

*Original Research*

## **Identifying and Ranking the Effective Factors in Attracting and Developing Public Participation in Iranian Public Libraries: Library Donors' Perspective**

**Mansoor Koochi Rostami**

Assistant prof., Knowledge and Information Science  
Department, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz,  
Ahvaz, Iran

Corresponding Author: [m.rostami@scu.ac.ir](mailto:m.rostami@scu.ac.ir)  
ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1351-6052>

**Fatemeh Mohamadzadeh**

M.A. in Knowledge and Information Science  
Department, Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz,  
Ahvaz, Iran [tinar.a94@gmail.com](mailto:tinar.a94@gmail.com)

ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8515-3214>

**Farideh Osareh**

Professor, Knowledge and Information Science Department,  
Shahid Chamran University of Ahvaz, Ahvaz, Iran

[f.osareh@scu.ac.ir](mailto:f.osareh@scu.ac.ir) ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6691-0339>

Received: 06 February 2021

Accepted: 04 September 2021

### **Abstract**

This study investigated the factors contributing to the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries from the donors' perspective in the library building. In terms of the research objectives, the present study is exploratory research that was carried out using a mixed research method, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. In the qualitative part of the research, 15 active donors were interviewed using the targeted and snowball sampling technique. The research population in the quantitative part consisted of active donors of public libraries in Iran, and a questionnaire was distributed and collected among 246 of them. Inferential tests, including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis were used for data analysis. Besides, spss22 and pls3.8 software were run for data analysis. Given the research findings, cultural, economic, social, and structural factors were identified as effective in attracting public participation. The results obtained from the confirmatory factor analysis showed that among the factors affecting the attraction of public participation in public libraries from the donors' point of view, cultural factors with an impact factor of 0.868 had the highest impact, followed by economic factors with an impact factor of 0.845, respectively. Furthermore, social factors with an impact factor of 0.824 and structural factors with an impact factor of 0.628 were in the third and fourth priorities, respectively. Given the severe challenges of the financial resources of Iran's public libraries, it is quintessential to identify ways to attract more public and donors' participation, to provide opportunities for participation in public libraries, and to promote this idea among other people. Utilizing donors' experiences in identifying the factors contributing to the attraction of public participation in public libraries can provide a suitable planning environment for the development of public participation in public libraries.

**Keywords:** Iran, Public libraries, public participation, Donors, Factors

### Introduction

In today's world, the broad participation of people in all political, social, cultural, and economic activities is considered one of the requirements for sustainable development (Rahimi & Yazdkhasti, 2012). Social participation has been present in the political and social system of Western societies for two hundred years; however, paying attention to this phenomenon and emphasizing its role as one of the main factors of development in societies in transition was mainly after the failure of strategies and development programs in the 1950s and 1960s. In reviewing and evaluating these programs, the lack of public participation has been evaluated as the main factor in the failure of development programs. Therefore, since then, development strategies have emphasized the approach of popular participation as one of the main human needs (Vahida & Niazi, 2004).

Roose and Daenekindt (2015) define cultural participation as a manifestation of social capital and a tool to maximize life chances and opportunities by monopolizing scarce economic, socio-cultural resources. Cultural participation means the voluntary, voluntary, and conscious participation of individuals, groups, and organizations that make up a society in various aspects of the cultural life of that society to promote the sustainable, balanced, and comprehensive development of cultural life. Voluntary, voluntary, and conscious participation means that presence in the field of cultural participation is an active, motivating presence, independent of imposed requirements and appointments and based on wise and informed decision-making and relying on recognizing the outputs and effects of cultural participation. Thus, limiting the definition of cultural participation to the characteristics of voluntary, voluntary, and conscious participation distinguishes this type of activity from other routine activities of daily life that may depend on blindly following social, political, cultural, and traditional constraints, traditions, and determinations in communities. It distinguishes between urban, rural, and nomadic (Kowsari, 2001).

Every society, by its cultural system, has a particular type of public participation. On this basis, in Iranian society, most forms of public participation have taken place in the context and structure of religious values because the most genuine feelings, emotions, and desires of Iranians are rooted in religious beliefs and values (Masjed Jamei, 1998). One of the areas of social and cultural participation is participation in donating and endowing books and libraries. The history of the Islamic world shows that the library, the center that was established to serve a large part of society and is generally ready to welcome all scholars and those interested in knowledge and research, has long been recognized by the Muslims from the very beginning and has always relied on the phenomenon of endowment (Koohi Rostami, 2012). From the fourth lunar century onwards, endowed libraries became popular throughout the Islamic world. Astan Quds Razavi Library is the oldest endowed library still exists today and is known as the Millennium Treasure Library. The Grand Library of Grand Ayatollah Marashi Najafi (Shahab Treasure) in Qom is also one of Iran's most important and prestigious libraries. It has a particular reputation and is called the great cultural heritage of Islamic heritage (Mohammadnia, 2009).

As can be seen, the endowment is one way to form libraries in the Islamic world, and until the beginning of the fourteenth century AH, the library was considered the endowment more than anything else and represented the benevolence of individuals or groups. The endowment is considered a suitable way to create cultural bases. Studies show that the Islamic world is re-engaging in launching libraries through endowments. A valuable and effective way that has not been realized in Iran is the return of the endowment status, as a suitable solution in the creation

and new movement of the revival of books and libraries in the way that they can remind us of the glorious days of the past (Koohi Rostami, 2012). On the other hand, public libraries are institutions that provide their services to community members for free. In other words, they do not charge users directly. However, the situation is changing so that the increase in inflation and consequently the reduction of budget and purchasing power of public libraries on the one hand and the rising clients' expectations for better and faster access to up-to-date information, the role of new technologies in strengthening expectations, and they help to launch new services, on the other hand, have posed new challenges to libraries (Singh, 2009).

Whereas public libraries are one of the important pillars of cultural and social development and play an effective role in promoting the culture of reading and scientific development along with the growth of moral and spiritual virtues of society, they need to be advocated by the community in addition to government support because at present, government support alone is not enough to run libraries. In this regard, contemporary economic realities clearly show that the challenge of budget cuts due to global inflation has severely reduced the purchasing power of libraries (Nnadozie, 2013). Therefore, public libraries should be able to use, in addition to their approved and legal budgets, public participation in other forms such as endowments and donations or other donations that meet the needs of libraries. In his research, Shahriari (2015) showed that the most effective motivation of public library donors was to serve the people and spread science and knowledge in society. Mansouri and Soleiman Rezai (2016) pointed to the lack of community need for libraries, low per capita reading, lack of information and publicity about the actions and use of libraries, lack of familiarity of donors with the missions of libraries, and lack of requests from donors to work as the main reasons for the low participation in this field. The results of the study by Mahmood, Hameed and Jalaluddin Haidar (2005) showed that the most important ways to remove barriers to participation are; 1) Teaching the people the culture of participation by the government, schools, and professional associations; 2) Carrying out formal activities and effective planning to remove barriers to public participation; 3) Creating an institution to support libraries to disseminate the culture of participation, and 4) Formal study and research on the factors affecting people's participation. Muralidhar and Rao (2013) showed that one of the most effective ways to improve the situation of public libraries in India was the participation of the private and public sectors in public libraries. For this reason, they suggested the need to establish a National Commission on Public Libraries to provide solutions to attract more participation.

It seems that despite the reduction of the budget of the country's public libraries and the increase of their expenses, little planning has been done to attract public and donors' participation, and the role of public participation in supporting public libraries is small. Signs of this lack of planning can be seen in the lack of a library donor association in the country and the lack of a provincial donor's association (although it has been formed in a few provinces). On the other hand, one of the paragraphs of the vision document of the Public Libraries Foundation on the horizon of 1404 states: "Public libraries have a flexible and agile structure in interaction with mosques and benefactors and benefit from the cooperation of government, public and religious institutions and organizations" (National Public Libraries Foundation, 2011) which shows serious attention to the issue of public and donors' participation.

Therefore, the problem of the present study is that despite the extensive background in Iranian and Islamic culture of the tradition of endowment and participation of donors in the development of books and reading, and on the other hand due to severe shortage of financial

resources and the need for public libraries to attract public participation, why has no effective action been taken to attract public participation? What factors are effective in attracting and developing public participation in the country's public libraries?

It is quintessential to seek the opinions of active donors in the field of public libraries in the country to identify ways to attract more public and donors' participation, provide opportunities for participation in libraries, and promote this idea among other people. Utilizing donors' experiences in identifying factors for attracting public participation in public libraries can provide a suitable planning environment for the development of public participation in public libraries. Accordingly, the main purpose of this study is to identify and rank the factors affecting the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries from the perspective of library donors.

### Research questions

Researchers intended to seek answers to the following specific research questions.

RQ1: What factors contribute to the attraction of public participation in public libraries from the point of view of the country's library-building donors?

RQ2: What rankings do the factors contributing to the attraction of public participation in public libraries have from the point of view of library donors?

### Methodology

The present research has been done using a mixed research method. This method is a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The present study in the qualitative part is exploratory research. The present research design is a correlation design of covariance matrix analysis or correlation in the quantitative part. The statistical population of the qualitative part of the research is composed of active donors who build libraries. In this section, 15 active donors in the field of public libraries of the country were selected using targeted and snowball sampling techniques. The statistical population of the research in the quantitative stage includes active donors in the field of public libraries in the country who, due to their type of assistance, both financially and non-financially, such as buying and donating books and equipment, donating and building libraries, etc. to public libraries, are known as donors in the country's public libraries. During the correspondence with the country's public libraries, it was impossible to reach the whole research population. If the size of the population is unknown, the following formula is used.

$$N = \frac{(z_{\alpha}^2 \times s^2)}{d^2}$$

In this formula, the most important parameter that needs to be estimated is  $S^2$ , which is the variance of the initial sample. Several questionnaires are distributed, and the variance of the initial sample is calculated to calculate  $S^2$ . For this purpose, a preliminary questionnaire was distributed among 20 donors in the public libraries of Khuzestan province to calculate the variance of the initial sample. The constant value depends on the confidence interval and the error level ( $\alpha$ ). Error levels are usually considered 5% or 1%. For instance, if the error level is 5%, the confidence level will be 95%. As a result,  $Z_2$  will be 1.96, according to the statistical table. The value of  $d$  is also based on the same level of error or equal to 0.05. Therefore, based on what was said, the sample size was calculated as follows:

$$N = \frac{(z_{\alpha}^2 \times s^2)}{d^2} = \frac{(3.841 \times 0/16)}{0/0025} = 246$$

$$z_{\alpha} = 3.841$$

$$s^2 = 0/16$$

$$d^2 = 0/0025$$

In this study, after designing and explaining the main problem of the research, recognizing and framing the research by reviewing theoretical foundations, comparative studies and examining the internal and external background of the research, and understanding their divergence and convergence, the first step was to identify the effective factors of public participation in libraries. Generalization was made through interviews with experts and qualitative analysis of data (content analysis). In the next step (quantitative analysis), after distributing and collecting the questionnaire, quantitative data analysis was performed to modify and confirm (validate) the factors affecting public participation in public libraries obtained in the qualitative section.

In the first stage of the research (qualitative section), interviews with experts were performed using content analysis to identify the effective factors and barriers to attract public participation in public libraries. It is worth noting that content analysis is a way to determine, analyze and express patterns (themes) in data. Summaries of the opinions of interviewees and their answers were first written and then collected as qualitative and reliable data. By re-reading the interviews, 28 initial codes related to the factors affecting public participation in public libraries were extracted. Table 1 shows how to open code and extract the source code.

Table 1

*Basic concepts extracted (related to factors) in the open coding stage*

Code	Concept or description of the initial code	Extracted interview code
A1	Promoting a culture of library building and public participation.	M1-M10-M14-M15
A2	Promoting and disseminating the culture of reading in the country.	M1-M4-M5-M7-M9-M10-M13-M15
A3	Beliefs of individual donors.	M1-M2-M3-M15
A4	Recommendations of Islam regarding endowment.	M1-M2-M7-M9-M13-M15
A5	Informing people about the ways and types of public library participation.	M1-M4-M6-M13
A6	Explaining the importance of book culture and reading for people through holding conferences, lectures, etc.	M1-M9-M10-M13
A7	Inviting influential and famous people from each region in order to create a culture and promote public participation.	M2-M4-M6-M10
A8	Using the capacity of the media to promote a culture of public participation in public libraries.	M2-M5-M7-M9-M12
A9	A sense of commitment from donors to the importance of raising awareness in the community.	M2-M5-M8-M12-M13
A10	A sense of donors' social belonging.	M2-M14-M15
A11	Strengthening the spirit of service to the people and fellow human beings	M2-M3-M5-M7-M9-M10-M14
A12	Motivating and encouraging donors.	M3-M14-M15

Code	Concept or description of the initial code	Extracted interview code
A13	Increasing social trust in society.	M3-M5-M7-M9-M14
A14	Appreciating the promotion of social status and modeling of donors in society.	M3-M5-M8-M11-M13-M14
A15	Reviving the value and status of books and reading in the community.	M3-M4-M7-M8-M10
A16	Depicting the social effects of reading on society.	M3-M9-M10-M13
A17	Establishing mechanisms to support donors.	M3-M8-M10
A18	Raising donors' awareness of spending on public libraries.	M6-M9-M10-M13
A19	Clarifying and reporting on where and how donations are spent.	M3-M6-M11-M13
A20	Involving the donors in monitoring and controlling costs.	M3-M6-M7-M8-M11-M15
A21	Increasing the level of welfare in society and improving the level of income of the people.	M1-M2-M4-M6-M7-M10-M12
A22	Involvement of government institutions in financing the establishment and management of public libraries.	M4-M10-M14-M15
A23	Creating communication channels between donors and officials.	M4-M13-M14-M15
A24	Existence of a library-building donors' association.	M4-M5-M8-M9-M10-M13
A25	Existence of a clear statute regarding the participation of donors in public libraries.	M5-M17-M12-M13
A26	Existence of structures to identify the needs of public libraries and transfer them to donors.	M1-M4-M5-M6-M7-M8-M9
A27	Elimination of legal and executive barriers to public participation in the country.	M1-M2-M4-M8-M9-M10-M15
A28	Creating a unit for attracting public participation in public libraries.	M1-M9-M10-M13

In this study, the content analysis method was used to analyze the qualitative data, which is described in the previous section. Inferential tests, including the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, exploratory factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis, were used in SPSS22 and PLS3.8 software to analyze the data quantitatively.

### Data analysis

Two methods of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were used to analyze the data, which are discussed in the following section.

#### Exploratory factor analysis

In this section, using exploratory factor analysis, factors and sub-factors are identified, and then, using confirmatory factor analysis, the validity and reliability of each research questionnaire are evaluated. Finally, the test and the results obtained are analyzed by running inferential statistical tests of each research question.

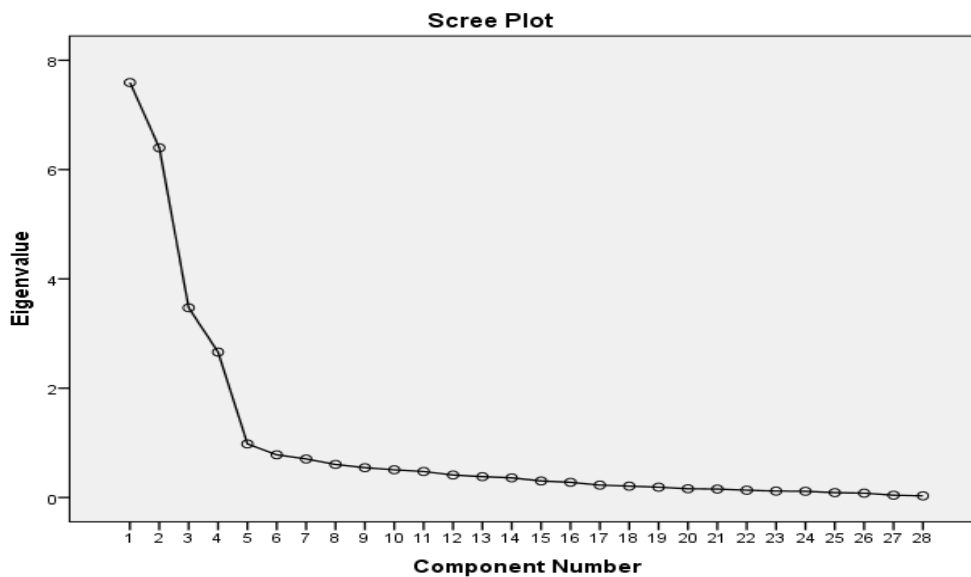
The primary statistical characteristics obtained in performing the main sub-factor analysis are shown in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 2, 4 sub-factors are larger than one, among which the eigenvalue of the first sub-factor is 7.592, the second sub-factor is 6.399, the third sub-factor

is 3.471, and the fourth sub-factor is 2.661. These 4 sub-factors together explain 71.870% of the total variance among the primary factors. A Scree plot was used to identify the number of sub-factors that must be extracted in the final solution. Scree plot of this factor is shown in Figure 1.

Table 2

*Extracted factors and percentage of variance explained by the factor of attraction and development of public participation in public libraries*

Sub-factor	Initial eigenvalue			The sum of the second power of the extracted loading factor			The sum of loading factors rotated		
	Total	Percentage of variance	Cumulative percentage	total	Percentage of variance	Cumulative percentage	total	Percentage of variance	Cumulative percentage
Cultural	7.592	27.116	27.116	7.592	27.116	27.116	6.063	21.655	21.655
Social	6.399	22.854	49.970	6.399	22.854	22.854	5.655	20.195	41.480
Economic	3.471	12.395	62.366	3.471	12.395	12.395	4.383	15.672	57.522
Organizational Structure	2.661	9.504	71.870	2.661	9.504	9.504	4.017	14.348	71.870



*Figure 1: Slope diagram of the range of four sub-factors of attraction and development of public participation in public libraries*

The exploratory factor analysis and the loading factor of the factors of attraction and development of public participation in public libraries, which was obtained by rotating the main sub-factors with the Varimax era, are presented below.



Table 3

*Rotating matrix of sub-factors of attraction and development of public participation in public libraries using Varimax method*

Number of items	Communality ratio	First loading factor	Second loading factor	Third loading factor	Fourth loading factor
1	0.733	0.854	0.024	0.053	0.031
2	0.788	0.860	0.064	0.183	0.041
3	0.848	0.908	0.005	0.140	0.0038
4	0.748	0.848	0.052	0.123	0.094
5	0.847	0.908	0.013	0.140	0.058
6	0.671	0.806	0.083	0.028	0.150
7	0.676	0.809	0.048	0.107	0.101
8	0.756	0.857	0.065	0.103	0.016
9	0.670	0.003	0.775	0.193	0.177
10	0.718	0.013	0.820	0.169	0.124
11	0.738	0.112	0.827	0.167	0.123
12	0.740	0.002	0.857	0.054	0.040
13	0.650	0.060	0.800	0.073	0.019
14	0.719	0.021	0.848	0.049	0.110
15	0.867	0.131	0.777	0.132	0.198
16	0.764	0.051	0.846	0.183	0.112
17	0.700	0.127	0.212	0.784	0.123
18	0.851	0.095	0.076	0.904	0.142
19	0.814	0.128	0.253	0.839	0.112
20	0.759	0.171	0.064	0.817	0.237
21	0.717	0.162	0.153	0.811	0.095
22	0.641	0.063	0.178	0.767	0.126
23	0.569	0.090	0.156	0.045	0.731
24	0.533	0.013	0.188	0.181	0.868
25	0.766	0.080	0.110	0.092	0.858
26	0.725	0.073	0.024	0.125	0.838
27	0.699	0.061	0.047	0.046	0.832
28	0.584	0.021	0.092	0.034	0.754

According to the results obtained from Table 3, it is clear that the factors for attraction and development of public participation in public libraries include four sub-factors: "cultural, social, economic, and structural", which includes 28 items. The highest loading factor (0.851) is related to item 18, whereas the lowest loading factor (0.5553) is related to item 24. All 4 factors are described below.

The first loading factor is related to the cultural sub-factor, which includes items 1 to 8. In this factor, the highest loading factor of 0.908 is related to items 3 and 5, and the lowest loading factor of 0.806 is related to item 6. Moreover, the second loading factor is related to the social sub-factor, including items 9 to 16. The highest loading factor of 0.858 is related to item 12, whereas the lowest loading factor of 0.775 is related to item 9. It should be noted that the third loading factor is related to the economic sub-factor, which encompasses items 17 to 22. The highest loading factor of 0.904 is related to item 18, and the lowest loading factor of 0.767 is related to item 22. The fourth loading factor is related to the structural sub-factor, which



includes items 23 to 28. The highest loading factor of 0.859 is related to item 25, and the lowest loading factor of 0.688 is related to item 24.

**Confirmatory factor analysis of the factors contributing to the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries**

Figure 2 shows the confirmatory factor analysis model in the standard coefficient estimation mode. In this figure, numbers or coefficients are divided into two categories. The first one is called first-order measurement equations, in which the relationships between latent (elliptical) variables are explicit (rectangular) variables. These equations are called loading factors. All items of the questionnaire had a loading factor greater than 0.5. Therefore, the alignment of the questionnaire items to measure the concepts can prove valid at this stage. The above results show that what the researcher intended to measure by the items was achieved by this tool. Therefore, the relationships between hidden structures or variables can be cited. An index with a higher loading factor is more important than other indicators. The second category is the second-order measurement equations, which are the relationships between the latent variables. These coefficients are called path coefficients.

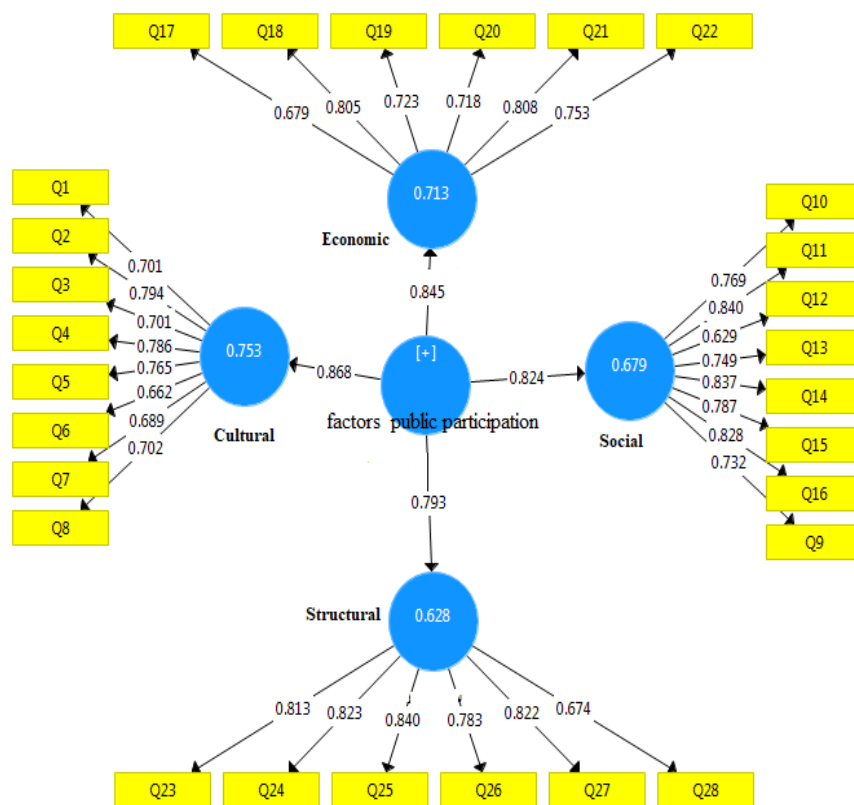


Figure 2: Model for attraction and development of public participation in public libraries in the case of estimating standard coefficients

Figure 3 shows the model of factors for attraction and development of public participation in public libraries in the absolute value of significant coefficients (t-value). This model tests all measurement equations (first and second-order loading factors) and structural equations using a t-statistic. According to this model, each of the loading factors and path coefficients is significant at the 95% confidence level if the value of T is greater than +1.96. The results show

that all loading factors are significant at a 95% confidence level.

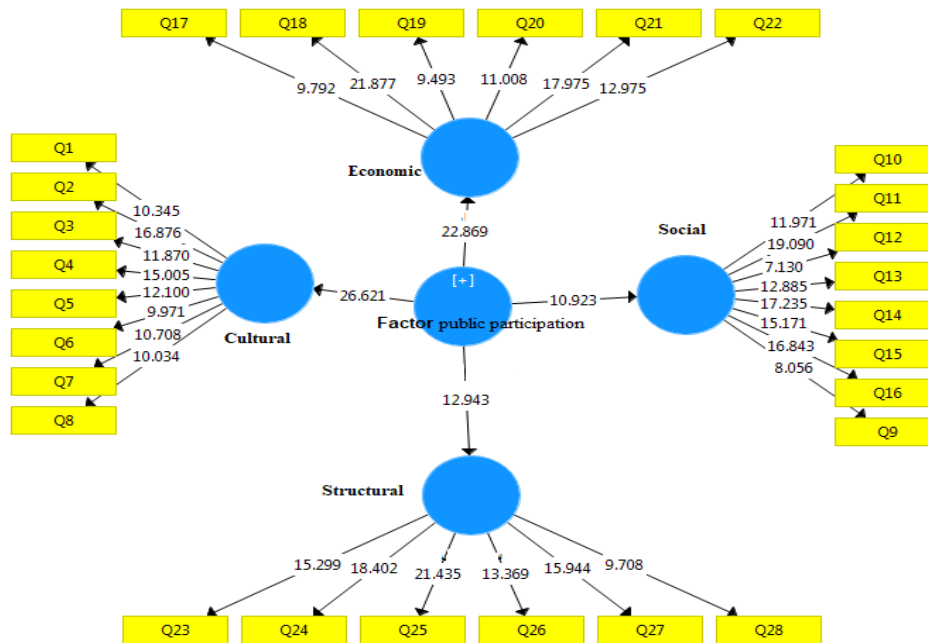


Figure 3: Research model in T-value mode

In the following section, the fit indices of the model are examined.

The results and output report of PLS software for internal consistency of the composite reliability index are given in Table 4.

Table 4  
Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability table

Sub-factors	Composite reliability	Cronbach's alpha
Cultural	0.899	0.871
Social	0.922	0.903
Economic	0.884	0.842
Structural	0.911	0.882

As shown in Table 4, the values obtained for Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are greater than 0.70, which indicates the optimal reliability of the research variables. Therefore, measurement models have good reliability. Two convergent validity and discriminant (divergent) validity methods were used to measure the measurement model's validity, which is described below.

Table 5  
Results of calculation of mean variance index

Sub-factors	AVE
Cultural	0.528
Social	0.599
Economic	0.561
Structural	0.631

As shown in Table 5, the value of AVE for latent variables is higher than 0.5. Therefore, it can be claimed that the convergent validity of measurement models is desirable.

The second validity under scrutiny to confirm the validity of the measurement model is discriminant, a complementary criterion. In PLS path modeling, two criteria, including Fornell and Larcker criterion and cross-loadings, are used to evaluate it.

Table 6 shows the AVE root value of each construct with the correlation values between other constructs.

Table 6

*Divergent validity matrix using Fornell and Larcker method*

	Research constructs	1	2	3	4
1	Social	0.744			
2	Economic	0.578	0.749		
3	Structural	0.497	0.611	0.795	
4	Cultural	0/601	0.678	0.589	0.272

Table 6 shows that the value of the AVE root of the latent variables in the present study, in the cells of the main diameter of the matrix, is greater than the value of the correlation between them in the lower and right cells of the main diameter. Therefore, it can be stated that, in the present study, the constructs (latent variables) in the model have more interaction with their indicators than with other structures. In other words, the divergent validity of the model is appropriate.

The GOF index is calculated as the geometric mean  $R^2$  and the mean communality:

$$GOF = \sqrt{\text{Communality} \times \overline{R^2}}$$

Table 7

*GOF validity index*

variables	Communality	$R^2$	GOF
Cultural	0.377	0.753	0.537
Social	0.444	0.679	
Economic	0.386	0.713	
Structural	0.460	0.628	
Mean	0.417	0.693	

As shown in Table 7, the positive fit of the Goodness of Fit index (GOF), which is 0.537, shows the model's overall fit. Since the value is greater than 0.4, the overall fit of the model is confirmed. In the following section, the research questions are analyzed.

### **RQ1: Factors contributing to the attraction of public participation in public libraries**

Factors and sub-factors contributing to the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries were first identified through interviews with experts and content analysis, presented in the methodology section. Then, through exploratory factor analysis, the factors and sub-factors were identified. However, confirmatory factor analysis was run to confirm these factors and sub-factors, the results of which are presented in Table 8.

Table 8

*Results of confirmatory factor analysis*

Factor	t-value	Beta standard coefficient	R <sup>2</sup>
Cultural	26.621	0.868	0.753
Social	10.923	0.824	0.679
Economic	22.869	0.845	0.713
Structural	12.943	0.793	0.628

The confirmatory factor analysis results in Table 8 show that the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries have four factors: "cultural, structural, economic and social." At the 99% confidence level, t-values for all four factors affecting the attraction and development of public participation in public libraries are out of range (-2.58 and +2.58). Given the value of R<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup> and its high values, it can be concluded that the variables are at a strong level.

### **RQ2: Ranking the factors affecting public participation in public libraries**

Given the results of confirmatory factor analysis and Figure 3, the impact of factors of attraction and development of public participation in public libraries is shown in Table 9.

Table 9

*The effectiveness of factors of attracting and developing public participation in public libraries*

Priority	Main factors	( $\beta$ )
1	Cultural	0.868
2	Economic	0.845
3	Social	0.824
4	Structural	0.628

According to the results obtained in Table 9, cultural factors with an impact factor of 0.868 had the highest impact, followed by economic factors with an impact factor of 0.845, social factors with a coefficient of 0.824, and structural factors with a coefficient of 0.628 in the second to fourth priorities, respectively.

### **Discussion**

In order to identify the factors affecting the attraction of public participation in public libraries, using content analysis and semi-structured interviews with experts, 28 primary themes were identified first, followed by exploratory factor analysis. Four secondary cultural themes were extracted (i.e. promoting the culture of library building and public participation, promoting and spreading the culture of reading in the country, beliefs and individual beliefs of donors, recommendations of the Islamic religion about endowment, informing people about the ways and types of participation in public libraries, explaining the importance of book culture and book reading for the people through holding conferences, lectures, etc., inviting influential and famous people of each region in order to create a culture and promote public participation, and using the capacity of the media to promote a culture of public participation in public libraries; social themes including donors' sense of commitment to the importance of raising awareness in society, donors' sense of social belonging, strengthening the spirit of serving

people and fellow human beings, motivating and encouraging donors, increasing social trust in society, appreciation, promoting social status and role modeling donors in the community, reviving the value and status of books and reading in the community and portraying the social effects of reading on the community; economic content including themes of creating mechanisms to support donors, increasing donors' awareness of spending on public libraries, clarifying and reporting on where and how donors' financial contributions are used, involving donors in monitoring and controlling costs, increasing the level of welfare in the society and improving the income level of the people, and the participation of government institutions in financing the establishment and management of public libraries, and finally the secondary structural theme including creating communication channels between donors and officials, the existence of a library donors association regarding the participation of donors in public libraries, existence of structures to identify the needs of public libraries and transfer them to donors, removing legal and administrative barriers to public participation in the country and creating a unit to attract public participation in public libraries).

The results of this study are in line with the research published in this field. Neale (2011) showed that public relations and advertising are crucial elements of fundraising. Shahriari (2015) showed that the most effective public libraries are for the people and the development of science and knowledge in society. Kim and Chen (2016) showed that social media and its use affected public participation in libraries. Moodi (2016) believed that continuous communication with donors and attention to his values and interests is one of the factors in attracting donors to libraries. Peymankhah, Khorasani, and Rofi (2017) noted that establishing more communication between public libraries and donors and organizational suitability of the main contributing factor in this area is the amount. Mansoori and Soleimian-Start (2019) showed that advertising and information and widespread demand in this regard increased public participation. Finally, using confirmatory factor analysis, the identified factors were examined. According to the results, all the loading factors calculated for each factor and the significant number calculated for them indicated the factors' confirmation and the cultural factor's coefficient of influence. The impact factor of a cultural factor on the attraction of donors' participation was equal to 0.868, the impact factor of the economic factor on the attraction of donors' participation was equal to 0.845, and that of the structural and social factors on the attraction of donors' participation was equal to 0.793 and 0.824, respectively.

Due to the complexity of today's society, spontaneous participation can no longer be relied upon. To achieve participation, it is necessary to provide for the organization, regulations, and special regulations, and all participants should be based on principles and laws. Governments have a key role in guiding and organizing people's participation. In terms of cultural factors, it can be said that the concept of participation has changed in the world and Iran, and this change is very weak in our culture. Participation and its necessity are not internalized in stakeholders and policymakers. Many officials are still unaware of the place and role of public libraries in cultural development and public awareness. The ground for people's participation in social, cultural, and political affairs must be provided in the form of participation. Other effective factors in public participation in public libraries depend on the country's economic issues and people's income and fair distribution. This issue is related to social justice and the role of legislation in this regard. Whether or not people participate in public library affairs depends on the country's macroeconomic policies and how the capital and income of the people are distributed. Any society's social, cultural, and economic issues, especially in recent decades,

depending on governments' macro and micro plans towards society. Providing opportunities for participation, especially in public libraries, is one of the government's responsibilities. Participation is dependent on the people, but governments must create, strengthen and provide the context for participation. The government must provide the necessary opportunities for the people in this respect. The government should allocate adequate funding to public libraries, provide a cultural platform for participation, and reform laws and regulations.

Regarding social factors, it can be said that this is not possible without the socio-cultural context of participation. People who are not actively involved in social activities are also not involved in education. Participation in public libraries is a cultural issue. Because our cultural contributions are limited, participation in public libraries is not enough. Structural factors have also influenced the attraction of donors' participation. The Public Libraries Foundation can establish communication channels between donors and officials, set up a library-building donors' association, formulate a clear statute on donors' participation, create structures to identify the needs of public libraries, and transfer them to donors to attract public participation in public libraries.

### **Conclusion**

Despite the budget allocated to public libraries, public libraries are not only slow to achieve their goals. Public libraries as cultural institutions but also faces financial and budgetary challenges. Public library financial problems have long been a problem, and public library administrators have always sought ways to increase their library budgets. Due to economic problems and inflation, rising costs, the half a percent (0.5) of municipal revenues earmarked for public libraries is neither paid on time nor meets the rising costs of public libraries. According to Article 5 of the Law on the Establishment of Public Libraries, gifts and donations from non-governmental organizations, institutions and public institutions, the private sector, and international associations and endowments are among the financial resources of public libraries that public library managers and officials should try to attract. Therefore, to develop public libraries, it is necessary to use the capacity of public participation more. So, encouraging people in the community to participate in financing public libraries is very important. Several factors influence public participation in public libraries. Identifying and strengthening these factors will help develop public participation in public libraries.

According to the results obtained in this research, cultural, structural, economic, and social factors were all influential in attracting people's participation in public libraries from the country's library-building donors. In the analysis of the above factors, it can be said that without the cooperation of the society and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, and the institution of public libraries, which are important cultural institutions, participation will not lead to a desirable result. Expanding people's participation in cultural affairs and public libraries needs the necessary ground for it. Therefore, it is quintessential to provide cultural, economic, social, and structural contexts of participation from different aspects.

#### **About the cultural factor, the following actions are suggested:**

- Advertising and informing about the status of libraries and encouraging people and donors to participate
- Utilizing the living and existing culture of participation, especially activating the culture of endowment among the people.

- Holding conferences, Zakat al-Fitr and vows and using the media to organize the organization of partnerships

- Considering the role and importance of developing a culture of participation among the people with the cooperation of staff, managers, and other stakeholders of public libraries, it is necessary to raise awareness in various ways, including holding in-service training courses for staff and managers, preparing educational booklets and brochures, films, speeches, etc. teaching them the thinking of participation, the methods of participation, and the importance and necessity of participation.

- Inviting influential and famous people from each region to create a culture and promote public participation.

Concerning the economic factor, the following actions are suggested:

- Celebrating donors and strengthening donor management in public participation in public libraries through the Donors' Association.

- Transparency and reporting on the location and manner of use of donors' financial contributions by managers and officials of public libraries.

- Allocating adequate financial resources to public libraries and providing a cultural platform for participation and work to reform laws and regulations.

**About the social factor, the following actions are suggested:**

Motivating people, developing motivation, and maintaining the motivation of donors and people prone to participate in the library building is similar to what has been done in the school building in the country.

- Considering the breadth and strength of religious backgrounds in society, the use of religious teachings and sacred stimuli in various programs and activities can also provide the grounds for social participation of the people.

- Depicting the social effects of reading books on society using community-level advertising and the use of mass media.

**About the structural factor, the following actions are suggested:**

- Establishing a library donors' association in all cities and supporting this association by the directors of the country's public libraries.

- Explaining the clear statute on the participation of donors in public libraries by the Public Libraries Foundation.

- Establishing structures to identify the needs of public libraries and transfer them to donors.

- Removal of legal and executive barriers to public participation in the country by the directors of public libraries.



### Endnote

1.  $R^2$  is a statistical measurement of data close to the regression line.  $R^2$  is also called the coefficient of determination.

### References

- Kim, Y. & Chen, H. T. (2016). Social media and online political participation: The mediating role of exposure to cross-cutting and like-minded perspectives. *Telematics and Informatics*, 33(2), 320-330. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tele.2015.08.008>
- Koochi Rostami, M. (2012). Reviving the culture of endowment and expanding public libraries. Guest notes. Mehr News Agency, Sunday, November 12th. [in Persian]
- Kowsari, M. (2001). Cultural participation. Tehran: An Publication. [in Persian]
- Mahmood, K., Hameed, A. & Jalaluddin Haider, S. (2005). Library fundraising in Pakistan. *Library management*, 26(8/9), 429-438. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01435120510631729>
- Mansoori, Ali, Salimian Rezai, Maliheh (2019). Examines the factors of attraction and development of donor's participation in Library building. *Journal of Studies in Library and Information Science (JSLIS)*.11 (2), 19-32. <https://doi.org/10.22055/slis.2017.12657> [in Persian]
- Masjed Jamei, A. (1998). Cultural participation and culture of participation. *Peyvand Journal*, 231, 14-19. [in Persian]
- Mohammadnia, M. (2009). The role of endowment in creating a library in Iran. *AYENEH-YE-PAZHOOHESH*, 20 (115), 5-10. [in Persian]
- Muralidhar, D. & Rao, M. K. (2013). Development of Public Libraries through Public- private Partnership in India: Issues and Challenges. *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 33(1), 21-24. <https://doi.org/10.14429/djlit.33.1.3725>
- Nnadozie, C. O. (2013). Alternative funding models for Nigerian academic libraries. *Library Philiosphy and Practice (e-journal)*, 904. Retrieved from <file:///C:/Users/Reza/AppData/Local/Temp/fulltext.pdf>
- National Public Libraries Foundation, General Directorate of Libraries (2011). *A set of guidelines for managing public libraries*. Deputy for Library Development and Book Reading. Tehran: Book Publishing Institute. [in Persian]
- Paymankhah, Motahara; Khorasani, Mahboubeh and Rufi, Qasem (November 2017). The role and effect of communication with donors in attracting public donations for the construction and promotion of public libraries in Semnan province. Presented in *Librarians' Communication Skills Conference*, Isfahan. [in Persian]
- Rahimi, H. & Yazdi Khasti, A. (2012). The place of culture in our religious teachings. In *Proceedings of the National Conference on Endowment (with Emphasis on Higher Education)*. Kashan University, 315-334. [in Persian]
- Roose, H. & Daenekindt, S. (2015). cultural participation Trends in. In *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd edition, volume 5, (447–452). Amsterdam: Elsevier. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-097086-8.10452-0>
- Shahriari, Amin Atta (2015). Factors affecting the attraction of public participation in public libraries of Mashhad. Non-Governmental Master Thesis - Non-Governmental Higher Education Institutions - Non-Profit - Imam Reza University - Faculty of Literature and Humanities. [in Persian]

- Singh, M. (2009). *Library management and information system* (theory and practice). Translated by Gholamreza Fadaei. Tehran: Public Libraries Foundation. [in Persian]
- Vahida, F. & Niazi, M. (2004). Reflections on the relationship between family structure and social participation in Kashan. *Social Science Letters*, 3 (23), 117-145. [in Persian]