on Culture
CRm = 0.05	0.289	(0.444, 0.265, 0.158)	Legal Dimension C1
	0.273	(0.420, 0.250, 0.148)	Value Dimension C2
CRg = 0.06	0.235	(0.360, 0.215, 0.130)	Structural Dimension C3

As observed, the Legal Dimension (weight 0.289) is of higher importance compared to the other factors. The second priority is the Value Dimension (weight 0.273), and the third priority is the Structural Dimension (weight 0.235).

4 Discussion and Conclusion

The present research aimed to identify and prioritize the factors affecting good governance based on culture in

government performance monitoring agencies using the ANP method. After reviewing the literature and research background, the criteria and sub-criteria were identified in the form of legal, value, and structural dimensions. The sub-components related to the legal dimension include adherence to norms, transparency in organizational norms, consistency in organizational norms, strength of organizational norms, and decisiveness of organizational norms. The sub-components related to the value dimension include professional ethics, compatibility of culture with requirements, and the presence of a value system. The sub-components related to the structural dimension include change management, organic structuring, and compatibility of leadership style with requirements. The ANP method analysis of the identified criteria indicated that the legal dimension has the highest priority. This means that, from the respondents' perspective, the main reasons affecting good governance based on culture in government performance monitoring agencies relate to adherence to norms, transparency in organizational norms, consistency in organizational norms, strength of organizational norms, and decisiveness of organizational norms. It is recommended that the content of organizational decisions and actions and top managers be periodically reviewed from the perspective of compliance with the organizational normative system. Also, the organizational normative system should be clarified and streamlined, and adherence to norms should be periodically reviewed. The results of this study are consistent with the findings of previous studies (Amir et al., 2023; Deghati et al., 2021; Gholipor et al., 2020; Karyatun et al., 2023; Morshedzad, 2017; Nabaviyan et al., 2021; Panahy et al., 2022; Payste et al., 2020; Peyghan et al., 2022; Rahnavard & Abbaspour, 2007; Rezaei Lori et al., 2022; Sepehri et al., 2019; Zareei & Araei, 2021).

After the legal dimension, the value dimension has the highest priority. This means that, from the respondents' perspective, the main reasons affecting good governance based on culture relate to professional ethics, compatibility of culture with requirements, and the presence of a value system. In this regard, enumerating ethical principles in the organization and institutionalizing them can be effective. Given the qualitative nature of the present research, conducting longitudinal studies and seeking opinions from more experts in the research field can lead to more generalizable results. Furthermore, this research focused only on prioritizing the identified factors, and it is expected that future research aiming at effective strategies on the phenomenon of good cultural governance or identifying

inhibiting and promoting factors of this organizational phenomenon could achieve more results.

Authors' Contributions

All authors have contributed significantly to the research process and the development of the manuscript.

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 research, ethical standards including obtaining informed consent, ensuring privacy and confidentiality were observed.

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