



## Analyzing the Efficiency of Post-Islamic Revolution Governments from the Perspective of Transparency and Corruption Control Indicators in Good Governance (Emphasizing the Khatami and Rouhani Governments)

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### Abstract

Good governance addresses how governments manage societies. It plays a special role in the efficiency of governments. The present research, utilizing a descriptive-analytical method, library studies, and survey investigations, aims to analyze the efficiency of post-Islamic Revolution governments from the viewpoints of transparency and corruption control, emphasizing the Khatami and Rouhani governments. For this purpose, a questionnaire consisting of 20 items, including transparency and corruption control indicators based on the Cochran formula, was distributed randomly among 384 professors and postgraduate students specializing in political science in the universities of Gilan province. The results obtained from the analysis of collected data, using SPSS software and conducting Chi-square and Friedman tests, showed the results of the Chi-square test with a significance level equal to 0.021 and less than 0.05. The impact of transparency and corruption control indicators among the indices of good governance on the efficiency of Khatami and Rouhani governments is confirmed. Also, considering the extracted average rankings, from a statistical community perspective, the presidency of Seyed Mohammad Khatami in the years (1997-2005) has been more efficient than the presidency of Hassan Rouhani (2013-2021) in terms of these two indicators.

**Keywords:** Efficiency, post-Islamic Revolution governments, good governance, transparency, corruption control, Khatami and Rouhani governments

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## Introduction

Good governance that is based on transparent and accountable management in a country aims to ensure fair and sustainable economic and social development. It is crucial as the outcome of the interaction and functioning of all branches of a country; Governments are entrusted to establish a strong position among citizens by relying on this concept and presenting its branches in the country's domain. One of the reasons for addressing good governance is its role in the efficiency of governments. After the victory of the Islamic Revolution and the establishment of governments based on the principles of republicanism and Islamism, the effectiveness of these governments has been realized based on the indicators of good governance considered by intellectuals. The authors of this research attempt to explain the effectiveness of Khatami's (1376-1384) and Rouhani's (1392-1400) governments within the framework of transparency and corruption control indicators in good governance. From this perspective, the administration of the country in the aforementioned periods, based on relatively common intellectual approaches, is compared for the effectiveness of these governments from the perspective of statistical society. Therefore, the indicators of good governance are considered independent variables, and the efficiency of the government, as a dependent variable.

## Theoretical Foundations

### Efficiency

Efficiency has multiple definitions and applications, especially in economics,

management, and politics. Essentially, it means being useful, serving, and "the impact of effectiveness, efficiency, and benefit." The term efficient also means "tested, complete, and beneficial," and efficiency refers to competence and what is useful (Behrouz Lak et al., 2018, p. 101). Efficiency is a common concept in the three realms of management, economics, and politics. It is defined as success in achieving defined goals or carrying out a mission. In political science terminology, this concept is defined as effectiveness, influence, competence, capability, and suitability (Atar and Kamali Zadeh, 2017, p. 4).

### Governance

Governance is defined as government, rule, and leadership. The United Nations Human Settlements Center defines governance as "a set of individual and institutional actions, both public and private, for joint planning and management of public affairs. It is a continuous process of creating understanding among conflicting interests to move in participatory and compatible actions, including formal institutions and informal arrangements and the social capital of citizens" (Damavandi Kenari et al., 2022, p. 1290).

### Good Governance

Good governance is a concept that includes criteria, standards, procedures, and principles of governance through which governments carry out public affairs, manage public resources, and guarantee human rights (Zarei, 2004, p. 1). This concept, derived from the institutional theory, is the product of the participation of three institutions: government, the private sector, and civil society (Sameti et al., 2011, p. 183). The World Bank defines this

concept in terms of indicators such as freedom of expression and responsiveness, political stability, government efficiency, quality of laws and regulations, rule of law, and control of corruption (Saeed and Roshan, 2010, p. 149). The first proposition in the governance theory is that only the people of a country can write their own development story, and any prescription without considering the society's indigenous, historical, and social conditions will not be useful. Downsizing the government in the good governance approach has transformed into empowering the government, and government administration has evolved from public management to public governance (Bahrami et al., 2019, p. 29). Good governance is in a reciprocal relationship with efficiency, as relying on good governance indicators leads to political stability and, consequently, the efficiency of the governing system. The Islamic Republic of Iran, as one of the last ideological political systems of the twentieth century, continues its existence despite differences with the new atmosphere

dominating the national and international arena. Undoubtedly, continuing this process requires the system to adapt to the new requirements of the global society, a necessity that is achieved through attention to good governance indicators and moving towards improving the performance and efficiency of this political system (Doust Mohammadi and Ekhtiyari Amiri, 2019, p. 91). Good governance means creating processes and conditions by which the needs of society are met while utilizing resources. To examine this important concept, the World Bank has identified six indicators, including freedom of expression and responsiveness, political stability and non-violence, government efficiency, quality of regulations/bureaucracy, rule of law, and control of corruption (Parchami and Jalali, 2016, p. 116).

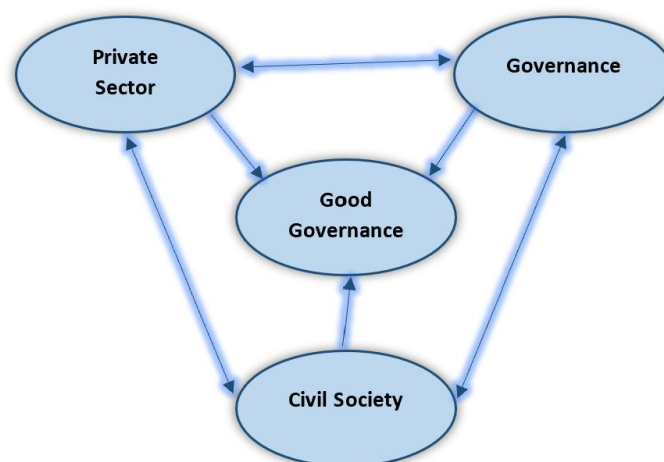


Figure 1: Pillars of good governance

Source: (Heidari Farzaneh et al., 2022, p. 1212)

### Transparency in good governance

Good governance is realized if all the actions of brokers have high transparency, (Emami and Shokri, 2015, p. 36). Transparency means the free flow of information and its availability to all those involved in the decisions. Transparency means empowering citizens to become millions of auditors and have the right to express their opinions and access to a free press (Darbandi and Haghshenas, 2020, p. 2).

### Corruption control in good governance

It means preventing the use of public power and facilities for personal gain. This index measures concepts such as corruption among officials, the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures, its effect on attracting foreign capital, additional payments or bribes to obtain economic licenses, and the like (Moradi et al., 2017, p. 158).

Table 1: Definition of transparency and corruption control sub-indices

Indicator	Sub-index	Definition
Transparency	democracy	Democracy is the rule of the people over the people and for the people. In the context of this definition, the freedom and participation of the public, which is one of the characteristics of good governance, is hidden.
	The principle of the rule of law	The rule of law is the extent of the possibility of action that the government men and citizens of the country have for the institutions that were created with the purpose of establishing and implementing the law and resolving disputes.
	People's right to know	The right to know is one of the rights of citizenship. This right has wide dimensions. On the one hand, the right to search or access information can be considered one of the most essential elements of freedom of expression, and on the other hand, democracy cannot have a bright future without guaranteeing the right to know.
	The right to freedom of expression	The right to freedom of expression is one of the basic human rights that can be expressed through the media. This right must be exercised respecting the rights of others to express their opinions and

		other human rights, including political, civil and cultural rights
	The right to participate in determining political destiny	Self-determination is a fundamental right without which other rights cannot be fully realized. The right to self-determination is not just a principle, but the most important right among human rights and is a precondition for the exercise of individual rights and freedoms.
Corruption control	Government intervention	It means measuring the signs of anti-market policies by the government.
	Corruption among officials	This index measures concepts such as corruption among officials, the effectiveness of anti-corruption measures, its impact on the attraction of foreign capital, additional payments or bribes to obtain economic licenses, etc.
	Effectiveness of anti-corruption measures	
	The effect of corruption on the attraction of foreign capital	
	Paying bribes to obtain economic licenses	

### Research Background

- Moghadari (2021) in a book titled "Good Governance and Development" states that governance is one of the key pillars of the development discourse and the foundation of development strategy. It is not surprising that governance, as a term, has gained significant meaning, especially in the past decade, emerging from obscurity and now finding fundamental applications. These applications and experiences have led this book to narrate the bitter and sweet stories of governance around the world.

-Abolhasani and Ghobadi (2022) in an article titled "Explaining the Theoretical Position of Civil Society in the Good Governance Model" state: In the model of good governance, the three sectors of government, private, and civil society collaborate separately and interactively to achieve development goals. This model, based on a common approach to civil society inspired by the Hegelian perspective rooted in political economy and conflict, is not compatible.

- Behruz Lak and colleagues (2019) in research titled "Efficiency Indicators of the

Government in the Intellectual System of the Leaders of the Islamic Revolution" state: The efficiency indicators of the Islamic government indicate that wisdom is the basis for the efficiency of the Islamic government. It stands firm based on the structure and the way officials interact to solve the problems of the system and the people, pursuing the goals set by the political system. The results also show that "attention to the importance and necessity of the formation of government for the implementation of Islamic law in society," "attention to its legitimacy, namely divine legitimacy and popular acceptance," and "observance of structures, principles, and processes" are indicators of government efficiency in economic, political, cultural, and social dimensions.

- Darestani (2015) in research titled "The Role of Political Culture in Good Governance" states: According to the classification presented for the types of political culture by Almond and Verba into three general categories of participatory, subject, and limited, it can be concluded, by presenting their characteristics and comparing them with the indicators presented by the World Bank for good governance, that participatory political culture, with its defined definitions and characteristics, as an advanced type of political culture considering the political acceptance created in it and also the capabilities it has for creating and accepting the model of good governance, can be considered as a suitable ground and a significant and influential factor in achieving this goal.

- Mursyidah & Wahyu Abadi (2017) state that good governance is a type of governance capable of preserving and improving the efficiency of performance for providing the best

public services. Strong and essential steps are required, to encourage the spirit in the governance environment, and increase the capacity of governors to have sufficient knowledge of government management and reliable performance.

-Czada (2016) in an article titled "Good Governance: A Framework for Successful Government" states: The elements of good governance include values and organizational guidelines on how to manage. They mainly include democracy and the rule of law, transparency, accountable and effective government, combating corruption, and protecting and enforcing human rights. When these goals are included in the law and executive practice, cooperation and oversight by government authorities are enhanced, civil society is strengthened, and the rights and freedoms of citizens are preserved. The criteria for good governance are also key to the well-being and prosperity of a country. Their implementation requires a transparent political will supported by a democratic rule and the relevant political and executive skills and knowledge.

## Methods

The research methodology in this study is descriptive-analytical, employing library research and survey investigations. Documentary and library information has been gathered through consulting books, scientific journals, and research materials. Survey findings are also collected using a questionnaire consisting of 20 items among 384 individuals from research population (faculty members & graduate students specializing in political science disciplines at universities in the Gilan province). These individuals were selected using the Cochran formula for unknown

$$n = \frac{\left( Z_{\alpha}^2 \times S^2 \right)}{d^2}$$

populations and were distributed through simple random sampling.

In this calculation,  $2 Z\alpha$  is calculated at a 5% error level ( $\alpha = 5\%$ ) and is equal to 1.96.

The researcher determines the value of the error (d), assuming a default value of 0.05.

If the population variance is not available, the  $\sigma$  value is determined based on the variance of the initial sample data.

The minimum sample size with a variance of 1 and an error of 0.1 is 384 individuals, which

is the sample size floor for infinite populations in the Cochran formula.

To assess the questionnaire's validity, feedback from 10 experts in the field was sought to determine the relevance of each item based on three essential spectra: "Necessary", "Useful but not necessary", and "Not necessary and not useful". Subsequently, the obtained values were averaged, and the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) was calculated to determine the questionnaire's validity.

Table 2: The minimum acceptable CVR value based on the number of experts

CVR value	Number of experts	CVR value	Number of experts
<b>0.59</b>	11	0.99	5
<b>0.56</b>	12	0.99	6
<b>0.54</b>	13	0.99	7
<b>0.51</b>	14	0.75	8
<b>0.49</b>	15	0.78	9
<b>0.42</b>	20	0.62	10

Source: (Studies of writers, 2023)

The minimum validity value for the number of 10 experts should be equal to 0.62. Since this value is equal to 0.856 in the total of questionnaire items, the content validity of the questionnaire is at a suitable level. Also, the reliability of this questionnaire, which uses Cronbach's alpha coefficient, is used to measure the degree of one-dimensionality of attitudes, judgments, and other categories that are

not easy to measure, and in which the more positive correlation between the questions; The amount of Cronbach's alpha will increase, and vice versa, as the average variance of the questions increases, Cronbach's alpha will decrease, and it is equal to 0.846. Since this value is more than the standard value of 0.7, the questionnaire has good reliability.

Table 3: Checking the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Sub-indexes	Cronbach's alpha coefficients
20 items	0.856

Source: (Studies of writers, 2023)

SPSS software Chi-square and Friedman statistical tests are used to analyze the research data. The chi-square test is used to analyze a categorical variable. In this way, if there is a difference in the frequency between the response categories, the chi-square test for goodness of fit shows it. Friedman's test is one of the statistical tests used to compare several groups and in terms of the average ranks of the groups, it determines whether these groups can be from the same society. The scale in this test should be at least rank.

## **General Findings**

### **Descriptive Findings**

The state of good governance during the Khatami period (1997-2005)

Khatami, considering his understanding of the political and social conditions of Iran, endeavored to create a foundation for progress and political stability in Iran through political development. He attributed Iran's problems to the dominance of a political culture rooted in the country's history, causing divisions, factionalism, resource waste, and consequently political instability. The reformist groups aimed to transfer the people's protest to the national stage, evident in the fortification of the sixth parliament. Khatami's era saw a significant expansion of newspapers and journals in the realm of social and cultural transparency. Despite some newspapers being shut down, the period of reforms, especially the

first term of Mohammad Khatami's presidency (1997-2001), could be considered the golden age of the press in the Islamic Republic system. Press circulation in Iran exceeded three million copies per day, with concepts like civil society and free press at the forefront of societal demands. Emphasis on the expansion of political and civil liberties, along with the efforts of the youth to achieve their freedom-oriented demands, created conditions for increased journalistic activity (Bahmani et al., 2019, p. 382). During Khatami's presidency, although there was initial hope for transparency in the Islamic Republic through indirect mechanisms of political power control, it did not materialize due to the weak civil society and resistance from political powers (Darbandi and Haghighi, 2020, p. 16).

In general, one of the major consequences of government intervention in the economy and its largeness is the prevalence of corruption, linked to the rentier nature of the government. This implies that as the government becomes larger and its intervention increases, the rate of corruption also rises. Studying bureaucratic trends in the reformist government, it can be said that, similar to the bureaucratic approach of the government of Velayat-e-Faqih, this government has been closer to harmony and conformity with the rules and norms of bureaucracy. In other words, considering the index of administrative corruption in the reformist government, ranked 78th



in the Transparency International ranking, the best rank for Iran after the revolution, it can be stated that the reformist government has aligned with bureaucratic rules (Bahmani et al., 2019, p. 389). In the final year of Khatami's government, Iran's economic rank in terms of financial corruption was 87th among 190 countries worldwide. In terms of the important indicator of economic growth, the highest stability occurred in the period from 76 to 83. The second term also had an average economic growth rate of 3.9 percent. Generally, in the second term, the average economic growth was about 1.5 units lower than the region and approximately equal to the world's average economic growth (Bahmani and Karimi-Fard, 2019, p. 297).

### **The state of good governance during the Rouhani period (2013-2021)**

Statistics published by the Transparency International organization indicate that the government of "Prudence and Hope" has experienced two different periods in terms of administrative corruption. Although it managed to achieve a better score in the Corruption Perceptions Index in its first four years, its performance in the second four years was entirely unsuccessful. The Corruption Perceptions Index is a criterion for measuring the level of administrative corruption in countries. It assesses the level of corruption in the public sector based on experts' and traders' perceptions while assigning a score between 0 and 100 for each country. A higher score suggests

lower administrative corruption and vice versa.

Before the start of the eleventh government's activities in 2013, Iran's score in the Corruption Perceptions Index was 25. With the onset of the eleventh government, Iran's score increased to 27 in 2014. In 2015, Iran maintained a score of 27, but in 2016 and 2017, it increased to 29 and 30, respectively, indicating an improvement in Iran's government control over administrative corruption. However, Iran's score on the Corruption Perceptions Index decreased to 28 in 2018 and further to 26 in 2019. In 2020, Iran's score on this index decreased to 25, and it remained the same in 2021.

Based on this, the Rouhani administration, which received a score of 25 on the Corruption Perceptions Index in 2013, repeated the same score in its final year, returning the level of administrative corruption perceptions to the 2013 level. In terms of global corruption perception rankings, Iran has followed a similar trend. In 2013, Iran ranked 144th in terms of corruption perception. In the first year of the eleventh government, Iran's ranking improved, reaching 136th in the world. In 2015, Iran's ranking improved again to 130th. However, in 2016, Iran's ranking dropped to 131st, and in 2017, it returned to 130th. In the twelfth government, we observe a continuous decline in Iran's global ranking in terms of corruption perception. In 2018, Iran descended to the 138th position, further to 146th in 2019, and to 149th in

2020. In 2021, Iran ranked 150th in terms of corruption perception, marking the worst ranking recorded for Iran in the past 11 years.

Based on this, the Rouhani administration, which received a rank of 144 for Iran in terms of corruption perception, handed over the rank of 150 in 2021, thus descending Iran's global ranking in corruption perception by 6 steps (IRNA, quoting Transparency International, 2022).

### Inferential Findings

In respond to the research question of which one of the presidencies of Khatami and Rouhani has been more effective in their terms in transparency and corruption control in good governance, a total of 20 sub-indicators were randomly assigned in the form of a questionnaire to the research population. Five indicators were related to transparency, and five indicators were related to corruption control. Respondents

were asked to assess the status of these two governance indicators in achieving the efficiency of the Khatami and Rouhani administrations.

The examination of the demographic status of the respondents indicates that 42.9% are aged 41 to 50, 32.9% are aged 31 to 40, 14.3% are aged 20 to 30, and 10% are aged 51 and above. Additionally, in terms of education, 37.1% holds a specialized doctoral degree, 28.6% are doctoral students, 22.9% have a master's degree, and 11.4% are master's students.

Regarding the work experience, 35% have 11 to 15 years, 25% have 16 to 20 years, 17% have 21 to 25 years, 13% have 5 to 10 years, and 10% have 26 years and more of scientific activity. The overall statistics of respondents' opinions on the questionnaire items, categorized by different presidencies, are as follows:

Table 4: Total statistics of the respondents' opinions about the questionnaire items by periods

Indicator	Period	Sub-index	The degree of influence				
			Very much	Much	To some	Low	Very low
Transparency	Khatami (1997-2005)	democracy	58.1	27.6	11.4	2.9	0
		The principle of the rule of law	57.1	29.6	9.4	2	1.9
		People's right to know	60	26.7	4.7	8.6	0
		The right to freedom of expression	53.9	16.1	24.3	4.2	1.5

		The right to participate in determining political destiny	53.9	16.1	24.3	3	2.7
Corruption Control		Government intervention	51.4	22.9	15.7	5.7	4.3
		Corruption among officials	46.7	31.9	18.6	1.4	1.4
		Effectiveness of anti-corruption measures	55.7	23.9	16.1	3.2	1.1
		The effect of corruption on the attraction of foreign capital	58.6	22.4	16	1.4	1.6
		Paying bribes to obtain economic permits	58.6	35.4	4.1	1.9	0
Transparenc y	Rouhani (2013-2021)	democracy	39.6	27.6	15.7	15.7	1.4
		The principle of the rule of law	28.1	21.9	42.9	4.3	2.8
		People's right to know	33.4	30.9	30	4.3	1.4
		The right to freedom of expression	42.9	31	18.6	7.5	0
		The right to participate in determining political destiny	34.3	26.7	30	7.6	1.4
Corruption Control		Government intervention	38.1	46.1	10	4.3	1.5
		Corruption among officials	45.3	35.3	18	1.4	0
		Effectiveness of anti-corruption measures	33.9	30	26.1	9.5	0.5
		The effect of corruption on the attraction of foreign capital	38.1	30	23.3	7	1.6
		Paying bribes to obtain economic permits	42.4	29	18.6	8	2

Source: (Studies of writers, 2023)

Chi-square and Friedman tests have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of Khatami and Rouhani governments from the perspective of

good governance indicators. The implementation of these two tests is as follows:

Table 5: Efficiency ranking of Khatami and Rouhani governments from the point of view of good governance indicators

Friedman test		Chi-squared test			
Governments	Average ratings	Abundance	Chi-square coefficient	Degrees of freedom	Significance level
Khatami	3.24	384	12.756	2	0.021
Rouhani	2.76				

Source: (Studies of writers, 2023)

According to the results of the chi-square test, since the significance level is equal to 0.021 and less than the 0.05 level. Therefore, in a general view, the effect of transparency and corruption control measures among the indicators of good governance on the realization of the efficiency of the Khatami and Rouhani governments is confirmed. Also, according to the average ratings extracted, from the point of view of the statistical community, Seyed Mohammad Khatami's presidential periods during 1384-1376 were more efficient than Hassan Rouhani's presidential period from the point of view of these two measures.

### Conclusion

Governance is the process of rule-making, rule enforcement, examination, supervision, and feedback application through the legitimate exercise of power. It aims to achieve a common goal for all stakeholders and beneficiaries in the framework of values and norms within an organization or a country. According to this definition, regulating laws and processes that impact

the style of policymaking, the roles of stakeholders, and the exercise of power are part of governance responsibilities. Furthermore, the success of governance is typically assessed through attributes such as achieving values, satisfaction, comprehensive justice, corruption control, participation, accountability, efficiency, unity, and similar criteria. Leaders' approach to acquiring such power for public affairs management relies on an acceptable or implementable governance procedure among key or all stakeholders.

Social developments globally have brought changes and transformations in the outlook towards development and progress at the societal level. Today, achieving comprehensive development requires organizing a different social structure, and anticipating all social forces in this structure. The model of good governance with a diverse social and political framework aligns with these new conditions. Good governance encompasses a broader concept than government, including the three branches of government, civil society, and

the private sector. Its task is cooperation and coordination among these entities.

The process, whose outcome can lead to the effectiveness of governments, involves organized and disciplined management using superior aspects of political thinking, practical implementation, a realistic attitude in administering affairs and trends, maintaining ethical standards, and justice in distributing benefits derived from a realistic approach, aiming for overall satisfaction within the framework of efficiency appearances. The proper implementation of the good governance model yields successful results.

The current research, utilizing descriptive-analytical methods, library studies, and survey investigations, aims to analyze the effectiveness of post-Islamic Revolution governments in terms of transparency and corruption control in good governance (with emphasis on the Khatami and Rouhani administrations). The research question, "Which of the Khatami and Rouhani administrations, in terms of transparency

and corruption control indicators in good governance, has been more effective?" guided the writing.

A questionnaire consisting of 20 items, including transparency and corruption control sub-indicators, was distributed among 384 faculty members and postgraduate students specializing in political science in the universities of Gilan province using simple random sampling. Based on the results of the Kappa test, the overall impact of transparency and corruption control indicators among the indicators of good governance on the efficiency of the Khatami and Rouhani administrations is confirmed since the significance level is equal to 0.021 and less than 0.05.

Considering the extracted average rankings, from a statistical community perspective, Khatami administration during the years 1384-1376 has been more efficient than the Rouhani administration in light of the two indicators of transparency and corruption control.

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