

## Pathology of Studying Public Policy of Students in Tehran Province from the Teachers' Perspective

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**Purpose:** The studying public policy can play an important role in improving the country's study situation. As a result, the present research was conducted with the aim of pathology of studying public policy of students in Tehran province from the teachers' perspective.

**Methodology:** The present study was applied in terms of purpose and survey in terms of implementation method. The research population had two parts, which in the first part was 30 cultural experts of education in the cities of Tehran province in the 2018-19 academic years, which number of 15 people of them were selected as a sample with using the targeted sampling method. The research population in the second part was 26889 teachers of education in the cities of Tehran province in the 2018-19 academic years, which based on Cochran's formula number of 379 of them were selected as a sample by stratified random sampling method, respecting the size of the population in each region. The cultural experts declared their level of agreement with each of the items of the initial researcher-made questionnaire (23 items in the two components of the studying social policy and studying general policy) during two Delphi rounds, the teachers also declared their agreement with each of the items of the modified researcher-made questionnaire (8 items in two components). The data were analyzed by percentage of agreement and one-sample t-test in SPSS software.

**Findings:** The findings of the first part of the research, i.e. cultural experts showed that after two Delphi rounds, among the 10 items related to the studying social policy the percentage of agreement for 5 items was higher than 50 percent and among the 13 items related to the studying general policy the percentage of agreement for 3 items was higher 50 percent.

Also, the findings of the second part of the research, i.e. teachers showed that the percentage of high and very high importance of 7 items out of the final 8 items of the modified questionnaire was calculated above 70%. In addition, in both components of studying social policy and studying general policy the population average significantly was higher than the hypothetical average ( $P < 0.05$ ).

**Conclusion:** The results of the present study have many practical implications for public policy officials, managers and planners. Based on the results of this study, they can take an effective step towards improving and promoting the studying public policy of students.

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## 1. Introduction

The book is one of the tools of thinking, growth and excellence of man, and the importance of reading has been clear to people of science and literature from long ago, also reading is a way to achieve knowledge and ability that helps human beings overcome limitations and shortcomings. In fact, the culture of reading is more than just a normal skill and a culture of rich literacy (Yaghobirad, Kavousi and Rashidpour, 2015).

In the age of electronic media and the changing world of information and communication technology, books are still one of the most important and effective media. This medium plays an important and fundamental role in many aspects of human life. In fact, through studying there is an exchange of thoughts and experiences, in which human awareness increases (Bicheranlou, Ghafouri and Mehraban, 2017). The culture of reading provides the basis for improving educational standards, because it implies attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that provide reading conditions among people and enable them to study according to logical principles (Greenfield, 2018). Today, one of the indicators of development of countries is the amount of reading. In developed societies, book reading per capita is high, and in developing and underdeveloped societies it has very low per capita reading and book reading per capita (Cochrane, Ozturk, Khataee, Al-Hababi, Al-Malki and Nourin, 2022).

Policy-making in the field of social relations or public policy (such as studying) has two phases of theoretical design and practical application, often carried out by the state institution (Makvandi, 2019). Nowadays, macro planning through road map formulation in different areas is a fundamental step in helping policymakers to take firm steps based on the plan and collective thinking. Planning and policy-making have always been popularized as a method of targeted development in the form of national and regional programs among experts. Therefore, planning and policy-making in various sectors such as education and study are vital for the development of the country today (Aqatabar Roudbari, Enayati and Salehi, 2019). Policy making in education and study as the most influential and effective types of public policy, is a set of policies, procedures and actions that the government agency develops and implements to empower and develop students' personal and social knowledge and skills, solve the existing problems in the field of education and also quality of education (Darvishi, Ghaedi, Keshishyan Siraki and Tohidfam, 2020). Policy-making in the general sense existed at the beginning of human life and is used as one of the requirements for the presence of reason in individual and social life. Public policy is also the study of government in practice and a multifaceted term that has been used in very different contexts (Pakzad and Khajeh Naieni, 2017). Public policy is a phenomenon that appears in the form of a government program in a segment of society or a geographic space.

This policy takes place in the governmental sphere at the subsystem and high level of national government. Policy-making at the subsystems of the national government consists of policies and procedures that perpetuate the continuation of political policies, which high-level policy making involves procedures and policies that can create or change significant movement in the direction of past policies (Dill, Dagios and Barros, 2022). Public policy is the adoption of decisions and policies taken by various public sector bodies, such as parliament and government, to protect the public interest (Allin, Martin, Rudoler, Carson, Grudniewicz, Jopling and Strumpf, 2021). Governments with high levels of institutional mechanisms, especially the technical and administrative capacities of the bureaucratic apparatus, are able to formulate and implement more efficient and effective public policies, and provide citizens with a more appropriate manner public services such as education or study and related infrastructure. In contrast, governments with low power capabilities have less ability to properly implement their basic mechanisms, particularly the optimal use and allocation of resources and provide rational and sustainable policy-making, such as education or study policymaking (Heydari, 2020).

One of the most important issues in public policy is its pathology. Pathology is a term that is most common in medical sciences, psychology and sociology, referring to the process of examining existing problems and challenges (Gov-Ari and Hopewell, 2015). Pathology of education and study can be studied in three dimensions: processive, structural and contextual. In the process or behavioral dimension, it includes

anything related to human behavior which can put teaching or studying in danger or harm them. In the structural dimension, all elements and factors and physical and non-human conditions contribute to the education and study of individuals, and in this dimension are the damages related to planning, need assessment, educational design and implementation of training. In context, all conditions and factors are external environment of the organization, including economic, social, political and cultural situations (Soleimanpouromran, Tavakkoli Ordoughan, Esmailzadeh and Alizadeh Firouzi, 2022). Correct and timely pathology helps managers to always be aware of the current problems of the organization and prevent more severe problems (Shrestha, Thapa, Tuladhar, Marinone, Andikyan and Chuang, 2018).

Few studies have been done on reading and literature and no research on the pathology of public policy was found. Therefore, the results of the most important research related to the present study are reported.

Darvishi et al. (2020) in a study on education policy in Iran with regard to good governance theory, introduced the most important policies including engagement, tolerance, participation, sociability, reliability, honesty and risk-taking.

Sharifi, Marzban and Labafi (2018) in a study titled Pathology of Cyberspace Content Production Policy in Iran, they concluded that identified vulnerabilities included seven categories of regulatory system damages, content production policies, content production protection, security and privacy, cultural factors and infrastructure, weakness in decision-making and technical infrastructure.

Hanifi, Karamali and Amini (2015) Research on the strategies for the development of reading culture among elementary students from the viewpoint of teachers concluded that strengthening family culture, individual characteristics of students, level of scientific attitude of teachers and strengthening of equipment and facilities of school are the most important strategies for the development of reading culture.

Yaghobirad et al (2015), while researching the factors affecting the promotion of reading culture among male high school students, concluded that the most important factors were social values, teachers, family and educational environment, respectively.

Today, attention to reading, books and reading indicates the cultural and national growth of each country, and for this purpose, the number of books and publications published in each country, libraries, librarians, authors, translators and publishers are used as the basic criteria for developing countries. Therefore, the expansion of the culture of reading, the development of libraries, the printing and publication of books and the use of this unrivaled cultural tool are essential for the growth and excellence of society. Nowadays, students should develop the habit of reading so that they enjoy reading books. Also, comparing Iran with different countries shows that the study position in Iran is not favorable compared to other developed countries and measures should be taken to create appropriate ways to promote the culture of reading in the country. For example, Sweden, with 9 million people, has 4,000 libraries, while Iran with more than 70 million inhabitants has only 1,500 libraries (Hanifi et al., 2015). As a result, planning and policy-making for reading is essential. Although in recent decades the subject of the reduction of per capita amount of study in the country has been considered and conferences and seminars have been held in this regard, but the situation of reading in the country is very inappropriate and far from the statistics of developed countries. Public policies in the field of study have not produced useful and effective results, and accordingly, it is essential that these public policies be pathological so that experts exploit their results and design and implement more effective policies for reading. Public policy of study can play an important role in improving the country's study status. As a result, the present study aimed at pathology of public policy of studying students of Tehran province from teachers' point of view.

## 2. Methodology

The present study was applied in terms of purpose and survey method in terms of implementation. The research population had two sections, which in the first part were cultural experts in education in the cities of Tehran province in the academic year of 2018-2019, 15 of whom were selected by targeted sampling method. In targeted sampling method, samples were selected according to the criteria identified by the

researchers, such as willingness to participate in research, having sufficient knowledge and information in the field of research, having at least a master's education, etc. The research population was 26889 students in the second part of the education and education department of Tehran province in 2018-2019 academic year, which based on Cochran's formula, 379 of them were selected by stratified random sampling method with respect to the size of the community in each region. In stratified sampling method, first the community size for each area of education in Tehran province including Pardis, Rudhen, Damavand, Firouzkooh, Rey 1, Rey Urban 2, Kahrizak, Fashafouyeh, Pakdasht, Qarchak, Varamin, Pishva, Javadabad, Baharestan 1, Baharestan 2, Robat Karim, Eslamshahr, Chahar Dangeh, Shahriar and Mallard and the ratio of each to the total volume of the population is calculated and then calculated according to the sample size of each of the regions, the sample was determined.

The research tool for the first part of the society, i.e. cultural experts, consisted of a 23-item researcher-made questionnaire with two components of study social policy making and study public policy making, so that the social policy component of the study had 10 items and the study public policy component had 13 items. Cultural experts used a five-degree Likert spectrum to respond to items including very low, low, medium importance, high importance and very high importance, and if the total amount of high and very high importance of item was above 50%, the item would be preserved and otherwise the item would be removed. It should be noted that the above process was carried out during two Delphi rounds. Also, the research tool for the second part of the society, namely teachers, included a modified researcher-made questionnaire based on importance by cultural experts. This tool included 8 items in two components of study social policy and study public policy, so that the social policy component of the study had 5 items and the study public policy component had 3 items. To respond to the items, teachers used a five-degree Likert spectrum including very low, low, medium, high and very high.

The stages of the study were as follows: First, a questionnaire with 23 items in two components of study social policy and general policy of the study was designed based on theoretical foundations. Then, 15 cultural experts were selected by targeted method and asked to respond to the importance of each item, and only the items that had a high and very high importance of them were above 50% and the rest were removed. During two Delphi rounds, the above process was carried out, and finally, 15 items were removed and only 8 items due to the high and very high importance. Above 50 percent were maintained. In the next step, teachers were selected separately from each region or city and asked to answer an 8-item questionnaire with two components of study social policy making(5 items) and study public policy making (3 items). Initially, the samples of both the cultural experts and teachers expressed the importance and necessity of the research and they were appropriately justified for participating in the research, and finally, the samples of both sections were appreciated and thanked for participating in the research. It should be noted that the data were analyzed by means of consensus percentage and one-sample t-test in SPSS software.

### 3. Findings

The first part of the sample of cultural experts did not fall and the analysis was done for 15 people, but the second part of the sample, i.e. teachers, had a decline and 3 questionnaires were removed from 379 questionnaires due to incompleteness and finally the analysis was done for 376 people. The results of the first round of Delphi were presented in Table 1 to identify the pathology of public policy of students' study from the perspective of cultural experts.

**Table 1.** Delphi First Round Results for Identifying the Pathology of Public Policy Studying Students from the Viewpoint of Cultural Experts

Component	Items	Average	Consensus Percentage	Consensus weight	Rating
Social Policy Study	1	3/60	40/00	Aug-00	10
	2	3/93	46/67	Sep-00	7

	3	4/27	46/67	Oct-00	2
	4	4/13	40/00	Oct-00	6
	5	4/20	46/67	Oct-00	4
	6	3/93	66/67	Sep-00	7
	7	4/20	66/67	Oct-00	4
	8	3/87	53/33	Sep-00	9
	9	4/53	73/33	Nov-00	1
	10	4/27	53/33	Oct-00	2
Public Policy Study	1	4/47	60/00	Aug-00	1
	2	4/40	66/67	Aug-00	2
	3	-4Jul	53/33	Jul-00	4
	4	3/87	33/33	Jul-00	7
	5	3/67	33/33	Jul-00	12
	6	3/87	33/33	Jul-00	7
	7	4/27	46/67	Aug-00	3
	8	3/80	40/00	Jul-00	10
	9	3/67	33/33	Jul-00	12
	10	4/00	46/67	Jul-00	6
	11	3/87	33/33	Jul-00	7
	12	-4Jul	46/67	Jul-00	4
	13	3/80	33/33	Jul-00	10

According to the results of Table 1, after the first round of Delphi, cultural experts had an agreed percentage of more than 50% only in 5 items in the social policy component of the study and 3 items in the public policy of the study. The results of the second round of Delphi were presented in Table 2 to identify the pathology of public policy of students' study from the perspective of cultural experts.

**Table 2.** The results of the second round of Delphi to identify the pathology of public policy of students' study from the perspective of cultural experts

Component	Items	Average	Consensus Percentage	Consensus weight	Rating
Social Policy Study	1	4/13	51/67	0/19	5
	2	4/33	53/33	0/19	4
	3	4/40	60/00	0/20	3
	4	4/47	53/33	0/20	1
	5	4/47	66/67	0/20	1
Public Policy Study	1	4/73	80/00	0/34	1
	2	4/47	60/00	0/32	3
	3	4/60	60/00	0/33	2

According to the results of Table 2, after the second round of Delphi, 5 items of social policy were studied from the viewpoint of cultural experts and 3 items of public policy of the study had an agreed percentage of more than 50%. The results of the pathological distribution of public policy of the students' study were presented from teachers' point of view in Table 3.

**Table 3.** The results of the prevalence of pathology of public policy making of students' study from teachers' point of view

Component	Items	Amount	Very little	little	Medium	much	Very much
Social Policy Study	1. How important is communication with authors, scientists, professors and teachers as study companions in promoting students' need to study?	frequency	6	20	69	158	123
		Percentage	2/00	5/00	18/00	42/00	33/00
	2. How much do social harms such as	frequency	10	18	32	96	220

	parental separation, child abuse and addiction contribute to the reduction of students' study?	Percentage	3/00	5/00	8/00	26/00	58/00
	3. How important is the increase of students' social awareness by mass media in promoting the study?	frequency	6	15	61	151	143
		Percentage	2/00	4/00	16/00	40/00	38/00
	4. To what extent is television broadcasts as national media important in promoting student study?	frequency	16	28	63	137	132
		Percentage	4/00	7/00	17/00	37/00	35/00
	5. How important is the expansion of digital study in the country in promoting students' study?	frequency	14	33	104	152	73
		Percentage	4/00	9/00	28/00	40/00	19/00
Public Policy Study	1. How important is it to evaluate reading in the country's macro-cultural and social policies in encouraging students to study?	frequency	6	14	67	152	137
		Percentage	2/00	4/00	18/00	40/00	36/00
	2. How important are government policies in creating facilities for the publishing industry in students' study?	frequency	7	17	73	155	124
		Percentage	2/00	5/00	19/00	41/00	33/00
	3. To what extent does the cost of cultural officials of the country towards investing in the field of culture and books play a role in reducing students' study?	frequency	2	17	61	140	156
		Percentage	1/00	4/00	16/00	37/00	42/00

According to the results of Table 3, from the teachers' point of view, 7 of the final items of the revised questionnaire were calculated above 70%, and only the high and very high percentage of the social policy item 5 of the study (i.e., how important is digital study in the country in promoting students?) was less than 70%. The results of one-sample t-test were presented in Table 4 to determine the status of the pathological components of students' general policy making from teachers' point of view.

**Table 4.** Results of one-sample t-test to determine the status of pathological components of general policy of students' study from teachers' point of view

Component	Average	Hypothetical Average	t	df	Sig.
Social Policy Study	3/91	3/00	-26/Jul	371	>0/001
Public Policy Study	-4/Jul	3/00	27/80	369	>0/001

According to the results of Table 3, the mean of society was significantly higher than the hypothetical mean in both the social policy components of study and public policy of study ( $P < 0.001$ ).

#### 4. Discussion

The present century is called the century of knowledge and can be provided by empowering the country's students through the habit of studying, strengthening mental abilities and going beyond the known affairs to achieve perspectives and turn threats into opportunities. Reading plays an important role in the social, cultural, political and economic status of each country, and public policy of reading can be effective in this regard. As a result, the present study aimed at pathology of public policy of studying in students of Tehran province from teachers' point of view.

The findings showed that cultural experts after two Delphi rounds of 10 items related to social policy study, the percentage of agreement of 5 items was higher than 50% and out of 13 items related to public policy of the study, the percentage of agreement of 3 items was higher than 50%. Also, from teachers' viewpoint, the percentage of high and very high importance, 7 of the final 8 items of the revised questionnaire were calculated above 70%. In addition, in both components of social policy, study and public policy making of study, the mean of society was significantly higher than the hypothetical average. Very little research has been done on the study and in some ways the findings of this study can be in line with the findings of

Darvishi et al. (2020) on identifying engagement, tolerance, participation, sociability, trustworthiness, honesty and risk-taking as the most important education policy in Iran. Sharifi et al (2018) based on the damages of the surveillance system, content production policies, support for content production, security and privacy, cultural factors and infrastructure, weakness in decision-making and technical infrastructure as policy damages to the production of cyberspace content. Hanifi et al. (2015) emphasizes strengthening family culture, individual characteristics of students, level of teachers' scientific attitude and strengthening of school equipment and facilities as the most important strategies for the development of the culture of reading. Yaghobirad et al. (2015) based on the priority of social values, teacher, family and educational space as effective factors in promoting the culture of reading among students.

In describing the findings of this study, it can be said that among the sub-components of social policy of study, parental separation, child abuse and drug addiction had the highest rank in the drastic decline of the study rate of students, which is the basis for other social disorders. In the meantime, the children of divorce are left away from any attention in society, and the basis of the crookedness is established in childhood and in adolescence emerges severely. Drug addiction also destroys many of society's moral values and causes the complete obliteration of books in the realm of life and imposes huge costs on society. In such a situation, sporadic measures should not be confined to changing students' study behavior. Because this is subject to various factors and requires national attention and comprehensive planning. Also, in this study, the component of digital study expansion in the country and its importance in promoting students' study of social sub-components from the viewpoint of respondents had the lowest rank. That is, despite the growth and expansion of electronic and internet resources in the country, it is not important to promote students' study. Obviously, the study of individuals, including students, has changed under the influence of cyberspace and social networks, and a group of readers may be satisfied with digital and online study, but students tend to study shallow and dispersed and avoid reading books and long-term study. Therefore, while taking advantage of the advantages of the information age, we must strive to enhance the country's position digitally and globally and this will increase the understanding power of society, especially students, which will show the wisest direction to navigate the information age with the spread of digital study.

The cost of the cultural authorities of the country towards investment in the field of culture and books as a deterrent and reducing of students' study was at the top of the public policy components of the study and on the other hand, the importance of government policies in establishing facilities of the publishing industry in promoting students' study rate was at the lowest level. The lack of an attitude based on investment in the cultural arena leads to short- and quantitative periods of policy making, which prevents qualitative and long-term measures which makes it impossible to think of gradual changes in the field of culture, while the nature of culture and institutionalization of culture is a matter of time. Therefore, it is desirable that the costs incurred in the field of cultural goods and books are not considered as lost and depreciated costs, but rather be interpreted as an investment in order to promote cultural development and literacy level and pay attention to its future return. It should be noted that the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran explicitly emphasizes the priority of cultural issues to economic issues. As a result, the necessary strategy should be tailored to the structure and capacity of the economic infrastructure related to cultural activities, and in order to promote the development of culture and art in preventing future identity and social crises, the production and reproduction of cultural products such as books, magazines, newspapers, access of schools to valid internal and external databases, added values and the promotion of knowledge and culture of the country should be considered and evaluated.

According to the contents mentioned above, valuing books and reading books in the country's macro-cultural and social policies is an important component of policy making in this field and plays an important role in encouraging students to read. Obviously, any rate of evaluation of the students' reading will be equally important and valuable among the members of society, especially students. In Iran, some upstream institutions, including the Supreme Council of the Cultural Revolution, refer to the concept of people's cultural rights in the sense that in new societies, as individuals have political rights and can participate in the

political life of the society, and just as everyone has the right to education and the right to find a job, they have the right to access culture. It also makes a clever point that cultural activities are very vulnerable and if left alone, they will fall into the stage of commerce, and if people are not able to develop the aesthetic and enjoyment of cultural goods in conditions of illiteracy or lack of livelihood, they should not be deprived of books, theatre, cinema, libraries and cultural centers. In addition, cultural goods and services should be widely supplied and with education and advertisement, demands for reading are created so that the culture of reading and book-seeking can be institutionalized and the consumption of books and other cultural goods is placed in the household basket.

Based on the findings of research in the field of pathology of public policy of students' study some suggestions are presented as follows:

- 1- Establishment and strengthening of continuous monitoring committees of social harms in education and centers of provinces and cities of the country
- 2- Creating an independent news-cultural section about promoting the culture of studying students free from politicization and a purely ideological view on television as a national media
- 3- Invite authors, scientists, professors, teachers and other scholars as study companions to participate in book review sessions
- 4- Producing documentary films from the lives of successful writers and scientists and study lovers
- 5- Increasing the quality of the existing cultural organizations of the country through providing appropriate and necessary funding and reforming the subsidy orientation of the government to the cultural sector and the expansion of cultural centers of the country, especially in deprived areas.
- 6- Allocation of funds to education in order to strengthen school libraries and strengthen the infrastructure of information and communication technology
- 7- Accelerating the entry of the relevant legislation related to promoting the study culture of students into public policy making and placing on the agenda to prioritize their full implementation.
- 8- Creating conditions for the lower classes to access information sources by understanding the class position of the people in the society in the type of cultural consumption by the state.

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