Kom, 2023, vol. XII (3) : 1–19

UDC: 28-23-254
001.102
DOI: 10.5937/kom2303001A
Original scientific paper

Behavioural Components of Information Transparency from the Perspective of the Quran and Its Organizational Implications

Hafizullah Asghari

Al-Mustafa International University, Qom, I. R. Iran

Abulfazl Gaeini

Social Sciences Research Institute, Hawza and University Research Institute, Qom. I. R. Iran

Amir Hamzah Mehrabi

Shahid Mahallati College, Qom, I. R. Iran

Organizations emerge to fulfil specific objectives, giving rise to expectations from stakeholders and beneficiaries of organization. As we enter the third millennium and people's awareness of their citizenship rights increases, we witness a growth in their expectations of organizations. The rise in stakeholder expectations, coupled with managerial and employee inclinations towards opacity, has led to a lack of transparency and the consequent dissatisfaction of stakeholders. Sustaining organizational transparency requires decision-making and implementation to be transparent, thus fostering stakeholder trust. This necessitates, in Islamic societies, the extraction of transparency components from the Quran as a guide for action, followed by their implementation. This research examines the Behavioural components of information transparency from the perspective of the Quran and its organizational implications.

Data collection was conducted through library research, with the method of inquiry utilized for problem formulation and referencing the Quran, and hermeneutics employed for organizational implications of transparency.

Findings suggest that consultation, condemnation of trickery, advice and benevolence of the people and the ruler, open communication, prohibition

Corresponding author: hafizullahasghari@gmail.com

Corresponding author: againi@rihu.ac.ir

Corresponding author: mehrabiamir39@gmail.com

of hiding the truth and the prohibition of secret conversation are among the behavioural components of transparency of information from the perspective of the Quran.

Therefore, if there is consultation in organizational decisions, the performance of duties is without pretence, employees and managers are benevolent towards people and each other, decisions and actions are expressed openly in organization, facts are not hidden and there is no slander in organization, which will, consequently, be characterized by transparency.

Keywords: *behaviour, information, organization, transparency, transparency of information*

Introduction and Problem Statement

Organizations have been established from the outset to meet specific objectives. This has led to the creation of expectations on the part of customers and stakeholders towards the organizations. As we enter the third millennium and people's awareness of their citizenship rights increases, we witness a growth in their expectations of organizations. On the other hand, the tendency of officials to conceal information and make it unavailable to stakeholders leads to dissatisfaction among beneficiaries and a lack of transparency within the organization. In the current era, where the boundaries of organizational privacy and internal and external limits have been removed, and stakeholders, aided by modern technologies, can scrutinize and evaluate the performance of organizations and express their opinions, it is expected that organizations will operate more transparently and provide the necessary information without ambiguity in the decision-making and execution process to stakeholders.

Accurate information dissemination regarding decision-making and transparent performance in an organization requires an understanding of the components of information transparency and their application. Although theoretical research has not specifically addressed the components of information transparency, it has considered perspectives, theories, and approaches that regard organizational transparency as a concept born of the modern era, distant from religious literature. Therefore, this research draws on the experiences of management scholars regarding information transparency and examines Quranic verses related to the behavioural components of information transparency. Key points and ideas from Quranic teachings will be extracted, the behavioural components of transparency will be identified, and their explicit or implicit organizational implications will be discussed.

1. Theoretical Literature

A. Understanding Concepts

– Organization

An organization has multiple definitions. One such definition is: "An organization is a social entity that is consciously coordinated, with relatively clear boundaries, and works towards achieving a common goal or goals" (Sayyid Javādian 2009: 18).

A social entity implies that the organization is composed of individuals or groups interacting with one another, and "consciously coordinated" indicates that these interactions are studied and reviewed beforehand. The existence of relatively clear boundaries is used to distinguish members from non-members.

– Organizational Behaviour

Organizational behaviour encompasses a set of knowledge about the concepts, theories, and understanding of behaviour within organizations, which has emerged from a series of scientific investigations (Shafīʿī, Khidmati & Pīrūz 2006: 2).

Understanding individual behaviour at all stages of life is increasingly important as a factor for success. This is because systematic study of behaviour leads to improved ability to describe, predict, control, and change behaviour, providing a foundation for accurately predicting behaviour (Rezāʾiān 2007: 7). Therefore, understanding organizational behaviour helps individuals work together, interact, and create a strong collaborative experience despite cultural and intellectual differences.

– Transparency

Transparency has different meanings in various contexts. For example, transparency in accounting is not the same as transparency in organizational and governmental contexts (Zandiyya & Sarwī 2013: 116–134; Simon 2006: 1029–1031). Therefore, the term "transparency" has various meanings depending on the context in which it is used, and this text will suffice with the meaning relevant to this research.

In one definition, transparency is considered the unobstructed access of citizens to reliable and timely information about public sector decisions and performance (Armstrong 2008: 1). The prominent feature of this definition is that it encompasses both decision-making and execution.

– Information

Vickery believes that information is any input to an organization that initiates change in the state of that organization (Vickery, B & Vickery, A. 1987: 27).

– Informational Transparency

Informational transparency is defined as stakeholders' awareness of governmental decisions and actions and stakeholders' access to organizational information (Pidrām & Rahmānī Zādah Dihkurdī 2002: 89; Rawlins 2008: 6).

Stakeholders will have transparent access to the information they need when decision-making in the organization is done through consultation (Ṭāhirī & Arasṭā 2016: 7; Shaʿbānī 1995: 147; Husseini 2021: 120), employees recognize stakeholders' right to be informed about decisions and actions within the organization (Ṭāhirī & Arasṭā 2016: 16; Pidrām & Rahmānī Zādah Dihkurdī 2002: 91), freedom of expression is respected (Ḥājiān, Dilshād Tehrani & Amini Hajābādī 2017: 93; Mihrpūr 2009: 160), managers and employees believe that information belongs to stakeholders (Anṣārī 2007: 142), the public and the government are benevolent towards each other and accept each other's advice (Ṭāhirī, Arasṭā & Malik Afẓalī 2013: 87), and finally, truths are not hidden in the organization, and those who conceal truths are reprimanded (Khiradmand 2019: 65). These mentioned points are components of behavioural informational transparency that have been studied in theoretical foundations with an Islamic approach.

B. Research Background

The background encompasses a comprehensive review of the works published in the researcher's area of interest. The background helps the researcher focus his findings on the key points considered important in the published studies (Sikarān 2019: 49). When it comes to "transparency", numerous practical and theoretical studies have been conducted so far. Practical background showcases experiences and operational actions in the field of transparency, while theoretical background pertains to existing views on transparency, which can be divided into general and specific backgrounds. Research that only examines the proposed ideas of organizational transparency is referred to as general background, whereas specific background pertains to studies that discuss transparency from the perspective of Islam, which is more relevant to the present research. This study attempts to make mention of the most recent related research and highlight their differences from the present study.

In Khiradmand's (2019) research titled *The Jurisprudential Position of Informational Transparency in Islamic Governance*, the principles, rules, and jurisprudential reasons for free access to government information have been examined without focusing on the components of transparency. Akhtarī and Dārābī (2019), in their article *Transparency from the Perspective of Islamic Governance and Good Governance*, stated that transparency provides grounds for reform, reduces corruption, ensures accountability, efficiency, and responsibility, and ultimately results in lawful behaviour. However, what constitutes transparency has not been discussed in this article either.

Ṭāhirī, Arasṭā, and Malik Afẓalī (2013), in their article *Foundations and Effects of the Principle of Transparency from the Perspective of Islamic Political Thought*, considered transparency as a central issue in discussions pertaining to governance and religious democracy from the perspective of religious political thought, which involves transparently sharing societal issues with the public. This research did not address the behavioural components of informational transparency from a Quranic perspective.

In his article titled *Components of Achieving Transparency in Governance from the Perspective of Imam ʿAlī in Nahj al-Balāgha*, Husseini (2021) examines, in a general way, the components of transparency from the perspective of *Nahj al-Balāgha*, while the present study aims to discuss and analyze the behavioural components of informational transparency from the Quranic perspective. In an article titled *The Role of Transparency and Accountability in Combating Corruption in Government Transactions*, Gulpūr et al. (2022) have focused on the role of transparency and accountability in government transactions without considering Islamic perspectives, attempting to identify problems and propose solutions. In the article *Principles Governing Legislative Transparency from the Perspective of the Quran, Hadiths, and Good Governance*, Nawrūzpūr et al. (2022) have considered transparency as a religiously emphasized concept essential for combating corruption and ensuring accountability of officials. However, this work does not touch on the behavioural components of transparency. Pahlavān Sharīf, Turābī, and Kamāliān Mihrīzī (2022), in a study titled *Presenting a Systematic Model of Transparency Based on the Quranic Verses: A Grounded Theory Approach*, delve into the functions of transparency in governance from the perspective of the Quran without addressing the components of informational transparency.

The studies mentioned above have not examined the behavioural components of informational transparency from the Quran's perspective, whereas the present study aims to discuss and analyze the components of informational transparency from the very same perspective.

2. Research Methodology

In the present study, data for the theoretical framework were collected through a literature review of written sources. The interrogative method was employed to formulate the research question and consult the Holy Quran. Additionally, the inferential research method was used to examine the organizational implications of transparency.

A. Interrogative Method

The interrogative or cross-examination (*istintāqī*) method refers to eliciting responses from a text (Bāqirī 2008: 91). In this method, the researcher poses questions to the text and seeks answers from it (ibid.: 92), which is conducted through the interpretation of the Quran by the Quran, exegesis of the Quran, thematic interpretation of the Quran, and deduction from the Quran (Ṣafrā, Ma'arif & Pahlavān 2010: 146–147). Shahīd al-Ṣadr considered thematic interpretation of the Quran as interrogation (*istintāq*), believing that the researcher focuses on a specific topic based on life realities, then turns to the Quranic text, presenting the topic to the Quran with reason and contemplation to discover the Quran's perspective on the subject (Ṣadr 1979: 19–20). In this research, the topic of behavioural components of informational transparency was presented to the Quran, similar and synonymous verses (in terms of wording and meaning) were linked to each other, and a theory regarding the subject was extracted from the collection of verses, shown in the section on extracting key points of transparency components from the Quran.

B. Implication Research Method

In academic circles, when a new idea, theory, or model is proposed, everyone strives to utilize it to advance the knowledge in his field. For example, everyone tries to use the guidance of the Quran to develop his discipline, just as in fields like sociology and psychology, new ideas are introduced and people endeavour to borrow them for his own fields. Using written sources like the Quran requires a research methodology that allows one to effectively borrow knowledge from the primary source and apply it to his field of interest. For this purpose, the methodology of "implication research" is recommended (Khanīfar & Muslimi 2019: 382). This present research uses the method of implication research to derive behavioural transparency components from the verses of the Quran. In implication research methodology, the researcher seeks borrowed knowledge, which means that in implication research, the researcher takes an idea, a theory, etc., and applies it to his field of interest.

In this research, the initial implications are identified, which, at first, are raw and merely descriptive-analytical (Dānāʾī Fard 2016: 45), but, with further refinement and expansion, the borrowed knowledge is transformed into local and indigenous knowledge, considering the prevailing value foundations in society.

The implication research method has three systematic, evolutionary, and integrative approaches. This research has been conducted with an integrative approach. According to the integrative approach, an initial conceptual framework is first established, and the concepts related to the components of behavioural information transparency are extracted from the Quran. During the research process, the researcher gains access to new keywords and key points, which pertain to the behavioural dimension of information transparency. These keywords have been utilized in this research. To emphasize not imposing any framework or basis outside the statements of the Quran, the research axes have been discovered by studying the verses of the Quran and expressing their organizational implications using the implication research method.

How the methodology of implication research has been applied will be explained in the stages of this method.

– Determining the Appropriateness of Implication Research Methodology

The implication research methodology is suitable for research where the researcher seeks borrowed knowledge. That is, the implication research methodology is suitable for studies where the researcher takes an idea, a theory, etc., and applies it to his field of interest. Therefore, this method does not aim to conduct empirical research (explanation, understanding, analysis) because its purpose is implication research (ibid.: 52). In this research, key ideas such as consultation, condemnation of deceit, advice and goodwill of the people and ruler, clear communication, prohibition of hiding the truth, and the prohibition of secret conversation have been extracted from the Quran using the interrogation method and utilized for their organizational implications through the implication research method.

– Determining the Source for Enumeration of Implications

The implication research methodology is suitable for studies in which the researcher derives an idea from the lending sources and applies it to their desired field (ibid.: 52). How the researcher borrows an idea from related fields depends on two major factors:

- Nature of the researcher's field. Typically, dependent fields borrow more from foundational fields. In the present study, the Quran is considered a foundational guideline that informs all human sciences, including management.
- Richness of the lending field. The richer the lending field, the greater the enthusiasm of the borrowing field to utilize it. It is well-known that the Quran is so rich that it can saturate all human sciences. Therefore, in this study, key ideas have been borrowed from the Quran, and the implication research method has been employed to derive organizational implications.

– Determining the Process for Searching the Selected Topic

Since implication research aims to outline the implications of key ideas for the requesting field, identifying and establishing a preliminary temporary process in implication research studies is essential (ibid.: 55). In this research, key ideas are first identified, then the Quran is examined to find these ideas. Once the initial concepts are extracted from the Quran, the extracted points are categorized under specific thematic implications to determine their organizational implications.

– Establishing the Conceptual Framework for Implication Research

Regarding establishing the conceptual framework for implication research, different approaches exist. However, the conceptual framework for implication research can be divided into three general approaches: systematic, evolutionary, and integrative (ibid.: 56).

- Systematic approach. In this approach, the researcher pre-determines a conceptual framework for borrowing ideas from the lending source and reviews the implications suitable for the conceptual framework. For example, in the present research, it is necessary to specify the components of informational transparency in the pre-determined conceptual framework and extract and review their implications from the Quran.
- Evolutionary approach. In this approach, the researcher explores the lending source without considering a specific conceptual framework

for the implications related to the subject under discussion. As a result, at the end, multiple implication statements may be identified that do not necessarily align with a pre-determined conceptual framework.

– Integrative approach. According to this approach, the researcher initially considers a preliminary conceptual framework, studies the lending source according to the specified keywords and concepts within this framework, and during the research process, may access new concepts that may or may not align with the initial concepts.

This research has been conducted with an integrative approach. According to the integrative approach, an initial conceptual framework is first established, and the concepts related to the components of information transparency in the behavioural dimension are extracted from the Quran. During the research, the researcher has gained access to new keywords and key points. These keywords pertained to the behavioural aspect of information transparency and have been used in this research. To emphasize not imposing any framework or basis outside the Quran, the research axes have been discovered by studying the verses of the Quran, and their organizational implications have been explained using the implication research method.

– Sampling the Implication Research Topic

The key point in this stage is gathering information that can shape the implications sought by the researcher. The researcher studies and examines the selected text to purposefully extract key points (ibid.: 57). In the present study, the Quran was chosen to extract key ideas and points related to the behavioural components of informational transparency.

– Specifying the Concepts of Implication Research

To specify the concepts of implication research, not only were the commonly identified concepts within the theoretical framework considered, but the text of the Quran was also examined. Behavioural components related to transparency were selected and extracted, and their organizational implications were then explained.

– Validating Key Points in Implication Research

The scientific credibility of a scholar's works is tied to the scholar's scientific credibility. The more a scholar's works are cited, the higher their scientific credibility (ibid.: 59). For example, someone who counts and categorizes the key points of a Quranic chapter gains credibility based on the citations of those key points. However, Dānā'ī Fard suggests that researchers who choose a systematic approach to derive key points can eliminate doubts by repeating the key points of the lending field in the scientific community. If accepted by the research review board, this suffices for validation. The key points extracted from the Quran in this research are widespread in scientific circles, as evidenced by the background discussion. Additionally, since this article is derived from a dissertation, it has been reviewed by a specialized jury in the field of human and Islamic sciences, which has validated the key points. Furthermore, the implications are drawn from Quranic verses, ensuring the robust referential value and necessary credibility of the implications.

– Aligning Key Points with the Conceptual Framework of Implication Research

In implication research conducted with an integrative approach, there is a predetermined conceptual framework, but not all elements of the conceptual framework are covered in the enumerated implications (ibid.: 60–61). This research was conducted with an integrative approach because in the theoretical foundations, concepts such as consultation (Ṭāhirī & Arasṭā 2016: 7; Shaʿbānī 1995: 147; Husseini 2021: 120), the right of people to be informed (Ṭāhirī & Arasṭā 2016: 16; Pidrām & Rahmānī Zāda Dihkurdī 2002: 89), freedom of expression (Ḥājiān, Dilshād Tehrani & Amini Hajābādī 2017: 93; Mihrpūr 2009: 160), the ownership of information by people (Anṣārī 2007: 142), mutual advice and goodwill between people and government (Ṭāhirī, Arasṭā & Malik Afẓalī 2013: 87), and the prohibition of concealing the truth (Khiradmand 2019: 65) have been discussed. During the search for these key points, the researcher also found key points such as consultation, condemnation of deception, advice and goodwill, clear notification, prohibition of concealing the truth, and prohibition of secret conversations. Some of these concepts e.g., consultation, advice and goodwill, and prohibition of concealing the truth are shared, while some titles, including clear notification with the ownership of information by stakeholders, freedom of expression with the prohibition of concealing the truth, and prohibition of secret conversations form closely related concepts. Meanwhile, the concepts of condemnation of deception and prohibition of secret conversations were discovered during the research process and are related to the discussed titles in the theoretical foundations with an Islamic approach. These concepts can be considered behavioural components of informational transparency, with their documentation presented in the classification of thematic implications.

– Validating the Enumerated Implications

In thesis and dissertation research, the enumerated implications can be subject to the judgment of several experts (Dānāʾī Fard 2016: 62). This article is extracted from a thesis that has been judged and approved by advisors, consultants, a board of reviewers, and specialists in this field, all of whom were proficient in human and Islamic sciences. Additionally, since the implications were extracted from the Quran, the standard for the robustness of the documented implications ensures their necessary validity.

– Present a Report

The final stage of conducting implication research is presenting the report. In the present research, key concepts and points related to the behavioural components of information transparency were initially extracted from the Quran. The extracted key points were then categorized under specific thematic implications, and the thematic implications were categorized under the behavioural components of information transparency, examples of which are provided below.

3. Behavioural Components of Information Transparency from the Perspective of the Quran

Since the components of informational transparency are examined only from a behavioural aspect, the extracted implications from the Holy Quran form the behavioural components of informational transparency. Some organizational implications of specific verses are provided as examples.

– Consultation

Consultation is one of the most important behavioural components of information transparency emphasized in Islamic policy. In other words, promoting and adhering to the principle of transparency by the government can foster more consultation within society. It is the people's right to be consulted in all policymaking and to be informed about policy implementation. On the other hand, this is considered a duty for statesmen.

The Quran emphasizes consultation among Muslims, highlighting decision-making and action based on consultation as a prominent characteristic of Islamic society. In *surah* Al-Shura, it is stated that matters related to the public should be conducted through consultation: "And their affairs are (conducted) through consultation among themselves (Quran 42: 38)".

Some interpreters have inferred the preference for consultation from this verse (Ṭabarsī 1993: 9/51; Ḥuwayzi 1995: 4/584). Some jurists have also derived the preference for consultation from this verse (Nāʾīnī 2004: 84; Araki 2004: 373). Another commentator has stated that Allah obliges members of the Islamic community to consult and vote from the perspective of people's governance over people (Javadi Amoli 1989: 149).

In another verse, researchers have inferred the obligation of consultation from the perspective of priority, where it says: "And consult them in the matter" (Quran 3: 159; for further details see: 2: 233; 42: 38).

Researchers have written that if the Prophet is obliged to consult, then Islamic rulers and governors are even more obliged to do so, making consultation mandatory for them (Ṭāhirī, Arasṭā & Malik Afẓalī 2013: 86).

Allāma Ṭabāṭabāʾī inferred the encouragement of consultation from this verse, stating that believers are prudent and careful in obtaining correct opinions (Ṭabāṭabāʾī 1997: 18/63).

In any case, a correct opinion is extracted accurately when the necessary information is provided to the stakeholders. Consultation is beneficial only if the consultants have sufficient awareness of the events. Therefore, consultation and informational transparency are interdependent and can complement each other.

– Condemnation of Deception

Deception is a form of hypocrisy and duplicity where a person secretly prevents another from doing something without them realizing it. Deception is a tool of Satan and leads to the violation of others' rights, hence it is condemned in Islam. The Holy Quran criticizes deception in many verses. For example: "They who plot evils – theirs will be a severe punishment, and the plotting of those – it will perish" (Quran 35: 10).

The late Narāqī considers deceit and cunning to be among the greatest perils and states that deceit and cunning are the most apparent traits of Satan. He believes that most of Satan's soldiers possess the traits of deceit and cunning. Additionally, he believes that the sin of deceit and cunning, according to religious teachings, is greater than the sin of openly harming others because, in open harm, the victim is aware of the attacker's ill intent and can protect themselves and possibly repel the harm. However, the unsuspecting person does not take precautions because they believe that the deceitful person is their friend and well-wisher, thus exposing themselves to harm and deceit under the guise of friendship and affection (Narāqī 2015: 1/328).

It is mentioned in another verse: "They desire to deceive Allah and those who believe, and they deceive only themselves and they do not perceive" (Quran 2: 9; for more information, see: 52: 42; 105: 2; 21: 70; 3: 54).

The important point in this verse is that the hypocrite always thinks of harming others. The word *khudʿa* (deceit) means to hide one thing and show another with the intention to harm (Qirāʾatī 2004: 1/58). Deception is condemned because the deceiver misleads the person who needs information and provides them with false information.

– Advice and Goodwill between People and the Ruler

"Counsel for the leaders of the Muslims" is a rooted expression mentioned in several narrations. *Nasiha* (counsel) comes from *naṣaḥa* and linguistically means to be sincere, to seek someone's good and well-being, to offer sincere advice, and to give friendly reminders and counsel (Āzarnūsh 2007: 693). This expression is used for words spoken with utmost sincerity and goodwill, free from deceit, fraud, and hypocrisy (Rashīd Riḍa 2000: 10/587).

The origin of this title is from the Holy Prophet of Islam, who mentioned it during his speech at the Farewell Pilgrimage in Masjid Khif. This matter has also been emphasized in the statements of the Imams as one of the responsibilities of the Islamic community; the counsel and goodwill of the people toward the government are so important that Shia narrators like the late Kulaynī, Muhaddis Kashani, and ʿAllama Majlisī have dedicated sections to this title in their collections of narrations.

Counsel and goodwill between the people and the ruler are mutual rights and obligations. In religious teachings, it is emphasized that rulers and the people should be well-wishers for one another; the Prophet's mission to convey the divine message with counsel and goodwill is one example of the ruler's goodwill towards the people, as stated in the Quran: "I convey to you the messages of my Lord and advise you; and I know from Allah what you do not known" (Quran 7: 62; for more information, see: 7: 68, 79, 93; 9: 91).

In the interpretation of this verse, it is stated that the Prophet said: "I convey my mission as a duty and in doing so, I am a sincere advisor to you" (Marāgha'ī n.d.: 8/194). According to this interpretation, the ruler should be benevolent towards his subordinates. Advice is possible only if the government provides the necessary conditions because the prerequisite for advice is transparency and information dissemination by the government to the people. Therefore, transparency and informing the people are prerequisites for advice, and it is the government's duty to fulfil this prerequisite so that the advice can be carried out correctly.

– Explicit Announcement

Explicit announcements remove ambiguities. The Holy Quran introduces the Prophet as a trustworthy advisor (3: 68), and in several places, it instructs the Prophet to make clear and explicit declarations. Regarding the explicit announcement of the position of guardianship, it says: "O Messenger, announce that which has been revealed to you from your Lord, and if you do not, then you have not conveyed His message" (Quran 5: 68; for more information, see: 3: 62, 68, 79, 93; 4: 63; 5: 92; 11: 57; 16: 35, 82; 24: 54; 29: 18; 36: 17; 64: 12).

In these verses, the important mission of guardianship is stated explicitly (Qirāʾatī 2004: 2/336–338). Additionally, in the interpretation of verse 12 of *surah* Taghābun: "But the duty of Our Messenger is only to deliver the message clearly" – it is stated that the propagation of religion must be open and transparent (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995: 10/85).

The mentioned verses signify transparency in information dissemination and the removal of ambiguity, even threatening the Prophet that if he does not make an explicit and public announcement, his mission remains incomplete. According to the teachings of the Quran, the ruler is obligated to announce decisions and actions taken transparently to the people.

– Prohibition of Concealing the Truth

In the Holy Quran, concealing the truth is forbidden, and it is stated: "And do not mix the truth with falsehood or conceal the truth while you know [it]" (Quran 2: 42). In another verse from the same Surah, those who conceal the truth are cursed: "Indeed, those who conceal what We sent down of clear proofs and guidance after We made it clear for the people in the Scripture – those are cursed by Allah and cursed by those who curse" (Quran 2: 159).

In the *Tafsīr Majma' al-Bayān*, it is mentioned that the meaning of "they are cursed by Allah" is that God distances them from His mercy because the concealers of the truth have brought punishment upon themselves (Ṭabarsī 1993: 1/441). Additionally, in interpreting this verse, it is narrated from the Messenger of God that he said: "Whoever is asked about any knowledge he possesses and conceals it, will be bridled with a bridle of fire on the Day of Resurrection" (ibid.: 442). In religious teachings, concealing the truth is prohibited because if the establishment of a right depends on expressing and stating the truth, and it is not stated, a right will be destroyed and lost. Hence, both God and all His angels and servants detest this act and are angered by those who conceal the truth. The importance of revealing truths has led to religious instructions advocating the declaration of truths and prohibiting knowledgeable individuals from concealing the truth. Therefore, the Holy Quran considers those who conceal the truth to be wrongdoers and states: "Say: 'Are you more knowing or is Allah?' And who is more unjust than one who conceals a testimony he has from Allah?" (Quran 2: 140; for more information, see: 2: 101, 146; 3: 167).

In the interpretation of this verse, it is mentioned that the greatest injustice is cultural injustice and concealing truths (Qirā'atī 2004: 1/217). According to this interpretation, God forbids concealing the truth and warns those who do so that He is not unaware of their actions. This divine threat demands that specialists and knowledgeable individuals in the organization do not conceal the truth and transparently convey it to the people. Therefore, the threat in this noble verse strongly motivates the realization of information transparency in the organization. In other words, the prohibition of concealing the truth implicitly and logically indicates that managers and specialized officials must not hide the necessary information because concealing information is equivalent to concealing the truth.

– Prohibition of Secret Conversations

Whispering (*najwa*) in the Quran is presented as a social anomaly and is forbidden. Considering the functions of *najwa* in society, it can be noted that a group of malicious individuals and opponents of the Islamic state seek to establish secret and underground gatherings to conspire. Thus, it can be said that in the Quran's use of the term *najwa*, its political functions are considered. This means that *najwa* in the Quranic context refers to secret gatherings and councils where enemies and opponents of religion and the Islamic government gather to discuss secret matters and plan their illegal and anti-people actions. They exchange information in these councils and gatherings, and plan and coordinate their actions and behaviours to harm the people and the state in various ways (Nūrullahī, internet).

The Quran refers to these secret gatherings of whisperers in verse 10 of *surah* Mujādala: "Private conversation is only from Satan that he may grieve those who have believed" (Quran 58: 10).

In the interpretation of this verse, it is stated that if a private conversation causes harm, distress, and the tarnishing of a Muslim's reputation, such conversation is satanic, aimed at causing grief to the believers, and is forbidden (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995: 23/435).

Some verses of the Quran criticize or prohibit any form of private conversation altogether, such as this noble verse: "Have you not considered those who were forbidden from private conversation, then they return to that which they were forbidden and converse among themselves about sin and aggression and disobedience to the Messenger?" (Quran 58: 8)

This noble verse condemns and reproaches those who engage in private conversation. It considers those who engage in private conversation unworthy of being directly addressed by God, and for greater humiliation of the whisperers, God speaks about them to the Prophet, condemning and forbidding private conversation.

The Holy Quran sees no good in secret meetings and hidden conversations meant for undermining others, thus it forbids them and states: "No good is there in much of their private conversation" (Quran 4: 114).

In the interpretation of this verse, it is mentioned that *najwa* includes all kinds of secret and hidden meetings. It originally comes from the root *najwa* on the pattern of *daf'ah*, meaning a high place separated from its surroundings. Since secret meetings and private conversations are separated from those around them, they are called *najwa*. The noble verse sees no good in most secret and hidden meetings, which are often based on deceitful schemes (Makārim Shīrāzī 1995: 4/125). Another reason for prohibiting *najwa* is that it causes suspicion (Qirā'atī 2004: 2/383).

Interpretations of this verse link the prohibition of *najwa* to a lack of transparency. Secret and covert meetings foster suspicion, while transparency in an organization aims to eliminate suspicion. Therefore, this noble verse forbids secret conversations and concealment because they contradict information transparency.

4. Research Findings

In this study, the Holy Quran was examined, and six components for information transparency in the behavioural dimension were discovered using an interrogative method. The organizational implications of these components were articulated through implication research. The six extracted components from the Quran include consultation, condemnation of deception, advice and goodwill between people and the ruler, explicit announcement, prohibition of concealing the truth, prohibition of secret conversations.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The behavioural dimension focuses on the actions and reactions of individuals within an organization. Research conducted in the Quran reveals six components of information transparency in the behavioural dimension. The organizational implications suggest that if organizational decisions involve consultation, there is no pretence in performing duties, deception is absent, employees and managers are benevolent towards each other and the public, decisions and performances are communicated openly within the organization, truths are not concealed, and there is no backstabbing, then the organization will be transparent.

The author proposes that the components of transparency in the Quran and *Nahj al-Balāgha* offer ample room for further research, including:

– Investigating the structural and contextual components of information transparency in the Quran and *Nahj al-Balāgha*.

– Examining the exceptions to transparency, which require serious research; therefore, it is recommended that researchers focus on these exceptions and discuss them from the perspective of verses and narrations.

Received: November 8th, 2023
Accepted: December 7th, 2023

References

The Holy Quran.

Anṣāri, Bāqir (2007), "Mafhūm, Mabānī wa Āzadi Iṭṭilāʿāt (Concept, Basics and Freedom of Information)", *Scientific Quarterly Journals of Comparative Law* 13 (61): 137–158.

Araki, Mohsen (2004), *Naẓariāt al-Ḥukm fī al-Islam (The Theory of Governance in Islam)*, Qom, Islamic Thought Forum.

Armstrong, Elia (2008), *Integrity, Transparency and Accountability in Public Administration: Recent Trends, Regional and International Developments and Emerging Issues*, United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affair.

Āzarnūsh, Ādhar Tāsh (2007), *Contemporary Arabic-Persian Dictionary,* Tehran, Nashr-e Nay.

Bāqirī, Khusrow (2008), *Hūwiyat ʿIlm Dīnī (The Identity of Religious science)*, 2nd edition, Tehran, Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance.

Dānāʾī Fard, Ḥasan (2016), "Methodology of Research Studies in Social and Human Sciences: Foundations, Definitions, Importance, Approaches and Implementation Steps", *Humanities Methodology Journal* 22 (86): 39–71.

Ḥājiān, R., Dilshād Tehrani, M. & Amini Hajābādī, M. R. (2017), "The Grounds for Information Transparency and Economic Justice According to *Nahj al-Balāgha*", *The Scientific-Research Journal of Nahj al-Balāgha Researches* 16 (55): 81–101.

Husseini, Sayed Ḥasan (2021), "The Components of Realizing Transparency in Government from the Perspective of Imam ʿAlī in *Nahj al-Balāgha*", *The Scientific-research Journal of Nahj al-Balagha Researches* 9 (35): 111–127.

Huwayzi, ʿAbd ʿAlī (1995), *Tafsīr Nūr al-Saqlain*, 4th edition, Qom, Ismāʿiliyān.

Javadi Amoli, ʿAbdullah (1989), *Wilāyat-e Faqih (Leadership in Islam)*, Tehran, Rajā Cultural Publishing Center.

Khanīfar, Ḥ. & Muslimī N. (2019), *Uṣūl wa Mabānī Rawīsh-hāi Pajūhīsh Kayfī: Ruykard Naw wa Kārburdī (Principles and Basics of Qualitative Research Methods: A New and Applied Approach)*, 2nd edition, Tehran, Negah Danish.

Khiradmand, Muḥsin (2019), "Jāigāh Fiqhi Shafāfiat Itilāʿāt Ḥukūmat Islāmī (The Jurisprudential Position of Information Transparency of the Islamic Government)", *Islamic Government* 24 (92): 59–84.

Makārim Shīrāzī, Nāsir (1995), *Tafsīr Numūna,* Tehran, Dar al-Kutub al-Islamiya Publications.

Marāghaʾī, Aḥmad (n. d.), *Tafsīr Marāgha'ī,* Beirut, Dar Ihyāʾ al-Turāth al-ʿArabī.

Mihrpūr, Ḥussein (2009), *Ḥuqūq Bashar wa Rāh-kārhāi Ijrāi Ān (Human Rights and Its Implementation Solutions)*, 2nd edition, Tehran, Iṭṭilāʾāt Press.

Nāʾīnī, Muḥammad Hūssein (2004), *Tanbīh al-Ummah wa Tanzīh al-Milla*, Qom, Islamic Propagations Office Publications.

Narāqi, Mahdī (2015), *Jāmīʿ Al-Saʿādāt*, 5th edition, n. p., Qāʾim Āl ʿAlī.

Nūrullahī, Ṣamad, "Najwa in the Quran – *Kayhan* Newspaper" (internet), available on https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/33277/%D9%86%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%86 https://kayhan.ir/fa/news/33277/%D9%86%D8%AC%D9%88%D8%A7-%D8%AF%D8%B1-%D9%82%D8%B1%D8%A2%D9%86 (visited on January 7th 2023).

Pidrām, S. & Rahmānī Zāda Dihkurdī, Ḥ. R. (2002), "Shaffāfsazi wa Pāsukhguyī dar Nihādhāi Rasmi (Clarification and Accountability in Official Institutions)", *Parliament and Research* 9 (36): 85–95.

Qirā'atī, Muhsin (2004), *Tafsir Nūr*, 11th edition, Tehran, Markaz-e Farhangī Darshāye Quran.

Rashīd Rida, Muḥammad (2000), *Tafsīr al-Manār*, Beirut, Dār al-Maʿrifah.

Rawlins, Brad R. (2008), "Measuring the Relationship between Organizational Transparency and Employee Trust", *Public Relations Journal* 2 (2): 1–21.

Rezāʾiān, ʿAlī (2007), *Mabānī Mudiriat Raftār Sazmānī (Fundamentals of Organizational Behaviour Management)*, Tehran, Samt.

Ṣadr, Moḥammad Bāqir (1979), *Muqadimāt fī al-Tafsīr Al-Mawḍūʾī lil-Quran (Introductions to the Thematic Interpretation of the Quran)*, Baghdad, Al-Sadrayn Institute for Strategic Studies.

Ṣafrā, Ḥ., Ma'arif, M. & Pahlavān, M. (2010), "Istintāq Quran (Interrogation of the Quran)", *Quran and Hadith Research Journal* 43 (1): 139–163.

Sayyid Javādian, Sayyid Riḍā (2009), *Mabānī Sāzmān wa Mudiriat (Principles of Organization and Management)*, Tehran, Nigāh Maʿrifat.

Shaʿbānī, Qāsim (1995), *Ḥuqūq Asāsī wa Sākhtār Hukūmat Jumhūrī Islāmī Iran (Fundamental Rights and Government Structure of the Islamic Republic of Iran)*, Tehran, Iṭṭilāʾāt Press.

Shafīʿī, ʿA., Khidmati, A. Ṭ. & Pīrūz, ʿA. Ā. (2006), *Raftār Sāzmānī Ba Rūykard Islāmī: Saṭḥ Guruh (Organizational Behaviour with an Islamic Approach: Group Level)*, Qom, Research Institute of the Hawzah and University.

Sikarān, Uma (2019), *Rawish-hāi Taḥqīq Dar Mudiriat (Research Methods for Management)*, translated by Moḥammad Ṣāʾibī & Maḥmūd Shīrazī, Tehran, Management and Planning Education and Research Institute.

Simon, Carol (2006), "Corporate Information Transparency: The Synthesis of Internal and External Information Streams", *Journal of Management Development* 25 (10): 1029–1031.

Ṭabarsī, Faḍl b. Hasan (1993), *Majmaʿ al-Bayān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 3rd edition, Tehran, Nāṣir Khusrow.

Ṭabāṭabāʾī, Sayyid Muḥammad Hussein (1997), *Al-Mīzān fī Tafsīr al-Qur'ān*, 5th edition, Qom, Islamic Publications of the Community of Teachers.

Ṭāhirī, M., Arasṭā, M. J. & Malik Afẓalī, M. (2013), "Mabānī wa Āthār Aṣl Shafāfiat az Manẓar Andīsha Siāsī Islam (The Principles and Effects of the Principle of Transparency from the Perspective of Islamic Political Thought)", *Siyāsat Mutaʿāliyya* 7 (24): 81–100.

Ṭāhirī, M. & Arasṭā, M. J. (2016), "Barrasī Taṭbīqī Mabānī Aṣl Shaffāfiat az Didgāh Islām wa Naẓariya Ḥukmrānī Khub (A Comparative Study of the Principles of Transparency from the Perspective of Islam and the Theory of Good Governance)", *Comparative Study of Islamic and Western Law* 3 (9): 1–24.

Vickery, B. & Vickery, A. (1987), *Information Science in Theory and Practice*. London, Bowker-Saur.

Zandiyya, Ḥ. & Sarwī, S. (2013), "Shaffāfiat Asnādī wa Ḥuqūq Dastrasī Āzād be Iṭṭilāʿāt (Documentary Transparency and the Right to Free Access to Information)", *Ganjīna Asnād Journal* 22 (89): 116–134.