

# Effects of Villagers' Contribution to and Cooperation with Organizations and Rural Governors Educational Empowerment on the Performance of the Rural Governors of Behnamir County, Babolsar

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## ABSTRACT

The current research is a case study investigating the factors affecting the performance of the rural municipalities of Behnamir County, Babolsar. The main question proposed is as following: what are the factors affecting rural municipalities' performance? Two hypotheses are suggested to fulfill the aim of the study:

1-Villagers' contribution to and cooperation with organizations highly affect rural governors' performance.

In order for the hypotheses to be tested, a researcher-made questionnaire was filled out by 17 rural governors of the villages of interest. Based on the results, 52.94% of the rural governors believed villagers' contribution to and cooperation with organizations were highly influential. Moreover, majority of the rural governors stated that the higher the job satisfaction, the better their performance. Thus, the hypotheses were confirmed.

**KEYWORDS:** Rural municipalities' performance, Villagers' contribution, Behnamir, Babolsar

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Rural municipalities, as the main organizations for rural management, play an effective role in providing public services and regulating rural life. This organization has permanently interacted with people. That is why villagers' ideas about its activities effectiveness count as an important factor regarding its success (Hafeznia, 2010). Rural management is defined as the comprehensive, generative and integrated way of social, natural and financial resources utilization at different times and locations. In other words, it is the process of regulating and leading rural societies and environment through forming organizations and institutions (Rezvani, 2009). Rural municipalities, as non-governmental institutions, are considered to be independent corporate bodies bearing some responsibilities. Having investigated some villages in Hamedan, Gonbad and Dasht, Taleb (1997) stated that for the executive activities of a village to be performed, the village is required to be managed by one of the villagers. Based on the study carried out by Chuichian & Kalantari (2007) regarding factors affecting Golestan Province's rural municipalities' performance, 59% of the rural municipalities' performance variance was determined by such variables as organizations' cooperation, rural governor's job satisfaction, Islamic Council's cooperation and public contribution. In addition, pervasiveness, integration, self-sufficiency, people-orientation, coordination with other institutions and opportunities continuation culture were reported as requirements of their positive performance. Suami & Proma (1992) who carried out a study titled *Factors Affecting Indian Agricultural Expert's Job Performance in the States of Bangalore and Mysore* suggested that achievement need, age, experience, job satisfaction, job involvement, job independence, job characteristics, organizational climate and commitment, in-service training and job stress had a significant relation with job performance. Karimi (2007) concluded that rural development would lead to rural municipalities' better performance; there was no monotonic relation between the activities and services offered by rural municipalities and Islamic Councils regarding villagers' satisfaction rate with development, agricultural, social and cultural performance amongst others. In other words, rural municipalities held greater performance considering rural development and winning villagers' satisfaction compared with Islamic Councils. Challenges to interaction between Iranian villages' Islamic Councils and rural municipalities were studied by Kuchakianard (2007). He reviewed the history of the rural governors and rural municipalities, compared the rules and regulations of the two organizations and reported the responsibility conflicts between them. Finally, they were proposed with some solutions to improving their performance. Naeiji (2009) studied roles training rural governors plays in rural development. Based on the results taken through a field study, it was suggested that rural governors achieved to bring positive changes to the education index regarding the education of the villagers of interest compared to the past. Eftekhari (2007) provided different definitions of rural development and management. He also discussed rural management regarding different aspects of sustainable development including economic, social and environmental aspects. Rural management main driving forces as well as their functions and status were finally determined.

Rural municipalities, as the supplementary link of rural sustainable development, have been established for about a decade protecting one third of the country population. Their performance is also highly effective on leading and regulating the activities and resources exploitation to satisfy villagers' needs. Furthermore, they are considered as a turning point in the history of rural management. Thus, investigating factors affecting their performance might lead to their performance improvement.

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## 2. METHODOLOGY

This is an applied and descriptive-analytical study regarding its aim and methodology, respectively. Data gathering was conducted through both infield (library research) and field methods (questionnaire). Behnamir geographical coordinates are as following; latitude: 52. 49. 54 E, longitude: 36.39.59 N. It covers 1200 square km located 7 meters above the Caspian Sea level and 22 meters below open water. The neighboring cities are Qaemshahr, Juibar and Sari; Babol and Babolsar in the east, south and west, respectively. It also shares a border with the Caspian Sea in the north. The area is placed on the sediments and recent alluvium (Quaternary). According to geological investigation, it was part of the Caspian Sea system related to Alpine orogeny and was repeatedly influenced by sea level changes during different geological eras. The area is also located in the structural geology zone of Gorgan-Rasht.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Data analysis

The data gathered through distributing questionnaires to and interviewing the rural governors of 17 villages regarding their performance was presented descriptively. Descriptive statistics usually consist of frequency distribution table, distribution ratios, geometric distribution, measures of central tendency, measures of dispersion amongst others (Hafeznia, 2011: 272).

Islamic Councils members' contribution and cooperation

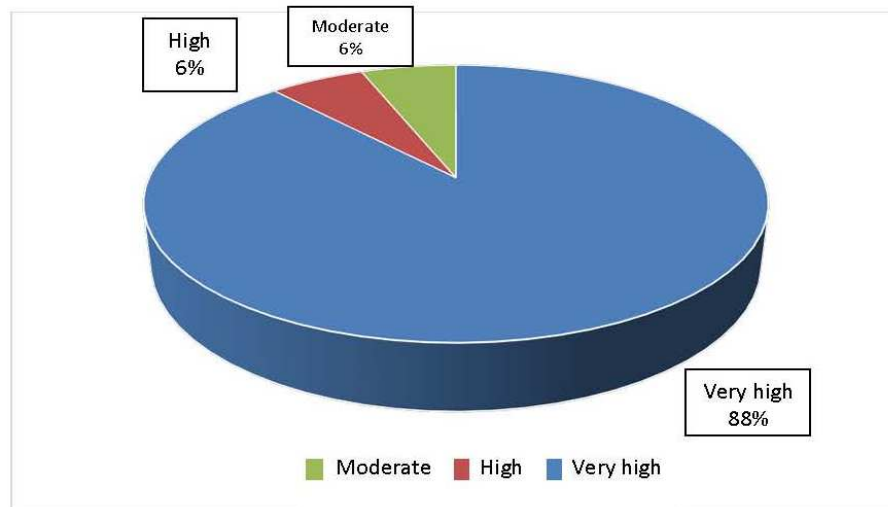
According to the rural governors, Islamic Council members' contribution and cooperation was 94.11% of very high and high effectiveness (Table 6-8 & Fig. 6-8).

**Table 1.** The Islamic Council members' contribution and cooperation effect on rural governors' performance

Contribution and cooperation rate	Frequency	Percent
Very high	15	88.23
High	1	5.88
Moderate	1	5.88
Low	0	0
Very low	0	0
Total	17	100

Source: Author, 2014

Fig. 1. The percentage of The Islamic Council members' contribution and cooperation effect on rural governors' performance



Source: Table 1

### People's contribution

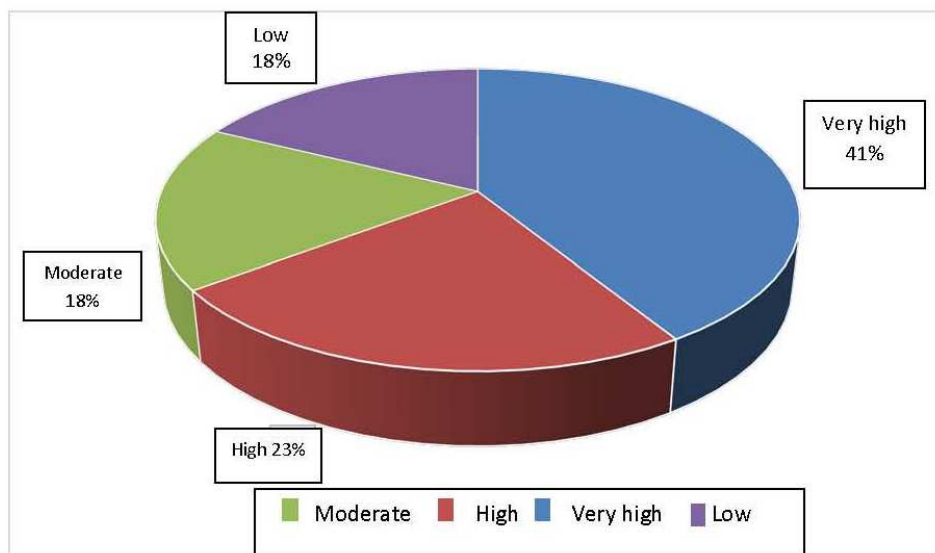
As Table 2 and Figure 2 show, 64.71% of the rural governors believed that people's contribution to and interaction with rural municipalities bore very high and high effects on their performance.

**Table 2.** The effect of people's contribution to and interaction with rural governors on the rural governors' performance

Contribution rate	Frequency	Percent
Very high	7	41.18
High	4	23.53
Moderate	3	17.65
Low	3	17.65
Very low	0	0
Total	17	100

Source: Author, 2014

**Fig. 2.** The percentage of the effect of people’s contribution to and interaction with rural governors on rural governors’



Source: Table 2

Since both governmental and non-governmental organizations play an essential role in exercising rural municipalities’ responsibilities, they highly affect rural governors’ performance. Once organizations refuse to have cooperation with rural municipalities, they will have difficulty exercising their responsibilities. Villagers’ contribution is considered to be another factor affecting rural governors’ performance. Rural municipalities, as non-governmental institutions, need villagers’ contribution in order to fulfill their objectives.

Based on the results, the effect of organizations’ cooperation and people’s cooperation was considered to be of very high and high by 94.12% and 64.71% of the rural governors, respectively (Tables 3 & 4). Therefore, the second hypothesis is confirmed.

**Table 3.** The effect of organizations’ contribution on rural governors’ performance

Organizations’ cooperation	Frequency	Percent
Very high	7	41.18
High	9	52.94
Moderate	1	5.88
Low	0	0
Very low	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author, 2014

**Table 4.** The effect of people’s contribution on rural governors’ performance

Contribution rate	Frequency	Percent
Very high	7	41.18
High	4	23.53
Moderate	3	17.65
Low	3	17.65
Very low	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Author, 2014

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