

# Corporate social responsibility and organizational commitment in agricultural cooperatives: evidence from Iran

(Responsabilidad social corporativa y compromiso organizacional en cooperativas agrícolas: evidencias de Irán)

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doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18543/baidc-59-2021pp263-283>

Recibido: 29.12.2020  
Aceptado: 23.09.2021

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this paper is to investigate the corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organizational commitment (OC) in agricultural cooperatives of Iran. The study's research model is tested through a survey consulting 260 respondents. The method of data collection is using the standard questionnaire of corporate social responsibility (CSR) based on the Carol model and organizational commitment (OC) based on the Allen-Meyer model. Data validity was confirmed by Bartlett test and KMO coefficient and its reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha. The statistical population of this study was the agricultural cooperatives with managed by the Rural Cooperative Organization (RCO) of Isfahan Province in Iran. The results of this research showed that from the members' viewpoint, the highest corporate social responsibility was in the legal dimension and the lowest was in the discretionary dimension as based on the Carol model. The research results show that the

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organizational commitment index of managers is nearly of 50%. The results of cluster analysis in the field of members' perception of cooperative social responsibility showed that the four variables such as: performance satisfaction, members' participation in cooperative meetings, age and purpose of membership, predicts the members' behavior in separating the cooperative into two groups with strong and weak the CSR. Also, the result of cluster analysis in board of director's organizational commitment showed that the variables such as: level of education, management experience and belief in the non-interference of other institutions in cooperative management, predicts the board of directors organizational commitment behavior in separating into two strong and weak the OC.

**Keywords:** Agricultural Cooperative, Corporate Social Responsibility, Organizational Commitment.

**Resumen:** El propósito de este documento es investigar la responsabilidad social empresarial (RSE) y el compromiso organizacional (CO) en las cooperativas agrícolas de Irán. El modelo de investigación del estudio se prueba a través de una encuesta que consultó a 260 encuestados. El método de recolección de datos es utilizar el cuestionario estándar de responsabilidad social empresarial (RSE) basado en el modelo Carol y compromiso organizacional (OC) basado en el modelo Allen-Meyer. La validez de los datos fue confirmada por la prueba de Bartlett y el coeficiente KMO y su confiabilidad fue confirmada por el alfa de Cronbach. La población estadística de este estudio fueron las cooperativas agrícolas administradas por la Organización Cooperativa Rural (RCO) de la provincia de Isfahan en Irán. Los resultados de esta investigación mostraron que, desde el punto de vista de los miembros, la mayor responsabilidad social empresarial se encontraba en la dimensión legal y la menor en la dimensión discrecional según el modelo Carol. Los resultados de la investigación muestran que el índice de compromiso organizacional de los gerentes es casi del 50%. Los resultados del análisis de cluster en el campo de la percepción de los miembros de la responsabilidad social cooperativa mostraron que las cuatro variables tales como: satisfacción de desempeño, participación de los miembros en reuniones cooperativas, edad y propósito de la membresía, predice el comportamiento de los miembros al separar la cooperativa en dos grupos con RSE fuerte y débil. Asimismo, el resultado del análisis de cluster en el compromiso organizacional de la junta directiva mostró que las variables como: nivel de educación, experiencia gerencial y creencia en la no interferencia de otras instituciones en la gestión cooperativa, predice el comportamiento de compromiso organizacional de la junta directiva en la separación en dos, fuertes y débiles el OC.

**Palabras clave:** Cooperativa Agrícola, Responsabilidad Social Empresarial, Compromiso Organizacional.

## 1. Introduction

Until now, development scientists seem to have focused on the idea that governments are generally responsible for the development of societies. However, the problems of dwindling resources and competing demand on the part of government have led to a new approach to rural development. This is the multi-stakeholders approach. The essence of multi-stakeholders approach is to ensure that individuals, groups who benefits directly or indirectly from communities should not sit on the fence. Instead, they are morally obliged to also contribute meaningfully to the growth and development of communities (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017). According to the International Cooperatives Association (ICA), there are nearly three million cooperatives with more than 1.2 billion members in the world, in other words, one in six people in the world are cooperative members. They are strong and healthy: the Top 300 cooperatives and mutual report a total turnover of 2.1 trillion USD (World Co-operative Monitor, 2017; ICA, 2016).

The concept and term cooperative was introduced as an economic organizational form in the nineteenth century and is now recognized as the dominant organizational form in the world (Noruzi and Westover, 2010 and Aref, 2011). Agricultural cooperatives have played an important role in rural development through socio-economic and infrastructure of agricultural development. The agricultural cooperatives are considered to be the most important organizations that pay attention and try to support the rural development in general and the agricultural development in special through the activities and services achieved for the sake of farmers (Aref, 2011).

In general, it can be said that cooperatives are organizations in which the formation of self-help groups is based on equity and equality. Cooperatives and other organizations practice social responsibilities in all their activities in order to enhance the credibility of cooperative as democratic and effectiveness institutions in the society. Therefore, cooperatives have an important role in social and economic empowerment of people, especially rural people in any country and community. Also, cooperatives can improve the standard of living of villagers and thus eradicate and reduce poverty, especially in developing countries and underdeveloped contribute significantly (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017). Nevertheless, for the cooperatives, commitment to CSR contributes as an internal tool to make sense of the cooperative and external commitments, or to put cooperative ethics at the service of customers, consumers and the community. CSR is a smart genius

business model. Cooperatives are seeking meaning to associate and recreate their social links with consumers. This is part of the evolution of the business model in contributing to the implementation of a responsible approach.

## 2. Literature review

The issue of social responsibility and organizational commitment is one of the most important and fundamental issues in the management of organizations and companies. Therefore in the present study, the social responsibilities of agricultural cooperatives as well as organizational commitment in these companies have been examined.

### 2.1. Corporate social responsibility (CSR)

The principle of corporate social responsibility (CSR) involves varying definitions, with different sets of goals and complex corporate policies, but most importantly, it is about business acknowledging the fact that it is not divorced from its operating society. The underlying assumption of corporate social responsibility (CSR) is that society and business are interdependent, and each partner must be assured of mutual understanding and responsible behavior (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017). The role of business in shaping the future and making proactive contributions to societal development has been recognized and is also being encouraged by society through assurances of cooperation. Depending on society culture, traditions, and era, understanding of companies' social responsibility might vary (Zukauskas *et al.*, 2018). The results of recent research on corporate social responsibility (CSR) have emphasized to companies that the use of CSR strategy can create and strengthen the necessary resources for development and prosperity in society (Imran *et al.*, 2010).

Pavie (2008) defines social responsibility as a set of voluntary actions that the company must promote, such as improvements in social and environmental conditions, and a company's responses to economic and technical issues and legal requirements to generate social and environmental benefits in addition to financial gains.

Specifically, due to high rate of poverty, infrastructural decay, system failure, illiteracy, inflation, unemployment, low standard of living (Less than one dollar a day) malnutrition, in developing countries, there is a growing interest and concern on how businesses should

take the lead in helping to address and solve societal problem particularly in areas where national government have failed to come up with a solution. However, there is growing pressure on corporate and their business to play an effective role in social issues in the developing countries. Therefore, corporate social responsibility (CSR) is an idea or belief in the field of corporate management that is evolving thematically and tries to use this capacity of cooperatives and companies to have a good impact on society.

It is a veritable platform for contributing to sustainable growth and development in areas where corporations operate. Aside from its usage to solve multifarious problems of developments, it has been discovered that CSR is also one major source of company's sustainability. CSR can help to promote a good image of corporate in the society while corporate can provide the necessary support to the people and the society to achieve the goals of sustainable development. Companies that practice CSR enjoy robust relationship in the communities where they operate. In fact, it has been proved that long time profitability of corporate organizations depends on the extent of their visible CSR activities. (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017). To develop sound relationships with employees organizations are using corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a strategic tool (Imran *et al.*, 2010).

In this study, Carroll (1979) CSR definition will be used as this is one of the more commonly referenced CSR definition (Maignan & Ferrell, 1999; Mattila, 2009; Pomeroy & Johnson, 2009; Turker, 2009). Carroll defines CSR as "the social responsibility of business encompasses the economic, legal, ethical and discretionary expectations that society has of organizations at a given point in time". As such, CSR dimensions in this study will follow Carroll's Conceptual Model of Corporate Performance (1979) to include: (1) economic responsibility, (2) legal responsibility, (3) ethical responsibility and (4) discretionary responsibility, to gauge employee's views on their organization's CSR practices.

## 1. ECONOMIC RESPONSIBILITY

The first corporate responsibility of business is to be a properly functioning economic unit and stay in business (Mattila, 2009). Profitability in the corporate is a fundamental issue and an important criterion for the performance of the sustainability organization. That's why many economic theories dwelled around the topic of profit maximization (Galbreath, 2009). The economic responsibility indicates

that organizations have a duty to be profitable and productive in order to meet the requirements of society in terms of resource utilization and consumption (Collins, 2010).

## 2. LEGAL RESPONSIBILITY

Legal responsibilities are the expectation of the society on organization or corporate to abide by the law and 'play by the rules of the game' although this can mean additional cost to organization or corporate. (Mattila, 2009). The legal dimensions of SCR states that each organization must operate legally. Although the economic responsibilities of an organization are important, it should be noted that any attempt to fulfill the financial responsibility of an organization must be based on legal standards and criteria. There is much debate in terms of this legal dimension of the SCR because many experts believe that the underlying reason organizations behave socially responsible or act ethically is to avoid unsavory legal consequences (Collins, 2010).

## 3. ETHICAL RESPONSIBILITY

Ethical responsibility is where organization or corporate need to do what is right, just and fair even when they are not compelled to by the legal framework (Mattila, 2009). The results of the research showed that organizations with a strong ethical culture not only attract customers, suppliers of employees and high quality investors, but also maintain the loyalty of their customers, which is the ethical dimension of responsibility (Collins, 2010). The ethical dimension of the CSR theory specifies that the obligation of an organization or corporate orbits around a collection of commonly understood unwritten codes and societal norms. These codes and norms are thought to be vital to the enduring success and socially responsible conduct of organizations or corporate (Collins, 2010).

## 4. DISCRETIONARY RESPONSIBILITY

Discretionary responsibility is voluntary activities that are not mandated, not required by law and not even generally expected of businesses in an ethical sense (for example, providing day care center for working mothers and committing to philanthropic donation) (Carroll, 1979). This dimension of corporate social responsibil-

ity includes the charitable activities of an organization. The most effective way to explain the Discretionary Orientation probably is best stated as society's expectation for organizations to express their humanitarian philosophy with donations and volunteer-related actions (Collins, 2010).

## 2.2. Organizational commitment (OC)

Commitment is "a force that binds an individual to a target (social or non-social) and to a course of action of relevance to that target" (Meyer *et al.*, 2006). Despite the theoretical and practical importance of commitment in an organization, its measurement is difficult (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017). Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) consider organizational commitment as an attitude of an individual to an organization, which can be an affective attachment to the organization's goals and values (Buchanan, 1974), or an "unconflicted state of internal readiness" (Jussila, Goel, & Tuominen, 2012). Committed employees are considered as critical success factor for any organization (Imran *et al.*, 2010).

Allen and Meyer (1990) conceptualize and measure the commitment in three different components: affective commitment, continuance commitment and normative commitment. Commitment is a multidimensional attitudinal construct. This concept which allows explaining the relationship between an individual with organization or corporate (Meyer *et al.* 2002; Solinger *et al.*, 2008). There are three components to this concept (affective, continuance and normative), (Meyer *et al.* 2002; Cooper-Hakim and Viswesvaran 2005).

1. Affective commitment refers to an individual's identification with and involvement in the organization. Members with a strong affective commitment have affective or emotional attachment to the organization and enjoy the membership. They stay within the organization or corporate because they want to do so. In other words, a member's commitment may be "desired": this is the affective component of the concept which corresponds to an emotional attachment, a feeling of belonging and a wish to remain a member of the organization (Barraud-Didieret *al*, 2012).
2. Normative commitment is obligation-based and is the result from personal internalization of normative pressures. Individuals with high level of normative commitment believe that

- staying within an organization is a “right” and moral thing to do. They feel obliged to stay and ought to do so.
3. Continuance commitment reflects that individuals are aware with the costs associated with leaving the organization. Members with high level of continuance commitment stay within the organization because they need to do so. A member may also concede commitment, this can be attributed to mandatory membership because he or she feels that there is no other choice but to remain a member of the cooperative since leaving it would entail costs and the loss of acquired advantages. This is the continuance component of organizational commitment (Barraud-Didier *et al.*, 2012).

The affective component is believed to be an emotional or affective attachment to an organization, so that the strongly committed person identifies with and enjoy the membership of the organization. The normative component in CSR refers to the employees’ sense of duty to stay in the organization or corporate. The continuance component in CSR corresponds to a lack of choices other than to remain a member of the organization or corporate when leaving it (Ademilua *et al.*, 2017).

### 2.3. Research of background

Zukauskas *et al* (2018) investigated the corporate social responsibility as the organization’s commitment against stakeholders. The result of this research emphasis is often in the practice of corporate social responsibility implementation, attention to one or even several very important activities, which shows that the organization has not yet understood the whole concept of social responsibility in all its dimensions and found it valuable and useful. Therefore has not recognized to improve its organizational performance.

Grashus and Su (2018) reviewed the theoretical and empirical literature of cooperatives and examined issues such as members’ attitudes, cooperative performance, ownership, governance, and cooperatives’ financial capital. The result of this research showed that cooperative membership is found to positively impact price, yield, input adoption, income, and other indicators of member performance. The results of this study emphasize that the inefficiency of cooperatives is mostly due to increased heterogeneity in the attitudes and goals of members, es-



pecially in terms of commitment and participation of members in cooperative activities.

Boudlaie *et al* (2018) investigate the impact of corporate social responsibility and internal marketing on employee turnover intentions, considering the mediating role of organizational commitment. The result of this research revealed that the organizational commitment has a negative impact on employee turnover intentions and also the social responsibility has a positive effect on organizational commitment and also, organizational commitment completely mediates the negative impact of social responsibility.

Nguyen and Yves (2017) investigated the impact of the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organizational commitment in the service sector in Vietnam. Results from this research showed that the corporate social responsibility has a positive and significant correlation with organizational commitment.

Gharleghi *et al* (2016), examine the effects of corporate social responsibility (CSR) to employees in Iran. Data collected from 209 employees in 45 small-sized enterprises in Iran. The findings of this study showed that the indirect effect of CSR on employees was on employee participation, so that it was effective in performing their creative work, especially through positive work attitudes and reducing their intention to leave of work.

Rabiey and Gholami(2016) studied the impact of social responsibility on organizational commitment. The result of this research emphasis on the importance of social responsibility and respecting it by organizations can have a positive impact on organizational performance so that it can impact on employees' organizational commitment significantly.

Hao (2015) investigated the cooperative member commitment, trust and social pressure in agricultural cooperatives in China. The result of this research indicated that trust is positively and significant associated with three components of member commitment (affective, continuance and normative).

Barraud-Didieret al (2012) explained the participative behavior of farmers-members of agricultural cooperatives (trust and organizational commitment). Results of this research showed that affective commitment had a mediating role in the relationship between trust and participation in the governance of cooperatives, notwithstanding the cognitive or affective nature of trust.

Bortoleto *et al* (2012) studied the undertaken to determine the effect of social responsibility activities on the loyalty of the members. The results of research indicate, first, that use of special-purpose reserves

for technical, educational and social assistance programs and spending on education and the environment have no significant effect on the loyalty of the cooperative's members. Second, if the cooperative has more capacity to provide quality services to its members, it can be concluded that the level of loyalty of members to cooperatives could be increase.

Imran *et al* (2010), investigated the influence of CSR on employee's organizational commitment and organizational performance in Pakistan. The results of this study showed that there is a positive relationship between CSR actions and organizational commitment of employees, as well as a positive relationship between CSR and organizational performance and in addition a positive relationship between organizational commitment of employees and organizational performance.

### 3. Methods

The study's research model is tested through a survey consulting 260 respondents from two groups. One, the members of agricultural cooperatives 210 respondents and group tow, the board of directors of agricultural cooperatives 50 respondents. The method of data collection is using the standard questionnaire of cooperatives social responsibility (CSR) based on the Carol model and organizational commitment (OC) based on the Allen-Meyer model. Data validity was confirmed by Bartlett test and KMO coefficient and its reliability was confirmed by Cronbach's alpha. The statistical population of this study was the agricultural cooperatives with managed by the Rural Cooperative Organization (RCO) in Isfahan Province. The total active of RCO was 116 cooperatives. Based on the Cochran sampling formula with a probability accuracy of over 90%, 53 cooperatives were selected. Instead the selections of each board of directors, 2 to 3 members of the cooperative were randomly selected as the second respondent society. We did face-to-face interviews with the chairperson or other officials involved in cooperative management. Data about the cooperative (e.g. number of members, initiation) and members (e.g. household and farm characteristics, such as age, education, farm size and asset investments, and attitude towards cooperatives and their colleagues) were also collected.

Following the more recent organizational commitment literature (Cechin *et al.*, 2013; Solinger, Van Olffen, & Roe, 2008), member com-

mitment is defined as members' attitudinal commitment to the organization (cooperative). Our measurement is based on the well-established three-component model by Allen and Meyer (1990) and Meyer *et al.* (2002).

To measure this specific dimension of corporate social responsibility, we relied on the scale recently developed by Carol. To measure this specific dimension of organizational commitment, we relied on the scale recently developed by Allen-Meyer. For measuring CSR and OC, we adopted from on a 5-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree). The resulting instrument yielded 24 separate cooperative social responsibility constructs measuring the four bases of economic, legal, ethical and discretionary responsibility. Also the resulting instrument yielded 18 separate commitment constructs measuring the three bases of affective, continuance, and normative commitment. The following three items are examples of the modification: (1) "I feel emotionally attached to my cooperative" (Affective Commitment); (2) "I think I have too few alternatives to consider leaving my cooperative." (Continuance Commitment); and (3) "Jumping from this co-op to other organization seems unethical to me." (Normative commitment). All coefficient alphas are above 0.70. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for CSR was 0.844 and for OC was 0.758. These alphas are acceptable given the early stages of research with these constructs. A confirmatory factor analysis supports these measures and is discussed in the results section.

#### 4. Results

One of the most important principles of cooperatives is the principle of intervention and free participation of members in cooperatives. Therefore, one of the most important questions in the present study was what are the goals or motivations of the members to join the cooperative? (Goal of members to cooperative membership). The results of research showed that about 44% of respondents join the cooperative membership with the aim of buying inputs and selling their products. Also about 27% of respondents to aim of cooperation and group work join the cooperative membership. The results of research showed that about 11% of respondents said they were forced to join a cooperative.

**Table 1**  
Goal of members to cooperative membership

Goal of membership	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percentage	Statistics
Selling the products	10	9.5	9.5	Mod: Buying inputs
Buying inputs	35	32.9	42.4	
Interest	24	22.7	65.1	
Mandatory membership	11	10.5	75.6	
Interference of goals	26	24.4	100	

The results of research showed that members have evaluated the average cooperative social responsibility of 53%. The members' viewpoint, the highest social responsibility of the cooperative was in the legal dimension (60%) and the lowest was in the discretionary dimension (45%) in based on the Carol model.

**Table 2**  
Dimensions of cooperative social responsibility (CSR) in based on the Carol model

Dimensions	Mean	Sd	C.V
Economic	52.63	17.003	0.323
Legal	60.28	21.637	0.359
Ethical	53.22	19.820	0.372
Discretionary	44.82	22.349	0.499
CSR	52.74	16.579	0.315

The research results show that the organizational commitment index of managers is nearly of 47%. This level of organizational commitment of employees was below average. Organizational commitment includes three components: continuous, emotional and normative commitment. Only in the normative commitment component, the level of employee commitment has been reported as average (50%).

**Table 3**  
Dimensions of organizational commitment index (OC).

Dimensions	Mean	Sd	C.V
Continuous	46.99	12.016	0.256
Emotional	44.74	12.167	0.272
Normative	50.36	10.164	0.202
OC	47.36	8.294	0.175

Also the result of cluster analysis in board of director's organizational commitment showed that the variables such as: level of education, management experience and belief in the non-interference of other institutions in cooperative management, predicts the board of directors organizational commitment behavior in separating into two strong and weak the OC.

**Table 4**  
Analytical diagnostic function in the distinguishing variables of classes of committed and non-committed groups (Stepwise)

Variables	Wilk's Lambda	F	df1	df2	sig
Level of education	0.918	4.096	1	46	0.049
Management experience	0.810	5.286	1	46	0.009
Belief in cooperative independence	0.730	5.434	1	46	0.003

In the general model, the focal correlation coefficient is equal to 0.520. Therefore, it can be said that 52% of the changes in the organizational commitment variable of the individuals under study are explained by these three variables.

**Table 5**  
Canonical correlation and Wilkes lambda for the model

Eigenvalue	0.370
Percentage of variance	100
Cumulative percentage	100
Canonical correlation	0.520
Wilks' Lambda	0.730
Chi-square	14.024
df	3
P-value	0.003

The variables of manager's education level, management background and belief in cooperative independence had the highest standard coefficient and this shows the importance of these variables in predicting the behavior of committed managers and separating them from non-committed managers in rural cooperatives.

**Table 6**  
Standard and non-standard coefficients of Canonical detection function

Variables	Standard coefficients	Non-standard coefficients
Constant	–	–4.544
Level of education	0.786	1.113
Management experience	0.788	0.089
Belief in cooperative independence	0.616	0.533

$$Z = \text{Constant} + W_1X_1 + W_2X_2 + W_3X_3 + \dots + W_nX_n$$

$$Z = -4.544 + 1.113 (\text{Level of education}) + 0.089 (\text{Management experience}) + 0.533 (\text{Belief in cooperative independence})$$

Also, the research findings show that this model correctly classifies 76.58% of managers with high organizational commitment and 71% of managers with low organizational commitment (non-committed to cooperatives).

**Table 7**  
Classification results to determine the accuracy of segregation

Classification	G <sub>1</sub>	G <sub>2</sub>	Total	Accuracy of segregation
	Frequency			
Committed to organization	20	9	29	
Uncommitted to the organization	5	16	21	
	Percent			
Committed to organization	69	31		
Uncommitted to the organization	23.8	76.2		72

The results of cluster analysis in the field of members' perception of cooperative social responsibility showed that the four variables such as: performance satisfaction, members participation in cooperative meetings, age and purpose of membership, predicts the members' behavior in separating the cooperative into two groups with strong and weak the CSR.

**Table 8**  
Analytical diagnostic function in the distinguishing variables of classes of CSR

Variables	Wilk's Lambda	Chi-square	df1	df2	sig
The general equation	0.598	38.350	1	17	0.002

In the general model, the focal correlation coefficient is equal to 0.598. Therefore, it can be said that 60% of the changes in the cooperative social responsibility variable of the individuals under study are explained by these variables.

**Table 9**  
Canonical correlation and Wilkes lambda for the model

Eigenvalue	0.673
Percentage of variance	100
Cumulative percentage	100
Canonical correlation	0.634
Wilks' Lambda	0.598
Chi-square	38.35
df	17
P-value	0.002

The variables of manager's education level, management background and belief in cooperative independence had the highest standard coefficient and this shows the importance of these variables in predicting the behavior of committed managers and separating them from non-committed managers in rural cooperatives.

**Table 10**  
Standard and non-standard coefficients of Canonical detection function

Variables	Standard coefficients	Non-standard coefficients
Constant	—	-5.718
Age	0.693	0.048
Sex	-0.006	-0.024
Level of education	0.047	0.049
Agricultural experience	0.047	0.003
The amount of capital	-0.115	-0.015
Cooperative membership experience	-0.018	-0.002
The purpose of membership	0.347	0.010
Belief in cooperative independence	0.146	0.141
Attending in cooperative meetings	0.325	0.310
Membership satisfaction in the cooperative	0.711	0.992

$$Z = \text{Constant} + W_1X_1 + W_2X_2 + W_3X_3 + \dots + W_nX_n$$

$$Z = -5.718 + 0.048 (\text{Age}) - 0.024 (\text{Sex}) + 0.049 (\text{Level of education}) + 0.003 (\text{Agricultural experience}) - 0.015 (\text{The amount of capital}) - 0.002 (\text{Cooperative membership experience}) + 0.010 (\text{The purpose of membership}) + 0.141 (\text{Belief in cooperative independence}) + 0.310 (\text{Attending in cooperative meetings}) + 0.992 (\text{Membership satisfaction in the cooperative})$$



The variables such as: membership satisfaction in the cooperative, attending in cooperative meetings and belief in cooperative independence had showed the highest standard coefficient and importance of these variables in predicting the cooperative social responsibility in rural cooperatives.

**Table 11**  
Classification results to determine the accuracy of segregation

Classification	$G_1$	$G_2$	Total	Accuracy of segregation
	Frequency			
Cooperative with high responsibility	30	7	37	
Cooperative with low responsibility	7	41	48	
	Percent			
Cooperative with high responsibility	81.1	18.9		
Cooperative with low responsibility	14.6	85.4		83.5

Also, the research findings show that this model correctly classifies 81% of rural cooperatives with high cooperative social responsibility and 85% of rural cooperatives with low cooperative social responsibility.

## 5. Discussion

By studying agricultural cooperatives in Iran, it can be seen that these cooperatives have been created as a result of structural changes in Iran in the 1940s in the name of general land reform to be a suitable alternative for farm management in the absence of large owners. Most of these cooperatives were created by the government and the membership of farmers in them was mandatory and therefore there was no motivation to empower them. Although farmers have a long history of cooperative membership, their membership is not active membership and therefore does not participate much in

cooperative management and as the results show, they do not participate much even in the meetings of the General Assembly of Cooperatives. Managers of agricultural cooperatives are also people who do not have a proper organizational commitment and therefore have not been able to create an important issue of social responsibility in cooperatives, and in principle, cooperative members do not have this demand from cooperative management due to lack of motivation. The results showed that organizational commitment as an important component in the management of cooperatives depends on the behavior of members, especially their belief in the ability to manage cooperatives independently of the government. These findings are consistent with those of recent studies that found a significant and positive relationship between affective commitment and member's favorable behavior towards the organization (Boudlaie *et al.*, 2018., Rabiey and Gholami, 2016. Peng and Chiu, 2010 and Rezaiean *et al.*, 2010). Therefore, if we want to have successful agricultural cooperatives, our cooperatives must be responsible. It seems that in evaluating agricultural cooperatives, the concept of social responsibility and its four dimensions is not seen and evaluated, so it is suggested in order to make cooperatives more efficient. Agriculture, the concept of corporate social responsibility and of courses its quantitative indicators and criteria as one of the most important areas for evaluating cooperatives to be successful and unsuccessful and designed. We encourage the directors of cooperatives to create the conditions which generate cooperatives' social responsibility because this is a source of affective attachment and favorable behaviors for members of cooperative.

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