

Social Policy Analysis in Arab Social Work Research: A Scoping Review

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تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية في بحث الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية:

مراجعة تحديد النطاق

الملخص:

تسهم دراسات تحليل السياسة في تحسين السياسة الاجتماعية. ورغم أهميتها للأخصائيين الاجتماعيين، والاهتمام المتزايد لباحثي الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية بإجراء هذه الدراسات، إلا أنه نادرا ما يوجد محتوى بحث تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية في مناهج تعليم الخدمة الاجتماعية. ومن ثم برزت أهمية تجميع وتلخيص محتوى دراسات تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية لتوفير معلومات قيمة لمعلمي وباحثي الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية للاستفادة منها في تطوير المناهج، والمؤلفات العلمية، وتوجيه البحث في هذا الموضوع. لذلك، هدفت هذه الدراسة إلى مراجعة دراسات تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية في بحث الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية، لتحديد ملامحها الأساسية وأولوياتها البحثية.

لتحقيق أهداف هذه الدراسة، استخدم الباحث مراجعة تحديد النطاق كإحدى طرق مراجعة الأدبيات، واعتمد على الإطار المنهجي لـ Arksey and O'Malley (٢٠٠٥) لإجراء هذه المراجعة. اشتملت هذه المراجعة على (٤١) دراسة خلال الفترة (١٩٦٠ - ٢٠١٩)، وتم اختيارها وفق معايير محددة.

أوضحت المراجعة ملامح تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية في بحث الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية فيما يتعلق ب: أغراض التحليل، مداخل التحليل، نماذج التحليل، المنهجية البحثية، والنماذج الفكرية للتحليل. وتم تحديد الأولويات البحثية للخدمة الاجتماعية العربية في هذا الموضوع.

الكلمات المفتاحية: بحث الخدمة الاجتماعية العربية- تحليل السياسة الاجتماعية - دراسات تحليل السياسة- مراجعة تحديد النطاق.

Social Policy Analysis in Arab Social Work Research: A Scoping Review

Abstract:

Policy analysis studies contribute to improving social policy. Although their importance to social workers and the growing interest of Arab social work researchers in conducting these studies, the content of social policy analysis research is rarely found in social work education curricula. Hence, the importance of collecting and summarizing the content of social policy analysis studies has emerged to provide valuable information to educators and researchers of Arab social work to use it in developing curricula and scientific literature and directing research on this topic. So, this study aimed to review the social policy analysis studies in Arab social work research to determine their key features and research priorities.

To achieve the aims of this study, the researcher used the scoping review as one of the literature review methods and relied on the methodological framework of Arksey and O'Malley (2005) to conduct this review. This review included (41) studies during the period (1960-2019), which were selected according to specific criteria.

The review showed features of social policy analysis in Arab social work research regarding analysis purposes, analytical approaches, analysis models, research methodology, and analysis paradigms. The research priorities of Arab Social work were identified in this topic.

Keywords: Arab Social Work Research - Social Policy Analysis - Policy Analysis Studies – Scoping Review.

Introduction:

Social policy plays a prominent and effective role in establishing and directing social welfare in society and influencing the well-being of citizens, by dealing with various aspects of welfare, providing social care services to certain groups, and improving the quality of life for members of society (Elsrogi, 2004, p.2, Midgley, 2009, p. 5-6). Therefore, it is necessary to continuously improve and develop social policy.

Policy analysis is an essential tool for improving social policy (Einbinder, 1995, p. 1853). O'Connor & Netting (2011) defined social policy analysis as "a systematic study of selected courses of action within unique contexts with goals of preventing and addressing social problems" (p.2). Segal (2016) defined it as "an investigation and inquiry into the causes and consequences of public policies" (p. 108). Gabel (2016) also defined it as "the efforts to systematically understand the consequences and intent of public actions in different sectors of society" (p.1). Social policy analysis is policy research (Hambrick & MacRae, 1998, 533; Segal, 2016, p.108) besides program evaluation (Hambrick & MacRae, 1998, p.533). Although some confuse policy analysis with evaluation, policy analysis is broader and more comprehensive than evaluation (Elsrogi, 2004, p.230; Unrau, 1993, P.533). Where, social policy analysis research includes understanding the social problem in its context, the goals of a particular policy and the forces affecting that policy, the decision-making process, the implementation process, the impact of this policy, and many other important elements (O'Connor & Netting, 2011, p.38).

Policy analysis focuses on examining the policy process, and it can be understood in two major meaning: analyses of policy (existing), which are analytical and descriptive to explain how and why particular policies have developed, consider how they were implemented, assess their impact; and analyses for policy (new), which are prescriptive, it

involved with formulating policies and proposals to provide information, advocacy and improve the quality of policy (Bochel, 2012, p.196: Spiker, 2006, p. v).

Social policy has been subject to systematic academic investigation since the middle decades of the last century. Although it is still a relatively new field of academic research, it has grown rapidly in recent times (Midgley, 2009, p. 5). Policy analysis is interdisciplinary, falls under the umbrella of general social sciences, where drawing on concepts from economics, political science, sociology, public administration, and history (Einbinder, 1995, p.1849; Gabel, 2016, p.1). Social policy analysis is an interdisciplinary endeavor where social policy inquiry takes place within schools of public policy; academic departments of economics, political science, and sociology; and at schools of social work and social welfare (Midgley, 2009, p.5).

In Arab social work, the interest in teaching social policy began in 1959, and in 1966 there was a specialized department for social policy at the Faculty of Social Work at Helwan University in Egypt under the name of social planning, and it granted master and doctoral degrees in this specialization (Elsrogi, 2004, p. 53). Since that time, the teaching of social policy has spread in faculties, institutes, and departments of social work in the Arab countries.

Policy analysis is one of the major research topics of social policy in Arab social work besides policy making and evaluation (Fahmy, 2008; Khalifa et al., 2010). There is a growing interest of Arab social work researchers in conducting social policy analysis studies, where Fahmy's study (2008) showed that policy analysis studies ranked first in social policy research in social work in Egypt.

Although the importance of teaching and conducting policy analysis as research in social work (O'Connor & Netting, 2008; 2011),

and what the policy analysis research provides for social workers to improve the life quality and well-being of their clients, the content of policy analysis research is rarely found in social work education curricula (Einbinder, 2010). Therefore, the importance of reviewing social policy analysis studies in Arab social work research has emerged to summarize their content to benefit from it in developing curricula, scientific literature, and directing research on this topic.

Although the importance of reviewing the literature in summarizing literature available on a particular topic and offering new insights can be developed by reviewing all the research on this topic together (Aveyard, 2014, 4-6), there is a scarcity of reviews of social work literature on analyzing social policy. Where the researcher did not find only a few studies related to this topic. Barretti (2016) examined how social problems are presented in a sample of social work policy textbooks and in policy analysis frameworks presented by the authors of these books. Lightfoot et al. (2018) Explored the nature of policy research by examining the policy content in doctoral dissertations of social work students in the United States.

Also, in Arab social work research, there is a scarcity of reviews of social policy studies in general and social policy analysis in particular. As there is only one study, Ismail's (2008) study on research trends in social policy. This study limited to reviewing published and unpublished social policy studies at the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University in Egypt, and did not focus on features of social policy analysis studies. So, the current study provides the first-ever review of studies of social policy analysis in Arab social work research to identify features of Arab social work research on social policy analysis regarding analysis purposes, analysis approaches, analysis models, research methodology, and analysis paradigms; and to identify research priorities of Arab social work on this topic.

A literature review is "the comprehensive study and interpretation of literature that relates to a particular topic" (Aveyard, 2014, P.2). There are many methods of reviewing the literature that differ greatly depending on the discipline, the researcher's methodological orientation, research topic and questions, and the nature of existing research methods and findings in the given knowledge domain (Rumrill et al., 2010, 399). These methods are generally divided into two main types: narrative literature reviews or traditional reviews, which characterized by a concern for drawing together conceptual and theoretical ideas from a range of literature; And systematic literature reviews, which are more rigorous and systematic, and usually have a very well-defined focus and relate to context and practice-based issues (Kiteley & Stogdon, 2014, p.11-12). Because of criticism of both traditional and systematic review methods, and there is not a single "ideal" type of literature review, Arksey and O'Malley (2005) introduced a scoping review as one of the many methods that can be used to review the literature.

A scoping review differs from a systematic review because it is generally undertaken to examine the extent, range, and nature of research activity in a particular topic, without the need to delve deep into the literature or assess its quality, where scoping review focuses on the breadth of coverage of the literature conducted on a topic rather than depth of coverage and rarely evaluate the quality of the included studies (Arksey & Agents, 2005, p.20; Rumrill et al., 2010, p.4). Scoping review provides viable alternatives to more traditional methods of reviewing and synthesizing existing literature. Characterized by the identification of broad themes and patterns in a research area, and provides important foundations for future study by framing research questions, identifying gaps in the knowledge base, and illuminating the most common approaches that researchers use within a specific content domain (Rumrill et al., 2010, p.404). So, the researcher used a scoping review to achieve the aims of this study.

For this study, Arab social work research on social policy analysis is published or unpublished studies within the Arab countries, which focus on social policy analysis in Arab societies, and were conducted or taken part in by a researcher specializing in social work.

Method:

The researcher depends on the methodological framework of Arksey and O'Malley (2005) for conducting Scoping reviews, which includes the following stages: identifying the research question; identifying relevant studies; study selection; charting the data; and collating, summarizing, and reporting the results (p.22).

Research questions are:

1. What are the features of Arab social work research on social policy analysis regarding analysis purposes, analytical approaches, analysis models, research methodology, and analysis paradigms?
2. What are the research priorities of Arab social work on social policy analysis?

To identify relevant studies, the researcher conducted a search in the following Arabic databases: Dar AlMandumah, AskZad, Al Manhal, and e-Marefa. The title was searched using (AND) in each of the following terms: social policy/ polices, welfare policy/policies, policy/policies analysis. The search was conducted during the time (1960 - 2019) where the first issue of the Journal of Social work - issued by the Egyptian Association of Social Workers - was published as the first journal for social work in the Arab countries. Also, the researcher carried out hand searching because most of the annual conferences of the Faculties of Social work at Helwan and Fayoum universities in Egypt; Some issues of the Journal of Studies in Social Work and Human Sciences at the Faculty of Social Work, Helwan University; and the vast

majority of master's and doctoral dissertations in Egyptian universities are not found in previous databases.

The researcher carried out the following steps:

1. Searching in each electronic database separately.
2. Exclude duplicate search results in each electronic database separately.
3. Applying criteria of inclusion and exclusion to research results in each electronic database separately.
4. Exclusion of duplicate studies between electronic databases.
5. Exclusion of duplicate studies between electronic databases and hand searching.

Table 1. Inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Articles of journals and conferences, Master's theses, and doctoral dissertations. • Conducted or taken part in by a researcher specializing in social work. • Policy analysis topic is obvious in "study title or study problem, or study objectives". • Non-theoretical articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Books and reports. • For non-specialists in social work. • Did not focus on policy analysis. • Theoretical articles.

According to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, the number of studies relevant to this review is (41) study. Table (2) summarizes the features of these studies:

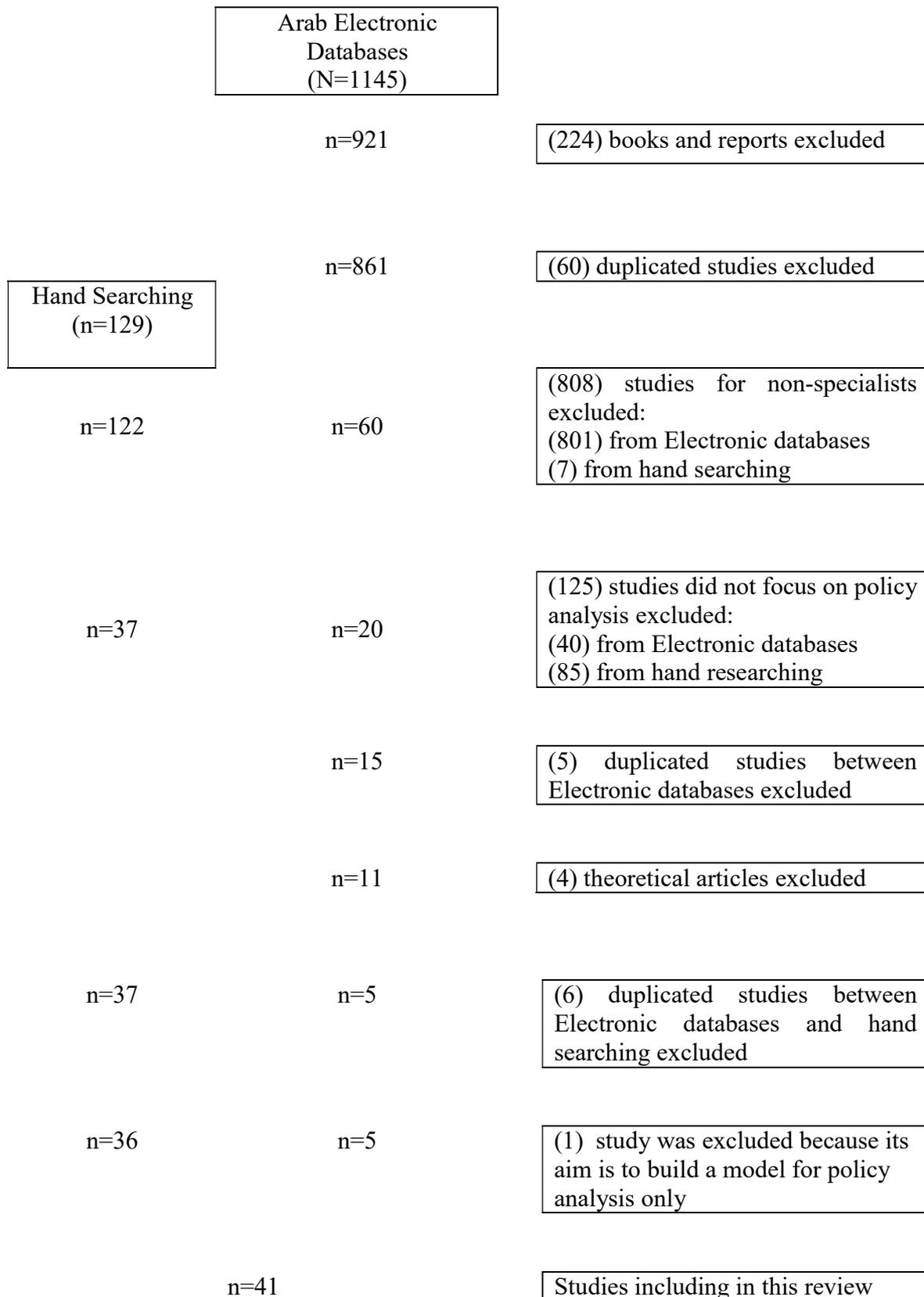


Figure 1. Search results and application of the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

Table 2. Full list of included studies and synthesis of results:

Author(s) and Year	Content type	Country under analysis	Using analysis models	Identification Time period of policy analysis	Research Methodology ^b			Analysis methods ^c
					Study design	Analysis unit(s) ^{b1}	Data collection Tool(s) ^{b2}	
1. Suleiman, S., 1987	Thesis	Egypt	No	(1950-1980)	Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA & SSI	Mixed
2. Hassan, 1991	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1939-1989)	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Qual CA, SI, & SSI	Mixed
3. Shafiq, 1992	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1970-1990)	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & B	Qual CA & SSI (2)	Mixed
4. Yunus, 1993	Conference	Kuwait	No	Did not specify	Historical	D	Qual CA	Qualitative
5. Alhamzawy, 1996	Dissertation	Egypt	No	Did not specify	Social survey	O & E	SI & SSI	Mixed
6. Owais, Mona , 1996	Conference	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	Did not specify	Social survey	D, O, & E	Qual CA, SI, & SSI	Mixed
7. Dawood, 1998	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1987- 1992)	Social survey & Case study	D & O	Quan CA & SI	Quantitative
8. Mustafa, 1998	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1988- 1992)	Social survey & Case study	D & O	Quan CA & SSI	Quantitative

9. Morsi, 1999	Thesis	Egypt	Yes ^{a1a2}	(1990- 1997)	Social survey & Case study	D, O, B, & E	Quan CA, Q,SSI, & UI	Mixed
10. Farouk, 2001	Conference	Egypt	No	Did not specify	Social survey	O & E	Q & SI	Quantitative
11. Owais, Muhammad, 2001	Journal	Egypt	Yes ^{a3}	Did not specify	Social survey & Case study	D, B, & E	Qual CA & SI (2)	Mixed
12. Amara, 2002	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1995- 2000)	Social survey & Case study	O & B	SI	Quantitative
13. Fahmy, 2002	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1975- 2000) 3 sub-periods	Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA & SSI	Quantitative
14. Rabie, 2002	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a2}	(1997- 2002)	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA, SSI, & UI	Mixed
15. Suleiman, A., 2002	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a2}	(1960- 1997) 5 sub-periods	Social survey	D & O	Quan CA & Q	Quantitative
16. Suleiman, S., 2002	Journal	Egypt	No	(1975- 1999)	Case study	D	Qual CA	Qualitative
17. Khalil, 2004	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1936- 2001) 3 sub-periods	Case study	D, O, & E	Qual CA & SSI	Quantitative
18. Salem, 2004	journal	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1993- 1998)	Social survey & Case study	D & O	Qual CA & SSI	Mixed

19. Abdulaziz, 2006	Dissertation	Egypt	No	(1945- 2004) 3 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA (2) & SSI	Quantitative
20. Marie, 2006	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1952- 2004) 2 sub-periods	Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA & SI	Quantitative
21. Abdallah, 2010	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	Did not specify	Case study	D, O & B	Quan CA & Q (2)	Quantitative
22. Alalam, 2010	Thesis	Libya	No	Did not specify	Historical	D	Qual CA	Qualitative
23. Muhammad, 2010	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1956-2008) 3 sub-periods	Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA, Q, & UI	Mixed
24. Sediq, 2010	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1920- 2007) 3 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA, Q, & UI	Mixed
25. Abdulgalil, 2011	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1950- 2008) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA & SSI	Quantitative
26. Aldhafiri, 2011	journal	Kuwait	No	Did not specify	Social survey	D, O, & E	Qual CA & Q	Mixed
27. Mara, 2011	Dissertation	Libya	No	Did not specify	Historical	D	Qual CA	Qualitative
28. Tadros, 2011	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1980- 2008) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA & SSI	Quantitative

29. Muhammad & Saeed, 2012	Journal	Saudi Arabia	No	(2000-2014) 3 sub-periods	Social survey	D	Qual CA	Qualitative
30. Othman, 2012	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1952- 2009) 3 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & B	Quan CA, Q, & SI	Quantitative
31. Abu Ali, 2013	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1920-2010) 4 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, B, & E	Quan CA, Q, SI & SSI	Mixed
32. Altarawneh, 2015	Thesis	Jordon	No	Did not specify	Qualitative (Did not specify)	D, O, & E	Qual CA & UI	Qualitative
33. Gomaa, 2016	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1946- 2013) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O & B	Quan CA, Q, & SSI	Quantitative
34. Harfosh, 2016	Thesis	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1928- 2012)	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA, Q, & UI	Mixed
35. Hikal, 2016	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1954-2014) 3 periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, B, & E	Quan CA, Q, & SSI (2)	Quantitative
36. Alshahrani, 2017	Journal	Saudi Arabia	No	Did not specify	Social survey	D & E	Qual CA & Q	Mixed
37. Alsibai, 2017	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1974- 2013) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D & O	Quan CA & Q	Quantitative

38. Harara, 2017	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1994- 2014) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & E	Quan CA, Q, & SSI	Quantitative
39. Ibrahim, 2018	Dissertation	Egypt	No	(1952-2017)	Social survey	D & O	Qual CA & Q	Mixed
40. khalaf, 2019	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a4}	(1982- 2015) 3 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & B	Quan CA, Q, & SI	Quantitative
41. Shaheen, 2019	Dissertation	Egypt	Yes ^{a1}	(1970- 2015) 2 sub-periods	Social survey & Case study	D, O, & B	Quan CA, Q, & SI	Quantitative

^{a1} David Gil model (1973); ^{a2} Gilbert & Specht model (1974, 1986); ^{a1a2} David Gil model and Neil Gilbert & Harry Specht model; ^{a3} Models: Donald Chambers (1993), Kathleen McInnis-Dittrich (1994), and Demetrius Latridis (1994); ^{a4} The used model from the researcher's suggestion.

^b Study type: descriptive in all studies

^{b1} D: Documents; O: Officials; B: Beneficiaries; E: Experts

^{b2} Q: Questionnaire; Quan CA: Quantitative Content Analysis; Qual CA: Qualitative Content Analysis; SI: Structured Interview; SSI: Semi-Structured Interview; UI: Unstructured Interview

^c The researcher identified analysis methods based on: study design(s) and data collection tool(s).

Results:

Table 3. Content Type, Year, and Country under analysis		N=41
	f	%
(A) Content Type		
Doctoral Dissertation	27	65.9
Master Thesis	5	12.2
Journal article	6	14.6
Conference article	3	7.3
(B) Year		
Before 2000	9	22
2000-2009	11	26.8
2010-2019	21	51.2
(C) Country under analysis		
Egypt	33	80.5
Kuwait	2	4.9
Libya	2	4.9
Saudi Arabia	2	4.9
Jordon	1	2.4
Palestine	1	2.4

Table No. (3) shows that:

- Content-type: (27 studies out of 41) were doctoral dissertations, (6 studies) published articles in scientific conferences, (5 studies) Master theses, and (3 studies) published articles in scientific journals.
- Year: (9 studies out of 41) were conducted prior to the year 2000, (11 studies) conducted in the first decade of the current century, and (21 studies) conducted in the second decade.
- The country under analysis: (33 studies out of 41) analyzed social policy in Egypt, (2 studies) in Saudi Arabia, Libya and Kuwait, and one study for Jordan and Palestine.

Table No. (5) shows that:

- Using Models of Policy Analysis: (28 studies out of 41) used the analysis models. (19 studies out of 28) used foreign (non-Arab) models, while (9) studies used models from their researchers' suggestion.
- Determining a time period for policy analysis: (30 studies out of 41) identified a time period for policy analysis, while (11 studies) were not identified.

Table .4 Features of Arab Social Research on Social Policy analysis N=41

Features	f	%	Clarifications
Using models of policy analysis			
Yes	28	68.3	(19) Studies used foreign models, (16) from these studies used David Gil model. (9) Studies used Proposed models by their researcher
No	13	31.7	
Identification time period of policy analysis			
Yes	30	73.2	(18) Studies divided the time period into sub-periods
No	11	26.8	
Study design			
Social survey	30	73.2	
Case study	29	70.7	
Historical	3	7.3	
Did Not Specified	1	2.4	
Number of study designs			
One	19	46.3	
Two	22	53.7	
Units of analysis			
Documents	38	92.7	(33) Legislations, (6) Five-year plans, (4) statistics, (4) global charters, (4) reports, (1) Parliament sittings minutes, (1) newspapers, (1) national strategy, and (1) interviews content
People	36	87.8	(34) Officials: (1) Policymakers, (6) Implementers, (27) Both; Experts: (1) Academic experts, (13) Practicing experts, (9) Both; and (11) Beneficiaries.
Number of analysis units			
One	5	12.2	
Two	11	26.8	
Three	22	53.7	
Four	3	7.3	
Data collecting tools			
Content analysis	38	92.7	(23) Quan CA, (15) Qual CA
Interview	30	73.2	(12) SI, (18) SSI, (6) UI
Questionnaire	18	43.9	
Number of data collecting tools			
one	6	14.6	
Two	17	41.5	
Three	15	36.6	
Four	3	7.3	
Methods of analysis			
Qualitative	19	46.3	
Qualitative	6	14.6	
Mixed	16	39	

- Study design: (30 studies out of 41) used social survey, (29 studies) used case study, (3 studies) used historical design. The social survey and case study were combined in (22) studies. One study did not specify the design used, where it indicated that it was qualitative without specifying this design.
- Units of analysis: (38 studies out of 41) relied on documents, (36 studies) relied on people (34 officials, 23 experts, and 11 beneficiaries). (36 out of 41 studies) relied on more than one unit of analysis.
- Methods of analysis: (19 studies out of 41) were quantitative, (6 studies) were qualitative, and (16 studies) were mixed.

Discussion:

Most social policy analysis studies in Arab Social Work research were doctoral dissertations and master's theses, and conducted in Egypt. There is a continuous increase in the number of Arab social work research on social policy analysis. Regarding the features of these studies and their research priorities, the review showed the following:

1) Purposes of Social Policy analysis:

As shown in Table (5), the most common purposes of policy analysis in Arab social work research are in order: Identifying policy goals; describe the application aspects of the policy; presenting proposals for improving the policy or developing an alternative policy; Determine the issues addressed by the policy; Determining policy-oriented values; Determining the influencing factors in the policy; Identifying developments and changes in the policy; Identifying the influencing forces and participating in setting the policy; Determining the effects of the policy; And determining the pros and cons of the policy.

It is noted that the key purpose of social policy analysis in social work research is to examine all or most elements of the policy-making stages (policy development, policy implementation, and policy evaluation) for improvement. This is because all studies analyzed policies that already exist, except for Mona Owais 1996, which analyzed a policy that had not yet been implemented. In spite of this,

this study presented a conception for the implementation and success of the policy.

Table 5. Purposes of Social policy analysis in Arab social work research

Policy analysis purposes*	f	%
1. Identify policy changes / developments	22	53.7
2. Determine the issues addressed by the policy	31	75.6
3. Determine policy-oriented values	21	51.2
4. Determine the forces involved / influencing policy setting	23	56.1
5. Determine the (social-economical-political) factors that influence policy	27	65.9
6. Identify policy goals	37	90.2
7. Explain policy choices	1	2.4
8. Describe the applied aspects of policy	41	100
9. Determine the positives (strengths) and policy negatives (weaknesses)	20	48.8
10. Determine policy return / impacts	23	56.1
11. Proposals to improve the current policy or to develop an alternative policy	37	90.2

* The researcher identified analysis purposes based on studies aims and questions (or hypotheses).

2) Analytical approaches to Social Policy:

There are three basic approaches to social policy analysis: process, product, and performance. The process approach focus on the dynamics of policy formulation regarding sociopolitical and technical variables, where it is most concerned with understanding how the relationships and interactions among the various forces in society affect policy formulation. The analytical focus of the product approach is on explaining policy choice. The performance studies are concerned with describing and evaluating implementation and program impacts. These approaches are overlapping and interrelated, and policy analysts often use different combinations of these techniques in their investigations (Gilbert & Terrell, 2013).

Determining the analytical approach depends on the analysis purpose (Elsrogi, 2004, p. 233). Given that the vast majority of social policy analysis studies in Arab social work research did not explicitly mention the analytical approach. The researcher relied mainly on the analysis purposes in identifying these approaches.

It is clear from the purposes of policy analysis that most studies of social policy analysis combined analytical approaches, especially the performance and process approaches. Where these studies depended on the performance approach for describing the applied aspects of the policy and identifying the pros and cons of the policy and its effects. And they depended on the process approach for identifying the factors affecting and the forces involved in making it. Although the vast majority of studies analyzed policy documents (38 studies) and many of them focused on identifying the issues addressed by the policy and the values directed to it, but they limited to describing the policy product, and rarely explained policy choices.

Gabel (2016, p. 5) distinguished between a needs-based policy analysis approach and a rights-based policy analysis approach. A needs-based approach typically establishes programmatic goals and the success of policy intervention is often measured by the attainment of these goals. While, in a rights-based approach, the success of policy or program interventions is measured against the progressive realization of human rights. The decisions, actions, and conduct of political, economic, social, and institutional systems, and actors are evaluated by their contribution to the realization of rights. policy analysis in Arab social work research has focused on needs and rarely on rights. Hence, using a rights-based approach in analyzing social policy is a research priority of Arab social work.

3) Models of Social Policy Analysis:

Although some scholars distinguish between the two terms of framework and model of policy analysis (Karger & Stoeze, 2018, p. 50; O'Connor & Knitting, 2008, p. 162; 2011, p. 33), the two terms are used interchangeably in Arab social work research on social policy analysis, and analysis model is the term most used.

(28 studies out of 41) used models of policy analysis. Most of these studies used foreign (non-Arab) models (19 studies). David Gil Model is the most commonly used foreign model in these studies, where it was used in (16 studies out of 19). Proposing Arab models for policy

analysis is one of the most prominent features of Arab social work research on social policy analysis, where (9 studies out of 28) used Arab models for policy analysis suggested by their researchers. Therefore, reviewing these models and determining their characteristics is one of the research priorities of Arab Social work.

4) Research methodology:

A- Study type:

Einbinder (2010) identified three types of policy analysis studies: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. An exploratory policy analysis examines new and promising policy issues or functions as a pilot study. Descriptive policy analysis research mainly identifies and describes the characteristics of a single policy or group of policies. explanatory studies are often the most complex; they examine the causal relationships between policy (independent variable) and changes (dependent variable). All policy analysis studies in Arab social work research were descriptive and use non-experimental designs.

Although determining the policy effects is a major purpose in (23 studies out of 41) and there are some studies that aimed to determine the relationship between policy (as an independent variable) and some dependent variables (such as: the development of school social care services in Suleiman study 1987; prisoner's citizenship in Abdallah study 2010; and life quality of factory workers in Shaheen study 2019), these studies identified these effects and addressed these relationships descriptively. Hence, the use of exploratory and explanatory analyzes of the policy is one of the research priorities of Arab social work.

B- Study design:

Heck (2008) identified the different approaches to designing policy research in non-experimental designs, experimental and quasi-experimental designs, case studies, and the historical. Einbinder (2010) summarized the types of policy analysis research designs in non-experimental designs, quasi-experimental designs, and experimental designs. All policy analysis studies in the Arab social work research

used non-experimental designs. The designs most used in policy analysis studies are social survey and case study, as they were used in (30, 29 studies out of 41) respectively, and they rarely used historical design. The combination of designs is considered one of the prominent features of the policy analysis studies in Arab social work research, where (22 studies out of 41) combined social survey and case study.

Policy analysis can be longitudinal or cross-sectional (Einbinder, 2020). Longitudinal Studies describe processes occurring over time, while Cross-Sectional Studies examine some phenomenon by taking a cross section of it at one time and analyzing that cross-section carefully (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, pp. 148,149). Many of the policy analysis studies in Arab social work research were longitudinal, where (30 studies out of 41) identified a time period for policy analysis, and (18 studies out of 30) divided this period into sub-time periods. Although this identification and division of the time period for the analysis, its purpose was to describe policy developments and changes and not measure their impact.

Although the importance of comparative studies in analyzing social policy to benefit from the experiences of other countries (Elsrogi, 2004), the policy analysis in all Arab social work research was country specific. Therefore, conducting comparative studies is research priorities of the Arab Social work.

C- Units of analysis:

For the research to be useful, it is necessary to determine the unit/s of analysis that is most important in answering the research question/s (O'Connor & Netting, 2011, p.43). Although policy analysis seeks to influence policies, the unit of analysis is not limited to policies. It can be individuals, families, state policies, or school of social work, as some examples: there are no restriction (Einbinder, 2010, p.537). Bardach and Patashnik (2016, p. 87) summarized all of the sources in two general types: documents and people.

Most of the social policy analysis studies in Arab social work research relied on more than one unit of analysis (36 studies out of 41),

and (33 studies out of 36) relied on documents and people together as units of analysis.

Documents are the units of analysis most used in social policy analysis studies (38 studies out of 41), and they included: legislations, five-year plans, national strategies, official statistical reports, international charters, and the content of expert interviews. Legislations are the most analyzed documents in these studies.

People were relied on as units of analysis in (36 of 41 studies), and they included officials (34 studies out of 36), experts (23 studies out of 36), and beneficiaries (11 studies out of 36). Officials are divided into two types: policymakers and implementers. They were relied upon together in (27 studies out of 34), and the studies rarely relied on policy-makers alone as the unit of analysis. Experts are also divided into two types: practicing experts and academic experts. (13 studies out of 23) relied on practicing experts, and (9 studies out of 23) combined the two types of experts, and these studies rarely relied on academic experts alone as a unit of analysis. Although determining the policy effects was one purpose of analysis in (23) studies, (11) studies relied only on the beneficiaries as units of analysis.

D- Data collection tools:

There are many tools that researchers can use in social policy analysis studies, and the most important of these tools are content analysis; questionnaires; scales; Structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews; Reviewing various laws, legislations, and statistics; and scientific observation (Elsrogi, 2004, p. 239).

Policy analysis studies in Arab social work research used the following data collection tools in order: content analysis (38 studies), interview (30 studies), and questionnaire (18 studies). Although the use of more than one tool to collect data is a prominent feature of these studies (35 of 41 studies), they did not use observation and scales.

The content analysis tool examination showed that quantitative content analysis was more used, where it was used in (23 studies out of

38), while qualitative content analysis was used in (15) studies. Although the types of interviews varied in the policy analysis studies, they focused on semi-structured interviews and structured interviews and rarely used unstructured interviews.

E- Methods of analysis:

Policy analysis research uses both quantitative and qualitative methods (Enibinder, 2010). And based on the previous methodological procedures, the researcher classified studies of policy analysis in Arab social work research according to the methods of analysis into three types, namely: quantitative studies, qualitative studies, and mixed studies. Accordingly, (19) studies were quantitative, (6) studies were qualitative, and (16) studies were mixed. Therefore, qualitative analysis is a research priority of Arab Social work.

5) Paradigms of policy analysis:

Paradigms organize our observations and make sense of them. They can tell us where to look for the answers. Of course, we can usually organize or make sense of things in more than one way. Therefore, different points of view are probably to yield different explanations (Rubin & Babbie, 2011, p. 47).

Although the paradigms of research are the basis on which all research steps and the methodology in particular depend, the researcher presented them at the end of the research because they are often not explicitly mentioned in the studies, and trying to identify it requires a complete review of the study.

O'Connor and Netting (2008; 2011) identified three basic paradigms or perspectives that pervade the field of policy analysis: Rational (linear), Nonrational (circular), and Critical (progressive). Schneider and Ingram (2017, p. 156) added a pragmatic analysis of policy.

Rational policy analysis depends on positivist and post-positivist concepts and ideas of reality and knowledge. It is linear and reductive,

requires a focused position and a rather narrow analytical space, and the rational process takes a step-by-step approach, somewhat described and intended to lead the analyst towards an ordered end. Irrational perspectives rely on interpretivism / constructivism. It is far more flexible and less risky ways to establish the contextual nature of multiple facts that are questioned in an irrational manner, as there are no steps that must precede subsequent steps. Instead, the analyst begins where he or she can build the information needed to complete the analysis, and a complete analysis takes place when all aspects of the portal have been completed (O'Connor & Netting, 2011). Policy analysis from a critical perspective is based on critical theory, which focuses primarily on power. (Segal, 2010: 126) The goal of analyzing policies that have been adopted from a critical perspective is the radical transformation of politics and society through conflict. conflict (Segal, 2010: 134,135). Hence, questions related to denial of rights, empowerment, suppression of ideas, and injustice are all appropriate to guide a critical analysis of politics (O'Connor & Netting, 2011, p.230). Pragmatic policy analysis relies on methods that are appropriate to produce useful knowledge within the context in which politics operates without an ideological commitment to a particular methodology (Schneider and Ingram, 2017, p.159).

Given that the key purpose of policy analysis in Arab social work research is to examine all or most of the existing policy elements in order to improve it and maintain the status quo and stability. In addition, the policy analysis was done in a linear form and focused on needs rather than rights, and most of the studies used quantitative methods, and there was a marked interest in using mixed methods. Therefore, the paradigms of policy analysis in social work research were closer to rational and pragmatic perspectives.

Conclusion:

This study aimed to review the social policy analysis studies in Arab social work research to identify their features regarding analysis purposes, analytical approaches, analysis models, research

methodology, and analysis paradigms; and to determine research priorities in this topic.

The key purpose of social policy analysis in Arab social work research is to examine all or most of current policies elements to understand and describe these policies and work to improve them, whether by presenting proposals for developing or alternative policies. These studies have relied on rational and pragmatic perspectives to analyze policy. Most of the studies used over one analytical approach and focused on needs more than rights. Many of these studies used analysis models, and although non-Arab models of analysis are the most used, there is a growing trend to suggest Arab models for analyzing policy. All analyzes were descriptive and used non-experimental designs. Most studies relied on documents and people together as the unit of analysis. Although quantitative methods were the most used, there is a marked interest in using mixed methods.

In the light of this review, the research priorities of Arab Social work on this topic are: Reliance on critical and irrational perspectives; Rights-based analysis; Conducting product, comparative, exploratory, and exploratory studies; Use experimental and quasi-experimental designs; And qualitative methods. Besides reviewing the proposed Arab models for analyzing social policy.

Although assessing these studies is not the aim of this study, it is noticeable that most Arab social work research on social policy analysis conducted by Egyptian researchers. In other Arab countries, there is a scarcity of policy analysis studies, and the studies that were conducted did not use analysis models, and most of them are desk research. Hence, the importance of studying the attitudes of social work researchers in these countries towards conducting social policy analysis studies, and examining the content of social policy courses in social work education curricula in these countries.

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