In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate the Merciful

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Religion, Management & Governance

Contents

Editor in Chief's note

With gratitude and pride, we present the fifth issue of Religion, Management & Governance (RMG), published precisely on schedule. This timely release reflects the commitment and coherence of a scholarly community devoted to exploring the interdisciplinary frontiers of religion, management, and governance. This issue, like the previous ones, contributes meaningfully to the ongoing discourse on Islamic managerial thought, offering studies that are not only theoretically rich but also practically relevant to policy and organizational design.

We begin with a jurisprudential investigation into the interaction between Zakat organizations and Qard al-Hasan banks, grounded in the classical text Sharh al-Lum'a. This piece provides an important framework for understanding structured cooperation between economic institutions and Islamic jurisprudence.

Following this, an article titled "The Rationality-Ethics Paradox in Managerial Decision-Making" offers a comparative analysis of Western and Islamic perspectives. It revisits a fundamental challenge in modern management theory, exploring how ethical reasoning can coexist with rational planning in decision processes.

In another significant contribution, the issue includes an Islamic critique of feminist anthropology. Drawing on the recent publication Feminism in Organization and Management: A Foundational Reflection with an Islamic Approach by Dr. Latifi and colleagues, the article presents a thoughtful engagement with contemporary critical thought through the lens of Islamic epistemology.

The ethical foundations of Islamic management are further examined in a comparative piece that contrasts Islamic and Western paradigms. This analysis enhances the reader's understanding of the conceptual and functional distinctions between these traditions.

Additionally, the article "Toward an Indigenous Model of Organizational Management" explores the construction of contextually rooted models of management based on Islamic principles—models that emerge organically from the values, logic, and culture of Islamic societies.

We are also pleased to announce a new category of scholarly output now accepted by RMG: Specialized Reports on Academic Events. These reports aim to strengthen the connection between academic publications and the intellectual dynamics of society. In this issue, we feature a special report on the Saba Winter School: Systems Thinking and Islamic Management, which offers valuable analytical and policy-oriented insights.

We hope that this collection of articles will serve as another step toward advancing Islamic perspectives in management and governance. We warmly invite our readers, researchers, and practitioners to engage with, critique, and disseminate these contributions to further enrich this evolving discourse.

Gholam Reza Goodarzi

essay

The leadership of education based on the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved)

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Abstract

This qualitative study aims to conduct a strategic analysis of the education system based on the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved). In this research, all statements related to the topic of education were examined using the official website of the Supreme Leader. A total of 188 documents—including speeches, messages, news items, and excerpts of statements—from the beginning of his leadership until the end of autumn 2023 were analyzed using thematic content analysis.

The research findings were categorized into 3 overarching themes, 16 organizing categories, and 43 basic codes:

1. Goals and Status of Education (comprising 4 categories)
2. Major Issues in the Education System (comprising 8 categories)
3. General Strategic Directions of Education (comprising 4 categories)

The analysis of these themes indicates that, from the perspective of the Supreme Leader, the educational system must be founded on Islamic principles, the nurturing of committed and capable human resources, intellectual and scientific independence, and resistance against imported models. This paper proposes a strategic model offering a framework for educational policymaking based on the discourse of the Islamic Revolution.

Keywords: Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved), leadership, education, educational leadership

Introduction

One of the core priorities within the system of the Islamic Republic is the effective implementation of leadership and high-level policymaking across all sectors (Gharabaghi, Moghimi, & Latifi, 2021). Among these sectors, the education system stands out as a critical institution—described by the Supreme Leader as "the most important task of the country" (Khamenei, 2007).

Despite its central role in the nation's governance and its contribution to comprehensive national development, the education system faces numerous challenges. These include managerial instability, structural fatigue, excessive politicization, dependence on Western models, and an entrenched culture of routine operations. There are also pressing issues related to teachers—such as their financial well-being, professional development, shortage, and the limited capacity of teacher training universities. Problems with textbooks and curricula are also evident, including an overemphasis on rote memorization, overloaded content, and insufficient attention to critical thinking. Additionally, the system struggles with gaps in moral education and guidance, a lack of adequate infrastructure, and various other concerns (Shahriari, 2023).

These challenges point to an urgent need for innovation in leadership and macro-level policymaking in education. Addressing them requires foundational transformation grounded in core principles, structural reform, and creative, context-aware solutions. In fact, key strategic documents—such as the Fundamental Transformation Document of Education and the National Curriculum Document—have been developed precisely to respond to these systemic issues.

It is essential to understand that leadership and policymaking in education are not value-neutral. They are informed by underlying doctrines, each rooted in the philosophical framework of a specific school of thought (Shafritz & Borick, 2008: 138). Therefore, any attempt to resolve these challenges must be based on Islamic philosophy while remaining responsive to the evolving needs of time and place. As Ayatollah Motahhari (2009: 457) has emphasized, anything that ignores the context of time and place—or fails to engage with it—is bound to become obsolete.

In this regard, the insights of Imam Khamenei—as both the leader of the Islamic Republic and a respected scholar grounded in Islamic philosophy—carry significant weight. His guidance reflects not only religious doctrine but also a deep awareness of the sociopolitical

landscape. According to Article 110 of the Constitution, one of the Supreme Leader's core responsibilities is to define the general policies of the Islamic Republic. His nuanced understanding of contemporary challenges and his ability to interpret religion in light of modern realities make his views a vital point of reference in national discussions, including those on education (Danaeefard, Bagheri Kani, & Khani, 2015: 106).

Moreover, in times of uncertainty, conventional models of leadership often fall short and must be reconsidered (Bush, 2021: 192). However, such reconsideration demands a rigorous and thoughtful approach—one that is both epistemologically sound and contextually aware. It calls for a critical engagement with scholars who are well-versed in Islamic teachings and deeply familiar with the complexities of society and its key institutions. Imam Khamenei, who has long emphasized the importance of education and training, stands as a foremost authority in this domain. His speeches and writings offer a rich and reliable resource for research and policy development in the field of education.

In leading the education system at a macro level, the Supreme Leader plays a guiding and enabling role—charting the course, articulating key objectives, and equipping educational leaders to implement his vision. His emphasis on the challenges faced by teachers underscores the importance of this responsibility:

> *"What we do is facilitation and groundwork; we help the process move forward. We are not the executors; we advise the Ministry of Education, we make recommendations to the Management and Planning Organization, to the honorable President himself, to the relevant officials, and to provincial authorities. Otherwise, the leadership body does not carry out executive tasks in this sense at all; it is the government that must act—this is the government's responsibility, and rightly so, it is the government that must carry out these duties." (May 2, 2005)*

This form of leadership manifests across all tiers of the education system—from national policymaking and administrative management to day-to-day operations within schools and classrooms. However, the focus of this study is specifically on leadership at the macro level, where strategic direction and overarching policy are shaped, rather than on operational or frontline leadership.

Given the importance of this topic, all public statements made by the Supreme Leader regarding education—from the beginning of his tenure up to the end of autumn 2023—were collected from his official website. These statements were then subjected to thematic analysis, resulting in their classification under three broad themes that reflect different aspects of educational governance.

The first thematic focus centers on the goals and overall status of the education system—areas the Supreme Leader has consistently described as critical to national governance. Underestimating the significance of education is seen as a serious strategic misstep. As noted in the Fundamental Transformation Document of Education, a clear understanding of the system's position and its high-level objectives is a necessary starting point for any meaningful reform.

Transforming the educational system in line with the values and vision of the Islamic Republic involves striving toward a future in which, by the year 2025 (1404 SH), Iran ranks first in the region in terms of economic strength, scientific progress, and technological development. This vision also includes fostering an identity rooted in Islamic-revolutionary principles, becoming a source of inspiration for the broader Islamic world, and playing an active and constructive role in international affairs (Fundamental Transformation Document of Education, 2011, p. 8).

Accordingly, the study first examines the system's goals and its intended status, followed by an analysis of the broader importance of education in three key areas: human development, social progress, and the building of Islamic civilization.

After establishing this ideal future state, the study then explores the current challenges facing the education system. These challenges, derived and prioritized based on the frequency of the Supreme Leader's references, include: reliance on Western educational models, teacher-related concerns, outdated institutional structures, curriculum and textbook issues, politicization of education, the disconnect between learning and moral development, unstable management, and a widespread culture of short-term thinking and routine-based administration.

To move from the current state to the envisioned future, it is essential to articulate a set of overarching orientations. These orientations provide the guiding principles and conceptual frameworks for implementing meaningful, long-term strategies in education.

According to Imam Khamenei's guidance (may his presence endure), these guiding principles include: adopting a needs-based approach to education, emphasizing justice as a foundational element, upholding state responsibility and oversight in the education sector, and promoting meritocracy in educational leadership and administration.

One key theme that recurs throughout the Supreme Leader's statements is the call for comprehensive transformation—particularly as outlined in the Fundamental Transformation Document of Education. This theme is rich with research potential and merits deep investigation in its own right.

Although various efforts have already addressed different aspects of this transformation, the present study focuses solely on those elements of the Supreme Leader's statements that directly correspond to the conceptual framework of educational governance, in order to avoid repetition and maintain a clear and concise analysis.

1. Review of the Literature

Previous research in the field of educational governance based on the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended) can be categorized into two main groups:

1. Research Related to Educational Governance

Studies such as those conducted by Eizan, Ghaderi, and Shirbegi (2019), and Habibi, Azimi Aghlagh, and Madani (2021), have primarily focused on educational governance at the school level and the role of educational leaders in improving instructional processes. These studies have largely defined governance as a supervisory process at the operational level, with limited attention to broader dimensions and strategic policymaking. Similarly, the study by Mohammadi Pouya and colleagues (2021) examined teachers' experiences regarding the policies of educational leaders; however, their perspective remained confined to the operational level and did not engage with the overarching views of the Supreme Leader regarding national governance.

2. Research Based on the Statements of Imam Khamenei in the Field of Education

Studies such as the books *The Intellectual System of the Supreme Leader Regarding Education* and *Khesht-e-No* have collected and categorized his statements; however, these works have remained largely descriptive and

have paid limited attention to strategic analysis and the development of managerial models.

The study by Seyed-Tabatabaei and Fereidouni (2017), titled *A Model for Extracting the Educational System's Issues Based on the Statements of Imam Khamenei*, addressed existing problems within the education system but lacked a framework for envisioning the desired state and defining strategic orientations. The article by Danaeefard, Bagherikani, and Khani (2015), titled *Understanding the Strategic Priorities of Educational Transformation from the Perspective of Imam Khamenei*, identified transformation priorities, yet its conceptual model differs from that of the present research and does not cover the three core themes (the desired state, the current situation, and strategic directions).

Additionally, the study by Javadi, Birami, and Hosseini (2020), titled *A Strategic Analysis of the Importance of Education in the Supreme Leader's Intellectual Framework*, employed a grounded theory approach to extract categories and themes related to the importance of education, but did not address the challenges and the current situation of the educational system.

2-1. Distinctiveness and Innovation of the Present Study

This study, by integrating two domains—macro-level educational governance and the analysis of the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended)—and employing a thematic analysis approach, follows three fundamental steps:

Depicting the desired state (the goals and position of education in human development, social development, and the building of civilization);

Analyzing the current state (major issues such as dependency on the West, teachers' livelihood challenges, and the outdated nature of the educational system);

Proposing overarching orientations (needs-based approach, justice-centered approach, state guardianship, and meritocracy).

This comprehensive approach introduces a novel framework for educational policymaking grounded in the discourse of the Islamic Revolution—an approach that has not been previously addressed in existing studies.

3. Research Methodology

3-1. Research Design

This study aims to provide a strategic analysis of the education system through the lens of the statements made by Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved). Adopting a qualitative, exploratory approach, the research employs thematic analysis to systematically examine and interpret his discourse. This method was chosen for its flexibility and its strength in identifying meaningful patterns within textual data, making it particularly well-suited to the objectives of this inquiry.

3-2. Population and Sample

The statistical population of the study consisted of all statements made by Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved) regarding education, from the beginning of his leadership period until the end of autumn 1402.

Sampling was conducted purposefully using the "census method," resulting in the analysis of 188 documents, including speeches, messages, news reports, and selected statements.

3-3. Data Collection Method

The data were collected through the official information portal of the Office for the Preservation and Publication of the Works of Grand Ayatollah Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved). The criteria for selecting documents were as follows:

1. Direct relevance to the topic of education;
2. Temporal diversity (covering different periods of leadership);
3. Content diversity (including speeches, messages, and interviews).

3-4. Data Analysis Method

Various methods exist for thematic analysis; however, in general, the thematic analysis process can be divided into three major stages:

1. Text fragmentation and description,
2. Text interpretation and elaboration,
3. Text reintegration and synthesis (Razavi & Johari, 1401: 163).

Following this process, data analysis in the present study was also conducted in three main stages:

1. **Open (Descriptive) Coding:**
   o Extraction of 43 basic codes from the texts;

- o Identification of initial concepts;
- o Example: The code "importance of human training" was extracted from a statement regarding human capital.

2. **Axial (Interpretive) Coding:**
   - o Categorization of basic codes into 16 organizing categories;
   - o Establishment of relationships between concepts;
   - o Example: The category "importance of education in human development" was formed by combining several basic codes.

3. **Selective (Integrative) Coding:**
   - o Formation of 3 overarching themes;
   - o Mapping of the thematic network;
   - o Validation through expert review.

3-5. validity and Reliability

To ensure the credibility of the study, the following strategies were employed:

- Review by an expert in the field of philosophy of education and a research team specialized in education;
- Presentation of samples from the coding process along with supporting documentation;
- Alignment of the extracted themes with upstream policy documents and academic research studies.

3-6. thical Considerations

- Maintaining fidelity in quotations;
- Accurate citation of sources;
- Avoiding any personal or biased interpretation.

This methodology, with its emphasis on a systematic research process and transparency at various stages, has facilitated the production of valid and reliable findings.

The results of this study can serve as a sound basis for macro-level policymaking in the country's education system.

4. Categorization of Themes: "Educational Governance Based on the Statements of Imam Khamenei"

During the present study, 43 basic codes extracted from the statements were organized under 16 organizing categories, and ultimately, the organizing categories were grouped under 3 overarching themes.

The table below presents a sample from the initial stage of thematic analysis, where the basic codes are displayed:

Table1: Sample of Descriptive Coding

Basic Codes	Statement	Code Symbol
Importance of Human Development	For a country, a civilization, and a nation, human capital is the most important asset of all; that is, even if you possess wealth, without proper and qualified human capital, you will not achieve anything significant.	13980211
The 12-Year Golden Opportunity	If our education system—which holds nearly twelve of the most formative years of a person's life—functions effectively, it will ensure that the youth who are developed, molded, and shaped within this system will be far less susceptible to fundamental changes when faced with future events.	13850503
Generation Training	The mission of the education system is to nurture an entire generation; from a mid-term perspective, it seeks to prepare a generation for the upcoming era.	13960217

In the second stage of the thematic analysis process, through continuous and repeated comparison of the basic codes generated in the previous stage, organizing categories were developed.

To form the organizing categories, multiple basic codes that were conceptually and semantically coherent were grouped under a single organizing category.

Through this process, 43 basic codes were categorized under 16 organizing categories.

Table 2: Sample of Interpretive Coding

Organizing Categories	Basic Codes
Importance of Education in Human Development	Importance of Human Development (Repeated 23 times among the basic codes)
	The Golden Twelve-Year Opportunity (Repeated 7 times among the basic codes)
	Generation Training (Repeated 5 times among the basic codes)
	Importance of the Role of Education Teachers (Repeated 4 times among the basic codes)
	Importance of Nurturing Elites (Repeated 2 times among the basic codes)
Importance of Education in Social Development	National Progress Dependent on Education (Repeated 18 times among the basic codes)
	Education as the Foundation for the Country's Future (Repeated 13 times among the basic codes)
	Education as the Nation's Most Important Endeavor (Repeated 5 times among the basic codes)

In the third stage of the thematic analysis process, the organizing categories derived from the data were classified. The following table presents the conceptual categorization of the organizing categories. As previously mentioned, in this stage, 16 organizing categories were grouped under 3 overarching themes.

Table 3: Integration of Categories

Overarching Themes	Organizing Categories
Goals and Status of Education	Necessity of Addressing Objectives
	Importance of Education in Human Development
	Importance of Education in Social Development
	Importance of Education in Civilization Building
Major Issues in Education	Issue of Dependency on the West
	Issue of Teachers
	Issue of Outdated Education
	Issue of Textbooks and Curriculum

4-1. Theme of the Goals and Status of Education

Effective policymaking in any field requires, first and foremost, a clear understanding of that field's current state and significance. This includes a careful examination of its goals and long-term aspirations to construct a well-informed vision of the desired future. However, critical institutions like the education system are sometimes undervalued or misunderstood—leading to misguided decisions, such as excessive privatization or outsourcing of educational responsibilities.

Given the pivotal role of education, it is essential to begin by emphasizing the importance of clarifying its goals. A meaningful understanding of the education system's position and purpose must consider its wide-ranging influence on human development, social progress, and the advancement of civilization.

As previously mentioned, through a process of initial and secondary coding, categorization, and thematic analysis, a total of 13 core codes were ultimately grouped into 4 organizing categories, all falling under the overarching theme of "The Goals and Status of Education." Accordingly, and in alignment with the Supreme Leader's statements and thematic priorities, the discussion proceeds in the following sequence:

- the necessity of addressing educational goals,
- the importance of education in human development,
- the importance of education in social development, and
- the importance of education in civilization building.
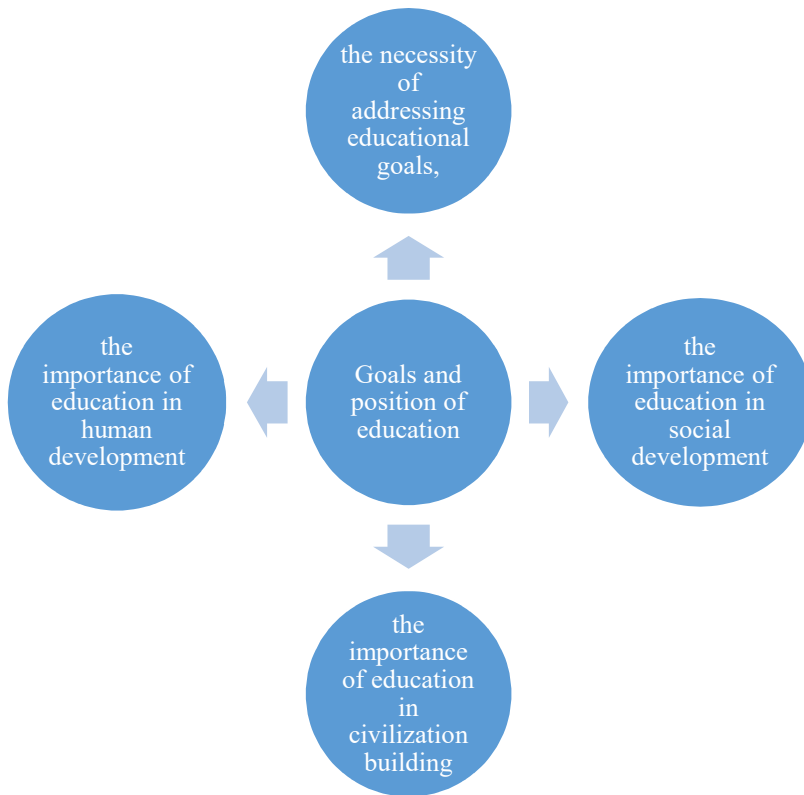
Figure 1: Theme of the Goals and Status of Education

4-1-1. Necessity of Addressing the Goals

Objectives evaluate, motivate, and direct organizational activities (Scott, 2003: 353). The determination of objectives at the operational levels, such as in schools, is based on goals set at the strategic and macro levels; however, defining these objectives is not necessarily a simple task. One of the factors often overlooked in goal or outcome models is that complex organizations, such as schools, tend to have multiple, and at times conflicting, goals (Hall, 2002).

Therefore, establishing clear objectives is particularly crucial for outlining the path toward effectiveness.

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements concerning the necessity of addressing educational goals, the primary basic codes were identified in the following two main categories, ordered by frequency:(1398/02/11)

1. Specification of objectives
2. Transformation based on objectives

Imam Khamenei believes that, for achieving transformation in the education system, the priority lies in defining clear objectives, and that these objectives must be firmly grounded in Islamic principles and aligned with the goals of the Islamic system.(1396/02/17)

4-1-2. The Issue of the Outdated Nature of Education

As previously mentioned, one of the problems facing the education system is its imported and imitative structure. However, what elevates this to a major issue in the current situation is the persistence in maintaining the same old, imitative system.(1395/02/13)

For years, we have operated within this imported educational framework without implementing any fundamental transformation, while Western countries themselves introduced significant changes and developed new methods.

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding the outdated nature of the education system, the primary basic code identified is: (1386/05/03)

1. Lack of modernization in education

In reality, the outdated and antiquated nature of the education system highlights the urgent need for renovation and transformation.

The failure to modernize the system has resulted in the continued dominance of old models characterized by rote memorization and overloaded curricula, distancing our educational system from new and innovative approaches.

4-1-3. The Issue of Textbooks and Curriculum

Among the existing problems in the education system—particularly those related to content—is the issue of textbooks and curriculum.

As previously explained, the outdated nature of the education system and the lack of modernization have resulted in the continuation of traditional methods focused on rote memorization, overloaded educational content, and a lack of attention to the attractiveness of instructional materials.
This has, in turn, led to a general disinterest among many students toward academic subjects.

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding the issue of textbooks and curriculum, the primary basic codes were identified in the following two main categories, ordered by frequency: (1378/02/12)

1. The issue of the attractiveness of textbooks

2. The issue of memory-centered education

One of the key reasons for students' interest in a subject is their comprehension of it. Unfortunately, textbooks are sometimes written in such a way that students cannot relate to them, perceiving the material as difficult and inaccessible, which naturally leads to disinterest.

In addition to the attractiveness of teaching methods, textbooks themselves must be rich in incentives to inspire the younger generation and ignite their enthusiasm.

According to the Supreme Leader, the writing style of textbooks must be appealing, innovative, and suited to contemporary needs.

As the Supreme Leader has said, our education system is predominantly memory-centered rather than thought-centered, and this orientation extends to the methods of teaching and evaluation. Such an approach fails to nurture creativity, innovation, and skill development.(1402/02/12)

4-1-4. The Issue of Education Without Upbringing

In the past, certain individuals argued that teachers should be solely responsible for both instruction and moral upbringing, and on that basis, advocated for the removal of the Vice-Chancellery for Upbringing Affairs from the structure of the education system. Imam Khamenei firmly opposed this initiative, rejecting the underlying rationale and warning of the serious consequences of an educational system divorced from moral and ethical development.

A review and content analysis of the Supreme Leader's statements on this matter—specifically the issue of education without moral guidance—led to the identification of several key basic codes. These have been organized below in order of frequency: (1378/02/12)

1. The issue of the elimination of the Vice-Chancellery for Upbringing Affairs

2. The weakness of upbringing programs

Although the policy of eliminating the Vice-Chancellery for Upbringing Affairs was eventually abandoned, the moral and developmental dimension of education remains significantly weak.

Unlike the heavy emphasis placed on academic instruction, moral and character development has not received equivalent attention.

Unfortunately, many schools still either lack a designated upbringing vice-chancellor or have serious deficiencies in their upbringing activities and programs.

4-1-5. The Issue of Politicization of Education

One of the actions that devalues the education system is its political exploitation and the politicization of this critical institution.

As mentioned earlier, the importance and position of education must first be properly understood; once this is established, any factor that diminishes its status becomes a significant issue that must be addressed. Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended), with a compassionate perspective, has pointed to the politicization of education as a major threat to the education system, teachers, and youth.(17/2/1396)

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding the issue of the politicization of education, the primary basic codes were identified as follows, ordered by frequency:

1. The issue of political exploitation of education
2. The issue of political exploitation of youth
3. The issue of partisan perspectives within the education system

Various political parties and factions have consistently sought to misuse the education system for their short-term goals, particularly during elections and specific political circumstances.

Educational organizations must not become passive instruments manipulated by external environments. Protective or buffering strategies can mitigate the environmental impacts on internal school operations. The political maneuvering of individuals, interest groups, and alliances can significantly reshape the policymaking environments of schools (Hoy & Miskel, 2015: 397).

Despite numerous clear examples and long-standing emphasis on the influence of external environments, educational leaders often underestimate the broader environment's impact on their organizations (Scott and Meyer, 1991).

The Supreme Leader advises cultural officials, particularly those in the education sector, to refrain from political experimentation on the youth.

Even in the selection of managers, care must be taken to ensure that their primary concerns are aligned with the goals of education, rather than being driven by partisan and factional interests.

However, Imam Khamenei also emphasizes that politicization should not be confused with having political insight and analytical ability.

In reality, it is necessary neither to create divisions through political factionalism nor to remain indifferent to the ongoing issues of the country. (17/2/1396)

4-1-6. The Issue of Managerial Instability in Education

The education system is inherently oriented toward long-term objectives, the outcomes of which often emerge after extended periods. Achieving such far-reaching goals requires continuity and stability in leadership. Unfortunately, the education system in Iran has suffered from a lack of managerial consistency and has experienced more frequent leadership changes than many other government ministries.

A review and thematic analysis of the Supreme Leader's statements on the issue of managerial instability in education highlight a key basic code (dated 2/12/1402):

1. Frequent managerial changes within the education system.

Over the years, the Ministry of Education has seen the appointment and replacement of multiple ministers across different administrations. These shifts are typically accompanied by widespread changes at senior, mid-level, and even operational tiers of management.

Such instability significantly hampers the consistent implementation of long-term strategic plans—particularly those with twenty- to thirty-year horizons—ultimately threatening the realization of the education system's broader developmental goals.

4-1-7. The Issue of Routine-Driven Education

Routine-driven practices are a major affliction that affects many administrative bodies in the country, including the education system.

This phenomenon leads to decreased motivation and a lack of progress toward long-term and lofty objectives.

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding the issue of routine-driven practices in education, the primary basic code identified is: (12/2/1385 and 3/5/1386)

2. Breaking free from routine-driven practices in education

Routine-driven behavior refers to the repetitive and monotonous performance of tasks in a dull manner without any innovation or change.

Such an environment erodes hope and enthusiasm among individuals, leading to frustration and ultimately to the inefficiency of the administrative system.

When the goals and position of the education system are properly understood, and systematic and precise planning is conducted to achieve these goals—with clear definitions of roles and responsibilities—it becomes possible to overcome routine-driven stagnation by fostering excitement and motivation.

4-2. Theme of the Strategic Orientations of Education

Having established a clear understanding of the goals and status of education—and after identifying its major challenges—it becomes essential to define the macro-level orientations and strategic approaches of the education system, drawing on the guidance provided in the statements of Imam Khamenei. These strategic directions serve as a compass for aligning educational policy and practice with the broader vision of transformation and systemic reform emphasized by the Supreme Leader.

Adherence to these priorities is crucial not only for charting the right course but also for ensuring that the path taken toward reform is consistent with the values and objectives of the Islamic Republic. As Hoy and Miskel (2015: 416) note, the means of achieving a goal are just as important as the goal itself—underscoring the need for strategic clarity and principled execution.

As previously mentioned, through a structured process of initial and secondary coding, categorization, and thematic analysis, a total of 13 core codes were classified into 4 organizing categories under the overarching theme of "Strategic Orientations of Education." Based on the frequency and emphasis found in the Supreme Leader's statements, the following directions have been prioritized:

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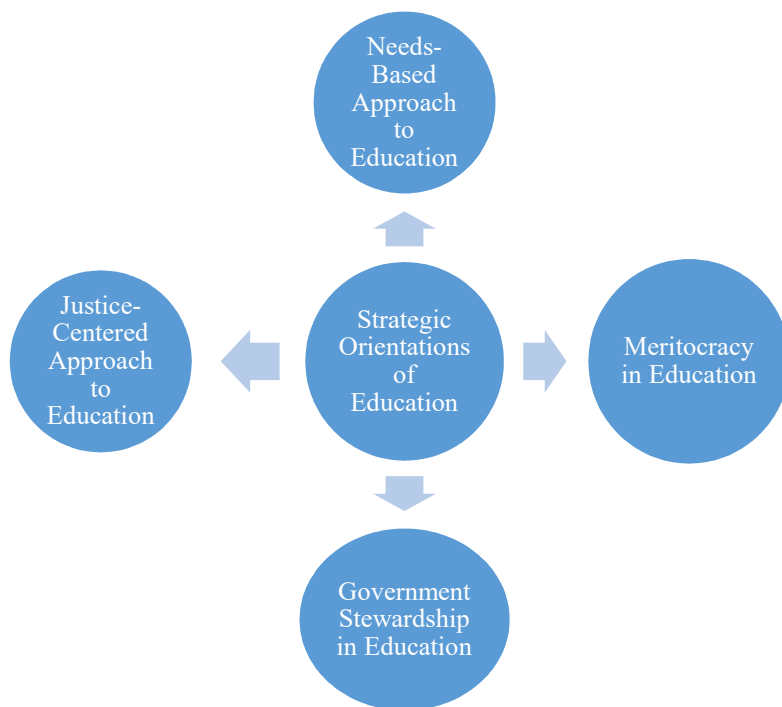
Figure 3: Theme of the Strategic Orientations of Education

4-2-1. Needs-Based Approach to Education

One of the fundamental and strategic orientations of education, the realization of which can resolve many of its current issues, is adopting a needs-based approach.

According to Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended), the current education system in our country is not rooted in our internal needs.

The imported and imitative nature of the system has led to a disregard for the nation's specific needs and traditions.

Thus, education must align itself with the actual needs of the country and adjust its orientation accordingly. (9/2/1388 Solar Hijri)

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements concerning the needs-based approach to education, the primary basic codes were identified as follows, ordered by frequency: (Source: Research Findings)

1. Emphasis on beneficial knowledge
2. Balanced distribution across educational disciplines

3. Practical and application-oriented curriculum
4. The issue of university-centrism
5. The misalignment of education with national needs
6. Transformation based on societal needs

ne of the key expressions of a needs-based education system is the emphasis on beneficial knowledge (ʿilm al-nāfiʿ). This concept refers to any field of learning that responds to the real and pressing needs of society, and it serves as a principal criterion for religiously valuable knowledge—extending far beyond the traditional confines of Qur'anic interpretation and Hadith studies. As Motahhari (2013: 15–18) explains, disciplines such as medicine, engineering, and management, when oriented toward the advancement and welfare of the Islamic society, are regarded as religiously significant. Conversely, even a large body of work in jurisprudence or philosophy may lack such value if it fails to address concrete societal issues.

From this perspective, prioritizing the identification of urgent social needs becomes a necessary step in reforming the education system (Khandan, 2012: 164). Accordingly, one of the core areas for transformation is the promotion of beneficial and forward-looking knowledge that directly contributes to the country's comprehensive development.

Given the nation's diverse needs across educational fields, the strategic distribution of human capital—especially among the youth, whom the Supreme Leader refers to as the country's most vital resource—is essential. Currently, a disproportionate number of top-performing students gravitate toward mathematics and experimental sciences, with aspirations of becoming doctors and engineers. However, there is a pressing demand for capable professionals in fields such as management, economics, law, and policy. Meeting this demand requires stronger educational guidance, investment in foundational sciences, and revitalization of the humanities.

Moreover, just as intellectual capacity is essential, so too is the availability of a well-trained and competent workforce. Therefore, greater attention must be given to technical and vocational education as a means of cultivating practical expertise and addressing labor market needs.

The existing education system, which remains largely reliant on outdated, memory-based approaches, has contributed to the ineffectiveness of many school subjects. Rote memorization continues to take precedence over meaningful, experiential, and deep learning, leaving students burdened with content that often lacks relevance in real life. Yet

the system holds great potential to equip students with essential life skills and values—such as the principles of an Islamic lifestyle, social cooperation, self-discipline, and respect for the rule of law.

Additionally, the pervasive culture of university-centrism and credentialism has further compounded the problem. Many of the country's urgent needs—particularly those that do not require advanced academic qualifications—remain unmet, while university degrees increasingly serve as mere credentials for accessing bureaucratic positions.

Taken together, these factors reveal a deep misalignment between the education system and the actual needs of the country. As such, a genuine and lasting transformation of the system must be grounded in a comprehensive reevaluation of those needs and a reorientation toward meeting them effectively.

4-2-2. Justice-Centered Approach to Education

Another major strategic orientation in the governance of education is adopting a justice-centered and justice-promoting approach, which requires appropriate metrics and indicators to be properly implemented. (19/2/1397)

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding the justice-centered approach to education, the primary basic codes were identified as follows, ordered by frequency: (Source: Research Findings)

1. Justice-centered perspective in education
2. Equal access to educational opportunities
3. Non-discrimination concerning gifted students
4. Strengthening public schools

For education to truly embody a justice-centered approach, it is essential that this perspective be deeply internalized within both policy and practice. Without a clear and consistent understanding of educational justice, the system risks becoming fragmented by multiple and potentially conflicting interpretations that can lead to misguided reforms and outcomes.

When a justice-oriented vision is clearly defined and supported by genuine political will, its impact becomes visible throughout society—for instance, through the reduction of class-based disparities and the promotion of relative equity across different social strata. Achieving such equity necessitates ensuring that students in all regions have fair and equitable access to quality educational resources and opportunities.

It is important to clarify, however, that justice in education does not imply absolute uniformity. Rather, it requires recognizing and responding to individual differences, enabling learners to benefit in accordance with their unique talents and capacities. In this context, particular attention must be paid to gifted and high-achieving students, ensuring that the pursuit of equality does not inadvertently result in the neglect of exceptional potential.

A recurring emphasis in the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved) is the need to strengthen public education and to prevent the unchecked proliferation of costly private schools. Public schools should reach a level of academic and moral quality that inspires trust among families—so that attendance is a matter of choice, not merely a consequence of financial limitations.

This does not mean disregarding the innovations found in private educational models. Rather, it calls for a careful and balanced approach that allows for constructive learning from private initiatives, while ensuring that such practices do not compromise the integrity of the public education system or undermine its commitment to justice-based principles. (Khamenei, 12/2/1402).

4-2-3. Government Stewardship in Education

Education is a responsibility of the state, and the government is the custodian of the people's education and upbringing. Since politics is not separate from religion, in reality, religion itself also assumes responsibility for this matter. Thus, education has a sovereign nature, and ensuring its provision is one of the duties of the Islamic government. (Statements, 9/4/1386)

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding government stewardship in education, the primary basic codes were identified as follows, ordered by frequency: (Source: Research Findings)

1. The sovereign responsibility of the state in education
2. Opposition to outsourcing education

While some advocate for removing education from direct governmental oversight—citing reasons such as decentralization, budget concerns, and increased efficiency—Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended) firmly emphasizes that education must remain under state administration.

He warns against disorder and irregularities arising from actions such as

privatization of education, uncontrolled expansion of private schools, and the implementation of foreign frameworks like the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is noteworthy that while the Supreme Leader accepts privatization in other areas, such as certain sectors of the economy, his insistence on keeping education under direct government stewardship highlights the unique and distinguished role of this institution compared to other fields. (Statements, 12/2/1402)

4-2-4. Meritocracy in Education

Another key strategic orientation in the education system—related specifically to human resources—is the establishment of meritocracy, meaning that high-quality personnel should enter the education sector and managers should be selected whose main concern is the upbringing and training of revolutionary-minded individuals. (Statements, 17/2/1393)

Based on the review and data mining of the Supreme Leader's statements regarding meritocracy in education, the primary basic code identified is: (Source: Research Findings)

1. Recruitment of high-quality personnel

Transformation in any field requires motivated, committed, and competent human resources. Accordingly, managers appointed in the education system must be individuals who are dedicated to its goals, deeply concerned about its transformation, and capable of addressing its challenges with appropriate strategic orientations.

Otherwise, the presence of unqualified personnel will hinder the progress of the education system. (Statements, 11/6/1399)

5. Conclusion

Following a comprehensive review of the statements of Imam Khamenei (may his dignity be preserved), the initial coding process was conducted. At this stage, individual statements and concepts were identified and analyzed with a detailed, micro-level focus. Once the initial codes were established, they were refined through an integrative process in which similar items were merged, and succinct, representative phrases were assigned as secondary codes. These refined codes were then grouped into broader organizing categories, ultimately forming the foundation for the development of the overarching thematic structure.

According to the findings, all statements were categorized into three central and overarching themes titled:

"The Importance and Status of Education," "Major Issues in Education," and "Strategic Orientations of Education."

Accordingly:

- For the first theme, the codes were placed under four organizing categories:

  "Necessity of Addressing Goals," "Importance of Education in Human Development," "Importance of Education in Social Development," and "Importance of Education in Civilization Building."

- For the second theme, eight organizing categories were identified:

  "Dependency on the West," "The Issue of Teachers," "Outdated Nature of Education," "Textbooks and Curriculum," "Politicization of Education," "Education Without Upbringing," "Managerial Instability," and "Routine-Driven Education."

- For the third theme, four organizing categories were presented:

  "Needs-Based Approach," "Justice-Centered Approach," "Government Stewardship," and "Meritocracy in Education."

In total, 43 basic codes were derived from the Supreme Leader's statements.

The approximate frequency of emphasis for each code, as observed in the statements, was also recorded and listed accordingly.

It is important to note that the organizing categories were developed in a data-driven manner. In the first theme, they were ordered by conceptual importance, while in the second and third themes, they were ranked by the relative frequency of occurrence.

Additionally, the basic codes within each theme were prioritized based on the estimated frequency of reference, and this number was indicated alongside each code.

Table 4: Categorization of Themes of "Educational Governance Based on the Statements of Imam Khamenei (may his shadow be extended)"

Basic Codes	Organizing Categories	Overarching Theme
Specification of Goals (5)	Necessity of Addressing Goals	Goals and Status of Education
Transformation Based on Goals (3)		
Importance of Human Development (23)	Importance of Education in Human Development	
The Golden Twelve-Year Opportunity (7)		
Generation Training (5)		
Importance of Teachers' Role in Education (4)		
Importance of Nurturing Elites (2)		
National Progress Dependent on Education (18)	Importance of Education in Social Development	
Education as the Foundation of the Country's Future (13)		
Education as the Nation's Most Important Task (5)		
Most Influential Connection with Society (5)		
Foundation for the New Islamic Civilization (4)	Importance of Education in Civilization Building	
Future Civilization-Builders (2)		
Imported Nature of Education (14)	The Issue of Dependency on the West	Major Issues in Education
The Issue of the 2030 Agenda (5)		
Westernization of Education (3)		
Confrontation with the International System of Domination (2)		

Basic Codes	Organizing Categories	Overarching Theme
The Issue of Teachers' Livelihood (5)	The Issue of Teachers	
The Issue of Teacher Training (3)		
The Issue of Teacher Shortage (3)		
Lack of Modernization in Education (9)	The Issue of the Outdated Nature of Education	
The Issue of Textbook Attractiveness (4)	The Issue of Textbooks and Curriculum	
The Issue of Memory-Based Learning (3)		
Political Exploitation of Education (3)	The Issue of Politicization of Education	
Political Exploitation of Youth (2)		
Partisan Perspectives in Education (2)		
The Issue of Eliminating the Upbringing Department (4)	The Issue of Education Without Upbringing	
Weakness of Upbringing Activities (2)		
Frequent Managerial Changes in Education (3)	The Issue of Managerial Instability in Education	
Breaking Free from Routine in Education (2)	The Issue of Routine-Driven Education	
Emphasis on Beneficial Knowledge (5)	Needs-Based Approach to Education	Strategic Orientations of Education

Basic Codes	Organizing Categories	Overarching Theme
Balanced Distribution Across Educational Disciplines (5)		
Practicality of Courses (3)		
University-Centrism Disease (3)		
Misalignment of Education with Needs (3)		
Transformation Based on Needs (3)		
Justice-Centered Perspective in Education (3)	Justice-Centered Approach to Education	
Equal Educational Opportunity (3)		
Non-Discrimination Concerning Gifted Students (3)		
Strengthening Public Schools (3)		
The Sovereign Responsibility of the State in Education (9)	Government Stewardship in Education	
Opposition to Outsourcing Education (2)		
Recruitment of High-Quality Personnel (3)	Meritocracy in Education	

Following the data mining and analysis conducted on the relevant codes and categories, a more precise cognitive analysis of educational governance based on the statements of Imam Khamenei can be presented.

To achieve this, it is essential to fully understand both the goals (desired state) and the challenges (current state) of the education system, and then to seek appropriate methods for achieving transformation. These methods, at the operational level, must be guided by the macro-strategic directions articulated by Imam Khamenei and addressed in this study.

In summary, the Supreme Leader's statements were categorized into three overarching themes in this research:

the Goals and Status of Education, the Major Issues of Education, and the Strategic Orientations of Education.

These thematic categories can provide valuable insights both for education officials and for stakeholders concerned with educational reform.

A brief overview of each overarching theme is as follows:

1. Theme of the Goals and Status of Education:

After emphasizing the necessity of addressing educational goals, the importance and objectives of education were discussed in three dimensions: **human development, social development, and civilization building.**

The connection between educational goals and these three dimensions highlights that the intended objectives of the national education system are aligned with the broader objectives of the Islamic Revolution and its five-stage realization process:

Islamic Revolution → Islamic System → Islamic Government → Islamic Society → Islamic Civilization.

The foundation for achieving this process is human development, which is one of the emphasized goals of Imam Khamenei for the education system.

2. Theme of the Major Issues of Education:

After outlining the desired state and identifying the aspirations to be achieved by the education system, the research addressed the current situation and the major issues emphasized in the statements of Imam Khamenei.

These issues, in order of frequency, include:

Dependency on the West, the Issue of Teachers, the Outdated Nature of Education, the Issue of Textbooks and Curriculum, Politicization of Education, Education Without Upbringing, Managerial Instability in Education, and Routine-Driven Education.

Referring to these as "issues" implies that they are problematic or complex matters requiring solutions, as they impede the organization's ability to achieve its goals (Faghihipour et al., 2021). Therefore, if solutions are not found for these challenges, the education system will inevitably face difficulties in achieving its designated objectives.

3. Theme of the Strategic Orientations of Education:

After assessing the desired and current states, the macro-oriented strategic directions outlined in the Supreme Leader's statements were extracted to guide the education system towards its goals. These four main strategic directions are:

Needs-Based Approach to Education, Justice-Centered Approach to Education, Government Stewardship in Education, and Meritocracy in Education.

According to the Supreme Leader's statements, when the strategic directions are clearly defined, it becomes possible to create a comprehensive roadmap that enables proper prioritization and prevents contradictory and redundant actions.

From the totality of these findings, it can be concluded that from the perspective of the Supreme Leader, the educational system must be based on:

- Islamic principles,
- The training of committed and competent human resources,
- Intellectual and scientific independence,
- Resistance against imported models.

The findings of this study are significant from two perspectives:

- **Theoretical:**
  It offers a systematic framework for educational governance based on the discourse of the Islamic Revolution, which can serve as a foundation for future research.
- **Practical:**
  The proposed framework can act as a roadmap for policymakers and senior managers in the field of education.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. Formulation of a strategic document based on the identified three overarching themes.

2. Revision of the teacher training system with an emphasis on meritocracy.
3. Designing a monitoring and evaluation system based on the indicators derived from this study.

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Analyzing the Causes and Impacts of Automotive Production Growth under the 13th Administration of the Islamic Republic of Iran with Emphasis on the Dimensions of the Resistance Economy using the system dynamics method

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Abstract

"This article examines the reasons for and effects of the growth in automobile production during the Thirteenth Government of Iran, with an emphasis on the dimensions of the Resistance Economy. The Iranian automotive industry witnessed a significant increase in the production of passenger cars and commercial vehicles during this period, stemming from overcoming the production shortage crisis. This research identifies the factors influencing this growth by using official statistics and analyzing economic policies. The results indicate that an inward-looking approach to production, the development of cooperation with aligned countries in the supply of parts and technology, and a focus on developing new products have played a key role in improving the situation of the automotive industry. These factors, within the framework of the principles of the Resistance Economy, have led to a reduction in dependence on foreign countries, strengthening domestic production, and increasing the competitiveness of the automotive industry, and can be used as a model for other industries as well."

Keywords: Iran Automotive Industry, Resilience Economy, Thirteenth Government (of Iran), Production Growth, System Dynamics.

Introduction

The automotive industry stands as one of Iran's most strategic and pivotal sectors, having experienced various peaks and troughs throughout its history. A portion of its successes and shortcomings can be attributed to the internal strategies and actions of automakers, while another significant portion stems from governmental interventions in these companies—referred to as "industrial policy." Analyzing these policies is crucial for extracting key lessons and incorporating them into future policymaking by state officials. (Siamak, Mohammad, Ebrahim, & Seyeed Abulfazl, 2025)

As a cornerstone industry in Iran, the automotive sector plays a central role in employment, gross domestic product (GDP), and technological advancement. Following a period of stagnation between 2018 and 2020, production began an upward trajectory at the onset of the 13th government in 2021. This paper adopts an analytical approach, utilizing system dynamics methodology, to examine the industrial policies implemented to boost automotive production and their subsequent impact on the national economy.

1. Theoretical Foundations and Research Background

1-1. Theoretical Foundations

The automotive industry holds significant economic importance, accounting for approximately 3.5% to 4% of global GDP, making it a strategic sector in many countries. In 2019, it represented nearly 10% of global trade (Bart & Dmitry, 2022). In the Islamic Republic of Iran, the automotive industry is also a key strategic sector. Over the past decade, it has contributed to around 6% of total industrial employment (Vice President of Infrastructure Research and Production Affairs, Majlis Research Center, 2015). Currently, it supports approximately 1.9 million direct and indirect jobs, reinforcing its strategic significance Mohammadreza, Shahab, Mahdi & ,Manuchehr (2021). As such, the automotive industry is considered Iran's second-largest industrial sector after oil (Reza, Nima, Amirhushang, Manuchehr & ,Saeed, 1401). The 13th government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, led by President Hojatoleslam Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi, assumed office in August 2021 under the slogan *"A People's Government, A Strong Iran."* Its key priorities included addressing economic challenges, combating corruption, and improving public welfare. Major policies and challenges during this period included:

- The elimination of preferential exchange rates.
- Efforts to revive the JCPOA (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action).

- Strengthening relations with neighboring and non-Western countries.
- Combating inflation and unemployment.

President Raisi's tenure was abruptly cut short by his martyrdom in May 2024, leaving his administration's policies partially unimplemented.

One of the most significant developments under the 13th government was the issuance of an eight-point presidential decree on March 2, 2022, following an unannounced inspection of Iran Khodro's production line. This decree outlined the government's governance model for the automotive industry, as follows:

2. Key Directives of the Eight-Point Decree

1. **Production Expansion**
   o A minimum 50% increase in vehicle production in 2022 compared to 2021.
   o Introduction of at least one new "economy car" with modern design.
   o Discontinuation of three outdated models and replacement with three new high-quality vehicles.

2. **Technological Advancement**
   o Promotion of electric, connected, and autonomous vehicles.
   o Leveraging defense and aerospace technologies and knowledge-based companies for industry transformation.

3. **Inventory Clearance & Parts Supply**
   o Immediate clearance of warehoused vehicles meeting standards within two months.
   o Ensuring timely supply of spare parts.

4. **Market Competition & Export Growth**
   o Removal of legal barriers to vehicle imports within three months.
   o Increasing exports of vehicles and parts to improve the export-to-import ratio.

5. **Sales Transparency & Consumer Rights**
   o Phasing out lottery-based sales in favor of direct, transparent sales.
   o Ensuring immediate delivery of pre-sold vehicles upon full payment.

o Banning non-transparent vehicle allocations to government/private entities.

6. **Fleet Modernization**

o Annual replacement of 20,000 outdated commercial vehicles (trucks, buses, etc.) with higher-quality alternatives.

7. **Quality & Safety Improvements**

o Ban on low-quality parts in vehicle assembly.

o Mandatory 3-year/60,000 km warranty for all new vehicles.

8. **Privatization of State-Owned Automakers**

o Transferring management of Iran Khodro and Saipa to the private sector within six months. (Iran Chamber of Commerce, 2021).

Although not all directives were fully implemented, this decree reshaped Iran's automotive governance, with lasting policy impacts.

3. Research Background

Despite extensive literature reviews, no prior studies specifically evaluating the industrial policies of Iran's 12th government (2017–2021) in the automotive sector were identified.

4. Research Method

Research Methodology This research was conducted in a descriptive-analytical manner using secondary data. Statistical information was collected and analyzed from sources such as the International Automobile Association (OICA) website, the Ministry of Interior, and the Parliamentary Research Center. Analysis of policy documents in the field of resistance economy was also used.

The Iranian automotive industry can be considered a large and complex system, encompassing social, economic, and technical subsystems. Analyzing the growth factors of private automakers and their impact on the resilience of the national economy cannot be conducted solely through an economic, technical, or social lens. Instead, we require a methodology capable of comprehensively analyzing socio-technical systems while accounting for their inherent complexities.

System Dynamics (SD), with its claim to identify the fundamental structures driving social, economic, and technical behaviors, has attracted researchers across disciplines (Hamidreza و Siamak, 2021). Thus, SD

provides a holistic framework to address the multidimensional nature of this problem.

5. Why System Dynamics?

1. **Causal Modeling Framework:**
   o Captures linear and nonlinear relationships between variables.
   o Analyzes endogenous behaviors of key factors.
   o Supports policy design and decision-making in managerial contexts.

2. **Policy Simulation & Feedback:**
   o Enables simulation-based testing of policies.
   o Provides policymakers with feedback loops to assess policy impacts efficiently (Alireza, Yahya, Jalali Manesh, Sadeghieh, 2020).
   o Identifies policy weaknesses and suggests improvements.

6. Application in This Study

This paper employs System Dynamics to:

- Evaluate macro-level automotive policies under the 13th government, focusing on:
  o Pricing mechanisms
  o Growth of private automakers
  o Economic resilience
- Propose data-driven policy recommendations for optimization.

7. Data Collection

- **Document Analysis**: Review of industrial reports, governmental decrees, and academic literature.
- **Expert Interviews:** 12 semi-structured interviews with industry experts (see Table X for participant profiles).

Table 1. Interviewee Profiles

No.	Position	Years of Industry Experience
1	Former Minister of Industry, Mine & Trade	20 years
2	Former CEO of Saipa Company	24 years
3	Strategy Manager at Iran Khodro Company	15 years
4	Strategy Manager at Saipa Company	15 years
5	Researcher at Parliament Research Center	5 years
6	Automotive Director at Ministry of Industry	20 years
7	Faculty Member, Automotive Engineering Dept.	20 years
8	Chairman of Homogeneous Parts Manufacturers Association	30 years
9	CEO of an Auto Parts Manufacturing Company	25 years
10	Former Automotive Director at Ministry of Industry	30 years
11	Automotive Industry Expert	5 years
12	Mid-level Manager at an Automaker	10 years

8. Research Findings Analysis

The Iranian automotive industry has a history spanning nearly six decades, with its formal activities beginning in the 1960s through the assembly of foreign vehicles. The first domestically produced vehicle, the "Peykan," was manufactured by Iran National (now Iran Khodro). During the 1980s and 1990s, despite the imposed war and sanctions, vehicle production continued through assembly operations. The 2000s witnessed production growth, development of domestic brands like Samand and Tiba, and increased exports. However, from the late 2010s, the industry faced declining production due to sanctions, currency fluctuations, and structural challenges. The 13th government implemented new policies to revive the industry, with observable impacts across various sectors.

Prior to the 13th government, despite challenges including parts sanctions and lack of emphasis on indigenous knowledge, the automotive industry had become so stagnant that annual production fell below one million units. Two chronic issues in the domestic automotive market between 2018-2021 - production below one million units and incomplete vehicles - had disrupted the industry.

According to documented reports from the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, production remained below one million units for four consecutive years (2018-2021), while the number of incomplete vehicles

increased. This led to accumulated demand over four years, creating a supply-demand gap and subsequent price increases in the market.

In the first year of the 13th government, Martyr Ayatollah Raisi issued an eight-point directive to "improve the country's automotive industry status" by empowering the sector and neutralizing sanctions. The directive emphasized:

1. Quality production increases and introduction of economy vehicles
2. Discontinuation of outdated models
3. Parts supply and immediate clearance of warehoused vehicles
4. Enhanced competitiveness and elimination of monopoly concerns
5. Price adjustments and production capacity increases to meet market demand

In the initial phase, through inter-organizational coordination and regulatory oversight, over 26,000 incomplete vehicles in storage lots were completed and rapidly cleared to market after receiving necessary parts.

Subsequently, with emphasis on manufacturer empowerment and supervision, domestic automakers and their supply chains produced 1,348,000 vehicles in 2022, representing 40% growth compared to 2021 - an unprecedented production increase during the 13th government's first year. This achievement gave Iran the highest automotive production growth rate among the world's top 20 automakers in 2022.

Production-oriented policies led to a 42% increase in vehicle deliveries, reaching 1,325,000 units in 2022. Furthermore, production stabilization enabled implementation of an innovative plan to eliminate lottery systems and allocate vehicles to all applicants through a prioritized, transparent integrated platform, successfully ending years of random vehicle allocation practices.

Production reached 1,338,856 units in 2023, with corresponding 42% growth in deliveries (approximately 1,325,000 units), leading to increased production and market competition while achieving market equilibrium (Irna Egency , 2024).

9. Vehicle Production Trend (2019-2024)

According to statistics published by the Ministry of Industry, Mine and Trade, Iran's automotive production figures are as follows:

Table 2: Iran's Automobile Production Trend (Solar Year)

Year	Number of Cars Produced	Growth Percentage
1398	832,000	14-
1399	992,000	19+
1400	964,000	2-
1401	1,236,000	28+
1402	1,338,000	8+
1403 (11 Months)	1,181,474	4-

Ministry of Industry, Mines and Trade, (2024).

These statistics indicate a continuous growth in automobile production under the 13th government, which occurred after a severe decline in the years 1398 and 1399 (Solar Calendar). Furthermore, according to the latest ranking published by OICA in 2025, Iran has ranked 16th globally with the production of over 1,077,839 vehicles in 2024. This is significant, as Iran was ranked 20th globally in 2019, and a four-place climb demonstrates remarkable progress in the country's automotive industry.

The chart below shows Iran's automobile production trend from 2018 to 2024:

Table 3: Automobile production trend in Iran (year)

Year	Number of cars produced	Growth percentage
2018	1.095.526	-27
2019	821.060	-25
2020	880.997	+7
2021	894.298	+1
2022	1.064.215	+20
2023	1.089.827	+3
2024	1.077.839	-1

(OICA, 2025)

10. Causal Loop Diagram Analysis: Drivers of Automobile Production Growth in Iran (13th Government Era)

The provided Causal Loop Diagram (CLD) illustrates the interconnected factors and feedback loops driving the growth of automobile production in Iran, particularly during the 13th government's tenure. This diagram, a foundational tool in System Dynamics, helps to visualize the complex

relationships between various elements within the system and identify reinforcing (positive) and balancing (negative) feedback loops.
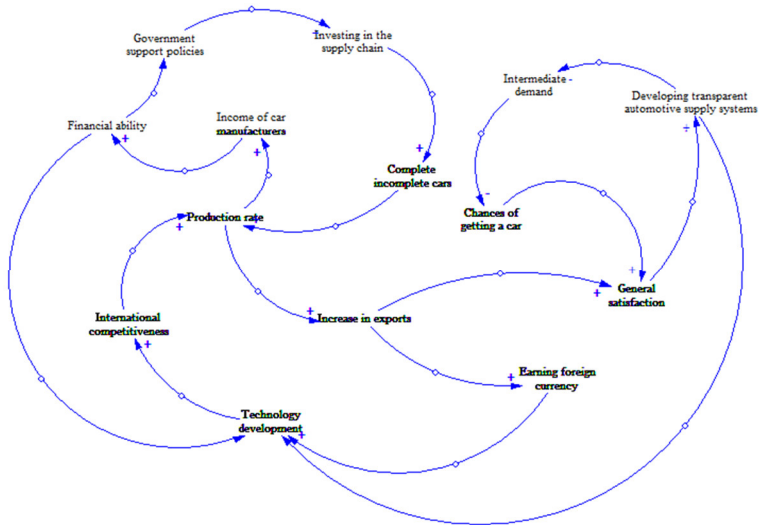
Figure 1:Causal Loop Diagram Analysis

11. Key Variables and Relationships:

1. **Government Support Policies:** This is depicted as an initial driver, directly impacting "Financial Ability" and, implicitly, other aspects of the industry. Strong government support can provide financial resources, incentives, and a conducive regulatory environment for car manufacturers.

2. **Financial Ability:** Directly influenced by "Government Support Policies." Increased financial ability for car manufacturers leads to higher "Production Rate" and enables "Investing in the supply chain."

3. **Income of Car Manufacturers:** A positive feedback loop is observed here. An increased "Production Rate" leads to higher "Income of Car Manufacturers," which in turn further enhances "Financial Ability," creating a virtuous cycle (Reinforcing Loop).

4. **Production Rate:** This central variable is positively influenced by "Financial Ability" and "Complete Incomplete Cars." A higher production rate also contributes to "Increase in Exports."

5. **Investing in the Supply Chain:** Driven by "Financial Ability," investment in the supply chain directly contributes to the ability to "Complete Incomplete Cars." This is a crucial element, reflecting

efforts to overcome past issues of parts shortages and incomplete vehicles.

6. **Complete Incomplete Cars:** Positively impacted by "Investing in the Supply Chain," completing incomplete cars directly increases the "Production Rate." This also negatively impacts "Chances of getting a car," suggesting that as more incomplete cars are completed and available, the difficulty in obtaining a car (due to scarcity) decreases.

7. **Chances of Getting a Car:** This variable is negatively influenced by "Complete Incomplete Cars." A higher availability of complete cars reduces the "Chances of getting a car" (i.e., makes it easier to get one due to less scarcity or lottery systems). This in turn positively impacts "General Satisfaction."

8. **General Satisfaction:** Directly influenced positively by a decrease in the "Chances of getting a car" (meaning easier access to vehicles). "General Satisfaction" also positively contributes to "Developing Transparent Automotive Supply Systems." This suggests that a more satisfied populace might push for or enable better systemic reforms.

9. **Developing Transparent Automotive Supply Systems:** Positively influenced by "General Satisfaction." Transparent systems enhance "Intermediate Demand" by building trust and efficiency. This also positively influences "Investing in the Supply Chain," indicating that a more transparent system encourages further investment.

10. **Intermediate Demand:** Enhanced by "Developing Transparent Automotive Supply Systems." This variable, in turn, positively influences "Investing in the Supply Chain," signifying that healthy demand drives further investment in the automotive ecosystem.

11. **Technology Development:** Driven by "International Competitiveness." As technology advances, it also contributes to "International Competitiveness," forming a reinforcing loop for innovation. Furthermore, "Technology Development" is shown to contribute to "General Satisfaction" (likely through improved vehicle quality and features) and to "Earning Foreign Currency" (through more competitive products).

12. **International Competitiveness:** Positively influenced by "Technology Development." Increased competitiveness is a desired outcome, but its direct impact on "Production Rate" is not explicitly shown, though it would likely be an implicit positive link.

13. **Increase in Exports:** Directly influenced by "Production Rate." A higher volume of exports leads to "Earning Foreign Currency."

14. **Earning Foreign Currency:** Positively impacted by "Increase in Exports" and "Technology Development." Earning foreign currency enhances "Financial Ability," forming another crucial reinforcing loop that can fuel further growth.

12. Identified Feedback Loops:

The diagram highlights several key feedback loops:

- **Reinforcing Loop (R1): Financial Ability → Production Rate → Income of Car Manufacturers → Financial Ability:** This is a core growth engine. As financial ability improves, production increases, leading to higher manufacturer income, which further boosts financial ability, creating a cycle of growth.

- **Reinforcing Loop (R2): Technology Development → International Competitiveness → Technology Development:** This loop suggests that advancements in technology lead to greater international competitiveness, which in turn incentivizes and enables further technological development.

- **Reinforcing Loop (R3): Production Rate → Increase in Exports → Earning Foreign Currency → Financial Ability → Production Rate:** This loop indicates that higher production fuels exports, generating foreign currency, which enhances financial ability and further boosts production.

- **Balancing Loop (B1): Complete Incomplete Cars → Chances of getting a car (-) → General Satisfaction → Developing Transparent Automotive Supply Systems → Investing in the supply chain → Complete Incomplete Cars:** This is a balancing loop that aims to stabilize the system by addressing the issue of incomplete cars. As more incomplete cars are completed, the "Chances of getting a car" improve (become easier), leading to higher "General Satisfaction," which drives "Developing Transparent Automotive Supply Systems." This transparency encourages "Investing in the Supply Chain," which in turn enables the completion of more incomplete cars.

13. Insights and Implications:

The CLD suggests that the 13th government's strategy for boosting car production heavily relies on:

1. **Direct Government Support:** Providing financial and policy backing to bolster manufacturers' capabilities.

2. **Addressing Supply Chain Bottlenecks:** A key focus on completing incomplete vehicles through targeted investment in the supply chain is critical for increasing output and satisfying demand.

3. **Enhancing Consumer Satisfaction and Transparency:** Recognizing that consumer experience and trust (through transparent supply systems) are vital for sustained demand and industry health.

4. **Promoting Exports and Technological Advancement:** Seeing these as long-term drivers for foreign currency earnings and improved financial health, ultimately fueling further production growth and competitiveness.

14. Reasons for Automobile Production Growth under the 13th Government

1. **Implementation of Resistance Economy Policies:** The 13th government practically implemented resistance economy policies in the automotive industry. Its most important components include:

- Increasing localization and reducing dependence on imports.
- Supporting knowledge-based companies and technological institutions.
- Utilizing the capacity of domestic specialized forces.

2. **Cooperation with Friendly Countries:** Iran was led towards developing industrial cooperation with non-Western countries. The 13th government leveraged this opportunity and signed contracts with China, Russia, Venezuela, and Belarus, which included:

- Assembly of joint products.
- Export of vehicles and parts.
- Provision of necessary parts to improve production.

3. **Reconstruction of Production Lines and Productivity Improvement:** By securing liquidity, removing production obstacles, and updating equipment, the production capacity of major car manufacturers like Iran Khodro and Saipa increased. The share of incomplete production and "cars on the factory floor" also significantly decreased.

4. **Phasing out Old Vehicles and Offering New Products:** Vehicles such as Pride, Tiba, Peugeot 405, Peugeot 206, and Peugeot Pars were discontinued, and new products like Rira, Tara, Shahin, Sahand, and

Atlas were introduced, which comply with safety and emission standards.

15. Economic and Social Impacts of Automobile Production Growth

With the return of a new round of sanctions in 2018, Iran's automotive industry once again faced a very major crisis, similar to that in 2012. This was to such an extent that all foreign parties and partners of Iranian car manufacturers rapidly exited Iran, ending their cooperation with Iranian partners. The situation progressed to a point where car production in Iran reached half of its good years, leading to the shutdown of many car and auto parts production lines. The closure of production lines, the inability to meet existing market demand, and a shortage of liquidity led to numerous public gatherings and protests by people and those who had lost their investments concerning the automotive industry.

Job Creation: According to a report by the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade (وزارت صمت), over 350,000 people were directly and indirectly employed in the automotive supply chain in 2023.

With the 13th government coming to power, and by adopting a strategy of maximizing the capacity of production lines and replacing Chinese partners for car manufacturers, over two years we witnessed a significant portion of the demand in the thirsty car market being met. Also, in the commercial vehicle sector, where the country was facing a crisis, we saw an increase in the production of car manufacturing companies. Companies that in 2019 had 7 trillion Tomans in accumulated losses following the production of two thousand vehicles, celebrated the production of eighteen thousand commercial vehicles in 2023, having overcome the recession and accumulated losses of previous years, and achieving profitability by year-end.

Economic Growth and Industrial Growth: According to data from the Statistical Center of Iran, the country's economic growth was -1.9% in 2020, which increased to 4.3% in 2021, 5.5% in 2022, and according to the preliminary report by the Central Bank, to about 5.7% in 2023. During the same period, the industrial sector's growth also increased from -0.3% in 2020 to over 6% in 2023.

This increasing trend, especially in the industrial sector, has occurred due to significant growth in areas such as automotive manufacturing, chemical industries, basic metals, and food industries. In the automotive industry, the 13th government's supportive measures, increased production volume, export growth, and localization of parts have played a prominent role in this growth.

According to the Deputy Governor for Economic Affairs of the Central Bank, the industrial sector's share in the country's economic growth in 2023 was over 30%, which indicates the pivotal position of this sector in revitalizing the country's economy.

Sources: Statistical Center of Iran (Quarterly Economic Growth Reports 2020-2023), Central Bank of the Islamic Republic of Iran (Macroeconomic Developments Report 2023).

Despite the advancements, challenges such as mandatory pricing, lack of electric vehicle infrastructure, and limited financial resources remain. By continuing the implementation of the resistance economy and resolving these challenges, Iran's automotive industry can return to the top 15 global producers.

16. Conclusion and Recommendations: The Resurgence of Iran's Automotive Industry

The analysis of recent trends in Iran's automotive sector reveals a significant turnaround, particularly under the policies enacted by the 13th government. Following a period of decline marked by the re-imposition of international sanctions and subsequent withdrawal of foreign partnerships, the industry has demonstrated a notable recovery and growth trajectory. This resurgence is attributed to a multi-pronged strategy encompassing the implementation of resistance economy policies, strategic collaborations with non-Western nations, revitalization of production infrastructure, and modernization of product lines.

The adoption of "resistance economy" principles, emphasizing domestic production and technological self-reliance, has been instrumental in mitigating the impact of international sanctions. The forging of partnerships with countries such as China, Russia, Venezuela, and Belarus has facilitated the diversification of supply chains and access to essential resources and technologies. Simultaneously, targeted investments in upgrading production facilities and streamlining operational inefficiencies have resulted in increased output and a reduction in the backlog of incomplete vehicles. Furthermore, the replacement of outdated models with newer, more compliant vehicles reflects a commitment to improving product quality and meeting evolving consumer demands.

The positive economic and social ramifications of this growth are evident in increased employment figures, a substantial contribution to national economic growth, and the revitalization of related industrial sectors. The automotive industry's resurgence has not only addressed

pent-up market demand but has also played a crucial role in offsetting the negative impacts of sanctions on the broader economy.

However, despite these achievements, several challenges persist that warrant attention to ensure the long-term sustainability and competitiveness of the Iranian automotive industry. These challenges include:

1. **Price Controls:** Government-mandated price controls may stifle innovation and limit the profitability of manufacturers, potentially hindering future investment and growth.

2. **Electric Vehicle Infrastructure:** The nascent stage of electric vehicle infrastructure development poses a significant obstacle to the adoption of cleaner, more sustainable transportation technologies.

3. **Financial Constraints:** Limited access to financial resources may impede necessary investments in research and development, technological upgrades, and expansion into new markets.

17. Recommendations:

To consolidate the gains achieved and propel the Iranian automotive industry towards greater global competitiveness, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Liberalize Pricing Mechanisms:** Gradually transition towards market-based pricing mechanisms to incentivize innovation, improve product quality, and attract both domestic and foreign investment.

2. **Invest in EV Infrastructure:** Prioritize the development of a comprehensive electric vehicle charging infrastructure to support the adoption of electric vehicles and align with global trends towards sustainable transportation.

3. **Enhance Financial Access:** Facilitate access to affordable financing options for automotive manufacturers and suppliers to enable investments in research and development, technological upgrades, and export promotion activities.

4. **Strengthen R&D and Innovation Ecosystem:** Foster collaboration between industry, academia, and research institutions to drive innovation and develop indigenous technologies that enhance the competitiveness of Iranian automotive products.

5. **Promote Export Diversification:** Expand export markets beyond traditional partners and explore opportunities in emerging

economies to reduce reliance on specific regions and mitigate geopolitical risks.

6. **Address Supply Chain Vulnerabilities:** Strengthen domestic supply chains, promote localization of critical components, and diversify sourcing strategies to enhance resilience against external shocks and disruptions.

By proactively addressing these challenges and implementing the proposed recommendations, Iran's automotive industry can solidify its position as a key driver of economic growth and technological advancement, contributing to the nation's broader development goals. Further research and analysis are warranted to assess the effectiveness of ongoing policies and identify emerging opportunities for sustainable growth and innovation in the sector.

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Investigation and Evaluation of Islamic Financing Instruments for Knowledge-Based Enterprises; Evidence from Iran Capital Market

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Abstract

Subject: One of the key infrastructures for the growth and development of Knowledge-Based Enterprises (KBEs) is providing financial facilities This study investigates the KBEs financing through Islamic financial instruments.

Methodology: In terms of data collection, it takes a descriptive-survey approach. Data required are collected using a structured questionnaire. The statistical population includes KBEs active in Tehran and simple random sampling method was applied to reach final community. The statistical sample consists of 80 specialists and experts in the financial field in knowledge-based companies, and a questionnaire was used to collect data. Experts' opinions were used to check validity and Cronbach's alpha was used for reliability test, which confirmed the validity and reliability of the tool.

The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method was used to analyze the data.

Originality: So far, many researches and studies have been done regarding the growth and development of knowledge-based companies; However, in none of them has attention been paid to the financing of these companies from the capital market. For the first time, this research aims to present the capacities of the capital market for financing knowledge-based companies.

Result: The results of this research indicate that innovative financing instruments such as sukuk, mortgage bonds, and project fund instruments, saving certificate instruments, deposit certificate instruments and bonds play a positive role on the financial provision of KBEs.

Keywords: Sukuk, mortgage bonds, project fund instruments, savings certificates, deposit certificates, bonds, financing instruments.

Introduction

KBE is a relatively new concept that has been widely used in scientific and technical contexts with several terms and definitions such as newly established technology-based company, knowledge-based company, and advanced technology-based company (Tabatabaian et al., 2019). KBEs are private or cooperative companies or institutions that aim to synergize science and wealth, develop a knowledge-based economy, realize scientific and economic goals (including the expansion and application of inventions and innovations) and commercialize the results of research and development (including design and the production of goods and services). KBE is formed in the field of leading technologies and with a lot of added value, especially in soft arenas.

Financing is the process of acquiring and providing financial resources and funds needed to continue the company's activities and to create and launch development and cash-generating projects of economic units (such as KBE). In fact, financing is the provision of capital needed by businesses, consumers and investors in order to achieve their goals. Its purpose is investment, profitability, risk mitigating and meeting the economic and social needs of business (Azizi, 2016).

This research has an important role in the development and strengthening of Iranian KBEs and going concern; because it tries to take a small step towards solving one of the most important anxieties of these companies, i.e. providing financial resources. We aim to introduce and evaluate innovative financing instruments in light of capital market for KBE managers.

Islamic finance combines all aspects of finance that do not conflict with Sharia law. Usually, conventional finance and banking is fundamentally based on collecting deposits from the population and giving loans to people. Despite the global financial crisis, the Islamic financial system is developing at rates that are not equal to 15 to 20 percent. Currently, more than 500 financial institutions operate based on Islamic principles, and the total assets under management of Islamic financial principles on a global scale have exceeded one trillion dollars. Some economists associate the dynamic growth of the Islamic financial system with cash flows to Arab countries as a result of high oil prices (Noorlan, 2019). In general, various methods have been proposed at the national and international level in connection with the classification of financing sources. For example, the division of financial resources is based on following criteria and indicators (OECD, 2015, 2016, and 2018):

- Internal and external resources,

- Official and informal sources, and
- Financing based on growth stages.

Golalizadeh (2023) has presented solutions to reduce the financing challenges of knowledge-based companies in Iran. Analysis of the opinion of the experts revealed that solving the financial problem of knowledge-based companies in Iran depends on the optimal role of knowledge-based ecosystem actors, which has been identified as three organizing and 18 basic themes. Golalizadeh, et.al. (2021) introduced 26 challenges around of financing KBEs in Iran. Motallebi et al. (2021) have investigated and ranked the ability of Islamic financial institutions to respond to the financing needs of KBEs. The findings have shown that the adaptability of facility contracts according to the growth stages of KBEs, real participation in profit and loss, not obtaining excessive profits, etc. are among the most important components of financing needs in KBEs.

Agoraki (2023) examined corporate sustainability, financing performance, and regulatory dynamics. The results showed that companies with lower reputational risk have reduced information asymmetry, are less financially constrained and have better financing performance. Lee (2023) investigated the legitimacy of green companies and their financing performance. The results showed that companies with low green performance are more likely to greenwash than companies with high green performance, although green companies do not affect financing performance. Nguyen (2022) investigated the impact of fintech development on financial stability in an emerging market. The results of this study showed that fintech development has negatively affected financial stability and market discipline can reduce this effect. However, further heterogeneity analysis showed that the negative impact of fintech development on financial stability is stronger when the degree of financial stability is low and the role of market discipline becomes more important in such conditions.

1. Literature Riview

Today, KBEs are considered a vital factor for the economic development of the country and in fact the engine of growth and development (Fakhari, 2015). These companies, which are the main source of innovation, have many problems in financing and raising capital. Despite the importance of KBEs in sustainable development, they face challenges. Scientific evidence and existing facts show that access to financial resources is one of the most important issues that hinders the comprehensive growth of these types of companies in the global economy (Baker et al., 2020).

Various studies have been conducted regarding the financing methods of knowledge-based companies, many of which have used the life cycle of companies as the basis for analyzing and identifying appropriate instruments (Golalizadeh, 2015). In addition to the development stage, the effectiveness of different financing tools can be related to other things such as the size of the innovative company and the amount of capital needed. The results of scientific-technical studies and surveys around the world indicate that technology-based companies lead to entrepreneurial mobility and wealth creation (Sejodi, 2020).

United Nations Millennium Development Funding plays an important role in supporting technology-based start-ups at various stages of innovation and can help increase income and reduce poverty. Financing mechanisms, due to the role of policy making and management, play an undeniable role in the success of these companies and their performance. Funding of knowledge-based companies is accompanied by many challenges due to non-compliance with the common patterns of financing in the banking system and the uncertainty in the future investment situation (Khayatian, 2014). The results of scientific and technical studies and reports at the national and international level also confirm that the issues related to the provision of financial resources, attracting investors and access to the required capital at different stages of the life cycle, especially in the early stages of growth, are among the most important challenges of establishing and continuing the activities of KBEs.

Developing countries are facing the problem of financing to implement and expand their economic activities, especially to finance the establishment of new enterprises that are considered knowledge-based and can create high added value. For the financing of these companies, different solutions have been provided so far, one of these methods is financing by venture capital funds. In Iran, venture investment is mostly governmental and so far it has not been properly organized and paid attention to, which may be due to the small share of research in the annual budget, the lack of risk-taking culture in the country, the specific expectations of investors, the lack of attractiveness of long-term investment, the low resources of these funds and the copying of most of the domestic plans from abroad. The present research aims to investigate the financing of KBEs, through Islamic financial instruments. Managers KBEs are mostly young people and university graduates, who face difficulties in providing reliable collateral to banks to finance the company's activities through bank facilities, and in addition, even if they have access to these facilities, they cannot withstand severe economic

fluctuations on their own. Therefore, in case of problems and uncoordinated economic developments, they may be shut down with the same speed and ease which come into existence (Golalizadeh, 2020).

In Iran, the upstream documents of the country, including the policies announced in Article44 of the Constitution Law, the fourth, fifth and sixth development plans, as well as the country's twenty-year vision document, all consider the field of knowledge-based economy as one of the most important and influential areas in the country. Development programs of the country have prioritized this sector; but the realization of these goals is gained through creation and development of KBEs (Kashian, 2018). Therefore, the government and public institutions try to provide the necessary platform for the creation and development of new, start-up and entrepreneurial technology-based companies by providing technical, financial and legal infrastructures. One of the key infrastructures and requirements for the growth and development of these companies is providing financial facilities, facilitating the financing process and ensuring their access to financial resources sufficiently and efficiently with favorable conditions and at the right time in different stages of growth, especially in the initial stages of their growth and development (Golalizadeh et al., 2017). Therefore, in this study, the financing of knowledge-based companies by means of Islamic financial instruments has been discussed.

2. Methodology

The current research is applied from the point of view of the goal and based on the data collection, it is a survey research. From the nature wivewpoint; it is considered a descriptive research. In this study, the financing of active KBEs by means of Islamic financial instruments in Tehran has been investigated from December 2022 till June 2023. The sampling method used was simple random sampling. In this research, the size of the community is estimated to be around 100 people, and using Cochran's formula, a sample size of approximately 80 active KBEs in Tehran was selected. To determine the validity of the content of the questionnaire, the Lawshec coefficient was used. First, the questions of the questionnaire were prepared and given to the relevant specialists, experts and professors. After reviewing and giving opinions of experts and professors, as well as the case of CVR editing the questions, the final questionnaire was compiled. In addition, the reliability of the questionnaire was also investigated. In this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the reliability. The statistical techniques used in this research are descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS

software. In the field of descriptive characteristics, statistical techniques such as frequency distribution table and bar chart, average, mean, median, standard deviation and variance were used and structural equations were used to test the hypotheses. Mean and frequency were used to describe the data and considering the non-normality of the data distribution, structural equations were applied using Smart PLS software.

3. Result & Discussion

The description of the demographic characteristics of the sample members is given in Table 1.

Table 1: gender, age, education and work exprience of sample members

Variable	description	frequency	% of frequency
Gender	Male	70	87.5
	Female	10	12.5
	Total	80	100
Age	<25	0	0
	26-30	12	15
	31-35	14	17.5
	36-40	23	28.7
	41-45	17	21.2
	>46	14	17.6
	Total	80	100
Education	Diploma	0	0
	Associate	0	0
	Bachelor	14	17.5
	Master and above	66	82.5
	Total	80	100
Work experience	<5	7	8.7
	6-10	25	31.2
	11-15	24	30
	16-20	14	17.5
	>21	10	12.6
	Total	80	100

Table 2 lists the descriptive statistics of the research variables. The results of Table 2 showed that the average of the variables of human resources, perceived quality and key indicators of the reconstruction process tend to have negative opinions and the variable of internal complexity in reproduction operations was lied to positive ones.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of research variables

Variable	Mean	Median	Std. dev.	Min.	Max.
Sukuk	2.907	2.8	0.916	1	5
Mortgage bonds	3.28	3.3	0.941	1.2	5
Project fund	3.065	3	0.790	1	4.8
Savings certificates	3.245	3	0.794	1.8	5
Certificate of Deposit	3.965	4	0.699	1.6	5
Bonds	3.255	3.2	0.816	1	5
KBE financing	3.597	3.6	0.767	1.2	5

The variance inflation test to check multiple non-collinearity of the research variables is shown in Table 3. Table 3 shows that all three independent variables have a variance inflation rate lower than 5. As a result, multiple collinearity between independent variables is not observed.

Table 3: Variance inflation test to check multiple non-collinearity of the research variables

Independent Variables	VIF	Dependent variable
Sukuk	1.473	KBE financing
Mortgage bonds	2.656	KBE financing
Project fund	1.875	KBE financing
Savings certificates	2.720	KBE financing
Certificate of Deposit	2.720	KBE financing
Bonds	1.651	KBE financing

In this research, partial least square modeling (PLS-SEM) method was used for data processing. Table 4 shows the values of the standardized factor loads and the validity and reliability indices of the structures. The results of Table 4 show that the selected indicators for measuring the model structures have had the necessary accuracy because most of the factor loadings are more than 0.7. Some items of the variables had low factor loadings and were removed from the model. The number of these items for the variables of human resources, perceived quality, reconstruction process and internal complexity are five, one, five and three items, respectively. Cronbach's alpha value was calculated for each of the structures, and the calculated values are more than 0.7, which indicates the appropriate reliability of the structures. The value of Average Variances

Extracted (AVE) indices for all constructs is more than 0.5, which means that the variables have internal validity. The composite reliability index is more than 0.7, which shows the internal consistency of the reflective measurement models of the research; therefore, each of the constructs of the model has good validity and reliability to measure the research variables.

Table 4: Values of standardized factor loadings and validity and reliability indices of structures

Variable	Question	Factor loading	reliability	Composit reliability	AVE
Sukuk	q2	0.612	0.838	0.858	0.615
	q3	0.540			
	q4	0.936			
	q5	0.958			
Mortgage bonds	q6	0.779	0.915	0.933	0.736
	q7	0.909			
	q8	0.877			
	q9	0.891			
	q10	0.828			
Project fund	q11	0.624	0.867	0.914	0.780
	q12	0.706			
	q14	0.741			
	q15	0.933			
Savings certificates	q16	0.903	0.802	0.842	0.577
	q17	0.929			
	q18	0.814			
Certificate of Deposit	q21	0.826	0.795	0.861	0.559
	q22	0.716			
	q23	0.747			
	q24	0.867			
	q25	0.541			
Bonds	q27	0.848	0.759	0.857	0.669
	q28	0.688			
	q30	0.905			
KBE financing	q31	0.926	0.905	0.933	0.778
	q32	0.917			
	q34	0.843			
	q35	0.838			

The coefficient of determination index (R^2) was used to check the quality of the model. The results showed that the coefficient of

determination predicts 46.6% of the changes in the financial provision of KBE by the variables of sukuk, mortgage bonds, project fund, savings certificates, deposit certificates and bonds. Table 5 shows the overall model fit results. Three values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 have been introduced as weak, medium and strong values for the GOF criterion. Therefore, the GOF value obtained in this study is equal to 0.417, which indicates an appropriate criterion.

Table 5: Results of overall model fit

Structures	Community	R squared
Sukuk	0.657	-
Mortgage bonds	0.622	-
Project fund	0.550	-
Savings certificates	0.822	-
Certificate of Deposit	0.522	-
Bonds	0.752	-
KBE financing	0.421	0.466

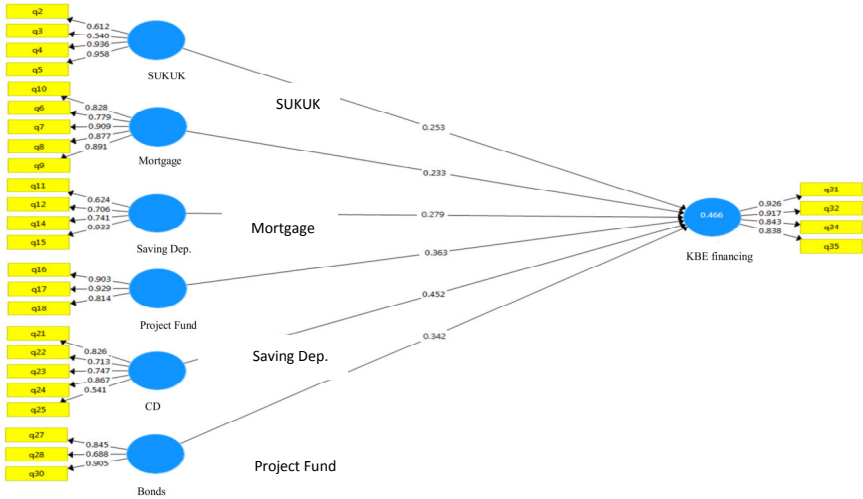Figure 1 shows the output of the original PLS model in normal mode.

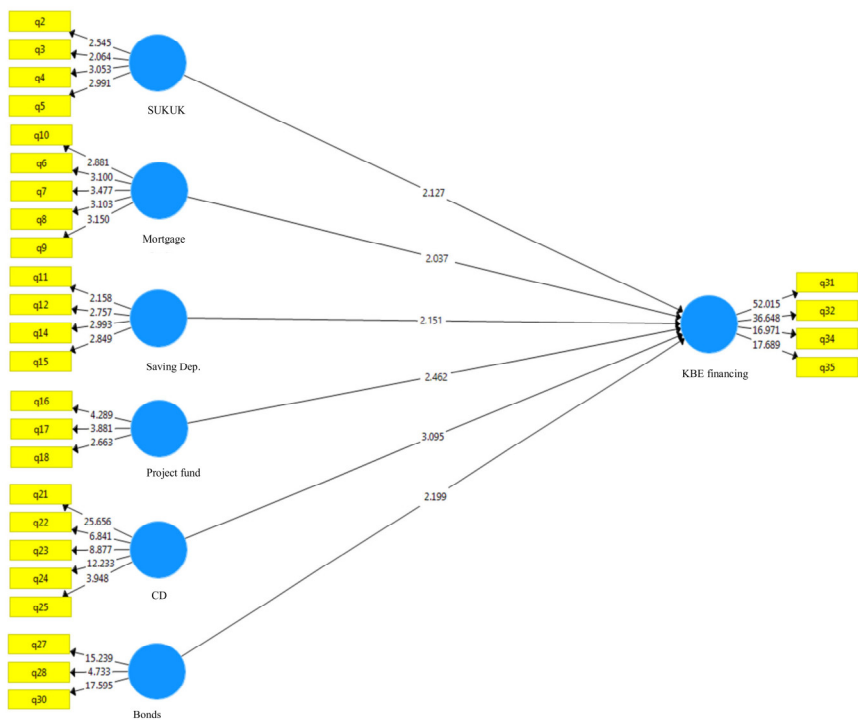**Figure 1: The output of PLS model in normal mode**

Figure 2: The Output of PLS model in standard mode

Figures 1 and 2 show the fitted model in terms of standard coefficients and significance level. The path coefficient of human resources on the perceived quality of the core is equal to 0.253. The path coefficient of mortgage bonds, project fund instruments, savings certificate instruments, deposit certificate instruments and bonds as one of the new instruments of financial provision is equal to 0.233, 0.363, 0.279, 0.452 and 0.342, respectively. The value of t statistic is 2.127, 2.037, 2.462, 2.151, 3.095 and 2.199 respectively, which is more than 1.96; therefore, the coefficient of the above path is significant at the confidence level of 95%. Therefore, it can be concluded that sukuk, mortgage bonds, project fund instruments, savings certificate instruments, deposit certificate instruments, and bonds as one of the new financial instruments have a positive role in the financial provision of KBEs (Table 6).

Table 6: Research hypotheses

Hypothesis	t-test	Sig.	Path coefs.	Results
Sukuk, as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	2.127	0.022	0.253	Confirm
Mortgage bond as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	2.037	0.044	0.232	Confirm
Project fund as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	2.462	0.363	0.011	Confirm
Savings certificate as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	2.151	0.023	0.279	Confirm
Certificate of Deposit as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	3.095	0.000	0.452	Confirm
Bond as one of the innovative financing instruments, plays an important role in financing of KBEs	2.199	0.024	0.342	Confirm

4. Discussion

This research bridges a critical gap in the literature by empirically investigating the role of Islamic capital market instruments in financing Iran's Knowledge-Based Enterprises (KBEs). While prior studies (e.g., Golalizadeh et al., 2021; Motallebi et al., 2021) identified financing challenges and emphasized the potential of Islamic financial institutions, this study is the first to quantitatively validate the efficacy of specific capital market instruments for KBEs, thereby extending the discourse beyond theoretical propositions.

4-1. Alignment with Literature

Our findings resonate with existing research on KBEs' financing constraints. Like (Golalizadeh et al. 2021), who identified 26 financing challenges (e.g., lack of collateral, short-term investment horizons), we confirm that KBEs struggle with traditional banking models due to intangible assets and vulnerability to economic fluctuations. Similarly, (Motallebi et al. 2021) highlighted the need for Sharia-compliant

instruments adaptable to KBEs' growth stages—a criterion met by the instruments evaluated here (e.g., profit-and-loss sharing in sukuk).

However, this study diverges by shifting focus from institutions (e.g., Islamic banks) to capital market mechanisms. While (Nguyen 2022) and (Agoraki 2023) explored fintech and regulatory impacts on financing, they overlooked Islamic instruments' unique potential for emerging markets like Iran, where Sharia compliance is non-negotiable. Our results thus complement global findings by contextualizing them within Iran's ethical-financial framework.

4-2. Novel Contributions

1. Empirical Validation of Instrument Efficacy:

- All six Islamic instruments (sukuk, mortgage bonds, project funds, savings/deposit certificates, and bonds) significantly enhance KBEs' financing access (Table 6: path coefficients = 0.232–0.452; $p < 0.05$). Notably, certificates of deposit (path coefficient = 0.452) and bonds (0.342) exhibit the strongest impact, offering liquidity and flexibility unmatched by conventional loans.
- This directly addresses (Golalizadeh's 2023) call for "optimal ecosystem actors," positioning capital markets as viable alternatives to bank-centric solutions.

2. Capital Market as a Strategic Enabler:

Contrary to (OECD 2015–2019) classifications emphasizing internal/external resources, we demonstrate that Iran's capital market—through Islamic instruments—can overcome KBEs' collateral deficits. For instance:

- Mortgage bonds enable asset-backed financing without immediate collateral.
- Project funds support stage-specific funding, aligning with (Motallebi et al.'s 2021) emphasis on lifecycle adaptability.

3. Policy Relevance:

The 46.6% explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.466$) of our model (Table 5) underscores that instrument diversification can resolve nearly half of KBEs' financing gaps. This validates upstream Iranian policies (e.g., Article 44, Vision Documents) advocating knowledge-based economies but hitherto lacking empirical backing.

4-3. Contrasts and Implications

While (Lee 2023) linked "greenwashing" to financing performance, we found no such risks with Islamic instruments due to their inherent ethical guardrails (e.g., prohibition of excessive profit). Nevertheless, challenges persist:

- Regulatory Refinements: Instruments like sukuk require standardized frameworks to mitigate complexity (Table 2: mean = 2.907).
- Market Discipline: As (Nguyen 2022) noted, fintech instability necessitates oversight—a caveat applicable here given Iran's evolving capital market.

5. Conclusions

KBEs are the driving engine of the knowledge-based economy and play a key role in the production and dissemination of knowledge and, most importantly, its commercialization. Therefore, the development and improvement of the performance of these companies will lead to the development of production and national wealth and the realization of the scientific and economic goals of the country. KBEs are mainly known with three main components of activity in the field of superior technology and high added value, significant spending on research and development, and having technical knowledge. In addition, most of KBEs have intangible assets such as manpower and technical know-how, and compared to large traditional industries, they have far less fixed assets. The managers of these companies are mostly young people and university graduates who are facing difficulties in providing reliable collaterals to banks to finance the company's activities through bank facilities, and in addition, even if they have access to these facilities, they cannot withstand severe economic fluctuations on their own. They may be closed with the same speed and ease which they come into existence, in front of problems and uncoordinated economic developments.

Large companies, especially joint-stock companies, face fewer problems in financing themselves. Because by selling shares, they can easily provide the capital they need. Also, their access to bank credits is possible with greater ease, but KBEs face limitations in providing the capital they need. In Iran, the upstream documents of the country, including the policies announced in Article44 of the Constitution Law, the fourth, fifth and sixth development plans, as well as the country's twenty-year vision document, all consider the field of knowledge-based economy as one of the most important and influential areas in the country.

Development programs of the country have prioritized this sector; but the realization of these goals is gained through creation and development of KBEs (Kashian, 2018). Therefore, the government and public institutions try to provide the necessary platform for the creation and development of new, start-up and entrepreneurial technology-based companies by providing technical, financial and legal infrastructures. One of the key infrastructures and requirements for the growth and development of these companies is providing financial facilities, facilitating the financing process and ensuring their access to financial resources sufficiently and efficiently with favorable conditions and at the right time in different stages of growth, especially in the initial stages of their growth and development. Therefore, in this study, the financing of KBEs by means of Islamic financial instruments has been discussed.

United Nations Millennium Development Funding plays an important role in supporting technology-based start-ups at various stages of innovation and can help increase income and reduce poverty. Financing mechanisms, due to the role of policy making and management, play an undeniable role in the success of these companies and their performance. Due to the influence and high effectiveness of financial instruments, the intelligent design of financing policies allows other issues and obstacles to the growth and development of companies to be solved by themselves. Despite this, the financing of KBEs is accompanied by many challenges due to non-compliance with the common financing patterns in the banking system and the uncertainty in the future investment situation. The results of scientific and technical studies and reports at the national and international level also confirm that the issues related to the provision of financial resources, attracting investors and access to the required capital at different stages of the life cycle, especially in the early stages of growth, are among the most important challenges of establishing and continuing the activities of these companies.

In general, the results of the current research indicated that the dimensions of the financing strategy have a very strong effect on the financing performance of KBEs. Therefore, it can be said that the financing strategy, apart from directly leading to an increase in financing performance, has a stronger effect on financing performance by influencing financing and information sharing, on the other hand, sharing correct information and how to do it. Using innovative financing instruments can help KBEs to achieve their goals. The results showed that sukuk, mortgage bonds, project fund instruments, saving certificate,

deposit certificate and bonds as new financing instruments have a positive role in the financing of KBEs.

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Implications of the Thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr for Participatory Governance: With an Emphasis on the Theory of Human Vicegerency

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Abstract

This paper aims to elucidate the implications of the thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr for participatory governance, with a particular focus on his theory of collective human vicegerency. According to this theory, the stewardship of worldly affairs has been entrusted by God to the human community as a divine trust. Hence, maximum public participation in societal administration is regarded not merely as a right, but as a religious obligation.

The research methodology is based on interpretive analysis of al-Sadr's works, specifically employing a thematic approach to identify key concepts such as decentralization of authority, social justice, and collective responsibility. The findings indicate that, in al-Sadr's thought, popular governance is a structural process grounded in two main pillars: the liberation of human potential and the guarantee of continuous movement toward divine values.

The theory of collective vicegerency attributes political legitimacy to the fulfillment of divine trusteeship and the active participation of the people through mechanisms such as consultative councils (Shora), public oversight, and the integration of religious jurisprudence with collective rationality. This model stands in contrast to Western democracies, where legitimacy is derived solely from the will of the majority.

The most significant challenges to participatory governance include economic inequality, individual moral weaknesses, and the complexity of modern institutional systems. Proposed strategies include the cultivation of responsible individuals, institutionalization of accountability, development of citizen-centered technologies, dismantling of monopolies, and mobilization of individual interests within a framework of collective justice.

In conclusion, participatory governance in this framework not only fosters social justice, but also serves as a manifestation of collective vicegerency, providing a path toward proximity to absolute divine values.

Keywords: Decentralization of Authority, Participatory Governance, People-Centered Administration, Theory of Collective Human Vicegerency, Social Justice, Implication Analysis

Introduction and Problem Statement

Popular participation and the decentralization of authority—referred to in Persian as Mardomisazi (literally, "popularization")—constitute foundational principles of Islamic governance. From the perspective of the Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, these principles represent an enduring necessity for the advancement and development of an Islamic society. In numerous public addresses, the Supreme Leader has repeatedly emphasized the significance of active and effective citizen engagement across various dimensions of social life. For instance, while outlining the foundational principles of Islamic governance, he has highlighted the necessity of public involvement in key national decisions and affirmed the vital role of the people in addressing societal challenges (Khamenei, 2022, April 4; 2021, February 17; 2022, August 30).

Linguistically, Mardomisazi denotes the process of making affairs accessible to or carried out by the public. In this paradigm, people engage in decision-making and participation across recognized economic, cultural, political, and social domains. Thus, the term strongly aligns with the notion of intensified public participation. It emphasizes collective awareness, collective will, collective approval, and collective choice, all rooted in societal needs. In a successful Mardomisazi process, recognizing a shared problem, perceiving the necessity for cooperation, assessing existing capacities and resources, and maximizing their use become vital elements. As a result, decentralization of authority implies elevating the role of the people in all aspects of public life—including policymaking, implementation, and oversight (Shirali, 2021, p. 16).

In recent years, Mardomisazi and citizen participation have gained particular significance within the framework of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The Supreme Leader has identified widespread public engagement in economic and administrative affairs as a strategic pillar in national planning and policymaking. This emphasis was clearly reiterated in his Nowruz message marking the beginning of the year 1403 (Khamenei, 2024, March 20).

Broadly speaking, people's participation in various domains can serve as both a catalyst and a stabilizer for national policies. Past experiences—particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic—demonstrated the critical role of popular involvement, as evidenced by the rapid mobilization for mask production, hospital volunteering, and community-driven relief efforts. Historical precedents such as the role of popular mobilization during the Iran–Iraq War, rural development initiatives, literacy campaigns, and volunteer efforts in post-disaster recovery all exemplify this phenomenon.

The importance of Mardomisazi can be summarized as follows:

Strengthening the Republic: In an Islamic Republic, widespread citizen participation in decision-making and administrative processes reinforces the legitimacy of the system. When people are given genuine opportunities to engage in public affairs, trust in governance is enhanced, thereby facilitating the establishment of a people-centered state.

Socioeconomic Development: Active public engagement in economic and social development planning allows for the creation of policies tailored to the actual needs and aspirations of the community. Such participation paves the way for sustainable, justice-oriented development.

Enhancing Divine Governance: Public participation contributes to the realization of elevated forms of governance (Hokm-e Motlaq) in which informed and active citizens play a direct role in shaping public policy in accordance with collective values and needs.

Increasing Public Trust: When citizens are included in governmental decision-making processes, their trust in the state and its institutions increases. This trust, in turn, strengthens social and political stability and deepens the bond between the state and the populace.

Given the increasing relevance of Mardomisazi, this study addresses a central research question: How can the thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr—as a pioneering figure in the development of Islamic human sciences—particularly through his theory of collective human vicegerency, offer a conceptual framework for designing a model of participatory governance in Islamic societies that responds to religious and identity-based needs?

1. Theoretical Framework

The discourse on participatory governance and the decentralization of authority (Mardomisazi) finds its roots in theoretical debates surrounding the dichotomy between the state and the market. For over three centuries, a central question has persisted: Who should manage the economy? Marxist theory, grounded in the inherent conflict between labor and capital, advocates for maximum state intervention to defend the rights of the working class. However, it does not propose a popularized or people-centered model of economic governance.

Liberalism, on the other hand, prioritizes private ownership and capital. In this tradition, the role of the state is to optimize the performance of the private sector. Citizens are primarily framed as consumers and labor providers, with no real claim to popular control over economic decision-making processes.

The emergence of New Public Management (NPM) represents an attempt to apply private-sector mechanisms within the public sector. Articulated by Pollitt in 1994, NPM was introduced as an ideological system shaped by corporate managerial ideals. Virtanen (1996) argued that NPM is rooted in neoliberal economic fundamentalism and market-driven administrative models. Nevertheless, the approach drew considerable criticism for alienating the state from its foundational role as a servant of the people. In response, Denhardt proposed the Public Service Management model, which emphasizes that government must actively serve the public and, where necessary, fulfill the essential needs of its citizens.

In the institutionalist paradigm, the triad of state, market, and civil institutions is foregrounded. This framework assigns a far more significant role to the public in the administration of societal affairs. A people-centered economic model could emerge as a new paradigm—one that views public administration through the lens of popular engagement, aiming for maximal public benefit and inclusion.

Within this context, Mardomisazi (popularization) and participatory governance are conceptually tied to two interrelated notions: participation and democracy. The following sections will explore each of these concepts in greater detail.

1-1. Democracy

The realization and strengthening of democracy has long been emphasized as a central goal in public administration. The term democracy originates from the Greek words demos (people) and kratein (to rule), meaning "rule by the people." This classical definition dates back to ancient Greek

thinkers and statesmen. Pericles, the famed Athenian leader, referred to the political system of Athens as democratic because it was governed by the majority. Aristotle also characterized democracy as a system in which all citizens are permitted to participate in the political affairs of the community.

Democracy is a multifaceted concept that has been interpreted in various ways and manifested in different forms. According to Aristotle, democracy entails the rule of the poor in pursuit of their own interests. Carl Friedrich, a key theorist in public administration, defined democracy as governance in accordance with the preferences and desires of the general public. In Friedrich's view, the role of the state as a representative of the people is critical, even if his definition does not necessarily imply broad political participation. Similarly, Cohen defines democracy as a system of governance in which members of a society participate—either directly or indirectly—in decisions that affect their lives (Tahmasebi, 2020, pp. 88–89).

Democracy remains a contested and debated term with a wide array of interpretations. As Diamond notes, there are nearly 550 different definitions of democracy, most of which fall into three main categories: minimalist (electoral) democracy, semi-democracy (hybrid models), and maximalist (participatory or substantive) democracy. Despite these variations, the most widely accepted definition frames democracy as a system in which people govern themselves.

While etymologically democracy refers to "rule by the people," in practice it often denotes a specific method of selecting political leaders. Democracy is frequently treated as a political concept applied to internal electoral processes and foreign policy discourse. It is particularly invoked by those seeking greater personal freedoms and self-governance. As such, democracy continues to serve as a fundamental pillar in the administration of public affairs in democratic nations (Azizi-Hossein, 2023, p. 39).

1-2. Decentralization of Authority and Popular Participation

Participation is often defined as a purposeful action within an interactive process between an agent and their social environment, directed toward achieving specific predetermined goals. Conceptually, the term "participation" refers to involvement and cooperation in actions, decisions, or organizational activities, whether actively or passively. At its core, participation is essentially about engagement and mutual influence within social processes (Alipour et al., 2009, p. 117).

In classical Persian sources, such as Dehkhoda's dictionary, participation (mosharekat) is defined as cooperation, sharing, and joint utilization. Another common definition emphasizes voluntary and willful activities through which community members engage in local affairs—whether at the neighborhood, city, or village level—and contribute directly or indirectly to shaping their collective social life. Some theorists have extended the notion of participation beyond national development, characterizing it as active human engagement in all dimensions of life—political, economic, and cultural. Given that the nature of participation varies across political systems, defining it in universal terms is complex and often controversial.

Proponents of democratic systems tend to view participation as voluntary, spontaneous citizen engagement in national policymaking, electing public officials, and influencing political leadership. In contrast, participation under totalitarian regimes is frequently coerced, incentivized, or symbolic. In the former Soviet Union, for example, participation was often driven by top-down mandates, threats, or institutional pressure. Absolute monarchies, lacking participatory structures, tend to experience specific kinds of stagnation and sociopolitical tension. Huntington, in this regard, predicted a bleak future for traditional monarchies. More recently, even authoritarian systems such as China have begun revisiting the notion of participation, introducing reforms—like limited freedoms and open-door policies—to mitigate social unrest and incorporate broader public involvement in governance.

The human drive for participation may stem from our inherently social nature. Given the multiplicity of human needs and desires, individuals cannot fulfill their aspirations in isolation. Participation becomes a pathway to self-realization, fulfillment, and collective progress. Participation may take many forms—from passive behaviors like consuming news media to active engagement such as voting, public consultation, and involvement in policymaking. Key motivators for participation include economic interests (seeking personal or communal benefit), psychological incentives (pursuit of security, power, recognition), and ideological or religious beliefs (as drivers of civic responsibility) (Maleki, 2017, pp. 100–101).

Decentralization of Authority (Mardomisazi)—in its literal sense—refers to the process by which an action or policy becomes public in nature or is carried out by ordinary citizens. It highlights the significance of collective will, public acceptance, and conscious engagement aligned with the real needs of society. The primary aim of decentralizing governance is

to open up decision-making processes to popular and community-based participation, enabling inclusive coordination for shaping national and regional policies while preserving core societal values across political, cultural, and social domains.

In this light, Mardomisazi is not tied to any particular political party or faction. Rather, it is seen as a democratic deepening mechanism that seeks broad consensus and collective participation in all dimensions of social, political, and economic life. The process is grounded in recognizing public needs, identifying shared challenges, and promoting group collaboration to effectively utilize available capacities and resources. Ultimately, this model seeks to strengthen the public's role in decision-making, implementation, and oversight, thereby ensuring meaningful, engaged, and active citizen involvement at every level of governance (Azizi-Hossein, 2023, pp. 81–82).

Decentralization of authority is fundamentally about creating opportunities and conditions for people to participate in decision-making and implementation of their own development agendas. It is built on a deep understanding of community identity, local characteristics, and the crucial role of local governance in achieving sustainable development. In this framework, the state bears the responsibility to empower local communities and facilitate citizen engagement in local affairs. Concurrently, citizens are expected to actively participate in local governance and contribute to collective development efforts.

This approach necessitates attention to local needs and interests, technical and managerial capabilities, and a balanced role between state and society. The government is thus recognized as a development partner responsible for legal, financial, and institutional support, ongoing training, and the creation of participatory structures. In turn, citizens play an active and accountable role, making autonomous decisions and engaging in participatory actions at the grassroots level. This enables communities to enhance their capacities and responsiveness to local challenges.

In conclusion, this approach promotes sustainable and equitable development, emphasizing public participation and local governance as key drivers of transformation. It supports the establishment of a cooperative management system rooted in mutual engagement between government and the people (Rezvani, 2004).

2. Literature Review

The decentralization of authority and the popularization of governance (Mardomisazi) have emerged as significant topics in the fields of public

administration and governance, garnering increasing scholarly attention in recent years. A selection of key studies is reviewed below:

A study titled "A Comprehensive Model of Expert and Civil Society Organization Participation in Public Sector Performance Management" by Ebrahimi, Moghimi, Pourazat, and Latifi (2021) identified the lack of expert and NGO participation as the central phenomenon. Key contributing factors included the absence of participatory infrastructure, mistrust in effectiveness, expert conflicts of interest, and bureaucratic arrogance. The study categorized systemic weaknesses into causal conditions, contextual factors, intervening conditions, and consequences—such as bureaucratic routine, political contraction, symbolic participation, administrative entropy, and expert inefficacy. It proposed a model to enhance expert and NGO participation based on thematic categories derived from interviews with practitioners familiar with public performance management systems in Iran.

Another study titled "A Public Participation-Based Model for School Resource Allocation in the Islamic Republic of Iran" by Tajalli, Chitsazian, and Saeedi (2021) explored strategies for mobilizing public participation in school funding. Amid declining public education budgets and increasing privatization, the study emphasized hybrid public-private partnerships through educational vouchers and philanthropic contracts. It recommended approaches such as awareness-building, capacity development, value-based engagement, and community empowerment—anchored in principles like merit, ethics, autonomy, and public trust.

In the study "A Model of Civic Participation in Public Administration Based on Nahj al-Balagha" by Khanmohammadi, Vaezi, and Delshad Tehrani (2014), the authors explored an Islamic framework for citizen participation rooted in the teachings of Imam Ali (a.s.). The study emphasized the cultural-contextual shaping of participation models and the potential for Islamic texts to inspire locally grounded approaches to public governance.

The article "Factors Influencing Volunteer Participation During Crises" by Babakhani, Yazdaninasab, and Nouri examined citizen participation in emergency situations. Utilizing surveys and questionnaires, the study found that perceived anomie, social trust, and individual isolation significantly affected public volunteerism in times of crisis.

In "The Impact of Social Capital, ICT Development, and Globalization on Urban Good Governance in the Light of Participatory Culture", Rahnavard and Sargazi (2021) assessed how technology, social capital,

globalization, and local authority attitudes affect urban governance. They concluded that while social capital and ICT development had significant effects, participatory culture itself was not found to be a direct determinant of good governance outcomes.

"Designing Public Participation Processes" by John M. Bryson and Kathryn S. Quick offers an interdisciplinary, evidence-based guide for practitioners designing effective public engagement processes. The authors advocate for context-specific, iterative design grounded in careful analysis of participation goals and community dynamics.

"The State, Popular Participation, and the Voluntary Sector" by John Clark discusses the evolving relationship between NGOs and the state. Clark suggests that NGOs can act as representatives of marginalized groups, facilitating a shift from supply-driven service delivery to demand-driven advocacy and empowerment through policy dialogue and grassroots mobilization.

In "Attitudes, Opportunities, and Motivations: A Field Essay on Political Participation", John E. Leigh examines major theoretical models and empirical findings related to political engagement. The article emphasizes the importance of linking attitudinal studies with actual behavior and outlines future research directions for understanding collective political action.

"The Participation Question: Toward Authentic Public Involvement in Public Administration" by Cheryl Simrell King, Katherine M. Feltey, and Bridget O'Neill Susel explores how public engagement processes can be transformed to become more dynamic and reciprocal. Drawing from interviews and focus groups, the study proposes shifting from static, reactive models to more active and deliberative frameworks that empower both citizens and administrators.

Finally, "Guidelines for Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation: Field Experiences" by Katja Jobs uses qualitative interviews and group discussions to explore how participatory M&E practices can be enhanced. The findings underscore the need for redefined roles and relationships between citizens and public officials, emphasizing a move toward consultative and iterative engagement models.

3. Research Methodology

This study employed library-based and documentary research methods to collect data. Primary sources included the intellectual works of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, such as Islam: A Guide to Life, Qur'anic Studies, Iqtisaduna (Our Economics), The Imams of Ahl al-Bayt,

and Glimmers. These texts were thoroughly reviewed, and approximately 100 pages of analytical notes were extracted and categorized as the foundation for further analysis.

For data analysis and the derivation of implications related to participatory governance (Mardomisazi), the study adopted the method of implication analysis (Delalat-pajohi). This methodological approach involves extrapolating and transferring implications, applications, consequences, or insights from one philosophical system, theoretical framework, or model into another disciplinary context (Danaeefard, 2016, p. 49).

Implication analysis serves as a crucial bridge for the expansion, refinement, and enrichment of human knowledge. Within this methodology, two sides are identified: a lending domain (source) and a borrowing domain (target). The source domain provides the conceptual object from which key insights or "supporting elements" are drawn. These are then adapted to the conceptual framework of the target domain, where relevant implications are designed and contextualized to align with the objectives of the receiving discipline (ibid., pp. 47–48).

In this study, the philosophical and theological foundations of al-Sadr's thought function as the lending domain, while the field of participatory governance serves as the borrowing domain. The goal is to identify applicable insights and reframe them into a coherent framework that can inform theoretical and practical approaches to people-centered governance in contemporary Islamic contexts.

3-1. Procedural Steps of Implication Analysis

The methodology of implication analysis (delalat - pazhuhi) consists of a structured, eleven-stage process. While each stage is explained in detail in the original framework, the process can be broadly conceptualized as follows (Danaeefard, 2016, p. 55):

1. Identifying Supporting Elements (Contributions)

Recognizing the key conceptual contributions from the source domain (e.g., philosophical or theoretical foundations).

2. Validating the Supporting Elements

Assessing the relevance, coherence, and applicability of the extracted contributions.

3. Determining Relevant Implications

Designing meaningful and logically derived implications for the target field based on the validated concepts.

4. Validating the Implications

Evaluating the final implications for theoretical robustness, contextual fit, and practical utility.

3-2. Detailed Steps of the Implication Analysis Method

1. Determining the Appropriateness of Implication Analysis for the Study

Given that the present study aims to extract implications from the thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr for the development of participatory governance, implication analysis is deemed an appropriate methodology. Additionally, the researchers' prior experience with al-Sadr's thought, the concept of Mardomisazi, and qualitative research further justifies the selection of this method.

2. Identifying the Source of Implications

The philosophical and theoretical works of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr are designated as the primary source for implication extraction. Al-Sadr is recognized as a prominent Islamic thinker whose intellectual system is both comprehensive and rich in Islamic content. Moreover, people-centered governance is a central theme in his work.

3. Establishing a Process for Exploring the Chosen Topic

The researchers began by conducting a comprehensive review and note-taking of al-Sadr's key works. This process included keyword searches as well as manual reading and annotation to ensure relevant content was identified for further analysis.

4. Determining the Conceptual Framework of the Target Field

This study adopts a hybrid, emergent approach to implication analysis. Rather than applying a pre-existing conceptual framework to al-Sadr's thought, the framework was allowed to emerge organically from within the texts. The researchers did not impose external categories but instead engaged in inductive reasoning to derive concepts directly from the source material.

5. Theoretical Sampling of the Source Domain

Primary sources included al-Sadr's original texts. Secondary sources such as scholarly articles, theses, and related books were also consulted. As new

questions emerged during analysis, texts were revisited multiple times using both keyword searches and full scans.

6. Extracting Supporting Elements (Conceptual Contributions)

The researchers did not rely solely on keyword identification; instead, they manually scanned the texts to locate meaningful passages. In the initial phase, 50 supporting elements were extracted using a systematic extraction process. Duplicates were removed (retaining one instance), and similar or semantically close items were combined without conceptual reduction.

7. Validating the Extracted Supporting Elements

The validity of the supporting elements was assessed through reanalysis of the original texts, with special attention paid to direct phrases and reasoning from al-Sadr's own language. Additionally, validation by domain experts further reinforced the reliability of the findings.

8. Aligning the Supporting Elements with the Conceptual Framework

The extracted elements were then mapped onto the emergent conceptual framework, ensuring coherence between the content derived from al-Sadr's thought and the target domain of participatory governance.

9. Deriving Specific Implications

Once the conceptual framework was established, the researchers examined each statement and proposition in relation to the broader framework. As more implications were identified over time, the conceptual structure became more refined, with new subcategories emerging.

10. Validating the Extracted Implications

The credibility of the implications was determined based on both their logical coherence and textual support. Attention was given to the strength of citation and the internal consistency of the implications in relation to the conceptual framework (Danaeefard, 2016, p. 62).

11. Reporting and Presentation of Findings

The final step involved compiling, organizing, and presenting the research findings in a systematic and scholarly format suitable for academic dissemination.

4. Findings – Extracted Implications

Implication One: Defining People-Centered Governance in the Thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr

In the intellectual framework of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, mardomisazi—commonly translated as people-centered governance—transcends mere administrative decentralization or popular participation. It represents a theologically grounded and ethically driven model of governance rooted in Islamic principles of vicegerency (khilafah), justice (adl), and collective responsibility. Based on an analysis of the extracted conceptual categories, the following interrelated dimensions can be identified:

First, people-centered governance necessitates the broad-based participation of the populace in productive economic activity and investment. By expanding economic ownership and facilitating the inclusive mobilization of capital, al-Sadr envisions a dismantling of monopolistic structures and a redistribution of wealth in service of the public good. This approach aligns with his vision of economic justice as outlined in Iqtiṣādunā (Our Economics), where investment is not merely an individual right but a collective responsibility toward social upliftment.

Second, the governance process is conceived as a continuous and purposeful movement toward absolute divine values, reflecting the Islamic conception of history as a teleological journey toward perfection and justice. Governance, in this context, is not limited to technocratic efficiency or short-term objectives; rather, it is embedded in a dynamic eschatological framework wherein human communities are tasked with actualizing divine norms through historical agency.

Third, al-Sadr underscores the liberation and empowerment of previously marginalized or exploited human capacities. People-centered governance thus involves reclaiming human potential that has been commodified or suppressed under exploitative systems, and redirecting it toward collective flourishing. This transformation reflects the Qur'anic emphasis on human dignity (karāmah) and capability (qudrah) as foundational to legitimate governance.

Fourth, the evaluative standards guiding such a governance model must be inclusive, balanced, and justice-oriented. Al-Sadr insists on adopting criteria that reconcile individual autonomy with collective welfare, ensuring that governance mechanisms do not privilege one group, class, or epistemology over others. This integrative vision resists reductionist

metrics and promotes a morally coherent and socially inclusive evaluative paradigm.

Synthesis In sum, the notion of people-centered governance in the thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr is defined by both structural transformation and moral commitment. It entails the expansion of economic and political participation as a means of achieving social justice, alongside a sustained orientation toward divine values as the ultimate reference point of legitimacy. This model emphasizes that true governance must facilitate not only public inclusion but also moral elevation, ensuring that the processes and outcomes of governance reflect a holistic vision of human dignity, equity, and transcendence.

Implication Two: The Theory of Collective Human Vicegerency as the Foundational Framework for People-Centered Governance

In the political and philosophical thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, the theory of collective human vicegerency (khelāfat al-jamāʿah al-bashariyyah) offers a foundational framework for the development of a people-centered governance paradigm deeply rooted in Islamic theology and moral philosophy. This theory presents mardomisāzī not merely as a political arrangement or technical mechanism, but as a sacred duty grounded in divine trust and oriented toward the realization of justice and human dignity.

At the heart of al-Sadr's vision lies the notion that legitimate governance is inseparable from the collective moral responsibility entrusted to humankind by God. Drawing on Qur'anic references, particularly the narrative of divine vicegerency being conferred upon the human collective rather than an individual figure, al-Sadr asserts that the very legitimacy of governing authority depends on its foundation in shared responsibility and public accountability. Governance, in this view, must not be monopolized by elites or reserved for a select class; rather, it is to be exercised by the people as a manifestation of their divinely ordained stewardship.

This vicegerency is conceptualized as an amānah—a divine trust so weighty that even the heavens and the earth recoiled from accepting it, yet humankind embraced it, despite its limitations. This narrative reveals that political power, from an Islamic standpoint, is not a right to be claimed but a burden to be borne with ethical consciousness. Consequently, popular legitimacy must be understood not only in terms of public consent but also as a moral obligation to fulfill the requirements of divine trusteeship.

Governance thus emerges as a sacred function derived from and subordinate to the overarching principle of human vicegerency.

Within this framework, al-Sadr underscores that governing authority is exercised through consultative and participatory mechanisms grounded in Qur'anic injunctions. The principles of shūrā (mutual consultation) and amr bi al-maʿrūf wa nahy ʿan al-munkar (enjoining good and forbidding wrong) are viewed as institutional embodiments of the people's role in ensuring ethical oversight and collective decision-making. These mechanisms empower the Ummah not merely as passive subjects but as active agents in shaping the moral and legal contours of public life.

Moreover, al-Sadr emphasizes the universal moral foundations upon which this model must rest. The Qur'anic conception of human dignity and equality is central to his understanding of governance. All members of society—irrespective of race, class, or gender—are equal participants in the moral project of vicegerency. This implies that people-centered governance must actively resist all forms of discrimination and exclusion, seeking instead to promote inclusive structures that reflect the brotherhood and equality of all human beings.

In the absence of an infallible Imam—a condition characterizing the contemporary age—al-Sadr articulates a dual structure of responsibility shared between the marjaʿiyyah (religious authority) and the broader Muslim community. In this arrangement, scholars serve not as rulers but as moral guides whose role is to ensure fidelity to divine law, while the people retain the mandate to manage public affairs through institutional mechanisms of consultation and participation. Such a model avoids both autocracy and anarchy, embedding governance within a balanced framework of spiritual leadership and popular responsibility.

Finally, a defining characteristic of al-Sadr's theory is the imperative to emulate divine attributes—justice, wisdom, mercy, and truthfulness—in public governance. This ethical imperative, known as tashabbuh bi akhlāq Allāh, demands that political institutions and leaders reflect the values of divine justice in their treatment of the vulnerable, their distribution of resources, and their confrontation with oppression and corruption. Governance, in this light, becomes an arena for the embodiment of divine ethics, not merely the execution of administrative functions.

In conclusion, the theory of collective human vicegerency as developed by Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr offers a profound theological and moral justification for people-centered governance. It situates political legitimacy within a divinely mandated framework that affirms both

popular participation and ethical obligation. By grounding governance in the sacred trust of vicegerency, and by integrating Qur'anic principles of equality, consultation, and moral oversight, al-Sadr's vision provides a uniquely Islamic model that harmonizes spiritual responsibility with democratic engagement and social justice.

Implication Three: The Distinction Between Western Democracy and Islamic People-Centered Governance

Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's theory of collective human vicegerency (khelāfat al-jamā'ah al-bashariyyah) offers a profound reconfiguration of political legitimacy and sovereignty, positioning it as a divinely mandated trust rather than a product of human consensus. This perspective reveals a series of foundational divergences between Western liberal democracy and Islamic people-centered governance. At the heart of this divergence is the question of sovereignty. In the liberal democratic tradition, sovereignty resides with the people; legitimacy is derived from majority rule, and the constitution is viewed as a human artifact subject to change through collective will. Consequently, the democratic state is not morally bound beyond the will of its citizens, even when majority decisions result in the marginalization of minorities or the erosion of ethical norms. In contrast, al-Sadr's Islamic conception of governance roots legitimacy in divine vicegerency. Here, the people do not rule as autonomous sovereigns but as trustees of God, accountable for upholding a sacred trust (amānah). Governance is, therefore, not an expression of unfettered human will but a moral duty bound by the immutable principles of Shariah. The people are not at liberty to legislate in contradiction to divine justice, even by overwhelming consensus, for authority is bounded by ethical and theological constraints that transcend temporal majority preferences.

This divergence extends further into the realm of lawmaking and moral responsibility. While Western democracies derive legal norms from deliberative consensus or majority interest—often vulnerable to the sway of special interests or moral relativism—Islamic governance, as articulated by al-Sadr, is anchored in divine law as an impartial and stable foundation. Legal codes in Islam are designed not merely to reflect collective will but to secure enduring principles such as justice, human dignity, and the prohibition of oppression. Moral responsibility in Western systems is limited to electoral accountability; ethical outcomes are subordinated to legal formalism. In contrast, Islamic governance considers the moral integrity of decisions as paramount: rulers and ruled alike are obliged to resist injustice, even when such injustice is legally sanctioned

or socially accepted. Al-Sadr draws upon Qur'anic imperatives, urging believers not to acquiesce to corrupt systems, and endorsing resistance, migration, or reform as ethical responses to systemic wrongdoing.

The purpose of governance further delineates these models. In liberal democracies, the state primarily seeks to secure material welfare and fulfill the majority's aspirations, even at the expense of deeper moral considerations. In contrast, the Islamic model envisions governance as a tool for actualizing divine justice, preserving human dignity, and cultivating moral development in alignment with God's trust. Political mechanisms in Western systems rely heavily on institutional checks such as elections, courts, and parliaments, which remain subject to majority dynamics. Islamic governance, however, institutes deeper safeguards: the constancy of divine law, the communal obligation to enjoin good and forbid evil (amr bi al-maʿrūf wa nahy ʿan al-munkar), and the oversight of religious authority (marjaʿiyyah) in the absence of an infallible Imam collectively function as internal correctives against deviation from ethical norms.

In sum, al-Sadr's model contrasts two fundamentally different paradigms: one that elevates human will as the ultimate source of legitimacy, and another that subjects human agency to a higher moral order. While Western democracy centers on procedural legitimacy and human autonomy, Islamic people-centered governance—mardomisāzī— is structured as a collective duty within a divine framework. It transforms popular participation from a right of self-expression into a form of spiritual accountability. This paradigm shift reorients governance away from the fluid preferences of majorities toward a stable ethic rooted in transcendence, safeguarding against the relativism and instrumentalism often seen in secular political systems. Ultimately, the distinction lies not in the mechanisms of participation but in the metaphysical foundation of authority: Western democracy is founded upon human sovereignty, whereas Islamic governance rests on divine trusteeship.

Implication Four: The Scope of Public Participation in Islamic Governance

In the political and ethical philosophy of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, the role of the people in governance is both foundational and multidimensional. It is grounded not merely in political necessity or utilitarian logic, but in a deeply integrated system of religious, moral, and institutional principles that reflect the Islamic worldview. At the heart of this framework lies the belief that the people are entrusted with divine

viceregency (khilāfah), bearing the collective responsibility to cultivate, administer, and morally guide society in accordance with God's will.

One of the essential concepts structuring this participatory vision is takāful ijtimāʿī, or social solidarity. Islam, as al-Sadr emphasizes, assigns responsibility for the well-being of the disadvantaged to the community itself, particularly to the affluent, regardless of the presence or absence of a formal Islamic state. This ethical obligation transforms social welfare into a spiritual mandate, internalizing a strong sense of collective accountability within the public. Governance, in this context, is not to be confined to state apparatuses alone; rather, it must activate grassroots mechanisms such as charitable associations, cooperative financial systems, and local communal networks to fulfill the imperatives of justice. Participation in governance, therefore, begins with the moral agency of individuals and extends into organized efforts that ensure equity and compassion at the societal level.

This theological foundation is inseparable from the principle of divine viceregency, which posits that human beings are God's representatives on earth. According to al-Sadr, political sovereignty belongs ultimately to God, and the people function as His trustees in executing authority. The legitimacy of governance, then, stems not from popular autonomy in the Western liberal sense, but from the ethical performance of divinely entrusted duties. Political power is a sacred responsibility, not a license for arbitrary will. Accordingly, public participation is not merely a democratic right but a religious obligation, encompassing engagement in legislative, executive, and oversight institutions.

Institutional structures within this framework reflect this normative vision. Through electoral processes, the public exercises its guardianship over legislative and executive functions. One prominent institutional expression of this principle is the majlis ahl al-ḥall wa al-ʿaqd (Council of Delegation and Resolution), whose members are directly elected by the community. This council bears key responsibilities, such as approving high-level governmental appointments, legislating in areas of juristic discretion (manṭaqat al-farāgh), and supervising the implementation of laws. The people, as the bearers of sovereignty, are recognized as equal before the law, and their rights to political expression and participation are considered fundamental to Islamic governance.

Al-Sadr's vision also places justice at the core of governance objectives. The Islamic state is not merely a neutral administrator of policy but is charged with the moral duty to reduce class disparities, ensure universal welfare, and uphold economic equity. Education, too, is integral

to this mandate. Islamic education plays a formative role in constructing a religious identity capable of sustaining the intellectual and spiritual foundations of the Islamic system. Hence, public engagement in welfare delivery and educational initiatives is not auxiliary to governance—it is essential to its success.

In order to structure collective deliberation, al-Sadr emphasizes the principle of shūrā (consultation), through which the general vicegerency of the people is exercised under the supervision of the wālī al-faqīh (Guardian Jurist), who serves as the representative of the hidden Imam. Consultative bodies thus serve as intermediaries between the people and religious authority, ensuring both participatory governance and fidelity to Islamic legal principles.

Finally, the spiritual and moral dimension is inseparable from the practical framework of governance. Through moral education and religious cultivation, Islamic society seeks to produce individuals who align their personal ambitions with the goals of divine governance. The eschatological consciousness cultivated by the Qur'anic worldview—especially the fear of divine accountability for neglecting the poor—acts as a powerful internal motivator for civic engagement and public service.

In summary, al-Sadr articulates a tripartite vision of the people's role in Islamic governance. First, legitimacy is simultaneously divine and popular: governance derives from God but is realized through the collective agency of the community. Second, social responsibility is not a peripheral concern but a central ethical obligation that mobilizes public involvement in justice, education, and welfare. Third, institutional mechanisms operationalize this vision, enabling consultative councils, elected authorities, and supervisory bodies to translate theological commitments into functional governance. This participatory model reflects the principle of collective vicegerency (khelāfat al-jamāʿah), wherein governance is understood not as a vertical, top-down authority, but as a dynamic and reciprocal relationship between the public, religious authority, and legal structures—all harmonized in service of divine justice.

Implication Five: Barriers to People-Centered Governance in Islamic Thought

In the framework of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr's theory of Islamic governance, the realization of Mardomisazi—people-centered governance rooted in collective vicegerency—is not simply an ideological aspiration but a practical challenge constrained by multiple layers of resistance. These barriers emerge across three interrelated domains:

structural-economic configurations, ethical-individual shortcomings, and systemic-social complexities. Each level reveals how the full actualization of divine vicegerency through public participation is obstructed by forces that require holistic and multi-dimensional reform.

At the structural-economic level, one of the primary barriers lies in the monopolization of productive assets and the entrenched inequalities in the distribution of resources. Al-Sadr warns against the concentration of economic tools in the hands of a minority, noting that such accumulation paves the way for systemic exploitation and power asymmetries. Without specific legal frameworks to ensure distributive justice—such as anti-monopoly legislation and progressive taxation—economic growth becomes a mechanism of domination rather than empowerment. The Qur'anic concept of ẓulm (oppression) is interpreted in this context as the unjust distribution of divine blessings, including natural and financial resources. Consequently, unequal access to land, water, technology, and capital not only violates the tenets of social justice but also nullifies the community's divine responsibility to manage creation equitably. A genuine model of Mardomisazi thus requires not merely abstract commitment to justice but concrete redistributive mechanisms such as the institutional revitalization of the Bayt al-Māl and transparent fiscal governance.

However, structural reforms alone cannot address the second layer of barriers: those rooted in ethical and individual failings. Al-Sadr, drawing on Qur'anic anthropology, emphasizes that human beings are susceptible to nafsānī (carnal) temptations such as greed, arrogance, and the abuse of power. These inclinations can erode the sense of collective duty and lead both rulers and citizens into patterns of corruption, apathy, and irresponsibility. The Qur'an repeatedly warns against such moral lapses, reminding believers of their duty to uphold truth even against their own interests. Moreover, al-Sadr identifies a deeper cultural malady—kufr al-niʿmah, or ingratitude for divine blessings—which manifests as societal complacency and resistance to reform. When communities fail to utilize their resources or fear the disruption of entrenched norms, they stagnate, betraying their role as divine vicegerents. The solution to these ethical barriers lies in sustained moral education, the promotion of collective piety, and the institutionalization of values such as amr bi al-maʿrūf wa nahy ʿan al-munkar (enjoining good and forbidding evil). These ethical institutions must be woven into the fabric of society not as marginal moral guidance but as pillars of civic consciousness and transformative agency.

The third domain of obstacles arises from the complexity of modern social life. As societies become more differentiated and stratified, the gap

between the powerful and the weak widens, undermining collective solidarity and complicating the implementation of consultative principles such as shūrā. Al-Sadr notes that modern governance requires normative and legal structures capable of managing pluralism while maintaining unity. Without clear frameworks to regulate participation, protect minority rights, and uphold justice across class divides, participation can become a tool for elite entrenchment rather than communal empowerment. The absence or weakness of legal structures—particularly in the domain of manṭaqat al-farāgh (areas of juristic discretion)—poses a critical risk to participatory governance. To address this, there is a need for the codification of laws based on Islamic jurisprudence, especially in ambiguous areas, and the establishment of robust oversight institutions, such as people's guardian councils and legally mandated ombudsman bodies. These institutions serve not only as technical correctives but as expressions of the people's shared commitment to justice and accountability.

In synthesis, the barriers to implementing people-centered governance in the Islamic context can be categorized into three integrated but distinct spheres. First, economic structures characterized by distributive injustice marginalize the public and reduce divine vicegerency to elite domination. Second, human moral weakness—manifested in both leadership and the broader citizenry—undermines the ethos of collective responsibility, highlighting the need for ethical cultivation. Third, the social and legal complexities of modern life threaten cohesion and the integrity of participatory frameworks unless they are met with clear institutional designs rooted in Islamic principles.

To overcome these barriers, al-Sadr's vision calls for a strategic and unified approach comprising three foundational pillars: the pursuit of economic justice through redistributive laws and institutional checks on accumulation; the promotion of spiritual and moral education to nurture a sense of vicegerency and public duty; and the construction of participatory institutions—ranging from local councils to the Ahl al-ḥall wa al-ʿaqd—to operationalize the collective moral and political agency of the community. Only through the integration of these elements can the ideal of Mardomisazi transcend abstraction and become the living reality of Islamic participatory governance.

Implication Six: Prerequisites for People-Centered Governance in Islamic Thought

The successful realization of Mardomisāzī—people-centered governance—in Islamic political philosophy is contingent upon a

constellation of theological, ethical, institutional, and economic prerequisites. In the thought of Martyr Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, these conditions are not merely idealistic aspirations, but normative imperatives derived from scriptural foundations and demonstrated throughout Islamic history. They reflect a holistic vision in which divine sovereignty, human agency, distributive justice, and political participation converge under the banner of collective vicegerency (khelāfat al-jamāʿah).

Foremost among these prerequisites is the acknowledgment of mutual responsibility as the ontological basis of human vicegerency. The Islamic model of governance, as articulated by al-Sadr, regards the people not merely as political participants but as bearers of a divine trust. Human beings, collectively designated as God's vicegerents on earth, are charged with the task of administering justice, upholding divine ordinances, and cultivating the earth in accordance with sacred principles. Participation in governance, therefore, is not a political privilege alone, but a religious duty that demands alignment with divine law. This conception renders political engagement an act of worship and a condition for legitimate sovereignty (Theory of Collective Vicegerency, pp. 79–80).

Integral to this vision is the Islamic affirmation of human freedom and agency. The Qur'anic paradigm presupposes that individuals possess the moral capacity to choose between gratitude (shukr) and denial (kufr), and this freedom is the foundation of both personal accountability and collective responsibility. As such, governance must occur within a socio-political environment that fosters conscious, voluntary participation. Mardomisāzī is not compatible with authoritarianism or blind obedience; it requires citizens who are morally aware and spiritually motivated to participate in reform efforts grounded in divine guidance (Theory of Vicegerency, p. 93).

Another essential condition is the incorporation of the public into the processes of justice and law enforcement. The Qur'an commands believers to "judge with justice" (4:58), a directive that implies the necessity of consultative mechanisms and communal oversight in the implementation of legal norms. Islamic criminal law is not merely punitive, but pedagogical and preventative—requiring public endorsement and moral awareness to function effectively. Al-Sadr thus envisions a participatory legal order in which society assumes partial responsibility for maintaining justice and deterring corruption (Theory of Vicegerency, pp. 271–275).

Furthermore, hope is identified as a critical spiritual driver of collective action. Without a realistic and faith-based hope for justice, Mardomisāzī becomes devoid of vitality. Al-Sadr argues that authentic Islamic

governance must cultivate a sense of purposeful hope—one rooted in religious eschatology and prophetic narratives rather than imported political myths. This hope is not abstract optimism, but a motivational force that inspires sacrifice, perseverance, and resistance in the face of oppression (The Essential Condition for an Islamic Uprising, p. 43).

In this context, Islamic political thought warns against the uncritical adoption of external models, particularly Western liberal democracies that prioritize material individualism and market rationality. For Mardomisāzī to be meaningful, it must emerge from indigenous traditions aligned with Islamic ontology and values. Al-Sadr underscores the importance of historical exemplars such as Imam Ali (a.s.), whose governance combined social justice, equal legal treatment, and principled leadership. These cases offer not only theoretical inspiration but practical templates for structuring participation and accountability (Sources of Power in Islamic Government, pp. 158–159).

Moreover, al-Sadr insists that legal legitimacy in Islamic governance is dependent upon practical implementation, not mere textual symbolism. He critiques historical and contemporary governments that possess righteous constitutions yet fail to actualize them in daily life. The true test of Mardomisāzī lies in the state's ability to translate constitutional values into equitable outcomes—particularly in access to justice, social services, and legal protection (Sources of Power, pp. 95–96).

Economic justice is also a foundational condition. The Islamic state must actively combat exploitative practices such as hoarding and monopolization. In al-Sadr's economic vision, labor-based ownership, progressive taxation mechanisms like khums and kharāj, and price regulation are essential tools for balancing public welfare and private enterprise. These policies ensure that economic participation remains inclusive and that the concentration of wealth does not erode the foundations of public sovereignty (Islamic Economic Blueprint, pp. 192–198, 243–245).

Further, a legitimate Islamic government must commit to job creation and poverty eradication. By guaranteeing employment and providing welfare to those unable to work, the state fulfills its moral obligation and reinforces the participatory essence of Mardomisāzī. Al-Sadr reinterprets governance not as an elite-controlled bureaucracy but as a system tasked with social upliftment, equity, and the eradication of deprivation (Islamic Economic Blueprint, p. 341).

Finally, the role of righteous religious leadership is emphasized as a catalyst for popular engagement. The Iranian revolution, for instance,

demonstrates how religious authority—embodied by figures such as Imam Khomeini—can unite faith with political agency, mobilizing the masses in opposition to tyranny. In this view, Mardomisāzī is most effective when spiritual guidance, collective resistance, and public participation converge within a framework of legitimate religious leadership (Draft Constitution of the Islamic Republic, p. 16).

Taken together, these conditions form an integrated architecture for implementing people-centered governance in Islamic thought. They encompass theological commitments to divine sovereignty, ethical imperatives for justice and agency, structural requirements for economic equity, and institutional mechanisms for participation. More than a theory, this framework is reflected in the historical praxis of early Islamic governance, especially in the conduct of Imam Ali (a.s.), whose leadership exemplified the convergence of divine authority and public accountability.

Thus, Mardomisāzī is not a mere expression of political inclusion; it is a spiritually rooted model in which civic engagement and religious ethics operate in tandem. It represents a paradigm of governance wherein the legitimacy of the state is measured not by electoral success alone, but by its fidelity to divine ordinances, its responsiveness to the needs of the people, and its capacity to translate collective vicegerency into both institutional form and social function.

5. Conclusion and Final Remarks

This study, grounded in the political and theological thought of Shahid Sayyid Muhammad Baqir al-Sadr, has examined the theory of collective human vicegerency (khelāfat al-jamāʿat al-bashariyyah) as a foundational paradigm for realizing people-centered governance (Mardomisāzī) in the Islamic tradition. Al-Sadr conceptualizes this model not merely as a political entitlement, but as a divine obligation embedded in the amānah (trusteeship) granted by God to humanity. Within this framework, the people—acting as God's vicegerents—bear a moral and institutional responsibility for managing society, implementing justice, and embodying divine values in public life.

The findings of this research may be summarized across five key dimensions. First, the study articulates a definition of people-centered governance in al-Sadr's thought as both a structural and value-driven process. It entails active and equitable public participation in ownership, decision-making, and policy implementation—while maintaining a qualitative orientation toward divine justice and ethical integrity. Second, the theory of collective vicegerency provides the theological underpinning

for the legitimacy of participatory governance. In this model, the vicegerency of humankind is actualized through mechanisms such as shūrā (consultation), communal oversight, and religious ijtihād. During the era of ghaybah (occultation), this responsibility is shared between the marjaʿiyyah (religious authority), which provides normative guidance, and the Ummah, which carries out executive and deliberative functions.

Third, the study highlights the normative contrast between Islamic people-centered governance and Western liberal democracy. While the latter derives legitimacy from majoritarian will and popular sovereignty, the former is rooted in divine trusteeship and adherence to immutable principles of justice and human dignity. In the Islamic framework, even majority consensus cannot override these divinely ordained rights.

Fourth, the implementation of Mardomisāzī is hindered by three interrelated categories of obstacles: structural (e.g., economic inequality and monopolistic ownership), moral (e.g., spiritual apathy and ingratitude), and systemic (e.g., social fragmentation and regulatory weakness). Addressing these challenges requires a tripartite strategy of distributive economic justice, sustained moral cultivation, and institutional reform.

Fifth, the study identifies the practical requirements for actualizing people-centered governance in line with Islamic principles. These include the internalization of divine accountability, the preservation of individual agency and freedom, the practical enforcement of justice, economic decentralization, and the integrative role of righteous religious leadership. Accordingly, key policy recommendations are offered: cultivating morally responsible and socially engaged individuals; institutionalizing state accountability mechanisms; promoting people-centered technologies and governance tools; and aligning individual incentives with communal values.

In sum, this research demonstrates that Mardomisāzī, as envisioned by al-Sadr, is a dynamic, multi-layered process that synthesizes ethical commitment, legal accountability, and participatory governance under the canopy of Islamic values. Its implementation requires a reconceptualization of the state not as an authoritarian structure, but as a facilitator of divine justice and communal empowerment. Only through such a transformation can people-centered governance fulfill its potential as an expression of collective vicegerency and contribute to the formation of a just, God-centered society.

Ultimately, this study affirms that al-Sadr's thought not only offers a coherent response to the governance dilemmas of the contemporary Muslim world, but also serves as an inspirational and operational

framework for justice-oriented movements seeking to establish a spiritually grounded and ethically coherent socio-political order.

6. Suggestions for Future Research

A comparative analysis of the theory of collective human vicegerency with governance models from other philosophical or religious traditions.

Empirical studies on the role of grassroots institutions (e.g., local Shora councils) in achieving social justice in contemporary Islamic societies.

Examination of the role of digital technologies in enhancing public participation and reducing administrative corruption.

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Designing an Ethical Framework for Using Gamification In Designing Educational Games Based on Analysis of Several Selected Management Games

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Abstract

Gamification has emerged as a innovative pedagogical tool, increasingly recognized for its potential to advance educational objectives. However, like all tools, it may entail ethical considerations or unintended dysfunctional outcomes. This study aims to develop an ethical framework for applying gamification in the design of managerial educational games.Through the analysis of selected management games and expert insights, we propose a three-layered framework. This model evaluates games across three design dimensions (form, rules, and content) and categorizes them into three ethical states: ethics-promoting, ethically neutral, or unethical-promoting. Five managerial games—Monopoly, Risk, Catan, Jaliz, and Twilight Struggle— were analyzed using this framework to delineate their ethical standing.Findings indicate that these games comply with legal and religious principles, rendering them suitable for educational settings. However, certain aspects related to social values and player interactions require targeted supervision to prevent behaviors misaligned with cultural norms. Collectively, these results underscore the necessity of integrating ethical considerations into gamification processes.The proposed framework serves as a valuable tool for future educational game design, guiding developers to embed ethical principles in a game's form, rules, and content. By doing so, it fosters greater alignment between gamified learning tools and societal ethical-cultural values.

Keywords: Gamification, Management Education, Ethics, Instructional Design

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Introduction

Gamification refers to the use of game elements and game thinking in non-game contexts. In recent years, this approach has emerged as an innovative strategy to enhance engagement and motivation in educational settings. Systematic reviews indicate that incorporating game mechanics (such as point systems, badges, and leaderboards) generally has positive effects on student participation, learning satisfaction, and even academic performance. In other words, empirical evidence suggests that adding game-like features to the learning process can foster intrinsic motivation and sustained interest in learning. However, gamification is not merely a neutral tool for entertainment; it functions as a persuasive technology designed to influence user behavior and attitudes.

As with other persuasive technologies, the application of gamification must be critically examined through an ethical lens to ensure that learners' rights and freedoms are not compromised. In theoretical terms, ethics provides a framework of guiding principles to distinguish right from wrong. In the context of designing gamified educational tools, adherence to ethical principles is crucial for safeguarding human dignity, promoting educational equity, and respecting cultural values.With the growing implementation of gamification in education, discussions around its ethical implications have become inevitable. Critics (both domestic and international) have warned about potential negative consequences, even characterizing gamification as a new form of exploitative instrument. For example, local studies have shown that when ethical principles are neglected, gamification can lead to the manipulation of users (endangering their personal rights). When an educational system uses game mechanics to nudge learners toward desirable behaviors, several issues must be carefully monitored (such as student consent and autonomy, privacy protection, fairness in competition, and the avoidance of harmful comparisons or discrimination).

For instance, publicly displaying scores and rankings may lead to undesirable social comparisons and undermine some learners' self-esteem. Similarly, an excessive focus on extrinsic rewards may weaken intrinsic motivation for learning. Furthermore, in different cultural contexts, game elements may carry unforeseen interpretations and impacts. For example, extreme competitiveness or the narrative content of certain games may conflict with the educational and cultural values of a given society. Therefore, indiscriminate integration of game mechanics into teaching and learning processes (without adherence to ethical frameworks) may

introduce educational and cultural challenges that call the legitimacy of the program into question.

1. Problem Statement

Despite the growing importance of the topic, there is still no clearly defined and widely accepted ethical framework for the design of gamified educational games. Many educational game designers (particularly in the fields of management and pedagogy) proceed based on experience and trial-and-error in the absence of clear ethical guidelines and frameworks. This increases the risk that ethical considerations may be overlooked.

A review of the research literature shows that although some studies have addressed the identification of ethical challenges in educational gamification and even proposed preliminary guidelines and frameworks (for example, frameworks for evaluating intentions, methods, and ethical consequences in gamification projects, and integrating ethical assessments into instructional design phases), a practical and comprehensive model (specifically developed for the design of educational games) is still lacking. This gap has resulted in the failure to systematically address ethical aspects in the design of many gamified management education games, which may unintentionally lead to negative consequences. The qualitative content analysis of selected management games in this study also confirms that the lack of a formal ethical framework can result in various shortcomings in game design (such as a mismatch between certain game mechanics and pedagogical goals, insufficient attention to users' cultural contexts, or the absence of oversight mechanisms to prevent misuse and learning decline).

To confront this challenge, it is necessary to provide a three-layered ethical framework to guide designers in the ethical design of gamified educational games. In other words, the present study seeks to propose a three-tiered ethical framework (by clearly articulating the ethical dimensions involved at the individual, pedagogical, and cultural levels), which will be detailed in the following sections. This framework acts as a roadmap to ensure that gamification elements not only promote participation and learning enjoyment, but also remain consistent with ethical principles and the educational values of the society. In this way, game designers and educational professionals can make use of gamification's benefits with greater awareness and confidence (while avoiding its ethical and cultural pitfalls).

2. Literature Review

Islamic ethics, as a comprehensive system of values, principles, and human virtues, places central emphasis on the dignity of human beings. According to Qur'anic teachings, humans possess intrinsic worth and divine honor, which must be respected in all spheres of life, including education and technology (Salimi Zare & Ghazizadeh, 2007). Justice, as a cornerstone of Islamic ethics, emphasizes fairness in rights and the equitable distribution of opportunities. These principles are also applicable in educational game design, where fairness may refer to balanced access to content and equal learning opportunities (Atrk, 2013). Truthfulness, another key virtue, forms the foundation of trust and ethical interaction; in the context of game-based learning, it is a critical factor in fostering a credible and supportive learning environment (Azizpour et al., 2024). Moreover, Islamic ethics strongly emphasizes individual responsibility before God, oneself, society, and nature. This emphasis can inspire mechanisms within educational games that encourage users to be accountable for their choices and behaviors within the game environment (Dadashi, Safarheidari, & Sharifzadeh, 2018). Another essential pillar of Islamic ethics is respect for privacy. With the growing presence of digital technologies and user data collection, protecting personal information has become more significant than ever. Islamic ethical principles mandate safeguarding individuals' privacy and confidential information, except in very limited and justified cases (Dargahzadeh, Nemati, & Sajjadi, 2018). Attention to these principles can significantly inform the development of ethical frameworks in educational game design rooted in Islamic values. Despite growing interest in ethical gamification, a comprehensive, structured framework (particularly one tailored to management education) remains absent. The present study addresses this gap by proposing a multilayered ethical framework grounded in Islamic values and informed by a content analysis of selected management games (Hosseini & Soltani, 2018; Ghodratzadeh, 2024).

Reyes-de-Cózar et al. (2022) conducted a mixed-methods analysis of 75 commercial video games and found that many convey implicit moral and social themes. Games like Papers, Please, Life is Strange, and Assassin's Creed were shown to foster ethical discourse and critical reflection when used pedagogically. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of ethical awareness in gamified learning. While gamification can promote motivation and engagement, it can also lead to manipulation, inequity, or psychological harm if implemented carelessly.

Gamification has emerged in recent decades as a novel and technology-driven approach to enhancing engagement, motivation, and learning within educational contexts. This method, which draws on game design elements applied in non-game environments such as classrooms, e-learning platforms, and instructional software, has attracted increasing attention from researchers in education, psychology, and cognitive science (Nah et al., 2014). By incorporating components such as points, competition, rewards, levels, challenges, storytelling, and immediate feedback, gamification transforms learning spaces into more engaging, interactive, and motivation-driven environments. This approach has been particularly welcomed in online learning, adult education, and interdisciplinary fields like management.

In their literature review, Nah et al. (2014) identified eight key gamification elements frequently used in educational contexts: point scoring, leveling, badges, leaderboards, external rewards, progress bars, narratives, and real-time feedback. These elements can enhance learner participation and reduce dropout by reinforcing motivation, mastery, and competition. However, many implementations are overly superficial, lacking sensitivity to cultural context, intrinsic motivation, or pedagogical nuance, which may result in reduced effectiveness or even unintended negative consequences.

A critical systematic review by Dichev and Dicheva (2017) analyzed 63 studies and found an overemphasis on surface-level elements such as points and badges, with limited attention to deeper game mechanics such as meaningful challenges, safe failure, and narrative engagement. Furthermore, many studies lacked robust experimental designs, control groups, or valid data analysis. They concluded that gamification only succeeds when based on solid psychological theory, particularly Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and designed in an ethical, learner-centered, and context-sensitive manner. Similarly, a quasi-experimental study by Bagheri and Shahsavon (2022) revealed that gamified instruction in a Photoshop training course had no significant effect on students' academic engagement. They attributed this to repetitive design, lack of dynamic feedback, and insufficient alignment between challenge level and learner readiness—highlighting the need for personalized and adaptive gamification strategies.

Beyond technical design, ethical considerations in gamification are increasingly emphasized in literature. Kim and Werbach (2016) identified four major ethical concerns: user exploitation, loss of autonomy, psychological or social harm, and the undermining of moral development.

They argue that gamification must align with justice, transparency, and human dignity, otherwise it risks becoming manipulative or coercive. O'Sullivan et al. (2021), using the ADDIE instructional design model, proposed embedding ethical checkpoints throughout the process. Their questions—drawn from deontological, utilitarian, and virtue ethics— include: "Does this design exclude certain learners unfairly?", "Do users give informed consent?", and "Does the competition induce stress or anxiety?" Klock et al. (2023) also emphasized key ethical principles such as informed consent, privacy, non-addictive design, and user well-being in their umbrella review of gamified education studies.

Razizadeh (2024), taking a philosophical stance, compared two approaches to ethical game design. The first uses pre-defined moral characters (e.g., religious or cultural), while the second exposes players to open-ended moral dilemmas. The latter was deemed more effective, as it fosters ethical reflection through player agency and experiential learning.

Digital management games, in particular, offer a valuable lens for ethical inquiry. Czauderna and Budke (2020) analyzed 17 such games (e.g., SimCity, Democracy, Tropico, Cities: Skylines) and showed that they prompt players to manage complex ethical trade-offs like economic growth vs. environmental sustainability, thus enhancing critical thinking and moral reasoning. In a follow-up study, Czauderna and Budke (2022) interviewed 19 young players and identified three attitudes: educational, dismissive, and balanced. These attitudes were strongly linked to the players' media literacy, the role of facilitators, and how the games were integrated into learning contexts.

3. Methodology

This qualitative, exploratory research aims to develop an ethical framework for integrating gamification into managerial educational game design. In the first phase, data were collected via a focus group consisting of gamification and management education experts, who identified core components and drafted the initial framework. Next, selected games— Risk, Jaliz, Monopoly, Catan, Silk Road, and Twilight Struggle—were analyzed to evaluate the framework's applicability. The games were chosen for their diversity in popularity, pedagogical relevance, and ethical dimensions. Findings from this analysis informed subsequent refinements, resulting in a finalized ethical framework.

4. Analysis framework

reviewing the focus group sessions, the following framework was developed. The components of the ethical framework for analyzing educational games can be described as follows. In this study, to analyze ethics in educational games designed using gamification, the overall relationship of each game with the concept of ethics is first identified. Based on this, three main categories are considered:

1. The game promotes ethics: In this category, the game directly or implicitly reinforces ethical values such as honesty, benevolence, justice, or responsibility. This promotion may manifest through the game's narrative, the design of its mechanics, or its graphical form. Games in this category can serve as complementary tools for teaching ethics within learning environments.

2. The game lacks ethical consideration: These games neither explicitly promote nor violate ethical values. They are typically designed for entertainment or to teach specific skills and occupy a neutral ethical stance. However, even in such games, neglecting ethical aspects can have educational consequences.

3. The game promotes unethical behavior: In this case, the game actively or implicitly undermines or disregards ethical values, for example, by encouraging violence, deception, discrimination, or disrespect for cultural beliefs. Such games may conflict with ethical principles in terms of content, structure, or visuals and can have negative effects on players, especially in educational settings.

After determining the game's relationship with ethics, the degree or level of this relationship is specified. In other words, it becomes clear how and to what extent the game engages with ethical or unethical aspects. These levels are analyzed across three independent yet complementary dimensions:

1. Appearance: This dimension refers to the game's visual aspects, including graphics, visual design, art style, and the overall graphical environment. The form can convey ethical (or unethical) messages and meanings or influence the audience's perception of values.

2. Rules: This dimension examines the game's mechanics and internal rules, such as scoring methods, rewards and penalties, decision-making structures, and interaction algorithms. The rules play a crucial role in instilling ethical or unethical behaviors in players.

3. Content: This dimension focuses on the narrative, dialogues, characters, story situations, and the implicit values within the game.

> Content often contains direct or implicit messages about human, social, cultural, or ethical values

For a more detailed analysis, each of the three general categories of the game's relationship with ethics can be further subdivided into deeper levels. This second-level classification represents the intensity or quality of the game's engagement with ethical issues. In games that promote ethics, three levels are identified:

- Valuing the ethical act: The game merely presents ethical concepts as values without necessarily compelling the player to act upon them.

- Encouraging the player to perform ethical acts: Through mechanisms such as points, progression, or narrative, the game motivates the player to engage in ethical behavior.

- Creating a mindset shift toward ethical acts: The game aims to foster an ethical transformation in the player's attitudes or values.

In games that promote unethical behavior, three distinguishable levels are identified:

- Opposition to religious law: The game conflicts with religious principles and beliefs.

- Opposition to social norms: Behaviors or messages in the game promote actions that are inconsistent with accepted societal norms.

- Opposition to cultural values: The game disseminates attitudes that weaken or undermine cultural values and traditions.

These levels, when combined with the three dimensions of "form," "rules," and "content," create a multilayered framework for the ethical analysis of educational games. This framework is presented in Table 1 and has been used as the basis for the qualitative analysis of the selected management games.

Table 1 Ethical Framework for the Application of Gamification and Game Design

Ethics	Category	Form	Rules	Content
Promote ethical values	Values ethical action			
	Encourages ethical behavior			
	Creates a mindset shift toward ethical action			
Ethically Neutral Game	No ethical consideration			
Promotes Unethical Behavior	Opposes religious principles			
	Opposes social norms			
	Opposes social etiquette and cultural values			

5. Discussion

Designing an ethical framework for educational games requires a thorough understanding of the intrinsic features of games, the nature of player interactions, and the behavioral outcomes they produce. Designing an ethical framework for educational games requires a thorough understanding of the intrinsic features of games, the nature of player interactions, and the behavioral outcomes they produce. In this section, with the aim of providing an objective and comparable assessment of the selected management games, each game is analyzed based on key gamification components, the structure of competition or collaboration, the transparency of rules, and potential psychological and cultural implications. These analyses serve as a foundation for evaluating the extent to which each game aligns with ethical values and considerations in educational contexts, and represent a critical step toward validating the proposed ethical framework.

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cultural implications. These analyses serve as a foundation for evaluating the extent to which each game aligns with ethical values and considerations in educational contexts, and represent a critical step toward validating the proposed ethical framework.

6-1. Analysis of Monopoly

The game Monopoly centers on real estate trading, wealth accumulation, and eliminating opponents through economic monopolization. According to the ethical framework proposed in this study, the game falls into the category of "ethically neutral"; however, it implicitly reinforces attitudes such as aggressive competition, individualism, and success defined by the elimination of others. In terms of form, the game employs a classic visual design filled with capitalist symbols, portraying a narrative of financial advancement and economic rivalry. At the level of rules, its core mechanic is based on asset accumulation and opponent elimination, leaving no room for cooperation or generosity. From a content perspective, values such as social justice or empathy are absent, with financial independence and individual dominance taking center stage. Despite these characteristics, Monopoly possesses significant educational potential for teaching economic principles and financial decision-making. However, its use in educational settings should be accompanied by ethical facilitation and critical discussion to ensure that its cultural and social implications are appropriately addressed.

6-2. Analysis of Risk

The game Risk is a strategic, turn-based war game that challenges players to engage in smart planning and decision-making. Each player assumes the role of a global military commander who enters the battlefield with the aim of world domination. Players must use calculated strategies and long-term planning to conquer various territories and defeat competing players. This involves deciding when to attack other territories, how many troops to allocate to each region, and when to defend. Overall, Risk is considered one of the most popular strategic board games due to its simple rules yet deep tactical complexity.

6-3. Analysis of Catan

The game Catan is a strategic and management-oriented game that focuses on resource development, construction, and social interaction. According to the three-layered ethical framework of this study, Catan is classified as a "promoter of ethics" because it reinforces values such as cooperation, negotiation, collective planning, and gradual development, thereby fostering ethical attitudes among players. At the second level of analysis,

the game falls under the category of "encouraging ethical behavior," as success in the game is achieved not merely through competition, but through constructive interaction, fair resource exchange, and participatory decision-making. In terms of form, the game's calm visual design, soft color palette, and natural setting convey a sense of balance and creativity. At the level of rules, the structure based on resource exchange, fairness in development, and mutually beneficial interactions enables competition within a cooperative framework. From a content perspective, the game lacks a specific narrative storyline, yet values such as coexistence, collective growth, and conflict management are implicitly reinforced through gameplay. Overall, Catan can be considered a successful example of a management game that, by fostering an interactive and ethically grounded environment, holds strong potential for educational use in social development and ethical skill-building.

6-4. Analysis of Jaliz

The game Jaliz is a competitive card game centered on planting, harvesting, and trading agricultural products. According to the ethical framework of this study, the game is classified as "ethically neutral" since it does not explicitly aim to teach or promote ethical concepts. However, certain structural features of the game may encourage the emergence of either positive or negative ethical behaviors. At the second level of analysis, the game has the potential to reinforce values such as cooperation, honesty in trade, and social interaction—values that, when guided through appropriate educational facilitation, can align with principles like mutual support and collective fairness. Therefore, this game can be analyzed as occupying a borderline position between "ethically neutral" and "promoter of ethics." In terms of form, its simple design and cartoon-style graphics convey a sense of balance and liveliness. At the rules level, the game focuses on bargaining and free trade, allowing players to choose between cooperation and deception. In terms of content, although there is no explicit ethical narrative, the game provides opportunities for developing social skills, honesty in interaction, and awareness of the ethical consequences of one's choices. Overall, Jaliz has the potential to serve as an educational tool in behavioral and social skill development, particularly when accompanied by instructor intervention and emphasis on ethical conduct.

6-5. Analysis of Twilight

The game Twilight is a two-player card game based on the foreign game Hierarchy, in which players compete for the throne. According to the

three-layered ethical framework of this study, the game is categorized as "ethically neutral," as it does not explicitly aim to teach or promote ethical concepts. However, certain structural features may facilitate the development of either positive or negative ethical behaviors. At the second level of analysis, the game has the potential to strengthen concepts such as fair competition, strategic thinking, and logical decision-making—values that, when appropriately guided through educational facilitation, can align with principles such as cooperation and collective justice. Thus, the game may be positioned at the intersection between "ethically neutral" and "promoter of ethics." In terms of form, the game's simple design and cartoon-style graphics convey a sense of balance and dynamism. At the level of rules, the gameplay focuses on the strategic arrangement of cards and the use of unique card abilities, encouraging players to engage in logical thinking and planning. From a content perspective, although the game lacks a defined ethical narrative, it offers opportunities for developing decision-making skills, anticipating opponent moves, and understanding the consequences of choices. Overall, Twilight has the potential to serve as an educational tool for strategic and behavioral skills development, particularly when accompanied by instructor guidance and emphasis on ethical interaction.

7. Conclusion

The present study aimed to develop an ethical framework for the application of gamification in the design of educational management games. To this end, a three-layered framework was constructed based on analysis of selected management games and expert consultation. In this framework, games are evaluated across three design dimensions (form, rules, and content) and classified into one of three general ethical categories: "promoter of ethics," "ethically neutral," or "promoter of unethical behavior." Using this framework, five selected management games (Monopoly, Risk, Catan, Jaliz, and Twilight) were analyzed, and the ethical status of each was identified. The analysis revealed that most of these games do not present issues in terms of religious or legal principles and can be appropriately used in educational contexts. However, certain aspects related to social values and player interaction require supervision and intentional guidance to prevent behaviors misaligned with cultural norms. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of ethical considerations in the gamification process. The proposed ethical framework of this study can serve as a valuable tool for the future design of educational games, guiding designers to incorporate ethical principles into the form, rules, and content of their games, thereby

enhancing the alignment of such games with the moral and cultural values of society.

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Anticipatory Governance in the Face of Afghan Migration Challenges in Iran: An Analysis of Concept, Position, and Alignment with Islamic Governance

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Abstract

This paper critically examines the concept of Anticipatory Governance (AG) as a distinct model of governance. The term "governance" is defined broadly as an interdisciplinary guiding activity involving multiple stakeholders, thus moving beyond traditional government-centric views. Foresight is defined as a systematic process for envisioning alternative futures to inform current actions. While acknowledging the existence of "future-oriented" or "predictive" governance approaches, this paper posits that AG, as a more nuanced and advanced concept, uniquely embraces uncertainty, focuses on shaping multiple futures, and addresses long-term, systemic challenges. The analysis positions AG as a distinct model that transcends reactive and purely predictive approaches by integrating foresight, networked systems, feedback loops, capacity building, policy integration, partnerships, data/technology use, and regulatory experimentation. Key components of the framework highlight potential benefits such as improved policymaking and navigating complexity, alongside challenges like short-termism and data governance. This paper contributes to the extant literature by examining the nuances between AG and other future-oriented approaches (including Predictive Governance), delving deeper into the historical development of the concept, and critically analyzing its potential application within the Iranian governance context. The paper focuses on the complex and long-term challenge of Afghan migration and its alignment with Islamic governance principles.

Keywords: Anticipatory Governance, Predictive Governance, Migration, Afghan Nationals, Iran, Islamic Governance.

Introduction

In an era marked by accelerated technological advancement, increasing global interconnectedness, and complex, often unpredictable challenges, traditional governance models are experiencing considerable strain. Reactive approaches that have historically dominated policymaking and administration are proving insufficient to address long-term, systemic issues, from climate change to the societal impacts of artificial intelligence. This context underscores the growing imperative for governance structures to evolve, shifting towards more proactive and future-oriented strategies. Anticipatory Governance (AG) has emerged as a compelling response to this need, proposing a framework that explicitly integrates foresight and long-term thinking into the core processes of decision-making and public administration.

However, the discourse surrounding future-oriented governance is multifaceted, with terms like "future-oriented governance," "predictive governance," and "anticipatory governance" used interchangeably or with subtle distinctions. The present paper aims to elucidate these subtleties, establishing AG as a discrete and sophisticated methodology that transcends mere prediction or rudimentary future-oriented analysis. The text delves into the concept of Anticipatory Governance, drawing upon extant literature to define its core elements, critically analyze its position relative to other future-oriented approaches (including Predictive Governance), and explore its key components and implications for contemporary practice. Furthermore, this paper seeks to address a critical gap by examining the potential applicability and integration of AG within the specific context of Iranian governance. The paper focuses on the complex and long-term challenge of Afghan migration and its alignment with Islamic governance principles.

1. Discussion

1-1. Defining Core Concepts: Governance and Foresight

To understand Anticipatory Governance, it is essential to first establish clear definitions of its foundational concepts: governance and foresight.

- **Definition of Governance:** The following text is intended to provide a comprehensive overview of the subject matter. The concept of governance is presented as a broad, interdisciplinary one that has grown significantly across various scientific fields, including political science, economics, sociology, and public administration. It is generally accepted to be a pattern or activity involving guidance or leadership, with a lower degree of connection to governments

specifically in comparison to the term "government" itself (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 3; Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 494). As stated by Mir mazaheri (2024, p. 3), governance is indicative of the state's growing reliance on external entities to achieve its objectives and execute its policies. It encompasses a series of decision-making protocols and procedures that delineate the prerogatives and obligations of stakeholders, encompassing those from parliament, administration, firms, and communities, through the mechanisms of coordination and cooperation (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 2). The concept of governance can be understood as the coordination of relations between academia, public and private institutions, citizens, and NGOs within a territory. This enables a flexible form of power that incorporates new stakeholders (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 494).

- **Definition of Foresight / Anticipatory Thinking:** Foresight, otherwise known as anticipatory thinking, is defined as a methodical process that focuses on the future, typically over a medium to long-term timeframe (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 5). This process entails the aggregation of information, thereby facilitating a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter. The objective of this aggregation is to inform contemporary decisions and actions (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 5). Foresight is defined as the capacity to anticipate alternative futures based on sensitivity to weak signals and the ability to visualize their consequences as multiple possible outcomes. It functions as a tool for visualizing, rehearsing, and refining actions in one's mind (Ahern, 2025, p. 10). Foresight activities have been incorporated into the agendas of governments worldwide, finding application across a diverse array of policy domains (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3). While futures studies endeavor to cope with and embrace uncertainty, foresight focuses more on eliminating it and influencing policies and strategies through forecasts and estimations (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 2). The objective of foresight is to anticipate rather than to predict, thereby facilitating a more judicious course of action in the present by envisioning multiple future scenarios (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3).

1-2. Distinguishing Anticipatory Governance (AG) from Predictive Governance

Understanding the precise distinction between these two concepts is crucial for grasping the position of Anticipatory Governance:

- **Predictive Governance:** This approach primarily focuses on using data, statistical models, and predictive algorithms to forecast future trends and probable events. Its main goal is to identify and predict the "most likely" future to inform planning. This approach is often applied in areas such as economic forecasting, crime prediction, or disease outbreak prediction. However, this approach has limitations when faced with deep uncertainties, sudden changes, and systemic complexities that lead to deviations from predicted paths, as it relies on a single future or a narrower set of probable futures, with less emphasis on embracing and shaping a wider range of possibilities.

- **Anticipatory Governance (AG):** This concept, the focus of this paper, goes beyond mere prediction. AG emphasizes proactive preparedness, embracing uncertainty, and the capacity to shape desirable and multiple futures. This approach not only seeks to foresee futures but also aims to prepare society for them by understanding emerging trends, weak signals, and various scenarios, and even actively playing a role in shaping the future trajectory. AG emphasizes building systemic capacities for continuous learning, adaptation, and multi-stakeholder engagement to manage complexity and uncertainty. In other words, AG seeks to "anticipate to act," rather than merely "predict to know." As Ahern (2025, p. 1) states, AG leads to "imaginative policy design that combines evidence and informed speculation about the future and how policy should shape it." This involves not just anticipating, but also preparing for, and actively influencing the trajectory of future developments.

AG is a "system of systems" that employs foresight to create future plans and execute relevant actions (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 1; Ahern, 2025, p. 8). It is a sustainable decision-making process based on consensus on a desirable future or vision, achieved through the participation of various stakeholders, including government, market, the public, and academics (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 2). AG is a broad-based capacity extended through society that can act on various inputs to manage emerging knowledge-based technologies while such management is still possible (Xu et al., 2024, p. 5).

As illustrated in Figure 1, Anticipatory Governance is often depicted as a framework built upon the foundation of foresight. This structure emphasizes that effective AG relies on robust foresight processes, which themselves are supported by systematic methods of scanning the

environment. The diagram highlights that foresight involves various approaches, such as visions foresight, strategic foresight, participatory foresight, and others, while scanning encompasses both broad horizontal examination of potential issues and deeper vertical analysis of specific topics (Heo & Seo, 2021). This layered approach underscores the systematic nature of AG, where understanding and anticipating the future are prerequisite to effective governance in the present.
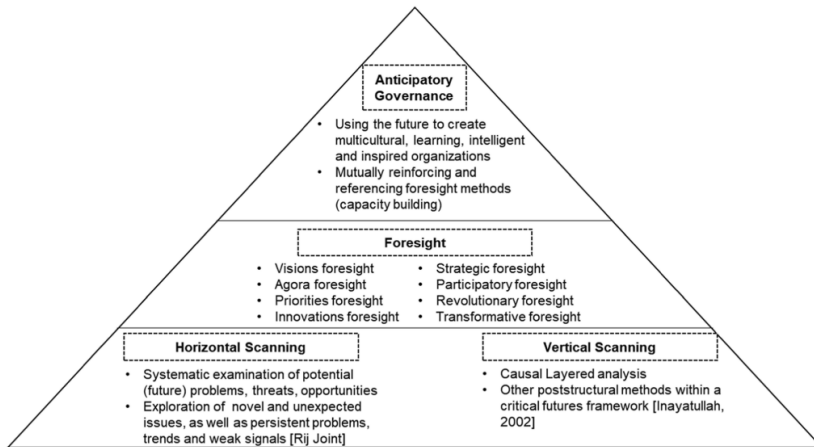

Figure 1: Structure of Anticipatory Governance (Heo & Seo, 2021)

1-3. Positioning Anticipatory Governance in the Governance Landscape

Anticipatory Governance is presented as a distinct and novel model of governance that moves beyond traditional, reactive, and even purely predictive approaches. A notable shift has been observed from reactive to proactive strategies (Xu et al., 2024, p. 5; Stępka, 2023, p. 152). In contrast to conventional governance, which is often characterized by short electoral terms and reactive policymaking, AG aims to address long-term challenges and uncertainties (Koskimaa & Raunio, 2022, p. 2). This approach stands in contrast to those that are primarily based on the logics of efficiency and the short term, instead aiming for a governance of well-being in a strategic key (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 493).

AG is distinguished from conventional preventive and risk management methodologies by its premise that forthcoming shocks and disturbances are not entirely manageable. While anticipation assumes the future can be efficiently governed with enough early warning, AG, particularly when linked with concepts like resilience, acknowledges the need to cultivate preparedness and the capacity to cope with unanticipated

dangers after they manifest (Stępka, 2023, p. 152). Some perspectives contrast AG with short-term resilience thinking, arguing that resilience can become an excuse for incapacity and shifting responsibility to the public without adequate capacity-building, rather than focusing on longer-term planning (Heo & Joseph, 2021, p. 2).

AG is also presented as a departure from models like New Public Management, which some early interpretations of AG were linked to, by focusing on future-oriented governance strategies rather than simply managing government like a private business. The approach under discussion emphasizes embracing uncertainty and deriving creative future scenarios (Heo & Joseph, 2021, p. 8).

Key characteristics of AG include its future-oriented nature, its reliance on foresight, its emphasis on proactive decision-making, its systemic approach, and its potential for integrating diverse stakeholders and knowledge sources (Mir mazaheri, 2024; Maffei et al., 2020; Xu et al., 2024; Heo & Seo, 2021; Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023; Ahern, 2025).

Table 1: Comparison of Traditional, Predictive, and Anticipatory Governance

❖ Feature	❖ Traditional/Reactive Governance	❖ Predictive Governance	❖ Anticipatory Governance (AG)
❖ Time Horizon	❖ Short-term, often tied to electoral cycles.	❖ Medium to long-term, focused on predicting a probable future.	❖ Medium to long-term, future-oriented, aiming to shape multiple futures.
❖ Approach	❖ Primarily reactive to events and crises.	❖ Prediction-based, seeking to identify and avoid predicted undesirable futures.	❖ Proactive, future-oriented, aiming for preparedness, embracing uncertainty, and shaping desirable futures.
❖ Uncertainty	❖ Often seeks to minimize or ignore uncertainty.	❖ Attempts to reduce uncertainty	❖ Embraces uncertainty, explores

		through more accurate prediction, but may be limited in the face of deep uncertainties.	multiple future scenarios, focuses on preparedness and adaptation.
❖ Decision Making	❖ Based on established procedures, often hierarchical.	❖ Based on prediction outputs, focusing on avoiding predicted negative outcomes.	❖ Systemic, networked, relies on foresight and continuous learning, integrates diverse knowledge, aiming for active future shaping.
❖ Innovation	❖ May lag behind technological advancements.	❖ May consider innovation solely from the perspective of predicting its consequences.	❖ Proactively anticipates and engages with innovation, uses regulatory experimentation and learning, seeking to shape responsible innovation.
❖ Goal	❖ Problem-solving, crisis management.	❖ Predicting the future and avoiding foreseen problems.	❖ Shaping desirable futures, navigating complexity, enhancing societal resilience and adaptability by embracing uncertainty.

1-4. Genesis and Evolution of Future-Oriented Governance in Literature

The conceptualization of governance that anticipates the future draws upon a diverse array of intellectual traditions. In the mid-20th century, the seminal discussions on strategic planning and policy analysis laid the foundation for more systematic, future-oriented approaches. In the period following the Second World War, intellectual organizations and academic institutions initiated the exploration of long-range forecasting and scenario planning as a means to inform government policy. This exploration was particularly salient in the context of Cold War geopolitics and the emerging challenges of industrial societies (see Meadows et al., 1972).

The advent of "New Public Management" in the late 20th century precipitated the integration of efficiency and market-like mechanisms into public administration. While these paradigms were often oriented towards the present, they concomitantly necessitated a degree of strategic planning for service delivery. However, the increasing recognition of the limitations of purely reactive or efficiency-driven governance in the face of complex, interconnected global challenges (such as climate change, pandemics, and rapid technological disruption) spurred the development of more sophisticated anticipatory frameworks.

The concept of "anticipatory governance" has emerged as a result of research focusing on the management of emerging technologies and societal transitions. For instance, studies on the governance of nanotechnology, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence highlighted the need for proactive engagement with potential risks and benefits before they become entrenched or unmanageable (e.g., Guston & Sarewitz, 2002; Rip & Meulmeester, 1999). This literature underscored the significance of "anticipatory governance" as a framework for responsible innovation, marked by an iterative process of foresight, deliberation, and adaptive regulation.

Heo and Seo's (2021) seminal contribution extends the current state of the field by examining the practical implementation of anticipatory governance in various countries, identifying key components such as foresight systems, networked governance, and feedback mechanisms. Maffei et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of data-driven approaches in facilitating anticipatory governance, particularly in urban contexts. Ahern's (2025) study centers on the "new anticipatory governance culture for innovation," underscoring the significance of regulatory foresight, experimentation, and learning as pivotal factors in navigating technological change.

Consequently, AG cannot be regarded as a sudden emergence; rather, it is a progression from earlier forms of future-oriented thinking. AG is distinguished by its explicit emphasis on embracing uncertainty, its systemic approach, and its focus on actively shaping multiple futures rather than merely predicting one.

1-5. Application in Iranian Governance and Alignment with Islamic Governance: Case Study of Afghan Migration

The principles of Anticipatory Governance hold significant potential for application within the Iranian governance context, offering a framework for addressing long-term challenges and fostering proactive policymaking. Iran, as one of the countries hosting the largest number of refugees and migrants globally, faces complex and multifaceted challenges arising from the long-term and sometimes sudden presence of foreign nationals, particularly Afghan migrants. These challenges encompass economic, social, cultural, security, and environmental dimensions, necessitating a more future-oriented approach than traditional reactive or purely predictive models can provide.

- **The Challenge of Afghan Migration in Iran and the Necessity of Anticipatory Governance:** The extensive and continuous presence of Afghan nationals in Iran, stemming from decades of unrest and conflict in Afghanistan, has imposed a range of systemic and long-term pressures on Iran's resources and governance structures. These challenges include:

  - **Pressure on Public Services:** The increased migrant population places additional strain on public services such as healthcare, education, housing, and infrastructure. More accurate prediction of future needs of this population and their impact on services is essential for sustainable planning (Sadeghi & Gholami, 2021).

  - **Labor Market and the Informal Economy:** The presence of migrants, particularly in the informal sectors of the labor market, has complex economic implications that require foresightful understanding and management to prevent unfair competition, exploitation, and the creation of social tensions (Hashemi et al., 2022). * **Social and Cultural Dimensions:** Social integration, maintaining national cohesion, and managing cultural diversity are long-term challenges that require a deeper understanding of social dynamics and the

anticipation of the effects of various policies on peaceful coexistence (Khorasani & Khosravi, 2023).

- **Security and Border Issues:** Border management, controlling movement, and anticipating security risks related to population displacement require anticipatory approaches and international cooperation (Ahmadi & Mohammadi, 2022).

- **Demographic Changes and Future Migration:** Demographic shifts in Afghanistan and global migration trends may expose Iran to new waves of migration, necessitating preparedness and strategic planning (UNHCR, 2023).

Anticipatory Governance (AG) can assist Iran in managing this complex challenge by providing a framework for forecasting, preparing for, and actively shaping futures related to migration. This includes:

- **Developing Migration Forecasting Systems:** Utilizing existing data and predictive models (Predictive Governance) to forecast future migration patterns, integrating it with scenario analysis of various factors (such as climate change, political instability in Afghanistan) to better understand uncertainties (IOM, 2022).

- **Building Adaptive Capacities:** Designing policies and programs that are flexible and capable of adapting to unexpected changes. This may include establishing rapid mechanisms for assessing needs and delivering services, or developing training and employment programs for migrants that align with future labor market demands (Hashemi et al., 2022).

- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Creating a platform for active cooperation and participation among government entities (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare), international organizations (such as UNHCR, IOM), civil society, academics, and even migrants themselves to better understand challenges and find sustainable solutions (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023).

- **Continuous Learning and Refinement:** Establishing feedback loops to evaluate the effectiveness of implemented policies and refine them based on new experiences and data (Heo & Seo, 2021).

- Alignment with Islamic Governance Principles:

The concept of Anticipatory Governance can resonate with core principles of Islamic governance that emphasize foresight, long-term planning, and concern for the community's welfare (Ummah).

- Responsibility and Stewardship (Istikhlaf): Islamic teachings emphasize humanity's responsibility to manage resources and ensure the welfare of the community, including migrants and the needy. Anticipatory Governance, by focusing on long-term and sustainable planning, operationalizes this responsibility within the framework of resource management and ensuring a better future for all citizens and residents, including migrants (Quran 2:30).

- Public Interest and Justice (Maslaha and Adl): The principle of Maslaha (public interest) and justice dictates that policies should be designed to consider both the long-term interests of the host society and the rights and needs of migrants. Anticipatory Governance, by accurately analyzing the long-term consequences of policies, can help achieve justice and public interest in this domain (Quran 4:58).

- Consultation and Participation (Shura): The principle of Shura in Islamic governance emphasizes the necessity of consultation and participation of various stakeholders in decision-making. In the context of migration, this principle can lead to the involvement of responsible institutions, NGOs, and even representatives of migrant communities in the policymaking process to find more comprehensive and acceptable solutions (Quran 3:159).

- Prudence and Foresight (Tadbir): Islam emphasizes prudence and avoiding haste and impulsive decision-making. Anticipatory Governance, by focusing on in-depth analysis, scenario forecasting, and long-term planning, aligns with this principle of prudence and foresight, moving away from reactive and emotional approaches that may have negative long-term consequences

By integrating the principles of Anticipatory Governance into the management of Afghan migration challenges, Iran can adopt a more effective, sustainable, and future-oriented approach while adhering to its Islamic and humanitarian values. This requires investment in analytical capacities, establishing robust participatory mechanisms, and adopting an adaptive and learning approach to policymaking.

2. Key Components and Implications

The essential elements and strategies for implementing Anticipatory Governance, as described in the literature, include:

- **Foresight System:** A core component is the development and utilization of a robust foresight system. This involves systematic processes for scanning the horizon, identifying emerging issues, trends, and potential future scenarios (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3; Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 5; Ahern, 2025, p. 8). In the context of migration, this includes analyzing demographic trends in origin countries, factors influencing migration (such as climate change, political instability in Afghanistan), and forecasting potential flows into Iran (IOM, 2022).

- **Networked System:** AG requires a networked system for integrating foresight into the policy process and facilitating coordination among various actors and institutions (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3; Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 5). This involves collaboration between government (Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Cooperatives, Labour, and Social Welfare), international organizations (such as UNHCR, IOM), civil society, academia, and research centers (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 494; Ahern, 2025, p. 9).

- **Feedback System:** A feedback system is necessary to assess predictions, gauge policy performance, and manage institutional knowledge, allowing for continuous learning and refinement of strategies (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3; Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 5). In the context of migration, this includes evaluating the effectiveness of integration programs, the impact of migration on the labor market and public services, and adjusting policies based on new findings (Sadeghi & Gholami, 2021).

- **Continuity System:** This refers to the organizational and individual capacity-building needed for the sustained operation of AG. It involves promoting future receptivity, future literacy, and future proficiency among government officials and the public (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 1, 5). Training and empowering experts in migration analysis, scenario planning, and future-oriented policymaking is essential.

- **Policy Integration:** Integrating foresight and anticipatory thinking into policymaking and strategic planning processes is crucial (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 3; Heo & Joseph, 2021, p. 9). This includes using foresight outcomes to inform decision-making, identify policy problems, and develop more appropriate, flexible, and robust policies (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 2-3). In the context of migration, this

means integrating migration considerations into development, health, education, and employment planning (Hashemi et al., 2022).

- **Participation and Collaboration:** AG often involves participatory processes to build consensus on desired futures and incorporate diverse perspectives from stakeholders (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 1; Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 490). Collaborative experimentation and co-production of policies are highlighted as important strategies (Monge-Ganuzas et al., 2023, p. 493, 498). In the context of migration, this includes collaborating with international organizations and civil society to provide services and support programs (UNHCR, 2023).

- **Data and Technology:** The increasing availability of data and advancements in technologies like AI are seen as enabling data-driven anticipatory governance. Predictive analytics and AI-enabled systems can be used to analyze large datasets, identify patterns, predict urban incidents, and support decision-making (Maffei et al., 2020, p. 2; Xu et al., 2024, p. 3, 5). In the context of migration, this can involve using demographic, economic, and social data for analysis and forecasting needs and challenges (IOM, 2022).

- **Regulatory Experimentation and Learning:** In the context of innovation, AG involves regulatory foresight, experimentation (e.g., regulatory sandboxes, pilot regulations), and learning. This iterative approach allows policymakers to respond to technological innovation, generate regulatory insights, and adjust policies over time (Ahern, 2025, p. 1, 6, 7). In the context of migration, this could involve experimenting with new approaches to social integration or resource management.

The implications of implementing Anticipatory Governance are manifold. It can lead to improved policymaking and decision-making, increased public participation, early identification of challenges, and the integration of policy and foresight (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 3). AG can enhance the ability of decision-makers to participate in and shape events over a longer timeframe (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 5). It can also contribute to navigating complexity and uncertainty in a rapidly changing world (Mir mazaheri, 2024, p. 5).

However, challenges exist, including the need to overcome short-termism, ensure the continuity of AG efforts, build future receptivity, manage the political nature of anticipatory expertise, and address potential issues related to data use, such as transparency, accountability, privacy,

and discrimination (Heo & Seo, 2021, p. 1, 5; Maffei et al., 2020, p. 2; Aykut et al., 2019, p. 3; Ahern, 2025, p. 8).

3. Conclusion

Anticipatory Governance signifies a substantial evolution in governance approaches, marked by a shift from a reactive stance to one that is proactive in anticipating and shaping future possibilities. The AG framework integrates systematic foresight with inclusive, networked, and adaptive governance structures. This integration is intended to enhance the capacity of decision-makers and society to navigate complexity and uncertainty over the long term. The present paper has sought to elucidate the distinctive contribution of AG by differentiating it from broader "future-oriented" or "predictive" governance concepts, emphasizing its embrace of uncertainty and its focus on shaping multiple futures.

The exploration of AG's potential application in Iranian governance underscores its pertinence for addressing national challenges and fostering strategic development. The case of Afghan migration, with its intricate and protracted nature, underscores the limitations of reactive and purely predictive approaches. This underscores the necessity for a foresightful framework that emphasizes preparedness, adaptation, and the shaping of future trajectories. Moreover, the alignment of AG principles with core Islamic governance concepts, such as Istikhlaf, Shura, and Maslaha, suggests a robust theoretical foundation for its adoption and adaptation within an Islamic framework.

Convergence and Divergence in Application: The successful implementation of AG in Iran will likely involve a process of both convergence and divergence.

- **Convergence:** Iran can converge with global best practices by adopting systematic foresight methodologies, building institutional capacity for future thinking, and fostering inter-agency collaboration. The emphasis on data and technology in AG also aligns with national priorities for digital transformation.

- **Divergence:** A key divergence will be the integration of Islamic ethical principles and cultural values into the AG framework. This means ensuring that foresight exercises and policy decisions are guided by concepts of justice, stewardship, and the long-term well-being of the community as understood within the Islamic tradition. The specific mechanisms for stakeholder engagement and

consensus-building may also need to be adapted to the Iranian socio-political context.

Recommendations for Future Research and Practice: Based on this analysis, several recommendations emerge for both research and practice:

1. **Develop National Foresight Capacity in Migration:** Establish specialized foresight units within relevant migration-focused institutions (e.g., Ministry of Interior, National Migration Organization, Ministry of Foreign Affairs) to systematically scan the migration horizon, develop various scenarios, and integrate foresight into migration policy planning.

2. **Integrate Islamic Principles into AG Frameworks for Migration Management:** Conduct in-depth research on how specific Islamic ethical principles and jurisprudential concepts can inform and guide the practice of Anticipatory Governance in managing migration, ensuring alignment with social and humanitarian values.

3. **Pilot AG in Migration-Related Policy Domains:** Initiate pilot projects in key sectors such as migrant social integration, healthcare and education service delivery, and labor market management for migrants, focusing on participatory and adaptive approaches.

4. **Enhance Future Literacy in Migration:** Invest in educational programs and public awareness campaigns to build "future literacy" among policymakers, government officials, and the public regarding migration challenges and opportunities, fostering a culture that values and engages with future thinking.

5. **Address Data Governance and Ethical Considerations in Migration Analysis:** Develop clear guidelines and robust mechanisms for data governance in migration analysis, ensuring transparency, accountability, privacy, and fairness in the use of data and predictive tools, particularly concerning Islamic ethical considerations.

6. **Comparative Studies in Migration Management with an Anticipatory Approach:** Conduct comparative studies of the implementation of Anticipatory Governance in migration management in Iran versus other countries with similar experiences in dealing with migratory flows, to identify transferable lessons and context-specific adaptations.

As global challenges become increasingly complex and interconnected, the principles and practices of Anticipatory Governance,

thoughtfully adapted to local contexts and ethical frameworks, are likely to become ever more critical for effective and sustainable guidance.

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