



EVALUATION OF GENERAL POLICIES: A CONCEPT READING

ÉVALUATION DES POLITIQUES GÉNÉRALES : UNE LECTURE DE CONCEPT

Fatima Chikh *

PhD student at Abdelhamid ben Badis
University-Mostaganem
fatima.chikh@univ-mosta.dz

Abdellah Belghit

PhD at Abdelhamid Ben Badis
University-Mostaganem
abdellah.belghit@univ-mosta.dz

Received: 05/ 08/ 2023

Accepted:24/ 08/ 2023

Published: 15/ 09/ 2023

Abstract:

This study seeks to advance theoretically and conceptually the evaluation of general policies as the key steps since public policy operations continue after implementation and analysis processes are complete. Therefore, despite their many specialisations, the majority of researchers and experts in this field view this idea as ambiguous. At this point, the study highlights the paradox between the cognitive side of evaluating general policies and the practical issues that governments must deal with in order to implement them. To do this, it first takes a broad view of what general policy evaluation is defined as and the issues that governments must deal with in order to implement them.

Keywords: evaluation of general policies; the stages of general policy evaluation; criteria for evaluating general policies; types of general policy evaluation; Methods for evaluating general policies.

Introduction:

Though its fields of use are as old as the state itself, the topic of general policy is seen as new in comparison to other areas of political science. However, the discourse focuses on the emergence of an independent science and a field of knowledge that was born in the 20th century and originated from American academic and research institutions. Due to the critical and interconnected nature of the process of evaluating governmental policies, the terms "general policy" and "government policies" are often used interchangeably to refer to the same thing. Government policies are the practical translation of a government's philosophy, objectives, and strategies that are put into practise by the public administration with the goal of resolving specific issues pertaining to society, individuals, or its institutions.

Importance of the research:

The significance of this topic lies via the fact that it emphasises on the issue of evaluating general policies and what that term entails, through what is required in terms of

*Submitted author



steps and methods, what the process entails in terms of types, standards, and sound methodological steps, as well as who are the authorities involved in the evaluation, in order to address the challenges that the general policy evaluation process faces.

The problem statement:

The issue this topic raises is as follows: What are factors which assist in the comprehension, interpretation, and meaning of the evaluation of general policies?

Aims of the study:

- Provide the notion of evaluating general policy a procedural definition.
- Establish the standards for judging general policy.
- Determine which phases in the process of evaluating general policy are the most crucial.
- Statement of the major challenges to the evaluation of general policy.

The study employed the following resources to explain the term in several theoretical dimensions:

Historical research: In order to accurately grasp any phenomena or condition of any topic, the researcher goes back to its context, roots, origins, and causes. This means that the researcher must be aware of the advances and changes that have taken place as well as the order in which they have appeared across various historical stages. The historical approach seeks out historical explanations and generalisations in order to comprehend the present and apply them to the future. In order to infer the historical evolution of the notion of public policy evaluation, the historical approach was used in our study.

The research study is organised into the following sections that assist readers become familiar with several theoretical elements of this subject:

THE FIRST TOPIC: WHAT IS THE EVALUATION OF GENERAL POLICIES?

Since evaluation performs to improve general policies permanently and continuously by disclosing their positive and negative effects, which is positively reflected on the quality of their results through the use of mechanisms, evaluation is crucial in the formulation of public policies as a political and scientific process that enables us to study the various quantitative, qualitative, and objective aspects of various fields. In particular, where we will talk about the conceptual approach to the process of analyzing general policy in this issue.

FIRST REQUIREMENT: THE NOTION OF EVALUATION OF GENERAL POLICIES

Scientific research is based on the concept-adjustment process, which makes it simpler for the researcher to understand the conditions of the event under study from all of its cognitive perspectives. We shall outline the most significant theoretical definitions of the phenomena in this context.

Firstly: The concept of evaluation

1- Linguistically: "Evaluation is defined as providing value (Al-Ma'ani n.d.) or assessing things, phenomena, ideas, or behavioural patterns, and making decisions regarding the worth of things, topics, or ideas. This requires a clear and sufficient grasp of the phenomena at hand. It might be either quantitative or qualitative. It is "a process of gathering and quantifying information, analysing it, and comparing it with standards that have previously been determined to judge the



effectiveness and adequacy of organisations' performance to the decision-making and monitoring objective," according to UNESCO (Abbas Hussein Jawad 2006).

1- As for terminology: Because it gauges a programme's ability and execution to accomplish set objectives that are qualitative rather than quantitative in nature, evaluation is regarded as the most crucial phase in general policy. programmes that have failed to meet the goals specified and have proven worthless (Hassan 2014).

Evaluation, according to Ahmed Mustafa Hussein, "is the process of making sure that political plans have accomplished their goals. In order to give participants in the formation of general policy input, it is also employed as a tool that examines programme operations. process from the planning stage to execution, in order to increase its effectiveness and efficiency (Al-Alban 2022).

According to another definition, evaluation is a periodic, objective study of a programme or activity to see how closely expected and unforeseen goals and outcomes match the original intent.

Furthermore, it emphasises in the same context (Martine & Jean; Pierre & Nathalie) that evaluation is a system, policy, or programme designed to measure and provide skills in accordance with particular criteria to achieve the objectives and make informed judgements (Jean Pierre 2012).

Thomas Daye relates evaluation to goals, and from his point of view, evaluation is a presentation of how well public programmes work overall at attaining their goals (Jean Pierre 2012).

On the other hand, (Fritz, Patrick & Wartheu) connect evaluation to techniques of arbitration and inquiry based on the choice of the measurement level, the gathering of data, the use of measurement levels, and the creation of particular recommendations.

To reach an agreement with (Thomas Daye), (William) emphasised that evaluation is the degree to which the outcomes of policy implementation are known and assessed as to whether they fulfil their goals (Daye 1984).

Others argue that evaluation, which has as its primary goal the diagnosis and measurement of the effects and outcomes of the policy in order to achieve knowledge of the results obtained, whether they are measured by goods or services rendered, is a crucial process for the designers and implementers of general policies. through projects or early results of policy in a particular region.

The goal of evaluation, according to Qassem Al-Qaryouti, is to determine the nature of general policy operations, their consequences, and the real programmes connected to execution. Evaluation is an organized activity based on a scientific approach (Al-Qaryouti 2015).

According to scholars Werner Bussman and Ulrich Klotui, evaluation is a crucial and practical step in the creation of general policies. Its origins can be traced to individual disciplines that have long concentrated on assessing the efficacy of general policies as well as to systematic efforts in a variety of disciplines that started in the United States of America in the 1960s and have since been carried out in other nations. The efficacy of governmental policy has been the focus of these endeavours (Bussman, Mlritchkloti and Knoepfel 1998).

According to (Bernard; Perret), the evaluation is used in a variety of sectors related to health, education, the economy, security, and other fields. It also targets various geographic, local, regional, and national levels (Perret 2008).

Khalifa Al-Fahdawi, on the other hand, holds the following view regarding evaluation: "It is this systematic process that the general policy analyst carries out and applies in order to



determine the value of the results obtained in the implementation of general policies, so that this analytical process results in proving the validity or failure of the alternative, and consequently working to find a new alternative in its place in case of failure (Fahmy 2001).

Apparently as a result, evaluations of general policy are conducted in the following order: achievement of goals and how they correspond to reality, followed by the substance and implementation of the policy and its results.

Secondly: in order to differentiate between successful and unsuccessful general policies, Edward Suckman has created a number of criteria, including:

1- Effort: is the quantity and quality of tasks and procedures that the business or programme requires to be performed effectively.

2- Achieved: The emphasis of this criteria is on performance and outcomes obtained in light of the efforts made.

3- Adequacy: The level of overall programme performance is discussed in this criterion.

4- Effectiveness: This criterion entails assessing many techniques and experiments.

Thirdly: According to Qassem Al-Qaryouti, there are three main factors for evaluating governmental initiatives in this situation:

1-Accuracy: The evaluation must employ accurate facts and data in order to meet the degree of accuracy.

2- Utility Criteria: A good evaluation should offer suggestions, ideas, and findings that are applicable.

3- lawful criterion: From an ethical, procedural, and institutional standpoint, all processes and procedures for reviewing general policy must be sound and lawful.

While some define the evaluation of general policy as "a systematic process of understanding the development, implementation, and outcomes of public policies, and uses social science research evaluation methods, including qualitative and quantitative techniques, to study the effects of policies" (Hall n.d.).

In light of the aforementioned, it can be stated that the concept has been used in a variety of ways, each of which expressed a particular point of view. Some of these uses linked the concept to goals, while others linked it to means, while others touched on the idea of general policy evaluation as a process concerned with the effects and results of policy; examples of these include the following. Its usage is constantly connected to the intended goals to be achieved behind it, even though its notion is never entirely clear.

Based on the foregoing, it is evident that the concept of evaluating general policies cannot only be linked to the objectives sought to interpret the term but rather: a systematic and organized process based on a set of criteria, mechanisms, and methods of data collection and analysis aimed at identifying the nature of operations related to general policies, measuring their success, and determining their success, effectiveness, and effects by comparing the results to the goals it provided, it is possible to evaluate the efficacy of a plan's execution, as well as its success and failure. This information is used to guarantee that the plan is followed through on and that its course has been rectified.

Thus, we can say that a good and accurate evaluation is one that is conducted throughout all phases of the implementation of general policies in order to correct any mistakes that may arise, prevent policy failure, and pinpoint the causes of policy failure. the rule is being implemented into practise.



Fourthly: On the basis of the previously stated, the evaluation is connected to two essential steps:

1- Policy outputs: This is where the evaluation focuses on the government's activities and concrete, completed material features.

2- Policy outcomes: This is when evaluation shifts focus to assessing how general policies affect society as a whole, as well as how well they accomplish their stated goals and how well they align with social values.

SECOND REQUIREMENT: TYPES AND CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING GENERAL POLICIES

Firstly: types of evaluation of general policies

The variety of scientific patterns, as well as hypotheses, and approaches that rely on various methodologies and procedures varies according to various sorts of evaluation. Following this taxonomy, there are several different methods of evaluation (Al-Azzawi 2001):

1- Evaluation of the process for developing general policies, presenting all the facts and information on the implications of the options for all members of society, it aims to determine the efficacy and efficiency of this process, assisting in the selection of the best alternative.

There is a clear vision of the process to produce the most effective alternative whenever information regarding the advantages and disadvantages of each option is provided. Here, evaluation is viewed as a component that contributes to giving all parties involved in suggesting alternatives a solid evidence foundation. This implies that evaluation activities can influence policymaking and the selection of options based on the volume and reliability of information provided, which can impact the efficacy of policymaking.

2- Policy implementation evaluation

"A sequential model of activity that contributes to the evaluation of general policies and complements their development, content, and effects" is how it is described. It is referred to as "follow-up evaluation" by public administration students and it concentrates on all areas as well as goals and objectives, methods for putting governmental policy into action in order to gauge how committed the administration is (Al-Azzawi 2001).

3 - Evaluation of general policies' results

Type of analysis focuses on results and results that follow implementation, where the evaluation of impacts and results is carried out by gathering data on policy to examine immediate results, which aids in identifying societal attitudinal changes and public intents.

4. Evaluation of performance

Planning, organising, monitoring, and monitoring are the stages of the administrative process that make up performance appraisal. These stages are followed by the evaluation of effectiveness, efficiency, and performance, which compares the performance attained for one stage with the actual performance of the preceding stages in order to identify strengths and weaknesses, as well as the review of the implementation mechanisms. The process of evaluating performance is therefore a technique for gauging effectiveness and efficiency in accomplishing the goals of the policies that are being examined (Bounoua 2010).



Evaluation of general policies: a concept reading

5- Pre-and post-implementation evaluation

The period needed for general policy operations, which may be summed up as follows:

a-A pre-implementation evaluation

This evaluation focuses on the viability of general policies prior to their implementation in order to understand the purpose of implementation. Because it is dependent on data on available policies and resources, the viability of their successful implementation, and the possibility of adverse effects, whether intended or not, it can be characterised as preventive.

b- Evaluation of the execution

By assuring the efficacy of general policies in the regulatory sector suited to the general interest, this evaluation, also known as direct monitoring and directed impact, supports the administration and execution of general policies (Al-Awalameh 1999).

c-Evaluation following implementation

The goal of this evaluation is to determine the degree to which the programmes put into place have been successful in reaching the predetermined goals, as well as to determine the direct and indirect good and bad consequences brought on by their implementation.

6- A review alongside a focus on general policy goals

In order to evaluate the extent to which the government has been successful in achieving each objective, the objectives are ranked in descending order according to importance. This evaluation is focused on the definition of the general policy objectives to be evaluated and the degree of success of the government in achieving the objectives of the previously defined programmes. This means that the evaluation process aims to show the veracity of each purpose and the breadth of its reach in order to redesign the government operations necessary to attain this objective, the ability to be the focus of policy (Al-Awalameh 1999).

Secondly: Criteria for evaluation of general policy

Evaluation criteria are strategies to gauge how well general policies have succeeded in achieving their goals. In order to calculate the percentage gains from the implementation of particular policies, this question may be crucial to the evaluation of general policy. knows, examines, and evaluate the results of policy.

However, when different criteria are applied from one evaluation step to another or when several evaluation bodies may produce disparate evaluation outcomes, the plurality and variety of evaluation criteria can muddy the evaluation process of general policy. Understanding three different factors is necessary in order to decide on the evaluation criterion, namely (Al-Obaidi 2019):

- What criteria are used?
- The relative weight each criterion has. How to apply this criterion and the comparisons that should be made.
- All of this necessitates the involvement of those in charge of policy evaluation throughout the decision-making stage.
- Therefore, all social, environmental, and economic problems must be addressed through these criteria and indicators. The evaluation criteria can then be broken down into:

1-Main criterion. They consist of:

a- Direct Outputs:

It includes all legislation, regulations, laws, decisions and instructions. The evaluation criteria for these outputs and their quality can be determined in (Al-Obaidi 2019):



Evaluation of general policies: a concept reading

- Consistency in form and content.
- Compatibility with prevailing principles.
- Inclusiveness.
- The degree of acceptability and the extent to which it can be executed.

b- Net Outputs

This criterion, which is more appropriate for the industrial and productive economic sectors, notably in the field of public services, evaluates the final effects of policies by deducting inputs from outputs. Outputs in the education industry include knowledge, skills, evaluation, etc.

c- Results and effects

Effects and results are not the same thing. The outcomes show what has been accomplished. The changes that have happened as a result of the implementation of general policies are expressed by the impacts. Indicators such as a decline in the mortality rate and a rise in life expectancy are used to quantify impacts in the health sector, among other areas (Al-Qaryouti 2015).

2-Secondary criteria

These are proximate criteria that do not assess the end effects obtained as a result of the application of policy. Instead, they seek to evaluate certain ancillary factors that are favourably associated to the primary core requirements for inputs, outputs, and They are divided into several categories, including:

a- Procedural requirements

A clear scientific approach must be used to identify the issue and potential solutions, as well as innovative solutions and adequate information, in order to guarantee that general policies are established from a procedural perspective.

b- Regulatory Principles: Providing regulatory mechanisms by (Al-Obaidi 2019):

Provide organisational units concerned with the evaluation process, long-term planning units, the presence of individuals and research centres interested in the various general policy operations, and the existence of interdependent relationships between the various parties involved in policy preparation, implementation, and evaluation.

Standards for contributions to public policymaking: These include the availability of a workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge, adequate library information, advisory and research services for making policy decisions, as well as financial, technological, and communication resources.

THE SECOND TOPIC: STAGES AND METHODS FOR EVALUATING GENERAL POLICIES.

FIRST REQUIREMENT: STAGES OF GENERAL POLICY EVALUATION

The phases of evaluating general policy are the first necessity. There are a set of established protocols in the procedure for evaluating, regardless of the type of evaluation or the party doing the evaluation. Many different countries share these behaviours, specifically:

Firstly: Establishing the Evaluation's Goal



The government must establish up front what it hopes to accomplish in reviewing certain general policies since these goals will subsequently dictate how and what will be evaluated.

Secondly: Identifying General Policy Objectives to Be Evaluated

Following the evaluation process, individuals who assess the evaluation process specify their goal, ensuring that those who assess policies may clearly understand their goals. Despite the overlap of some objectives with other objectives or the difficulty of isolating them, it is necessary to isolate each of the objectives of general policies from the others. This is especially true given that the government has two policies that are similar, or rather that their objectives overlap while the evaluators only evaluate one policy, so the policies that one wants to evaluate must be separated from the other policies, and these objectives must be classified into objectives that are either (Yaghi 2010).

Thirdly: identifying the parties and entities related to the policies we are evaluating

The entities and parties that could play a role, have an interest in, or implement a programme that could influence the policy's direction and, in turn, its execution must be identified when analysing any policy. Therefore, it is essential to establish each actor's identification before figuring out their goals, priorities, modes of collaboration, and influence over the relevant policy.

Fourthly: Determine the mechanism by which the evaluation process of relevant general policies will be conducted

Since there are no standardized ways for evaluating all policies, it is important to choose the best evaluation approach for the type, context, and aims of these policies. The approaches vary depending on the goals.

Fifthly: Drafting of objective and practical recommendations and proposals

The final phase of the process should be drafting a collection of helpful recommendations based on the evaluation process' results. These recommendations include specific actions to do and options for deciding whether to retain the policy in place after modifications and mistakes have been made (Yaghi 2010).

Sixthly: Clarifying whether or not the government should conduct another assessment

To conduct a thorough appraisal, decision-makers must consider various evaluations of the same policy.

SECOND REQUIREMENT: METHODS FOR EVALUATING GENERAL POLICIES

The processes outlined below are used by the organisations in charge of assessing general policy:

Firstly: is the report and hearing part. The government and the legislature are two of the parties involved in the process of evaluation who utilise this method to ascertain the realism of the work and the breadth of a particular policy's results.

Secondly: is the survey sample. If the survey is used appropriately, the target group of a policy will provide us thorough conclusions about the company based on the patterns of change within the sample reflecting that society.



Thirdly: In order to get an accurate depiction of the effects of the policy, which is described in the third section, the case study approach provides us an additional component to .(Yaghi 2010) techniques that combine larger samples for specific sample surveys

Fourthly: Comparison of performance with international standards: evaluation based on local standards may not achieve the desired objective, so the comparison is made to evaluate international standards and specifications for ISO quality - and to ensure the extent of compliance with these standards.

Fifthly: Field Visits: Senior officials and legislative committees keep a close eye on the work's progress since they may view in-depth observations of what has been accomplished where a policy is expected to be put into practise. It is crucial since it serves as a means of reporting practises and behaviours.

Sixthly: Organise gatherings using information sources: This entails conducting solitary interviews with individuals on a certain subject. These people might be either institutional or personal leaders. Finding out the scope of responses to this policy is the goal of this method.

Seventhly: Interviews with Community Members: This technique is used to gather various perspectives on the policy, provides decision-makers with input from beneficiaries and stakeholders, and spreads particular information in the community.

Conclusion:

In light of the aforementioned, it may be claimed that the success of government operations is the goal of the general policy review process. The evaluation's goals are to finish off the analysis of policies and pinpoint areas where such policies have succeeded and failed. The evaluation process assesses how well public policies have performed in relation to the core goals that are pursued by governments.

The study produced a number of findings based on the previously provided information, to which we refer in the following points:

- Governmental activity is successful when general policies are evaluated.
- The idea of evaluating general policies has a variety of applications because each tendency expresses the idea from a different angle. Some people have connected the idea to the goals, while others have connected it to the means. Still others have approached the idea of evaluating general policies as a process focused on the outcomes and effects of the policy.
- A good and accurate evaluation is one that is conducted throughout all phases of the implementation of general policies in order to correct any mistakes that may arise, prevent the policy from failing, and pinpoint the causes of the policy's failure.
- The review is connected to two key steps: the first covers political accomplishments; the evaluation focuses on real-world outcomes, quantifiable outcomes, and government activities; and the second focuses on the consequences of policies.
- Examining how general policies affect society as a whole and its effects are the goal of the review. The process of assessing general policies has a number of challenges, some of which may be related to the ambiguity and incommensurability of the aims of general policy and may be linked to contradicting objectives owing to the many interests and orientations that these policies are intended to address.



Evaluation of general policies: a concept reading

In light of the research and statements made thus far, we recommend the following suggestions:

- The integrated policy evaluation process demands competent and specialised technical experience in a way that enables them to effectively complete the review process, therefore provide all essential expertise.
- Aims of general policy that are clear and produce positive outcomes.
- A thorough review of all phases results from providing causal linkages throughout the policy making process between indications, goods, and impacts.
- All material resources required for the review process must be provided.

Bibliography List setting:

- 1- Al-Ma'ani, Al-Jami', Arabic-Arabic Lexicon, p. 17
- 2- Abbas Hussein Jawad, Arzouqi Abbas Abd, "Evaluating General Programs and Projects: A Theoretical Framework," Ahl al-Bayt Magazine, Issue 04, December 2006, p. 203.
- 3- Belaa Hassan, "An Introduction to Understanding General Policies", Journal of Moroccan Law, Morocco: Dar Al Salam for Printing and Publishing, Issue 22, January 2014, pp. 143-145.
- 4 - Faisal Al-Manawer and Muna Al-Alban, Building General Policies, Kuwait: Arab Planning Institute, Issue 157, 2022, p. 18
- 5- Jean Pierre, et al Catrage, "Methodological Evaluation of Partnership Policies (Guide)", December, France, 2012, p02.
- 6 - Thomas Daye, "Muderstanding Public Policy 5th Hallime Englewood Cliff Prentic," 1984, p. 344.
- 7- The evaluation of General action (political program, device) has as its object the appreciation of the complainer with regard to certain criteria, as well as the relevance, the effectiveness, the efficiency In particular with the aim of bringing it knowledge to aid decision-making and enlighten General debate.
- 8 - Muhammad Qassem Al-Qaryouti, Drawing, Implementation, Evaluation and Analysis of General Policies, 02nd edition, Kuwait: Al-Falah Library, 2015, pp. 277-282.
- 9- Werner Bussman; Mlritchkloti; Peter Knoepfel, "Public Policy Evaluation; Economica political collection compared economica", Paris, 1998, p01.
- 10 - Bernard Perret, "Evaluation of public policies; discovery", Paris, 2008, p03.
- 11- Fahmy, Khalifa Al-Fahdawi, General Policy from a Holistic Perspective in Structure and Analysis, Cairo: Dar Masirah, 2001, p.109.
- 12- Shane Hall, What is Evaluate Policy, Link: <http://www.ehow.com/about>. visited on: 20 August 2021, at: 02: 15 pm.
- 13- Wesal Najeeb Al-Azzawi, General Policy, A Theoretical Study in a New Field of Knowledge, Baghdad: Centre for International Studies, 2001, p. 114.
- 14- Nadia Bounoua, "Civil Society in the Making and Implementation of General Policy – A Case Study of Algeria," Master's Thesis, Haj Lakhdar University- Batna, Faculty of Law and Political Science, 2010, p. 60.
- 15- Nael Abdel Hafeez Al-Awalameh, General Policy Analysis: A Systematic Approach, Applications from Jordan and the Arabian Gulf, Amman: Ahmed Yassin Centre, 1999, pp. 130-157.
- 16- Muthanna Faeq Marei Al-Obaidi, Theoretical Approaches to General Policies, Cairo: Arab Organization for Administrative Development, 2019, p. 182
- 17- Yaghi, Abdul Fattah, Public Policies: Theory and Practice, Arab Organization for Administrative Development, 2010, pp. 144-190.