

Following Islamic teachings in the governance of Islamic society with an emphasis on transparency



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Government is a rational necessity for mankind because a society without government leads to chaos. Government regulates the affairs of the individual and the community, implements the limits, and ensures the dignity and independence of the human society. Thinking in the main goals of the divine prophets, it is clear that achieving great goals such as liberating people from the domination and captivity of foreigners, comprehensive human education, reviving human values, establishing justice, bringing people to excellence and growth, etc., requires formation. In this context, transparency is a key attribute, which can bring much power to the expected level as an effective mechanism for protecting citizens' political, economic, social and cultural rights. This concept is thus a valuable solution in the fight against sinister phenomena, such as political and economic corruptions, which are ranked as the biggest challenges facing any society. Even though transparency is nowadays deemed an emerging concept, its roots can be traced back to Islamic teachings, mainly during the short reign of Imam Ali, (peace be upon him [PBUH]). As a central figure, Imam Ali considered transparency as essential, and shared his views on governance and practical methods with the people and all audiences based on complete honesty and openness. As per Alavi thoughts, some criteria and indicators, both structural and behavioural, are involved in order to ensure the public good and meet the interests of all by providing the prerequisites for the realisation of transparency, at odds with the predominant ideas that transparency in governance, like many concepts in the political and governance-related spheres, has a western origin.

Contribution: The concept of transparency, with a proven history in global experiences, accordingly holds a special place in the literature of Islamic governments. Given the importance of this topic, the present study with an emphasis on transparency aims to examine Islamic teachings on governance in Islamic societies, and reflect on governance transparency components in such societies, relying on expert opinions.

Keywords: Islamic teachings; Nahj Al-Balagha; transparency; governance; Islamic society.

Introduction

Together with the key issues addressed in the related literature on development is governance, which holds a special place, principally in establishing and institutionalising civil societies (Sharifzadeh & Qolipour 2003). Even though the concept of government represents a political unit for developing policies, which is significantly over and above their implementation, the concept of governance characterises accountability for both (Akbari 2006). From this perspective, many experts have suggested several features and indicators through developing various governance models. Nevertheless, there is no single model for good governance (GG), but a wide range of governance models in line with the political, cultural and religious conditions prevailing in different countries (Rahnavard & Abbaspour 2007). In this sense, transparency has been introduced as one of the vital components of governance and the main driving force to improve the policymaking process in order to strengthen the relationship between government and its citizens (Yeganegi, Alwani & Memarzadeh 2016). Transparency can be further considered as the building blocks to realise this theory, which is by itself the reinforcing foundation of other governance components. As one of the high features of GG, transparency can be additionally deemed an effective mechanism for protecting citizens' political, economic, social and cultural rights, bringing much power to the expected level as a valuable solution in the fight against sinister phenomena, such as political and economic corruption, which are ranked as the biggest challenges facing any society.

Even though transparency is nowadays supposed to be a concept at its embryonic stage, its roots can be traced back to Islamic teachings, mainly during the short reign of Imam Ali (PBUH). As a central figure, he considered transparency as essential, and shared his views on governance and practical methods with the people and all audiences based on complete honesty and openness. As per Alavi thoughts, some criteria and indicators, both structural and behavioural, are involved in order to ensure the public good and meet the interests of all by providing the prerequisites for the realisation of transparency. By definition, transparency is associated with sharing information, exchanging data and delineating the relevant procedures, as well as making them obvious and available for further monitoring (Sarikhani & Akrami Sarab 2013). This works well in various social fields. For example, transparency in the domain of power is in general an indicator for the quality of politics and governance. Although this concept may sound familiar to people from the past, its new perception, debated today, was initially raised in the World Bank reports on development programmes. Putting emphasis on the significance of reducing the role of governments in achieving greater economic efficiency in the implementation of development programmes and the public sector management, the World Bank introduced the concept of GG for the first time in its 1989 report about the economic crisis in Africa. Accordingly, it had been pointed out that the existing economic crisis had stemmed from the governance crisis, and the lack of concern regarding transparency-based management had been portrayed as one of the characteristics of bad governance. After that, the World Bank enumerated four basic elements of GG in its 1992 report on development and governance, in which transparency was of priority (Yazdani Zenouz 2009). As specified by this theory, transparency denotes giving an opportunity to citizens and providing them with the information by the government to help them become aware of what is occurring, and empowering them to analyse, criticise and compare, but not being left in a darkroom. This concept is generally based on the mechanisms for guaranteeing public access to the decision-making processes (Pourezat, Qolipour Baghestani Barzeki 2010).

Like any other societies, Islamic societies require management also. An Islamic society is one in which the divine, religious and moral values of Islam are taken into consideration in formal and informal relationships. The Islamic management system in an Islamic society is thus combined with and influenced by many ethical issues, behaviours and values in Islam. If such Islamic concepts are not acknowledged or perceived, there is no proper and effective planning for this purpose, and above all social institutions, including departments, agencies or organisations, cannot be directed. An Islamic society accordingly craves for a kind of management bonded with human and religious values and its moral foundations, as well as devotion to ideals of Islam (Faruzandeh Dehkordi & Molai 2009).

Against this background, governance transparency is one of the focal values in the management of an Islamic society.

Transparency and public awareness of what the government is doing are not an issue specific to today's modern societies, but this concept has been already addressed in religious practices, as the tradition of Islamic religious leaders has advocated the principle of transparency and non-observance in their dealings with the people (Taheri & Aristo 2016). Therefore, it is possible to shed light on the model for transparency in governance based on Islamic teachings in accordance with the cultural and religious characteristics of Islamic nations. One of the main sources to search for the indicators and components of governance from the perspective of Islam is the theoretical and practical life of Imam Ali (PBUH), who is the best evidence for ideal governance in an Islamic society despite his short reign (Montazeri, Bahmani & Fathizadeh 2018). Listing the components of governance from the viewpoint of Nahj al-Balagha, such a model sets the stage for comparing the existing conditions and the desired ones, so that the managers and rulers of Islamic societies can find the distance between their administrative institution and the society under their rule.

The conventional view of the qualitative concepts and factors among thinkers and experts in social sciences in the Western world is generally an instrumentalist one. As a result, most concepts are in the main without spiritual and sacred values, and farther away from the monotheism and the divine system. This standpoint is the underlying reason why the Western models do not have roots in the people, their percentage error is sometimes high in Islamic societies, and above all their stability, effectiveness and application in human societies with a divine and religious nature are doubted (Fazli Kebriya & Delshad Tehrani 2012). Accordingly, adhering practically to the commandments of Imam Ali (PBUH) and being inspired by the most noble book of Nahj al-Balagha, containing concepts issued by a perfect human being (Imam Ali), can open the way for settling conflicts, improving the society and upgrading organisations and institutions in the path of divine growth and excellence, which may help strengthen and expand social capital in the governance of an Islamic society. This is the main reason why such an irreplaceable book, along with the Holy Qur'an, always illustrates the right thinking and living, because it is the commandments of a central figure grown up under revelation and influenced by God's Word in the behaviour of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as the best prophet of all time. If the Holy Qur'an is a manual for living, Nahj al-Balagha is the book of a path to taking actions (Delshad Tehrani 2013). Taking into account the importance of the subject, the present article aims to study the role of transparency in the governance of Islamic society.

Theoretical foundations

Governance

Today, economic success at the national level is significantly determined by the competitiveness, transparency and active governance of organisations, as the core institutions that help create economic value. Furthermore, the need for honesty

and transparency in the governance of organisations is one of the big concerns among standard-setters all over the world (Mudashiru, Bakare & Babatunde 2014). The concept of governance in the public sector is an emerging one, recognised only by societies that require continuous negotiations and inquiries (Ryan & Purcell 2004). However, serious efforts and constructive actions have been thus far made by various sectors, including governments, academics and professionals, to realise and boost governance in the public sector, specifically through the implementation of GG (Ryan & Ng 2000). Accordingly, GG is vital in the public sector because it guarantees the success of service delivery systems by the affiliated organisations. Therefore, the concept of governance is mainly focused on the development of GG principles or characteristics (Keping 2018).

As an approach to improve performance, GG is increasingly gaining much importance in organisations. It is also an integral part of all economic relations, in particular in emerging or changing economic systems (Banerjee et al. 2009). Good governance is a system by which organisations can be directed and controlled, and then their transparency, accountability and power relations can be addressed. It aims to ensure that organisations are able to manage people's interests in the long run (Joe 2007). In addition, GG refers to a set of rules and regulations implemented by managers to value principles based on management, whose essence is to guarantee that the maximum social welfare is achieved (Rashid 2008). Researchers have further argued that GG contains a number of structures and processes (Fama 1980). Accordingly, a GG structure clarifies the distribution of rights and responsibilities among those involved in organisations and other stakeholders, and further helps specify the rules and regulations as well as the decision-making processes in their affairs (Duke & Kankpang 2011). In such a case, a structure emerges in which the organisations' goals are determined and the methods to fulfil them and then evaluate values and performance are concluded. Therefore, governance implementation methodology has been widely highlighted as one of the main pillars for supporting long-term economic performance in different countries and organisations (Kyereboah 2006).

Benefits of transparency in the governance of Islamic society

The origin of the command to follow transparency comes from Islam. Some people claim that all the useful principles have originated from Westerners, while these people have not studied the Quran and Islamic teachings. Imam Ali orders his governor – Malik Ashtar – that 'whenever a subject suspects you of wrongdoing, openly present your excuse to them, and by apologizing, dispel their bad suspicions' (Nahj al-Balagha, Imam Ali, letter 53). Transparency enables stakeholders to investigate and review any process. Clarifying the government performance accordingly helps to reduce corruption and inefficiency among employees, and then improve their overall functioning (Trakulmututa & Chaijareonwattana 2013). Of note, corruption is a universal phenomenon, threatening the

administrative system of all countries, with a history as old as early human societies. Administrative corruption can thus facilitate inactivity in all dimensions, and hinder the growth of healthy competitions by damaging development. As the determinants of corruption are multidimensional, various reasons can be mentioned in this context, such as legal, judicial, inspective and supervisory, economic and political ones. Corruption is sometimes considered as a social phenomenon, viz., the unfair use of one's position by officials for self-interest (Gholami 2018). It is not a newly fledged phenomenon, but its development is as deep-rooted as the history of human societies, organisations and institutions. All societies have accordingly undergone layers of corruption, and no history and civilisation of human life has been an exception. From this viewpoint, it has been acknowledged that corruption, referring to the misuse of available resources for personal gain, is a widespread phenomenon in all societies. It also affects governance, institutions, services and structures in all countries (Sungbeh 2017).

Today, the administrative system in all countries, even the most democratic, developed and underdeveloped ones, is suffering from corruption in all aspects. It means that such systems across the world are exposed to some layers of corruption. Characterised by its cultural, political and economic components, corruption in any system takes certain forms, for example, paying a bribe at work to use some privileges or have permissions, receiving rewards for good service, not respecting clients, exploiting available documents in line with personal or special class interests, buying off administrative agents, wasting public property for personal gain, altering documents, underperforming or overlooking organisational duties (Khalaf Khani 2009).

In this sense, administrative corruption is a form of social deviance, placed in the category of organisational deviations, and in general, it refers to a behaviour in which a person acts out of the framework of official duties in order to gain one's personal interests and achieve greater welfare or better positions. If the law leads to more transparency of existing structures or current mechanisms, viz., the clarification of property rights, information, opportunities, costs, benefits, etc., there is a ray of hope that further steps are being taken towards an institutional reform, whose product is reducing corruption and exchange costs in the economy (Akai 2006).

The term 'administrative corruption', which is often applied in contrast to administrative health, has received much attention by various thinkers and experts for a long time. They have thus attempted to provide definitions corresponding to organisational principles, as their commonality. Corruption in the government and public institutions can be accordingly pictured as bribery and power tripping for personal gain. In any case, corruption is a chronic condition in such institutions. There are several points of view regarding administrative corruption and its indicators. In other words, administrative corruption, like corruption itself, has many dimensions, viz., political, economic, legal, etc., which are interrelated and influenced by each other.

Research model

This research aims to identify the role of transparency in the government of Islamic society, with an emphasis on Nahj al-Balagha (see Figure 1).

Methods

This applied research surveyed expert opinions regarding the application of transparency (based on Nahj al-Balagha) in the governance of Islamic society. To refine the data and test the research model; the experts were initially interviewed, and then completed some questionnaires. Finally, all the governance transparency indicators, along with the basic and organising themes, were presented to the panel of experts in the form of a five-point Likert-type scale (*completely normative, somewhat normative, useful but not normative, somewhat useful but not normative* and *neither useful nor normative*). It should be noted that the questionnaire included all open codes, as well as the basic and organising themes of each code.

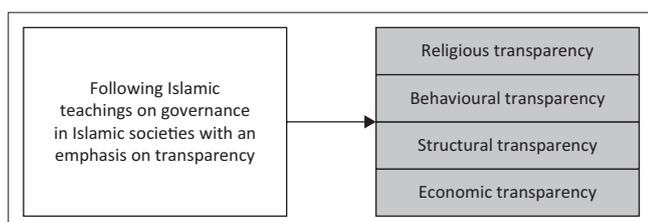
Statistical population

The statistical population in this study comprised the experts recruited in the interview and presentation processes. For this purpose, the opinions of 37 professors at the seminary and university levels, as experts in management sciences, theology, political sciences, sociology, jurisprudence and law, selected by snowball sampling method, with related specialties, were obtained. Data saturation was further reached upon the completion of the interviews and questionnaires. The experts also met one or more of the following inclusion criteria, that is, being a faculty member at university or seminary; having expertise in management sciences, theology, political sciences, sociology, jurisprudence, law and Nahj al-Balagha; and authoring numerous relevant books and articles.

Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Among the main qualities of research instrument, including questionnaires, are validity and reliability. In this sense, validity denotes that the content of the instrument or its items accurately measure the variables and the study subject, and reliability or consistency implies the extent to which the results are similar and dependable if the measurement tools are administered under the same conditions.

To measure reliability in this research, Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated for 37 questionnaires distributed



Source: Rastgar, A.A. & Mousavi Davoudi, S.M., 2022, 'Designing and explaining the model of transparent governance based on the teachings of Nahj al-Balagha', Postdoctoral thesis of the Faculty of Economics, Management and Administrative Sciences, Semnan University

FIGURE 1: Research model.

among the experts, using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software package. Table 1 provides the Cronbach's alpha coefficient values of the questionnaire items. The four items mentioned in Figure 1, introduced by Rastgar and Mousavi Davoudi (2022).

According to Table 1, all Cronbach's alpha coefficient values were greater than 0.7, indicating that the questionnaire items had acceptable reliability.

Furthermore, the most common definition of validity started with the following question: How accurately does the questionnaire measure what it is intended to measure?

Inappropriate and insufficient measurements may thus cast doubt on the validity of any scientific research. In terms of reliability, the essence of reality is often questioned, and it can be studied without investigating the scale of the variables, but validity is not possible without examining the nature and meaning of the variables. In this context, there are several methods to determine the validity of a questionnaire, including content and factor validity. In this study, the content validity of the questionnaire was measured, which could depend on its items, representing the special characteristics and skills that the researcher intended to measure, and determined by the experts. The content validity of this questionnaire was accordingly checked by the professors and experts, and ultimately confirmed.

Results

A total of 58 basic themes, as the components of transparency in governance based on Islamic teachings (Nahj al-Balagha), and four organising themes, that is, the indicators of transparency in governance according to Islamic teachings, were presented to the panel of experts in the form of a five-point, Likert-type scale (*completely normative, somewhat normative, useful but not normative, somewhat useful but not normative, and neither useful nor normative*). These factors have been extracted by thematic analysis in Nahj al-Balagha. Of note is that this questionnaire included all the basic and organising themes of each code together, so the expert opinions were elicited in the form of a Likert-type scale and with the mentioned options. The results are given in Table 2 in detail.

The data were further analysed by the binomial test using the SPSS software package, with a cut-off point of 3.5. If the significance corresponding to any indicator was greater than or equal to 0.05, it implied that the mentioned indicator needed to be excluded from the final model according to the

TABLE 1: Cronbach's alpha coefficients of the questionnaire items.

Factors	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Religious transparency	8	0.793
Behavioural transparency	28	0.831
Structural transparency	15	0.812
Economic transparency	7	0.754
Governance transparency based on Islamic teachings	58	0.874

TABLE 2: A binomial test of the questionnaire given to experts.

Number	Basic themes	Organising themes	Total number of experts	Significance	Cutoff point	Distribution of responses
1	Pietism	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
2	Rejection of worldliness	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
3	Self-restraint	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
4	Hereafterism	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
5	God-fearing	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
6	Lawfulness	Religious transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
7	Self-improvement	Religious transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
8	Guardianship	Religious transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
9	Responsibility	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
10	Rejection of greed	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
11	Honesty	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
12	Insubordination	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
13	Anti-oppression	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
14	Righteousness	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
15	Bravery	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
16	Realism	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
17	Patience and perseverance	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
18	Humility	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
19	Generosity	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
20	Expediency	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
21	Conscientiousness	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
22	Farsightedness	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
23	Rejection of hypocrisy	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
24	Self-control	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
25	Benevolence	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
26	Moderation	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
27	Exertion	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
28	Chastity	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
29	Visionary	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
30	Contentment	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4

Table 2 Continues on the next column→

TABLE 2 (Continues...): A binomial test of the questionnaire given to experts.

Number	Basic themes	Organising themes	Total number of experts	Significance	Cutoff point	Distribution of responses
31	Pragmatism	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
32	Rejection of sticking to a position	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
33	Impenetrability	Behavioural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
34	Good behaviour	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
35	Rejection of haste	Behavioural transparency	37	0.002	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	33 4
36	Opportunism	Behavioural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
37	Knowledge	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
38	Wisdom	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
39	Social justice	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
40	Patronage	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
41	Rule of law	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
42	Authoritarianism	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
43	Populism	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
44	Health	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
45	Procedural justice	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
46	Dignity	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	34 3
47	Transactional justice	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
48	Anti-dominance	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
49	Control and audit	Structural transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
50	Fairness	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
51	Responsiveness	Structural transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
52	Bailment	Economic transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
53	Anti-corruption	Economic transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
54	Distributive justice	Economic transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
55	Simple life	Economic transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	36 1
56	Economic health	Economic transparency	37	0.000	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	37 0
57	Rejection of extravagance	Economic transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2
58	Rejection of aristocracy	Economic transparency	37	0.001	> 3.5 ≤ 3.5	35 2

expert opinions. Among the 541 codes extracted, the significance more than or equal to 0.05 was obtained for 13 cases. However, the significance of all 58 basic themes was within the acceptable range after removing these 13 items. This indicated that the experts confirmed the categories of the open codes as well as the basic and organising themes.

Discussion

Following Islamic teachings in the governance of Islamic societies, with an emphasis on transparency, was investigated in this study. For this purpose, the opinions of 37 experts on the components of governance transparency were analysed to measure their efficiency in an Islamic society. The results in Table 2 suggest that the experts endorsed all the components of governance transparency based on Islamic teachings (here, Nahj al-Balagha). Previous research, particularly those in Western societies, had proposed models for governance transparency in organisations. Filling the gap in the literature, related to the value of the monotheism as well as the divine system, under the conditions governing Islamic societies and organisations, was the significance of this study. It is noteworthy that current research is limited to empirical knowledge, so it is a good idea to prioritise the outcomes of religious sciences, in view of the religious conditions predominating in Islamic nations.

Against this background, efforts to create transparency may lead to increased public trust as one of the important values in contemporary political systems. Trust here refers to a relationship that must be actively established and maintained. Citizens' trust that the officials are managing national affairs in a promising way, and can thus pave the way for the development of public programmes in each society. Today, officials' honesty is among the basic requirements to trust them, whose fulfilment is inextricably linked to the transparency of public affairs, including the clarification of their property and lifestyle. As a result, public trust in the government depends on its transparency. Besides, the problems facing today's societies are so complicated that officials are not able to solve them alone; in other words, such problems cannot be tackled but with the cooperation and participation of all members. People will never support the government to deal with difficult conditions unless they trust the government and its willpower to provide the best solutions and meet their interests. In this sense, transparency is one of the most significant ways to build public trust among citizens.

Conclusion

Creating transparency accordingly enables public oversight and prevents corruption. As economic rent and corruption become pervasive and affect the most important institutions, the best choice to avoid this situation is to start public monitoring. An effective strategy to deal with the systematic corruption in the government is thus the pressure of public opinion; otherwise, actions to reach the desired results with normal follow-ups may deviate from their path mid-way because the influence of the beneficiaries is so all-embracing it

does not publicise all confidential files. By activating public monitoring, transparency consequently counteracts violations and corruption as they are under public surveillance.

Future recommendation

As a final point, it is suggested to recruit statistical populations with maximum variation to evaluate the proposed model for governance transparency based on the teachings of Nahj al-Balagha, and examine its association with the key management variables in future research. Besides, some organisations should be further selected to implement or strengthen the governance transparency components, developed on the teachings of Nahj al-Balagha. It is also recommended to compare the results with the outcomes of longitudinal studies.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

A.A.R. was responsible for the supervision, editing and conceptualisation of the study. S.M.M.D. was responsible for writing the original draft. H.S.S. and A.A.A.A-S. did the investigation.

Ethical considerations

This article followed all ethical standards for research without direct contact with human or animal subjects.

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Data availability

The data used in this study are available from the authors upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any affiliated agency of the authors.

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