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## Article

# The role of Islamic city council in the promotion of citizenship rights : (case: Islamic city council of Tehran)

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## **The Role of Islamic City Council in the Promotion of Citizenship Rights (Case: Islamic City Council of Tehran)**

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**Abstract:** Today, the city and every environment of civil and social life become meaningful to the citizens. The relationship between citizenship and urban management is one of the important issues that have been considered in the field of urban management in the world. One of the factors that can lead to the realization and sustainability of the democratic system in society through public gatherings is the attention to citizens' rights that can be achieved by the councils to achieve this goal. In a comprehensive glance, the councils have the keyword of civil rights in itself since the philosophy of the council itself is a part of the realization of the criteria and components of the citizenship rights. In other words, the councils are the realization of citizenship rights. In this regard, the present study examines the performance of Tehran City Council in the realization of citizenship rights. This research is applied and survey-descriptive in terms of method. Data collection was carried out in two ways: library-documentary and survey-field with questionnaires. The available sample is 150 employees of the Islamic Council and 384 citizens of Tehran in 2016. To analyze the collected data, SPSS software, T-test, Pearson correlation coefficient and regression were used. The results of this study showed that citizens of Tehran have less than average performance of city council due to lack of proper mechanism for monitoring city affairs and realization of citizenship rights. In addition, there is a positive and significant correlation between the performance of the Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, electing mayor and approval of municipal affairs) with the extent of realization of citizenship rights. Moreover, the results of regression test indicates that among the dimensions of Islamic City Council of Tehran, the variables of electing mayor, the supervision of urban management and approval of municipal affairs predict respectively the extent of realization of citizenship rights. Therefore, providing appropriate mechanisms to better realization of these criteria in the Islamic City Council of Tehran will help to play the best role of this institution in realizing citizenship rights in order to increase Tehran citizens' quality of life.

**Keywords:** Citizenship, Citizenship rights, Urban Management, Islamic City Council, City of Tehran

**JEL Classification:** N15, L32, P25, H76

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### 1- Introduction

The rapid growth of urbanization and the formation of new scales of urban development during recent decades have faced cities and urban communities with new complexities and problems (Gholipoor et al., 2015). The complexity of cities and urbanization, the complexity of the government and the need for the interaction of the urban community, citizens, guilds and urban institutions, with the government, requires a new approach to citizens as complementary and government-led decision makers. In other words, urban management, on the other hand, has increased urban population growth and social development, increasing the level of citizens' demands from the government to provide services. Thus, governments are entering into new political, economic and cultural arenas, and in order to manage the affairs of society, they need to adopt laws and regulations that are appropriate to the requirements of time (Shakeri & Fadayi, 2014). City management as a new approach to solve problems in society plays an important role as a local government in urban life (Amanpoor et al., 2015).

It is a vast organization consisting of all the elements and components of the official and informal relevant and effective in various aspects of the social, economic and physical life of the city with the aim of managing, controlling and developing the city comprehensively and sustainably which consists of various departments and institutions. One of the most important pillars of this system is city councils, which are considered quite public institutions and are responsible for discussing, reviewing and deciding on everyday issues and citizen affairs. According to the Constitution and the law adopted by

Islamic City Councils (dated 1996), the main task of urban management lies with Islamic City Councils, whose representatives are elected by the people (Noroozi, 2016). For this purpose, the main goal of Islamic City Council is the rapid advance of urban development programs through cooperation and participation of the people, which is why, in Iran, the councils have found philosophy of existence as one of the supervisory bodies on the performance of the public sector (Pirmoazzen, 2002). Islamic City Councils are defined as the main driver of urban activities to realize single urban management. According to the seventh principle of the constitution of the councils, their duties are to attract people's participation in the city administration, to prevent discrimination, to protect citizenship rights, to regulate local regulations, to elect local directors and to monitor the effective implementation of city and citizen affairs (Beheshti, 2001). In fact, the main objective of the formation of the city council is the rapid progress of urban development through cooperation and participation of the people.

The policies, programs and rules of the local governments in the absence of citizens' awareness will not yield significant results, and in addition to city management disturbance, citizens will face a number of problems. In other words, having decent living with others and enjoying the benefits of the city, without awareness of the rights, duties and related tasks will not be realized for citizens. In a civil society, citizenship rights are one of the most important and fundamental issues, and Islamic Councils are also responsible for defending these rights.

Considering that the most important reasons for the formation of Islamic City Councils are in accordance with the

principles of the constitution and even with regard to global experiences; therefore, debate on the role and function of the city council in realizing citizenship rights needs to provide an image of the concept and the main features of the metropolitan management system and the expected performance of it. In fact, first of all, it should be clarified what functions of the city administration system are expected to be made in order to determine the position, role and functions of the relevant elements, including city council, in realizing citizenship rights in this framework and in accordance with its requirements.

In realizing citizenship rights, attention should be paid to the civic, political and social factors in society. Each of these factors contributes to the realization of citizenship rights. Citizen is one of the important factors in the establishment of government, so citizenship rights should be considered. As citizens share in obedience, they must share in governance. In such a process, citizenship rights are accepted and recognized. One of the ways to realize citizenship rights is to strengthen civil institutions. Just as the will of the community and all citizens in the implementation stage for the realization of citizenship rights is required, the will of the official authorities and institutions of the government, given the historical background and complete state authority over economics, culture and politics, is necessary and crucial to respect citizens' rights and implement existing laws on citizenship right. This will must be considered above power in order to make citizen's right to be treated as a civil and formal norm, and at the lower levels of executive management, middle management and city councils that have broader connections with the community and have

a daily interaction with citizens, also clearly to be considered and adhered.

In this regard, the present study seeks to assess the status of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights and it also seeks to answer the following research questions:

What is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the point of view of citizens of Tehran?

What is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the point of view of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran?

Is there any significant difference between Tehran Islamic City Council's performance on the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic Council City of Tehran?

How is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of the mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the perspective of the citizens of Tehran?

How is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of the mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran?

Is there a significant difference between Tehran citizens and Tehran city councils' assessment of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, mayor's election, approval of municipal affairs)?

Is there a significant relationship between the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the selection of mayors, and

approval of municipal affairs) and the extent of realization of citizenship rights?

Are the dimensions of the anticipation of the functioning of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the selection of the mayor, approval of municipal affairs) able to predict the extent of realization of citizenship rights?

## 2- Literature Review

### a) *Foreign Researches*

Raco & Imrie in a research entitled "Governmentality and rights and responsibilities in urban policy" stated that the issue of the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and their bilateral relationship are a part of the widespread developments in the rationality and techniques of local governments. The local governments of the community emphasize the common sense of rationality, membership and social commitment, the social participation and belonging of all members of society in order to strengthen modern social cohesion and order.

Nzuve & Bakari (2012) in their research entitled "The relationship between empowerment and performance in the city council of Nairobi" stated that there was a positive and significant relationship between empowerment of city council members and their performance. The average Nairobi council staff empowerment rating from the maximum of five scores is estimated to be 3.546, indicating that in Nairobi, powerful staff and expert at the City Council are used to better serve the city administration, the necessary arrangements to participate more people in the city and enjoy their rights.

Hansen (2015) in a research entitled "the democratic costs of size: how increasing size affects citizen satisfaction with local government" stated that one of

the main tasks of the local government is to provide citizenship satisfaction and to pay attention to the citizens' quality of life, which, by establishing appropriate laws and regulations, prevents others from invading their rights and freedoms.

### b) *Iranian Researches*

Habibi (2002), in addition to investigating the performance of the first Tehran City Council, considered political tendencies and affiliations as the most important elements to enter into Islamic City Council of Tehran, rather experience and operational efficiency. He said that ignoring this important issue by the Council would be a ground for the failure of the Council.

Sarrafi & Abdollahi (2008) argued that structural and functional changes of social and political systems have created different grounds for managing the affairs of cities. Forming and playing the role of different actors in the urban arena, including government, people, civil society, and legislators, have led to the creation of mutual and interrelated duties and responsibilities between citizens and policy makers at national and local levels. Cities as residential centers have different structures and functions. Formation of physical elements in cities and playing various roles has been made by actors in the political and social arena of the country, but the city administration and addressing the demands and expectations of citizens require the existence of the bases and fields that can be answered in a way that is reasonable in the light of such demands. City, citizen, and urban management are the concepts that are closely related to each other. Establishing the necessary conditions for interaction between urban management elements involving citizens, city governing institutions, Islamic City

Council and the private sector requires the inclusion of the rule of law. Legislation is based on the elaboration of laws and regulations that clarify the duties and responsibilities of citizens and urban management, and its purpose is to organize urban life and urban management activities.

Saffarirad & Tahvildari (2015) in a research entitled "An Analysis of Urban Management and Its Role in Awareness of Citizenship Rights and Citizenship-Case Study of Langrood County" stated that citizenship rights are an integral part of civil society and the basis for its formation, because it provides for the voluntary participation of all individuals in all social arenas. Therefore, considering the importance of citizens in urban management, the need to examine urban management and its role in citizenship is felt more than ever. Therefore, today, while emphasizing on the specialization of urban management and its role in citizenship, the changes and developments in urban governance laws and regulations have been addressed in order to improve the relationship between management and citizenship socially and economically.

### 3- Theoretical Framework

The city is the place where society, civilization and citizenship emerge. Today's city can be considered a place for citizens' production. In the meantime, urban law has been considered as the basis for the emergence of the citizen and their rights for facilitating these matters, defining, strengthening and supporting the relations and interactions of the actors and institutions of the city for more than half a century. Cities as residential centers with different structures and functions. The formation of physical elements in cities and the various

roles are made by actors in the political and social arena. Forming and playing the role of different actors in the urban arena, including government, people, civil and legislative bodies, and so on, have led to the creation of mutual and interrelated duties and responsibilities between citizens and the administrators of affairs at the national and local levels (Lotfi et al., 2009).

City administration and addressing citizens' demands and expectations require the existence of the bases and areas in which they can respond to such demands in a sensible and rational manner. City, citizen, and urban management are concepts that are closely interrelated with each other, because the city relies on its own function and specificity of living space. Citizens are considered as inhabitants of this space, and urban management is responsible for mutual interaction between these two elements. Therefore, there can be said that there is a space called city that citizens enjoy citizenship rights with having rights, duties, responsibilities, and urban management makes attempt to meet these needs and it has also expectations from citizens to participate in city administration (Akhbari et al., 2014).

In the political encyclopedia, a citizen is a person who enjoys political and civil rights in relation with a government, and on the other hand, one has duties for the government (Lotfi et al., 2009). Citizen is also a person who is present in the social, political, cultural and economic structure of the society, in the decision-making and shaping of it, directly or indirectly, in the shadow of coexistence, voluntary engagement and is effective on co-operation in achieving worldly and future prosperity (Ahmadzadeh, 2005). Citizens are individuals who have nationality and, as a result of this dependence, enjoy the rights and

benefits conferred by the Constitution and other ordinary laws in that country. Citizenship is considered social status in the attitude towards civil society, which provides for the possibility of enjoying rights and powers (Mohseni, 2010). In political and legal theory, a citizen refers to a set of rights and duties of members of

a state-nation or city (Marshall, 1998). Since citizenship is about human relationships, it is not possible to provide a simple, static definition that applies to all societies and times (Faulks, 2002), but the common core of all theories and definitions of citizenship can be summarized in Table 1:

**Table 1. Common Core of Citizenship Theories and Definitions**

| Row | Common Core of Citizenship Theories and Definitions   |
|-----|---|
| 1   | A kind of base and a modern social role for all members of the community  |
| 2   | Interconnected collections of duties, rights, responsibilities, and social, political, legal, economic, and cultural obligations universally, equally and uniformly   |
| 3   | Sense of belonging and modern social membership for active participation in society and economic, political, social and cultural arenas   |
| 4   | The fair and just enjoyment by all members of society of the benefits, and privileges of social, economic, political, legal and cultural rights, regardless of class, racial, religious or ethnic belonging |

**Reference: (Tavassoli & Nejati Hosseini, 2004)**

The realization of the concept and the formation of the idea of citizenship require the existence of a suitable and well-established context, which is referred to as civil society. Civil society refers to a set of institutions, bodies, associations, private and civil organizations (non-governmental organizations) that include individuals and groups of civil rights, regardless of political power. It is in such a space and place that citizenship is emerged (Bashariyeh, 2002).

Citizenship is a set of rights and duties that determines the individual's access to social and economic resources. Marshall analyzes citizenship into three elements of civil, political, and social, including the rights that a citizen has in relation to the state (Mohseni, 2010). Citizenship is the status given to the full members of the community (Sheikhani, 2003). The dimensions of citizenship rights are as follows:

- Civil dimension: It includes numerous issues such as the right to liberty, inviolability,

freedom of expression, religious freedom, equality against law, prohibition of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, national or linguistic origin, protection of a person against illegal government actions, such as imprisonment (illegal) or compulsory labor (Goldooziyan, 2006).

- Political dimension: The rights that are essential for active participation in the free government process include the right to vote and the possibility of holding government-level responsibilities, freedom of assembly and association, freedom to access information and the possibility of political activities.

- Social dimension: It includes a wide range of rights related to welfare and economic security, and includes the right to live in accordance with the ordinary living standards of a community (Hezarjoreybi & Amaniyan, 2011). Socio-economic rights, which have been interpreted as "full membership in the social arena of society", such as the right to property, the right to work, equality in job opportunities,

the right to benefit from social-health services, the enjoyment of social security and standard of living for the individual and support of the person in the event of unemployment, aging and disability (Goldooziyan, 2006), the right to housing, the right to access to all services offered to the public, such as vehicles and parks, the right to enjoy a healthy and peaceful

environment for present and future generations, including the right to environmental education, the right to environmental litigation, the development of environmental rights, the right to access to environmental information (Eftekhari et al., 2016).

The dimensions of citizenship rights are expressed in table 2:

**Table2. The dimensions of citizenship rights**

| Citizenship rights                                   |                      |   |   |  |
|--|----------------------|---|---|--|
| Civil  |                      | Political   | Social  |  |
| Freedom of expression                                | Freedom right        | Right to vote   | Property right  | Right to have house                          |
| Freedom of religion                                  | Race                 | Gathering rights  | Working right   | Right to access to all services              |
| Equality against law                                 | Preventing violation | Freedom to access to information and political activities | Equality in job opportunities   | Right to have health environment             |
| Nondiscrimination based on gender                    | Nationality          |   | Right to benefit health and social services                             | Developing rights of development             |
| Protecting people against illegal acts of government |                      |   | Enjoying social security right  | Right to access to environmental information |
|  |                      |   | Proper standard for living  |  |
|  |                      |   | Protecting and supporting people at time of unemployed and incapability |  |

**Reference: (Goldooziyan, 2006; Hezarjoreybi & Amaniyan; Eftekhari et al., 2016)**

Civil rights is a collection of laws, rules and regulations that regulate the interactions between citizens and city administrations in local and urban areas and explains the rights of councils, municipalities and other urban institutions (Lotfi, et al., 2009).

Urban management means the targeting, planning and implementation of urban-based solutions and services to citizens, under the supervision of responsible organizations such as city councils and municipalities (Cheema, 1993). Urban

management organizes factors and resources to meet citizens' needs. Given that city has an open system, urban management is something more than physical structure of city (Bartlett et al., 2016). Urban management consists of an extensive organization consisting of formal and informal elements that are effective and relevant in various social, economic, and physical aspects of urban life, with the aim of managing, controlling, directing and developing the city immensely and sustainably (Barakpoor, 2008).



In Amid dictionary, the council means consultation, exploration, and investigation (Amid, 2004). The Council is a body of representatives elected by the people who, with the authority of the executive, administer part of their affairs (Irani, 1997).

In the concept of the council, there are three main characteristics: 1- Elected by people 2- Administering executive powers 3. Being based on the place of residence of individuals. With such characteristics, local elected councils, in

the form of city councils, departments, villages and settlements, manage some of their public and social affairs, such as approving the municipal budget, selecting and dismissing the mayor, overseeing financial and operational work on government departments, and directing and organizing finances (Choopani Yazdali, 2003).

Table 3 contains some definitions in relation to the Council:

**Table3. Definitions provided by experts from the council**

| Experts                                  | Definitions   |
|--|---|
| <b>Arnstein</b>                          | Councils in urban management system are citizenship power (Papliyazdi, 2003).   |
| <b>Cunningham</b>                        | The Council is a process in which it considers public participation as a political one, and it defines the involvement of all individuals, groups, organizations and communities in a planning process, in which the effectiveness has the results of process (Papliyazdi, 2003). |
| <b>Ansari (2005)</b>                     | The Council is a fundamental value in democratic societies and a necessary part of a genuine and effective democracy. It is based on the principles of the council, democratic planning and empowerment of citizens in order to be effective in their surroundings.               |
| <b>Asadiyan et al., (2013)</b>           | A gathering of people to discuss, investigate, and exchange views, as well as expediency and opinion  |
| <b>KhademHosseini &amp; Bagha (2015)</b> | The Council is an Islamic term based on the teachings of the Qur'an and the prophetic tradition, and has been mentioned twice as a worthy act in the Holy Qur'an. The significance of the council is so far as the name of the fourteenth chapter of the Holy Quran is "Shuri".   |
| <b>Rajabi (2013)</b>                     | The city council is the place where its activists are elected by popular vote and work to improve the city and improve urban affairs such as cultural, architectural and recreational ones.   |
| <b>Alikhani (2005)</b>                   | The councils are one of the most appropriate and best grounded for people's participation in determining their own destinies and governing the society as well as institutionalizing accountability and democracy.  |

In many democratic societies, the councils give their citizens the right to be informed, consulted, and, in the circumstances provided for them, express their ideas about issues affecting their lives (Papliyazdi, 2006).

According to the constitution and law of Islamic City Council, city council has the central role in urban governance, its representatives elected by the people (Shakeri & Fadayi, 2014).

The appointment of the mayor is the responsibility of the council. All plans and decisions of the municipality should be coordinated and supervised by the councils. By law, Islamic City Councils are formed to promote social, economic, development, health, cultural, educational and other welfare programs in cooperation with the people and supervise city affairs. The duration of the council members is

four years and the number of members varies according to the population of the city (Saeidniya, 2003). City Councils are advocating for equilibrium in urban living conditions. They are selected by different classes of the city, which should consider the luck of the people, meet their needs and expand the areas of urban growth and excellence (Shieh, 2004).

Today, living in urban societies due to the size of the cities in the territorial dimension as well as the diversity created in the area of urban services, has caused urban executives to seek a sort of decision-making power to better manage and respond more effectively to the diverse and broader needs of the urban population. The implementing experience of various nations in this area illustrates the success of city executives who have made their decisions on relative independence within the framework of national regulations. From this perspective, being a citizen is a legal concept between city residents and urban management, which in some countries is called "local government" and in others, "local council". Due to the nature of the elected officials of the local governments directly elected by the people, with the supervision of the people's representatives, the performance of city executives (mayors and their affiliated directors) in the form of city councils, the field of intervention and public participation in welfare, development, environmental, service, cultural and recreational services will be provided more than ever. Governance can also use the positive effects of this participation in the political arenas (Noroozi, 2016).

Tehran, the largest city and capital of Iran, is the center of capital of Tehran province and the city of Tehran with a population of about eight million and an

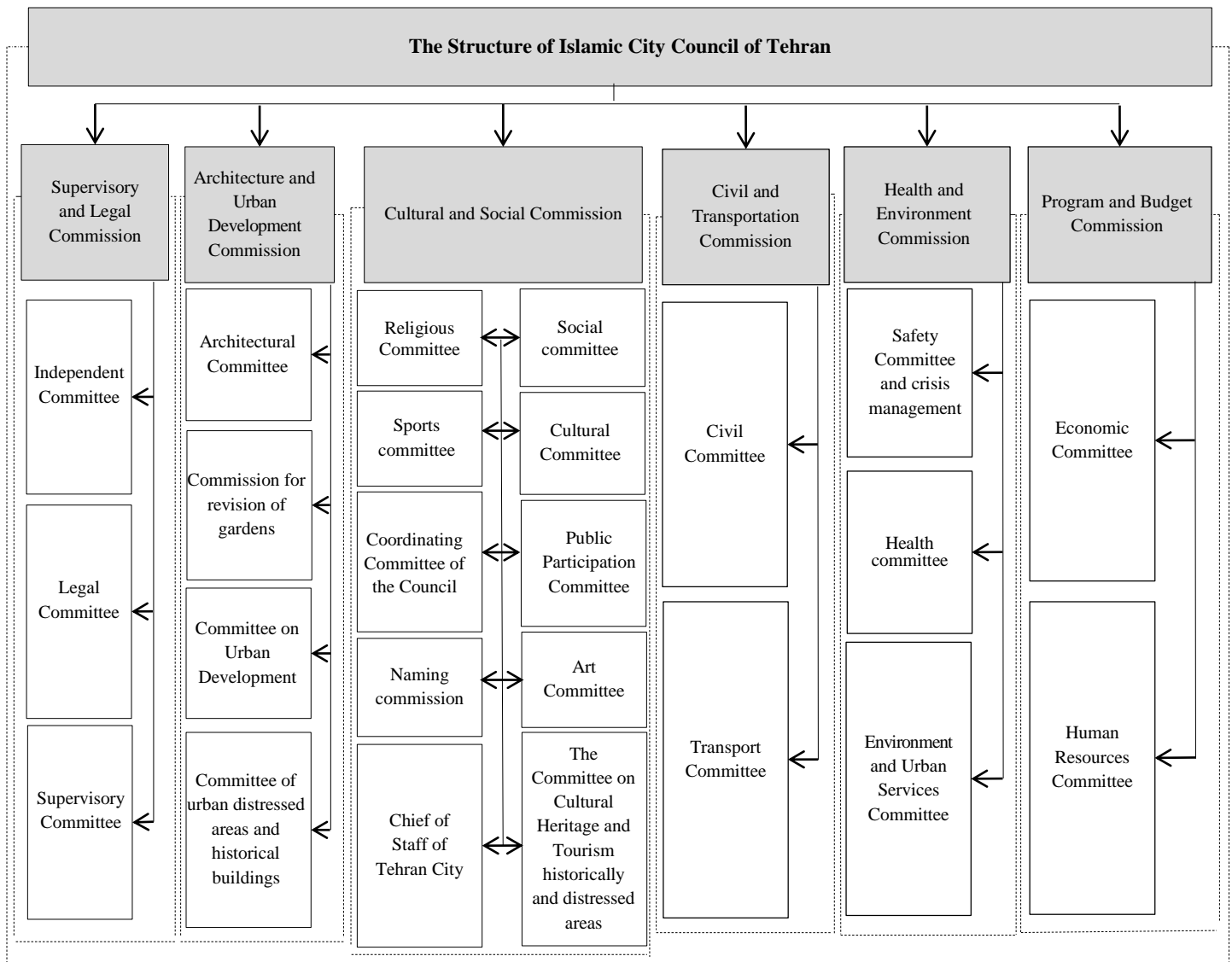
area of 730 square kilometers is the twenty-fifth populated city and the largest twenty-seventh city in the world.

Islamic City Council of Tehran (in the fourth period) consisted of 31 representatives, who were responsible for the administration of the city of Tehran in accordance with the laws of the councils. One of the most important tasks of the council is to elect of the mayor for four years, monitor the performance of the municipality and, if necessary, overthrowing the mayor, approving plans for the welfare of more citizens and monitoring their implementation, approving the annual budget of the municipality, approving the statutes of the institutions and affiliated companies of municipality. Tehran City Council has six permanent committees. The departments of each of the commissions are as follows:

- Program and Budget Commission: Economic and Human Resources Committee
- Commission on Health and Environment: Committee on Safety and Crisis Management, Health Committee, Environment Committee and Municipal Services
- Civil and Shipping Commission: Civil and Shipping Committee
- Cultural and Social Commission: Social Committee, Religious Committee, Cultural Committee, Public Participation Committee, Committee on Cultural Heritage and Tourism, Historical and Distressed Areas, Sports Committee, Art Committee, Naming Committee, Coordinating Committee of Chairs and Headquarters of Tehran City
- Commission for Architecture and Urban Development: Architectural Committee, Gardens Revision Commission, Urban Development Committee, Urban Distressed Areas Committee and Historic Monuments Committee

- Commission for Regulatory and Legal Affairs: Committee on Modification, Committee on Legal Affairs and Supervision

The structure of Islamic City Council of Tehran is as follows:



**Fig1. The Structure of Islamic City Council of Tehran**

By studying the literature of the research, Figure 2 shows the overall structure of the research. As you can see, Islamic City Council of Tehran has played a significant role by creating six

commissions in the framework of monitoring urban management, electing mayors, approving municipal affairs and exchanging communication with citizens in the realization of the rights of the three citizens.

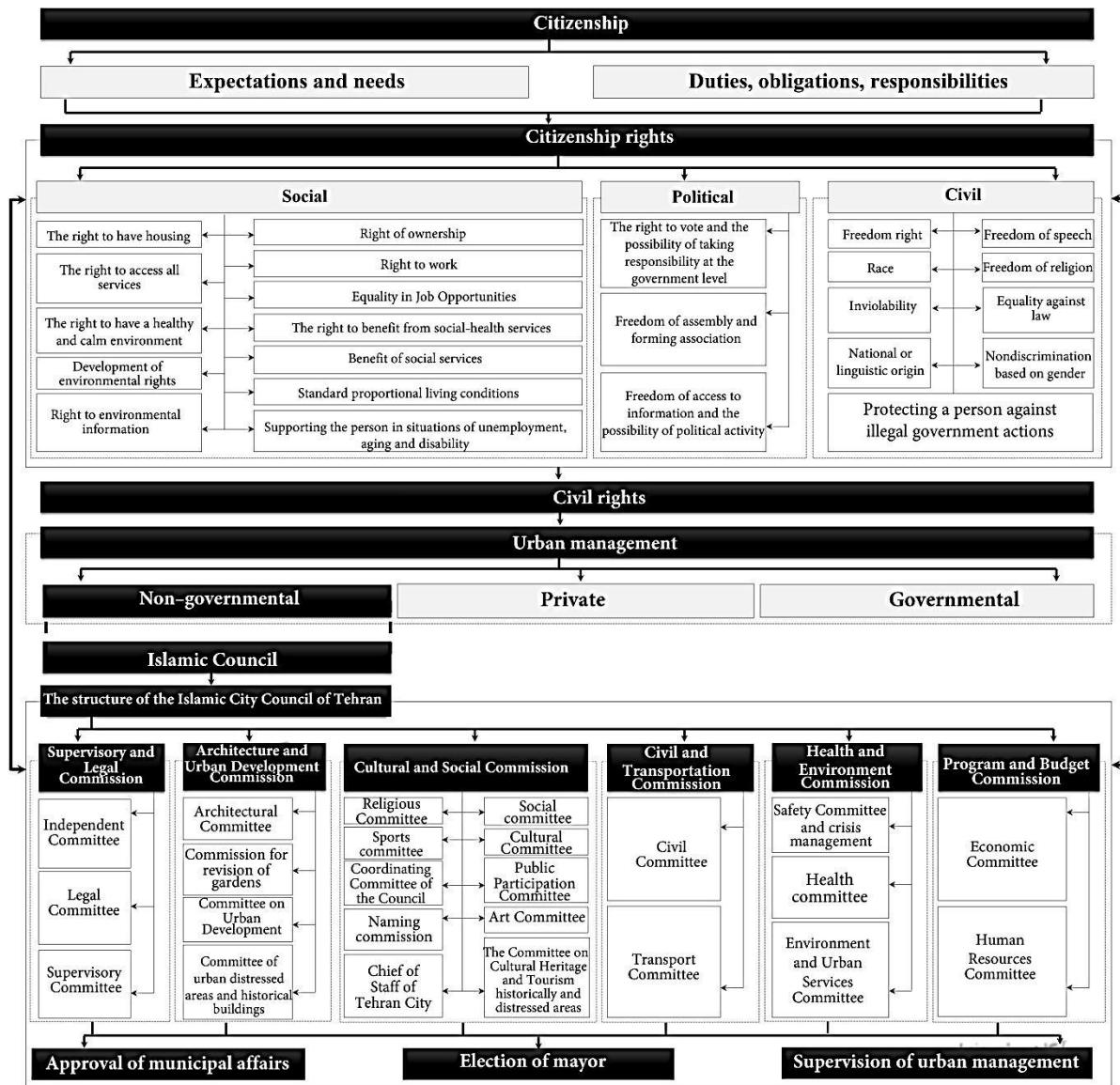


Fig2. Overall structure of the research

#### 4- Research Method

Given that the present study aims at assessing the status of Islamic City Council in the realization of citizenship rights, the research method is a survey-descriptive and it is considered as an applied research. The statistical population of the present study consists of Tehran City Council members and Tehran citizens in 2016, which is a sample of available research including 150 employees of Islamic City Council and 384 citizens of Tehran in 2016.

In the elementary part of the research, a library method was used for data collection. In the second step, a quantitative method was used to collect data using a survey method-a 21-item researcher-made questionnaire, based on five-point Likert's scale. In the present questionnaire, citizenship rights have been developed with the following elements: civil, political, social and city council performance with the following elements: supervision of urban management, mayor election, approval of municipal affairs. To assess the validity of the instrument, experts evaluated the

validity of the tool in a desirable manner using content validity method. To estimate the reliability of the research tool, Cronbach's alpha method was used, which was calculated as 0.82.

In order to analyze the data according to the continuous scale and the distance

between the data and after ensuring the normal distribution of the data through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, t-test and independent sample t test were used.

The structure of the questionnaire and the components of the research variables are described in Table 4 and 5:

**Table4. Components and sub-elements for assessing citizenship rights**

| Components of citizenship rights | Sub-Components  |
|----------------------------------|---|
| <b>Civil</b>                     | Effect of Islamic City Council of Tehran through the approval of bills on the realization of citizenship rights, the influence of religion, gender, race on the citizenship at Islamic City Council of Tehran   |
| <b>Political</b>                 | The role of Islamic City Council of Tehran in approving bills to support the participation of citizens in public organizations, voluntary activities, the formation of associations, etc., the role of Islamic City Council of Tehran in promoting citizens' awareness in framing scientific, experimental and ethical principles and values in the election of council members, the work of Islamic City Council of Tehran in establishing citizens' rights in the freedom of citizens to access information and the possibility of political activities |
| <b>Social</b>                    | The success rate of councils in monitoring the social affairs of the city and improving the health and beauty of the city, the influence of the city council on the supervision of urban affairs to create a healthy environment  |

**Table5. Components to evaluate the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran**

| The components of council's performance | Sub-components  |
|---|---|
| <b>Supervision of urban management</b>  | The role of Islamic City Council of Tehran in monitoring the executive functions and projects of the municipality, approving urban development plans and projects, implementing the laws approved by the council, resolving civil disputes with the municipality, maintaining the use of urban land and preventing violations, monitoring the municipal financial performance, preventive monitoring etc.   |
| <b>Mayor election</b>                   | The election of qualified people for the mayor by Islamic City Council of Tehran, far from political tendencies, attention and consideration to the executive records of the people to elect the Mayor by Islamic Council of Tehran, attention to the specialty in electing the mayor by Islamic City Council of Tehran etc.  |
| <b>Approval of Municipal Affairs</b>    | The role of Islamic City Council of Tehran in approving bills or abolishing city complications, as well as changing the type and extent thereof, taking into account the public policy of the state, in influencing the management and development of urban infrastructure (such as parks, streets, bridges, underpasses, sanitary facilities, etc.), in approving bills and plans for preservation (sanitation, public comfort, beauty of the city), approval of bills and plans related to urban affairs (field of management and use of urban land) etc. |

## 5- Research Findings

Demographic information of 384 Tehran citizens and 150 Islamic City Council officials and experts who completed the questionnaire information, are presented in tables 6 through 9 in percentage terms.

Table 6 shows the percentage distribution of respondents' age in both groups of Tehran citizens and Tehran City Council staff and it was found that respondents are more likely to be between the ages of 31 and 40.

**Table6. Percentage distribution of respondent's age groups in both groups**

| Age group of respondents       | Between 20 and 30 years old | Between 31 and 40 years old | Between 41 and 50 years old | Between 51 and 60 years old | More than 60 years old | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-------|
| Experts of Tehran City Council | 15.33                       | 50                          | 20                          | 12.67                       | 2                      | 100   |
| Citizens of Tehran             | 25.26                       | 34.64                       | 22.66                       | 11.46                       | 5.98                   | 100   |
| Total                          | 22.47                       | 38.95                       | 21.91                       | 11.80                       | 4.87                   | 100   |

In Table 7, the percentage distribution of respondents in both groups of Tehran citizens and employees of Islamic City Council of Tehran was expressed in terms

of gender and marital status and it was found that married and men respondents were more than women were.

**Table7. Percentage distribution of gender and marital status of respondents in both groups**

| Gender |        | Respondent's groups            | Marital status |         |
|--------|--------|--------------------------------|----------------|---------|
| Male   | Female |                                | Single         | Married |
| 54     | 46     | Experts of Tehran City Council | 32.67          | 67.33   |
| 58.59  | 41.41  | Citizens of Tehran             | 47.14          | 52.86   |
| 57.30  | 42.70  | Total                          | 43.07          | 56.93   |

Table 8 shows residence duration of each respondent (in two groups) in Tehran. As it can be seen, the length of residence

of the majority of the two target societies is between 10 and 20 years in Tehran.

**Table8. Percentage distribution of residence time of two target groups in Tehran**

| Residence time in Tehran       | Less than 5 years | Between 5 and 10 years | Between 10 and 20 years | More than 20 years |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Experts of Tehran City Council | 14.67             | 26.67                  | 42                      | 16.67              |
| Citizens                       | 17.97             | 28.65                  | 31.77                   | 21.61              |
| Total                          | 17.04             | 28.09                  | 34.64                   | 20.22              |

Table 9 represents the percentage distribution of respondents' education in both target groups. As it can be seen, more than two-thirds of the members of

Tehran City Council are masters and higher, and nearly half of Tehran's citizens are accountable to the level of diploma education.

**Table9. Distribution of respondents' education level in two target groups**

| Respondents' education level   | Junior and Senior | High school | Diploma | A.A. & B.A. | Master and higher |
|--------------------------------|-------------------|-------------|---------|-------------|-------------------|
| Experts of Tehran City Council | -                 | -           | -       | 26          | 74                |
| Citizens                       | 11.72             | 16.67       | 43.75   | 21.35       | 6.51              |
| Total                          | 8.43              | 11.99       | 43.75   | 22.66       | 25.47             |

To answer the first question of the research, “What is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran?”, one-sample t test was used. Considering the amount of t obtained, it can be argued that there is a significant difference at the level

of  $\alpha = 0.01$  between theoretical mean and experimental one. Therefore, given the fact that the experimental average is lower than the theoretical average, from the viewpoint of the Tehran citizens, the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights is less than average (Table 10).

**Table10. Performance evaluation of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran**

| Evaluation of Tehran Islamic City Council Performance  | Mean | SD   | Df  | t       | Sig   |
|--|------|------|-----|---------|-------|
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of civil rights of citizenship from the perspective of citizens of Tehran | 2.15 | 0.32 | 383 | -52.051 | 0.000 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship political rights from the viewpoint of the citizens of Tehran   | 2.33 | 0.22 | 383 | -59.678 | 0.000 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic Council of Tehran in the realization of social citizenship rights from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran          | 2.67 | 0.45 | 383 | -14.370 | 0.000 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran            | 2.25 | 0.19 | 383 | -77.352 | 0.000 |

To answer the second question of the research, “What is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the point of view of the staff of Islamic Council of Tehran?” one-sample t test was used. Considering the obtained t value, it can be argued that there is no

significant difference at the level of  $\alpha=0.01$  between the theoretical mean and the experimental mean., that is, from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran, the performance of Islamic Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights is moderate (table11).

**Table11. Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic Council of Tehran**

| Evaluation of Tehran Islamic City Council Performance   | Mean | SD   | Df  | t      | Sig   |
|---|------|------|-----|--------|-------|
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of civil rights of citizenship from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran | 2.98 | 0.20 | 149 | -1.225 | 0.125 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship political rights from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran       | 3.04 | 0.31 | 149 | 1.580  | 0.187 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic Council of Tehran in the realization of social citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran          | 3.06 | 0.41 | 149 | 1.792  | 0.152 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran            | 3.02 | 0.22 | 149 | 1.113  | 0.132 |

To answer the third question of the research, “Is there any significant difference between the evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran?” independent sample t test were

used. Considering the obtained t value, it can be argued that there is a significant difference in the level of  $\alpha = 0.01$  between the evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran (table12).

**Table12. Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran**

| Statistical test<br>Evaluation<br>of the performance of<br>Islamic City Council of Tehran | Status   | Mean | SD   | Df  | t      | Sig   |
|---|--|------|------|-----|--------|-------|
| Realization of Citizenship Rights   | The viewpoint of citizens of Tehran                          | 2.15 | 0.32 | 532 | 14.745 | 0.005 |
|   | The viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran | 2.98 | 0.20 |     |        |       |
| Realization of Political Citizenship Rights   | The viewpoint of citizens of Tehran                          | 2.33 | 0.22 | 532 | 10.349 | 0.000 |
|   | The viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran | 3.04 | 0.31 |     |        |       |
| Realization of Social Citizenship Rights  | The viewpoint of citizens of Tehran                          | 2.67 | 0.45 | 532 | 4.825  | 0.000 |
|   | The viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran | 3.06 | 0.41 |     |        |       |
| Realization of Citizenship Rights   | The viewpoint of citizens of Tehran                          | 2.25 | 0.19 | 532 | 5.627  | 0.000 |
|   | The viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran | 3.02 | 0.22 |     |        |       |

To answer the fourth question of the research, “What is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (monitoring city administration, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the viewpoint of Tehran citizens?”, one sample-t test was used. Considering the obtained t value, it can be argued that there is a significant difference at the

level of  $\alpha = 0.01$  between the theoretical and experimental means. Therefore, given the fact that the experimental average is lower than the theoretical average, from the viewpoint of Tehran citizens, the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in terms of monitoring urban management, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs, is less than moderate (table13).



**Table13. Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the perspective of citizens of Tehran**

| Evaluation of Tehran Islamic City Council Performance  | Mean | SD   | Df  | t       | Sig   |
|--|------|------|-----|---------|-------|
| Supervision of Urban Management from the Viewpoint of Citizens of Tehran   | 2.15 | 0.19 | 383 | -87.665 | 0.000 |
| Election of mayor from the Viewpoint of Citizens of Tehran   | 2.54 | 0.17 | 383 | -53.024 | 0.000 |
| Approval of municipal affairs from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran   | 2.78 | 0.21 | 383 | -20.529 | 0.000 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the perspective of citizens of Tehran | 2.68 | 0.25 | 383 | -25.082 | 0.000 |

To answer the fifth question of the study, “how is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (monitoring urban management, the choice of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the views of the staff of Islamic Council of Tehran?” a single-t test has been used. Considering the obtained t value, it can be argued that there is a significant difference at the level of  $\alpha = 0.01$  between theoretical

mean and experimental means. Therefore, considering that the experimental average is higher than the theoretical average, according to the employees of Islamic City Council of Tehran, the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in terms of supervision of urban management, the election of mayors, approval of municipal affairs, is more than moderate (table14).

**Table14. Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the viewpoint of the employees of Islamic City Council of Tehran**

| Evaluation of Tehran Islamic City Council Performance  | Mean | SD   | Df  | t      | Sig   |
|--|------|------|-----|--------|-------|
| Supervision of urban management from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | 3.68 | 0.12 | 149 | 69.402 | 0.000 |
| Election of mayor from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | 3.77 | 0.19 | 149 | 49.634 | 0.000 |
| Approval of municipal affairs from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | 3.85 | 0.24 | 149 | 43.376 | 0.000 |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the viewpoint of the employees of Islamic Council of Tehran | 3.52 | 0.22 | 149 | 28.948 | 0.000 |

To answer the sixth question of the research, “Is there any significant difference between the assessment of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of the mayor and approval of municipal affairs) from the citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran?” the independent samples t-test is used. Considering the obtained t value, it can

be argued that there is a significant difference at the level of  $\alpha = 0.01$  in terms of the evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in terms of the supervision of urban management, the election of mayor and the approval of municipal affairs from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council Tehran is different (table15).

**Table15. Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran and the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran**

| Statistical test   | Status  | Mean | SD   | Df  | t      | Sig   |
|--|---|------|------|-----|--------|-------|
| Supervision of urban management from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | The Viewpoint of Tehran Citizens                                | 2.15 | 0.19 | 532 | 14.548 | 0.000 |
|  | The Viewpoint of The Employees of The Islamic Council of Tehran | 3.68 | 0.12 |     |        |       |
| The election of mayor from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | The Viewpoint of Tehran Citizens                                | 2.54 | 0.17 | 532 | 23.789 | 0.000 |
|  | The Viewpoint of The Employees of The Islamic Council Of Tehran | 3.77 | 0.19 |     |        |       |
| Approval of municipal affairs from the perspective of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran  | The Viewpoint of Tehran Citizens                                | 2.78 | 0.21 | 532 | 18.325 | 0.000 |
|  | The Viewpoint of The Employees of Islamic Council of Tehran     | 3.85 | 0.24 |     |        |       |
| Evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran and the staff of the Islamic City Council of Tehran | The Viewpoint of Tehran Citizens                                | 2.68 | 0.25 | 532 | 29.789 | 0.000 |
|  | The Viewpoint of The Employees of Islamic Council of Tehran     | 3.52 | 0.22 |     |        |       |

In examining the seventh question, “Is there a meaningful relationship between the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) and the degree of realization of

citizenship rights?” the calculated “r” at the level of  $\alpha = 0.01$  indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between the performance of the Islamic City Council of Tehran and the rate of realization of citizenship rights (table16).

**Table16. Correlation coefficient between the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, the election of mayor, approval of municipal affairs) and the degree of realization of citizenship rights**

| Predictor variable                                    | Criterion variable                      | Correlation coefficient | Sig   | N   |
|---|---|-------------------------|-------|-----|
| Supervision of urban management                       | The rate of realized citizenship rights | 0.888                   | 0.000 | 534 |
| The election of mayor                                 |   | 0.867                   | 0.000 |     |
| Approval of municipal affairs                         |   | 0.884                   | 0.000 |     |
| The performance of the Islamic City Council of Tehran |   | 0.874                   | 0.000 |     |

In order to examine the eighth question, “Is the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran (supervision of urban management, mayor’s election, approval of municipal affairs) able to predict the extent of realization of citizenship rights?” and also determine the relative contribution of each of the variables of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in prediction of the degree of realization of

citizenship rights regression was used. In this method, using the partial regression coefficient (Beta), the direct effect of Islamic City Council of Tehran on the amount of realization of citizenship rights is analyzed, which shows that the election of mayor is 0.383, the supervision of urban management 0.366 and approval of municipal affairs 0.181 predict the realization of citizenship rights (table17).

**Table17. Regression analysis to determine the contribution of variables predicting the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran on the level of realization of citizenship rights**

| Tehran City Council Performance | Beta  | Sig   | t      | R     | R <sup>2</sup> |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|----------------|
| Supervision of urban management | 0.376 | 0.000 | 11.954 | 0.762 | 0.581          |
| The election of mayor           | 0.383 | 0.000 | 10.309 |       |                |
| Approval of municipal affairs   | 0.181 | 0.000 | 4.891  |       |                |

## 6- Conclusion and Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the assessment of the status of Islamic City Council in the realization of citizenship rights from the viewpoint of the staff of Islamic City Council of Tehran and the citizens of Tehran. The findings indicated that the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the realization of citizenship rights from the point of view of Tehran citizens is less than average and from the viewpoint of the employees of Islamic City Council of Tehran, which it was moderate and there is a significant difference between these two views. This means that Tehran citizens from Islamic City Council of Tehran expect more to realize their civil, political and social rights. In fact, Tehran's citizens expect from Islamic City Council of Tehran to raise citizens' awareness of their rights, oversee urban issues and provide a healthy city for citizens, help to access accurate information, and pass laws and bills in order to realize more citizenship rights. In this regard, the councils as public institutions are effective centers for teaching duties and citizenship rights, and as an intermediary link between people, urban and executive managers, they have an effective role in following the demands and rights of the people. Therefore, what is considered the duty of Islamic City Council as Article 71 of the Law of Islamic Councils of the country is in fact observing the duties and obligations of urban management in the

realization of citizenship rights. Citizens continuously evaluate the performance of city council in municipalities. If city councils and municipalities observe all citizens' rights and citizens' assessment is positive, the credibility of urban management increases and if citizenship rights and duties are ignored and so does citizenship, citizens expect outside the scope of city council duties and, consequently, municipalities.

According to the results of the research, suggestions on the promotion of citizenship rights by Tehran City Council on each of the components mentioned in the research are expressed:

- Islamic City Council of Tehran should interact with ministries and government organizations and conduct city affairs with public partnership.

- Islamic City Council of Tehran should, instead of occasional and accidental supervision, apply oversight of the organization to the municipality. Given the limited capacities of Islamic City Council of Tehran in the field of monitoring Tehran Municipality in terms of human resources and facilities, urban management should provide the groundwork for this issue. In this regard, it is necessary to use intelligent processes, measures and services of the municipality with the access of Tehran City Council. On the other hand, it should provide for the possibility of monitoring councils, local associations and civil society.

Increasing the number of members of City Council and the presence of expert, knowledgeable and experienced people can also provide careful and more detailed monitoring.

- An appropriate mechanism for people's complaints in the councils should be reviewed before the response and followed up people's problems.

Also, the results of the study showed that the evaluation of the performance of Islamic City Council of Tehran in terms of the supervision of urban management, the election of mayors and the approval of municipal affairs from the viewpoint of citizens of Tehran is lower than average; therefore, the following suggestions are presented:

- Islamic City Council of Tehran should provide NGO's partnership in the administration of city affairs, because the existential philosophy of the councils is the basis for public partnership in the administration of city affairs.

- City Council should provide the opportunity to create such rights as peace, happiness and hope for a better future, spiritual self-improvement and social empowerment, having a safe and peaceful life, having the opportunity to accompany the family, recreation, sports and tourism that is the rights of every citizen.

- Establishing different specialized working groups in the field of women and children, and supporting and creating rights for women who have appropriate health and treatment programs and appropriate counseling for physical and mental health in their individual, family and social life at different stages of life, especially pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, and illness, poverty or disability.

- Social damages in the field of child labor, addiction, informal settlements, etc. should be more specialized and each area should be specially considered and given appropriate solutions.

- Rights for people with disabilities (disable people) and the elderly should be provided with appropriate medical and rehabilitation facilities to improve and empower them to live independently.

- Islamic City Council of Tehran, may lay down several articles and submissions in the Five-Year Plan of Tehran Municipality Act, which will consider the codified and specific ways to institutionalize citizenship rights, and mandate Tehran's municipality to submit them in the form of a bill to investigate and approve at the councils.

- Rules for the fitting of buildings, projects, environments and urban spaces for the benefit and safe, convenient and easy transportation of the elderly, disabled people, veterans, and medical personnel to promote human dignity.

- Islamic City Council should be able to freely publish the information of urban management and help the media disseminate their thoughts and fears, city issues and problems, and urban management.

- Supporting and expanding NGOs and planning to take advantage of their cooperation and assistance in urban management in the form of good urban governance perspectives and policies, resulting in participatory, accountable, transparent, efficient, consensual, effective and, most importantly, strengthening citizens' awareness of their citizenship rights. These organizations can, on the one hand, monitor urban management (council and municipality) to identify issues and urban disadvantages, and, on

the other hand, the interlocutors of urban executives with local communities.

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