

## Factors Affecting the Participation of Kermanshah Province Aid Workers in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization in 2020

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### Original Article

#### Abstract

**INTRODUCTION:** Participation suggests partaking and treating people in such a way that enables them to retain a decisive impact on events that affect their lives. The present study aimed to investigate the factors impacting the increase in the participation of aid workers in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**METHODS:** The present research is applied purpose-wise, cross-sectional time-wise, and a survey in terms of data collection. The statistical population involves every volunteer aid worker of the Red Crescent Society of Kermanshah Province in 2021. The data collection tool was a researcher-made questionnaire whose face validity was obtained. Moreover, the questionnaire's reliability was confirmed through Cronbach's alpha. Data were analyzed within SPSS and Amos software.

**FINDINGS:** Variables of sex, social capital, safety culture, religious beliefs, and media consumption significantly and positively impact the participation of aid workers. Furthermore, the impact of the socio-economic status as a variable is significant and inverse. However, variables of age and marital status do not significantly influence the participation of aid workers. Among these variables, the media consumption variable has the highest regression coefficient value with a regression coefficient of 0.454 while the marital status variable, with a coefficient of 0.039, has the smallest regression coefficient value on the participation of aid workers in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**CONCLUSION:** Increasing the cooperation and participation of aid workers in the activities and programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization is impacted by several factors to which we need to pay close attention. Attending to these factors can significantly improve how the forces are utilized and further fulfill the goals and programs of the Red Crescent Rescue Organization.

**Keywords:** Aid Workers; Participation; Red Crescent Society; Relief and Rescue Organization; Social Capital.

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#### Introduction

Participation means utilizing personal resources to participate in collective action (1). In another definition, participation is described as taking part in a social life situation and engaging in various activities. It has three components: volunteering, assistance, and accountability. Therefore, participation is an essential and integral part of every person's daily

life and is of incredible importance (2).

Participation is a multidimensional and complex concept, of which each society possesses various levels in various dimensions according to its consistency. Accordingly, different societies seek to establish and enhance citizen participation in various social areas to reinforce their social solidarity and social ties (3). Spontaneous,

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voluntary, and systematic participation is constructed when a strong participatory culture is developed and participation has become a "cultural norm." People's participation, which is a sort of decentralization in the management of affairs, boosts human development and the factor of equality and the realization of socio-political justice (4). The most fundamental idea of the foundation of participation is accepting the principle of equality of people whose purpose is consensus, cooperation, and collective efforts of individuals to improve the quantity and quality of life in all social, economic, and political aspects. Participation is the process by which people achieve change and create change within them. Croft and Beresford have regarded developments such as the emergence of novel social movements, reflection on human needs, the re-emergence of the idea of citizenship, and postmodernism as the motives behind the attention towards participation (5). Sociologically, a distinction must be made between participation as a state or condition and participation as action and commitment. In the former sense, participation indicates belonging to a certain group and having a share in its existence. Meanwhile, in the latter sense, it suggests actively participating in the group and deems the conducted social activity (6).

Gauthier believes that participation goes back a long way in human history since the idea and practice of participation lie in the heart of any society and concepts such as "solidarity", "unity", "cooperation", "association", etc. Participation has been regarded as the foundation of the socio-anthropological origin of mankind (7). In 1981, the United Nations defined participation as the creation of opportunities enabling all members of a local community and the larger community to participate actively and effectively in the process of community development and the exploitation of its wealth and benefits (8).

In general, there are several definitions of the concept of participation, each of which refers to a specific aspect of participation. Alain Birou has defined participation as finding a share in something and benefiting from it, or participating in a group and consequently collaborating within it (6). Oakley argues that applied participation is defined as "sensitizing people and ultimately enhancing their acceptance and ability to respond to programs based on organized effort". Oakley clarifies participation in the following definition:

"Participation suggests partaking. Participation as empowerment implies that participants possess the skills, development capabilities, and the power to make decisions." (1). Arnstein also sees participation as "a redistribution of power that enables citizens who are presently excluded from the political and economic process to gradually participate in the future" (9).

New definitions of participation have changed from a collaborative relationship to a fundamental foundation for development programs, from a purely passive and spontaneous science to active and conscious action. In addition, in the new definition, the unit of analysis is the participation of the individual and the voluntary, conscious, and peaceful action of the individual to influence the system.

According to Askia and Ghaffari, participation is a systematic process in which individuals in the community participate consciously, voluntarily, and collectively with specific goals in mind. The manifestation of this partnership is the existence of participatory institutions, e.g., associations, groups, local and non-governmental organizations. In general, social participation refers to those voluntary activities through which members of a community participate in the affairs of the neighborhood, city, and village and participate directly or indirectly in shaping social life. Voluntary associations are the most significant arenas to establish and regulate participatory activities in society (10).

The World Bank has provided a relatively explicit definition of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The World Bank lists NGOs as "private organizations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services or undertake community development" (11). Non-governmental organizations are founded upon the feeling of need by a portion of society. Although NGOs are established for different and specialized purposes, they can be categorized into several groups. Non-governmental organizations are divided according to the type of activity: scientific-research, legal (Human Rights, Women's Rights, and Children's Rights), sports, rescue and relief (Red Crescent Society, etc.), religious, traditional charities, healthcare (AIDS prevention, patients with CKD, patients with rare diseases, etc.), anti-drug, art, environmental protection, cultural heritage and tourism, and prevention of

social harms. Each of these NGOs sets goals to execute the missions resting on its shoulders and fulfill its purpose (12).

Nowadays, the Red Crescent Society is one of the non-governmental organizations that play an active role in public welfare, humanitarian aid, and rescue services in our country. The organization has endeavored to alleviate human suffering, contribute to the health of society, defend human values, and strive for consensus, friendship, and persistent peace among nations. Human society benefiting from the humanitarian services of the national Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in a nationally, regionally, and internationally organized manner has a history of nearly a century and a half, resulting from the efficiency and effectiveness of the presence of these organizations in relieving human suffering. Relieving the pain caused by poverty, war, accidents, and natural unforeseen disasters has been welcomed by the general public (13).

### Research Hypotheses

1. Demographic characteristics (sex, age, marital status, etc.) have a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
2. Socioeconomic status has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
3. The value of social capital has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
4. Raising public awareness and sensibility to safety culture and disaster preparedness has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
5. The amount of media consumption (mass media) has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
6. The level of religious beliefs has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

### Methods

The present research is an applied study in terms of purpose, a cross-sectional study in terms of time, and a survey in terms of data collection. The study population of the present research comprises volunteer aid workers of the Red Crescent Society of Kermanshah Province in 2020, whose number equals 1764 individuals. The sample size of the study was estimated at 135

participants using Cochran's formula at an error level of 5%. The research tool is a researcher-made questionnaire consisting of 68 questions. Research validity was confirmed through the content validity method. Furthermore, the researcher sought the opinion of experts and professors to ensure the validity of the research tool. To assess research reliability, a pre-test with 30 samples was conducted. The obtained data were analyzed through Cronbach's alpha method and the reliability of the research tool was evaluated at an appropriate level. Next, the questionnaires were randomly assigned through stratified random sampling. Firstly, the five cities of Islamabad-e-Gharb, Paveh, Kermanshah, Sonqor, and Sarpol-e Zahab were randomly selected. In the next step, by referring to each of the Red Crescent branches in each of the selected cities in person and after explaining the objectives of the research, questionnaires were distributed among the aid workers and the research data were collected. After collection, data analysis was performed within SPSS and Amos software.

### Findings

According to descriptive findings, 60.3% of respondents were male and 39.7% were female. In terms of the age distribution, 7.9% of respondents were in the range of  $\leq 20$  years old, 16.8% of respondents were 21–25 years old, 36.5% of respondents were 26–30 years old, 25.7% of respondents were 31–35 years old, and 13.1% of respondents were  $36 \leq$  years old. Therefore, the majority of the respondents were in the age group of 26 to 30 years while the age group of 20 years and younger retains the fewest respondents. Findings associated with the distribution of marital status of the respondents also indicate that 60.3% of the respondents were unmarried, 39.1% were married, and 0.6% of the respondents were without a spouse due to either divorce or demise. The frequency distribution of the respondents based on the number of family members demonstrated that families with 4 to 5 members with 63.1% are allotted the highest number, followed by families with 3 and fewer members with 25.7%, and families with 6 to 7 members with 10.8%, respectively. 0.4 of the participants did not respond to the question. Findings regarding the frequency distribution of respondents based on education level revealed that the highest number was 58.7% linked with

individuals with a bachelor's degree, followed by an undergraduate degree with 15.6%, an associate degree with 0.13%, high school diploma and below with 11.1%, Ph.D. and postdoctoral degrees with 0.6%, and unanswered with 0.1%. Frequency distribution of the monthly income of the respondents illustrated that 7.9% of the study sample had a monthly income of below one million tomans, 21.9% had a monthly income of 1,100,000–1,200,000 tomans, 15.6% had a monthly income of 2 million tomans to 3,100,000 tomans, 11.1% had a monthly income of 3,100,000 to 4 million tomans, 28.6% had a monthly income of 4,100,000 to 5 million tomans, and 14.9% had a monthly income of 5 million tomans and more. Moreover, findings concerning the type of housing of the respondents ascertained that 54.3% of them owned a house, 31.1% were tenants, 0.6% lived in organizational (governmental) houses, 4.4% selected other options, and 4.2% left this question unanswered.

#### **Pearson Correlation Coefficient (Pearson's *r*)**

**Hypothesis 1:** Demographic characteristics (sex, age, marital status) have a significant effect on the participation of aid workers.

**Hypothesis 1-1:** Sex has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.000), it can be asserted that there is a statistically significant relationship between sex and the level of participation of aid workers with a confidence level of 0.95 and an error level of less than 0.05. The value of this significance is equal to 0.415, which is relatively moderate. Therefore, the aforementioned hypothesis has been confirmed and it can be concluded that the sex of the aid workers affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent

Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 1-2:** Age has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers. According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.022), it can be deduced that there is a statistically significant relationship between age and the level of participation of aid workers with a confidence level of 0.95 and an error level smaller than 0.05. The value of this significance is equal to 0.135, which is low. Therefore, the above hypothesis has been confirmed and it can be asserted that the age of the aid workers affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 1-3:** There is a statistically significant relationship between marital status and the participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.455), it can be implied that there is no significant relationship between marital status and the level of participation of aid workers with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05. Therefore, the above hypothesis has been dismissed and the marital status of the aid workers does not affect the extent of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a statistically significant relationship between socioeconomic status and the level of participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.005), it can be declared that with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05; there is a statistically significant relationship between socioeconomic status and the participation of aid workers. The value of this significance is -0.171 and is negative. In other

**Table 1.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 1 (sex)

	Sex	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- sex	1	0.415
significance level	0	0.000
sample	315	285

**Table 2.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 1 (age)

	Age	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- age	1	0.135
significance level	0	0.022
sample	315	285

words, with the increase of the socioeconomic status of the aid workers, their participation decreases. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed. The socio-economic status of the aid workers is impactful on their participation in the

programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 3:** The value of social capital has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

**Table 3.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 1 (marital status)

	Marital Status	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- marital status	1	0.045
significance level	0	0.455
sample	313	283

**Table 4.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 1

	Socioeconomic Status	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- socioeconomic status	1	-0.171
significance level	0	0.005
sample	297	267

**Table 5.** Pearson correlation coefficient of Hypothesis 3

	Social Capital	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- social capital	1	0.149
significance level	0	0.049
sample	314	284

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.049), it can be indicated that with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05 there is a significant relationship between social capital and participation of aid workers. The value of this significance is equal to 0.149, which is low. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed and the value of social capital of aid workers affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 4:** Raising public awareness on safety culture and disaster preparedness has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.019), it can be presumed that with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05. According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.019), it can be presumed that with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05; there is a significant relationship between safety culture and participation of aid workers. Moreover, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 160 and is

low. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed and the level of awareness of aid workers about safety culture affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 5:** Media consumption has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

Table 7: Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 505, there is a significant relationship between safety culture and participation of aid workers. Moreover, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 160 and is low. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed and the level of awareness of aid workers about safety culture affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 5:** Media consumption has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.000), it can be contended that there is a statistically significant relationship between media consumption and the participation of aid workers with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level smaller than 0.05. The value of this

**Table 6.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 4

	Safety Culture	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- safety culture	1	0.160
significance level	0	0.019
sample	309	279

**Table 7.** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 5

	Media Consumption	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- media consumption	1	0.352
significance level	0	0.000
sample	309	279

significance is equal to 0.352, which is relatively low. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed and media consumption of aid workers affects their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

**Hypothesis 6:** The level of religious beliefs has a significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

According to the results obtained from the correlation matrix table and the level of significance (0.047), it can be confirmed that there is a statistically significant relationship between religious beliefs and the participation of aid workers with a 0.95 confidence level and an error level of less than 0.05.

**Table 8:** Pearson correlation coefficient of hypothesis 6

	Religious Beliefs	participation of aid workers
Pearson correlation coefficient- religious beliefs	1	0.177
significance level	0	0.047
sample	315	285

Furthermore, the correlation coefficient between these two variables is equal to 177 and is considered low. Therefore, the above hypothesis is confirmed and the level of religious beliefs of the aid workers affects the level of their participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

A T-test was carried out to compare the level of participation between male and female participants.

Based on the findings presented in Table (9), addressing the significance level of Levene's test

at  $<0.05$ , we use the results of the second row of the table, which demonstrates the assumption of unequal population variances between the two groups. The value of the T statistic is at 7.676 with the degree of freedom at 0.283 and the significance level at Sig = 0.043. The assumption that the mean difference between the sexes and the participation of aid workers is different is accepted. In other words, the level of participation of aid workers is different between male and female volunteers.

**Table 9.** T-test comparing the willingness to participate between male and female aid workers

	Levene's Test				Independent Samples T-test					
	F	Sig.	t	Difference	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Standard Error	95% confidence interval of difference		
Sex	assumption of equal variances	0.371	0.043	7.676	0.283	0.000	6.51254	0.8484	4.8425	8.1825
	assumption of unequal variances	0	0	7.560	199.68	0.000	6.51254	0.8614	4.8138	8.2125

After the significance of the T-test, the results presented in Table (10) are referred to investigate the difference between the mean willingness of aid workers to participate between the two groups. The findings indicate that the mean score of the willingness of aid workers to participate is higher among male volunteers (47.8361) than the willingness of aid workers to participate among female volunteers (41.33535).

According to Lipset's theory, participation occurs more in men than women, the educated than the uneducated, urban residents than rural residents, the middle-aged than the young and the old, the married than the unmarried, and the higher-ranking than the lower-ranking. The results of the present study similarly indicated that sex influences the participation of aid workers. As a result, the hypothesis founded on Lipset's theory is confirmed.

**Multivariate Regression**

In the present study, a multivariate regression test was utilized to analyze and measure the intensity of the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables to determine which of the independent variables has the greatest impact on the dependent variable and the coefficient of the impact of each independent variable on the participation of aid workers in the Red Crescent Society's programs.

Table (11) outlines the model. According to this table, the value of the correlation coefficient (R) between the variables is 0.555, which indicates that there is an above-average correlation between the set of independent variables, e.g., age, marital status, number of family members, socioeconomic status, social capital, safety culture, media consumption, religious beliefs and the dependent variable of aid workers' participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Rescue and Relief Organization.

Moreover, the value of the adjusted R-squared

(R2 adj.), which is equal to 0.283, reflects that 28.3% of the factors affecting the participation of aid workers in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization are influenced by the independent variables of the present study.

Moreover, the value of the adjusted R-squared (R2 adj.), which is equal to 0.283, reflects that 28.3% of the factors affecting the participation of aid workers in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization are influenced by the independent variables of the present study.

Based on the results presented in Table (12) and considering the meaning of the F test (12,303) at an error level of less than 0.05 (0.000), it can be concluded that the research regression model includes 9 variables of age, marital status, number of family members, socioeconomic status, social capital, safety culture, media consumption, religious beliefs, which can elucidate the level of participation of aid workers in the programs of the Red Crescent.

According to the findings in Table 13, the results of algebraic regression between independent variables with the variable of aid workers' participation in the programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization there are 8 variables in the final model: sex, age, marital status, socioeconomic status, social capital, safety culture, media consumption, and religious beliefs. The interpretation of regression coefficients is based on the beta coefficient, since this statistic represents the standardized regression coefficient of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable of the research. Therefore, we can utilize it to determine the relative share of each independent variable in the model. Comparison of variables shows that the impact of 6 variables including sex, socioeconomic status, social capital, safety culture, religious beliefs, and media consumption are significant on the participation of aid workers in the programs of the

**Table 10:** Group statistics (comparison of the means of the two groups)

Participants	Sample	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean Standard Error
	male	183	47.8361	6.73154
female	102	41.3235	7.10203	0.70321

**Table 11.** Summary of regression model

Model	Correlation Coefficient (R)	Multivariate Correlation Coefficient	Adjusted Coefficient (R <sup>2</sup> adj.)	Estimated Standard Error
1	0.555	0.308	0.283	6.20958

**Table 12.** Regression ANOVA test output

Model	Total Squares	df	Mean of Squares	F	Sig
1 Regression	4269.340	9	474.371	12.303	0.000
Residual	9601.170	249	38.559		
0	13870.510	258			

**Table 13.** Multivariate regression test

Variables	Standardized Coefficients		Standardized Regression Coefficient (Beta)	t	Sig
	regression coefficient (B)	Standard Error			
sex	2.640	0.995	0.170	2.653	0.008
age	0.736	0.433	0.113	1.699	0.091
marital status	0.580	1.093	0.039	0.530	0.596
socioeconomic status	-0.185	0.085	-0.200	-1.597	0.011
social capital	0.191	0.083	0.280	2.479	0.014
safety culture	0.074	0.084	0.174	0.886	0.007
media consumption	0.757	0.223	0.454	6.174	0.000
religious beliefs	0.067	0.085	0.152	0.791	0.041

Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization. In this regard, it should be noted that the beta correlation coefficient of the status variable is inverse, i.e., the higher the socioeconomic status, the smaller the social participation of aid workers, and vice versa. Therefore, these research hypotheses are confirmed.

However, the two variables of age with a significant level of 0.091 and marital status with a significant level of 0.056 are not verified since their level of significance is higher than 0.05 and the related hypotheses are dismissed. Furthermore, the media consumption variable with a regression coefficient of 0.454 has the highest regression coefficient and the marital status variable with a coefficient of 0.039 has the smallest regression coefficient on the dependent variable of aid workers' participation in the Red Crescent's programs.

### **Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) Model**

The relationships between research structures are to be tested. The model was implemented in Amos software and the causal relationship between variables was tested by structural equation modeling within Amos22.

Based on the findings and reporting the value of root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) error for the research structural model at 0.045, and less than 0.08, this model requires no further modification and revision. Therefore, this structure can be utilized to design the research model and test the hypotheses statistically. The

model can be considered utterly and entirely statistically reliable and can be used to test hypotheses.

Additionally, the relative chi-square or chi-square ratio to the degree of freedom (CMIN / DF = 2.97), adaptive fit indices at 0.95, destination indices above 0.80, and RMSEA index with a value of 0.045 indicate the feasibility of the developed model.

- The t-statistic of Hypothesis 1-1 is at 0.4. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.
- The t-statistic of Hypothesis 1-2 is at 5.9. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.
- The t-statistic of Hypothesis 1-3 is at 7.9. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.
- The t-statistic of hypothesis 2 is at 0.7. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.
- The t-statistic of hypothesis 3 is at 6.6. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.
- The t-statistic of hypothesis 4 is at 5.1. This value is not in the insignificant range (1.96, -1.96). Therefore, it can be concluded that this hypothesis is statistically significant.

Table 14. Summary of the results of the hypotheses

Result	Impact Value	t statistic	Impact Type	Hypotheses
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.68	4.0	Positive & significant relationship	1. social capital 1.1. The value social trust has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.70	5.9	Positive & significant relationship	1. social capital 1.2. The value social cooperation has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.69	7.9	Positive & significant relationship	1. social capital 1.3. The value social solidarity has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.73	7.0	Positive & significant relationship	Raising public awareness and sensibility to safety culture and disaster preparedness has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.73	6.6	Positive & significant relationship	The amount of media consumption (mass media) has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.
H <sub>0</sub> rejected H <sub>1</sub> confirmed	0.74	5.1	Positive & significant relationship	The level of religious beliefs has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers.

### Discussion and Conclusion

The results of testing the first hypothesis of the study on the impact of demographic characteristics, particularly sex, on the participation of aid workers in Kermanshah Province demonstrated that the correlation coefficient between the two variables and the probability value of significance were 0.415 and 0.000 ( $< 0.05$ ), respectively. Therefore, there is a statistically significant relationship between sex and the participation of aid workers. However, a t-test was carried out to compare the participation level between male and female aid workers. The test result demonstrated that the mean willingness of aid workers to participate was higher among male volunteers (47.8361) than female volunteers (41.3235).

The findings of this hypothesis are consistent with Lipset and Dowse's theory. Analyzing people's participation behavior, Seymour Martin Lipset and Robert Dowse highlighted factors and variables that they believed to have a significant impact on participation. However, the value and pattern of this impact have not been constant. Sex is so influential a factor that participation in social and political processes is reported to be higher among males. The findings of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of the study by Zare and Rohandeh (2015). In their paper titled "A Survey of Social Factors Affecting Socio-Political Participation", they concluded that there is a significant relationship between sex and social

participation. The results of their study, in contrast to the results of the present study, revealed that the rate of social participation is slightly higher in women than men.

Moreover, the findings of the study regarding the impact of age and marital status on the participation of aid workers illustrated that these factors do not have a significant impact on the participation of aid workers. Based on the analysis done in this study, the participation of aid workers in Kermanshah Province is not associated with age. The aid workers being young, middle-aged, or old do not influence their participation. The findings of this hypothesis are inconsistent with Lipset and Dowse's theory. Analyzing people's political behavior and participation, Seymour Martin Lipset and Robert Dowse accentuate factors and variables that they believe have a significant impact on political participation. However, the intensity and pattern of this influence have not been constant. The age of the individual is one of the most influential of these factors. The rate of participation in social and political processes is higher among middle-aged individuals. The findings of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of the studies by Safabakhsh (2009) and Stevens et al. (2017).

In his research, Jafarinia concluded that there was no significant relationship between age and willingness for political participation. The findings of this hypothesis regarding the impact of marital status on the level of participation are not consistent with Lipset's theory and the results of

the studies by Negintaji and Keshavarz (2015). Lipset's research investigating the pattern of participation in social activities between several countries (Germany, Sweden, the United States, Norway, Finland, etc.) concluded that the level of participation in social and political processes is higher among married individuals than the unmarried ones in all the target countries. Furthermore, the study by Negintaji and Keshavarz titled "A Survey of social, individual, and cultural factors affecting the political participation of 18-29 year-olds in Nourabad Mamasani" concluded that there was a significant difference between youth participation in terms of marital status. In other words, married young individuals are more likely to engage in politics than unmarried young individuals.

The findings of this hypothesis are consistent with the results of the study by Jafarinia (2012). In his study titled "A Survey of Socio-Economic Factors Affecting the Rate of Khormoj Residents Political Participation", Jafarinia concluded that the willingness for political participation does not vary much between married and unmarried individuals. The findings of the first hypothesis are generally consistent with the results of the studies by Safabakhsh (2009), Zahed and Rajabi (2008), Naidoo and Ramphal (2018), Stevens et al. (2017), and Straka and Tuzova (2016).

According to the results of the second hypothesis of the study, which explores the impact of socioeconomic status on the participation of aid workers, and the significant level of beta coefficient obtained at 0.005, the second hypothesis with a confidence level of 0.95 and an error level smaller than 0.05 is confirmed. Furthermore, the coefficient of this correlation is equal to  $-0.171$  and negative. Therefore, there is an inverse relationship between the socioeconomic status of aid workers and their willingness to participate

In other words, as the aid workers' socioeconomic status increases their willingness to participate declines. Per data analysis, it can be concluded that the participation of aid workers has an inverse relationship with their income and status. The findings of this hypothesis are inconsistent with the theories by Verba, Nie, Almond, and Paul. Verba and Nie have claimed that people with high social status, e.g., income, are more willing to participate in the political processes of society. Such individuals have more

contact with politicians than lower-income individuals, are more likely to be members of civic, social, or political organizations, and are more likely to participate in election campaigns. Straka and Tuzova (2016) reckon that wealthy citizens are more likely to have participatory attitudes. The findings of this hypothesis are not consistent with the results of research by Babakhani et al. (2013), Zafari and Veisi (2011), Safabakhsh (2009), and Straka and Tuzova (2016).

According to the results of the third hypothesis, which investigates the impact of social capital on the participation of aid workers, with the significant level of beta coefficient, which is equal to 0.014, the third hypothesis is confirmed with a confidence level of 0.95 at an error smaller than 0.05. Social capital refers to a set of relationships and norms that regulate the quality and quantity of people's social relationships and connects people in the form of institutions, networks, and volunteer organizations and can consolidate the participation of aid workers and increase and improve the level of cooperation of community members. In addition to indirect effects, social capital also affects the participation of aid workers directly. High social unity and solidarity of citizens lead to social participation of citizens and, consequently, promote and strengthen the safety culture. Social trust is one of the fundamental aspects of human relations that pave the way for participation and cooperation between members of society. The results indicated that higher trust increases the willingness for the participation of aid workers. The significance level of the next hypothesis of the research, which deals with the relationship between raising awareness and public sensitivity about safety culture and disaster preparedness with the participation of aid workers, is equal to (0.019), confirming this hypothesis. Therefore, the value of safety knowledge of aid workers affects the extent of their willingness to participate in rescue and relief. Raising public awareness and sensitivity regarding safety culture and disaster preparedness has a statistically significant impact on the participation of aid workers. Findings concerning this hypothesis are consistent with the results of studies by Babakhani et al. (2013), Babaei Eghdam et al. (2015), Zahed and Rajabi (2008), Anabestani et al. (2012), Safabakhsh (2009), Straka and Tuzova (2016), and Stevens et

al. (2017).

Moreover, according to the results of the next hypothesis of the research, assessing the relationship between the value of media consumption (mass media) and the level of participation of aid workers, with a significant level of beta coefficient at 0.000, this hypothesis is confirmed with a confidence level at 95% and an error level smaller than 0.05. Communication, advertising, and marketing experts can manipulate the audience's mind through scientific techniques. Therefore, by presenting posters and advertising programs in various media and wielding appropriate phrases and terms and elegant graphic combinations, they can authorize and focus the mind and notions of the potential volunteer audience towards the target topic. Therefore, one of the substantial functions of the platforms and mass media is to create social solidarity and increase cultural capital, which is the source of emotional relationships, commitment, and social trust, which hence enhances the participation of individuals. Findings pertained to this hypothesis are consistent with the findings of the studies by Anabestani et al. (2012), Naidoo and Ramphal (2018), and Stevens et al. (2017).

According to the results of the last hypothesis of the research, exploring the impact of religious beliefs on the participation of aid workers at a significant level of beta coefficient equal to 0.047, this hypothesis is confirmed with a confidence level of 0.95 and an error level smaller than 0.05. It seems that not only is the inference due to a religious regime, but also due to the participation-based content of religion, particularly Islam, regarding the socio-political affairs of society. In other words, indifference towards society and authorities is considered indictable in religious rites. The levels of piety and religiosity are favorably high in the study sample. In this regard, Hoffman and Dowd (2001) believe that the religious structure provides an efficient environment to increase the sense of effectiveness and various forms of participation for citizens. Kinder and Kiewit (1979) believe that religion enhances the spirit of empathy, social solidarity, and motivation to participate and instills in the individual not to be insensitive and passive in social processes. Findings regarding this hypothesis are consistent with the findings of the studies by Mirzaei (2010), Imam Jomehzadeh et al. (2010), Anabestani et al. (2012), Dietram et al.

(2003), and Naidoo and Ramphal (2018).

The Red Crescent Society, as the largest relief organization in the country, has a crucial role in assisting the victims of natural and man-made disasters. Boosting the cooperation and participation of aid workers in the activities and programs of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization is influenced by several factors. Heeding to these factors can significantly improve how the forces are utilized and further fulfill the goals of the Red Crescent Relief and Rescue Organization.

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### Conflict of Interests

Authors declared no conflict of interests regarding the publication of the present study.

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