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SOCIAL SCIENCES

Analysis of the Public Policy Reform Process of 4+4+4 Education System in Turkey

IRMAK ÖZER

0773687

Masters' thesis submitted to obtain the degree of

MASTER OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

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Abstract

The new education policy of Turkey, also named as the 4+4+4 system, was adopted in 2012 under the AKP government. Even though this policy created many reactions among the public and experts, none of these criticisms has the endorsement of an in-depth analysis of the 4+4+4 policy. With the motivation from this gap in the Turkish educational policy literature, this study provides an insight into the new Turkish education policy by conducting public policy analysis. By employing the policy cycle framework with a convergent mixed method, this case study answers the following research questions: What were the policy goals of the new education system? How effective were the policy outcomes to meet the policy goals? Which factors were influential in the development of the 4+4+4 education policy?

Public policy as a socio-political reality is created through discourses. Hence, this research employs discourse analysis with an inductive approach to related policy documents, laws, and secondary sources. Statistical analysis of the numerical data on the education system, as a quantitative method, is adopted to complement the qualitative discourse analysis.

This study questions the influential factors in the development of the 4+4+4 policy by developing four hypotheses related to New Public Management (NPM), conservative ideology, quality of education, and equal access to education. In testing these hypotheses, each stage of the 4+4+4 policy is applied to the analytical framework and analyzed through discourse analysis in the first place. Thus, an insight into the policy goals, implementation process, outputs, outcomes, and new policy problems is provided. Simultaneously, changes in the policy inputs, outputs, and outcomes are compared and analyzed through statistical analysis to assess the influential factors in the development of the 4+4+4 policy as well as its effectiveness. While the changes in Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores enables an understanding of whether the reform improved the quality of education, the examination of changes in the number of Imam Hatip and private schools reveal whether the policy goal was in line with NPM aims of efficiency and effectiveness or was ideologically driven by complementing findings from phase one. After the responsiveness of the findings to hypotheses are assessed in the discussion section, limitations of the policy cycle framework are addressed, and a new framework -the Snail Model- for public policy analysis is proposed. In conclusion, the findings of this research provide insights into the new education policy and shed light on the influential factors on the development of the 4+4+4 system. Moreover, this study contributes to the Turkish educational policy literature by proposing the Snail Model as a guide for future research.

Keywords: *Turkey, education policy, 4+4+4, conservatism, NPM, quality of education, equal access to education*

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List of Abbreviations

AKP: Justice and Development Party
DİSK: Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey
EĞİTİMSEN: Education and Science Workers Union
EU: European Union
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
KESK: Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions
MoNE: Ministry of National Education
NGO: Non-governmental Organizations
NMP: New Public Management
OECD: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PISA: Programme for International Student Assessment
SPA: Special Provincial Administrations
TSI: Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜSEV: Third Sector Foundation of Turkey
UNICEF: United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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For Emel Gökova, my angel above the stars, and my archangel…

1. Introduction

The conservative democrat[1] Justice and Development Party (AKP) came into power in Turkey in 2002. This governmental change brought a New Public Management (NPM) driven public management reform process between 2003 and 2005. This process aimed to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of public service through privatization and decentralization (Tan, 2018, p.2). However, the proposed devolution reform of education services was left out because of Constitutional Court's decision regarding security concerns about Kurdish population in Turkey[2] (Tan, 2019). Following the legislative proposal of AKP in February 2012, the Turkish Grand National Assembly passed the new education bill in April 2012, which led to the adoption of the new education system, also called the 4+4+4 system.

4+4+4 stands as the only major education reform after the public management reform process in Turkey. This policy created many reactions among the public and experts. Students, parents, and teachers protested and collected signatures against the implementation of this policy by claiming that the policy was formed to replace secular education with Islamic education ("[4+4+4 İçin İmza Topluyorlar]," 2012). Education faculties of different universities in Turkey, as well as Education and Science Workers Union (EĞİTİMSEN), published reports claiming that this policy would bring new problems for education rather than solving the previous ones ("[Üniversiteler 4+4+4'e Karşı Sesini Yükseltti]", 2012). Scholars also criticized the AKP government by claiming that the government's education policies until 2013 did not successfully provide equality in education (Akkoyunlu-Wigley & Wigley, 2013). Combined with the increasing number of unemployment of the teachers, the education policy is controversial even today[3] (Deutsche Welle, 2019).

This study aims to provide an insight into the policy process of the new Turkish education policy by conducting public policy analysis. By employing the policy cycle framework with a convergent mixed method in this case study, it is anticipated to have an understanding of whether the reform has been successful in its aims. After defining the policy goals, by questioning the effectiveness of the new education system, this study provides an understanding of the influential factors in the development of the 4+4+4 policy. For this research, the policy process is considered to include policy mobilization, policy agenda/demand process, agenda-production, policy package, converting policy packages into legal texts, policy implementation, policy outputs, policy outcomes, and new problems. Therefore, each stage will be analyzed to provide a detailed and holistic analysis of the policy.

Even though much research has been conducted on Turkey's education policies, the lack of an in-depth analysis of the policy process of 4+4+4 in the Turkish educational policy literature motivated this research.

[1] AKP defined its ideology in the International Symposium on Conservatism and Democracy held on 10-11 January 2004. The published document by AKP on the Symposium can be found in the reference list.
[2] "Given the concentrated Kurdish population in the southeastern and eastern Turkey, the already heated political discussions around the fear of segregation made the government even more reluctant to take further political action toward decentralization" (Tan, 2019, p.90).
[3] https://www.dw.com/tr/2023te-atanamayan-%C3%B6%C4%9Fretmen-say%C4%B1s%C4%B1-1-milyona-%C3%A7%C4%B1kacak/av-49726450

2. Problem Statement and Research Question(s)

Public policy analysis provides insight into the policy process through “the description and explanation of the causes and consequences of government activity” to find out “what governments do, why they do it, and what difference, if any, it makes” (Dye, 2013, p.6). The socio-political and socio-economic changes should also be taken into account when studying in policy sciences (Torgerson, 2007). Thus, each policy stands as a unique one not only because it aims to solve specifically defined problems of the evolving society, but also because of the changes in the social, economic and political context in which the government makes these policies. Therefore, each policy requires analysis for providing policy knowledge to the government to enable the improvement of policies (Fisher, Miller, & Sidney, 2007, p. xix).

Education policy is one of the most important public policies through which governments and political leaders shape the society by instilling ideologies and increasing labor productivity to provide economic growth (Akkoyunlu-Wigley & Wigley, 2013). Thus, analyzing education policies provides insight into the government’s ideology and a country’s economic potential for the future.

Analysis of the 4+4+4 system in Turkey is a unique case as it reflects public management reform process in the education system. Education has been attributed to a political mission in the creation of the nation’s identity. Because of this political mission, the "principles of secularism, national solidarity, and indivisibility necessitated the construction of centralized policymaking and implementation structure" in education policies (Bayırbağ, 2015, p.65). However, NPM-driven reforms aimed to change the policy process, and these changes found their echoes in education through the 4+4+4 policy.

This thesis aims to answer the following research questions through a public policy analysis on the 4+4+4 system;

1) What were the policy goals of the new education system?
2) How effective were the policy outcomes to meet the policy goals?
3) Which factors were influential in the development of the 4+4+4 education policy?

3. Literature Review

3.1. Public Policy Analysis

Conceptualizing public policy is a challenging task. One of the most commonly accepted and used definition by Dye (2013) represents public policy as "whatever a government chooses to do or not to do" (p.3). This simplistic understanding of public policy undermines the phenomena and represents it as any decision of a government. This issue also creates a challenge in conducting an analytical study on the topic. However, as Howlett, Ramesh, and Perl (2009) argue, this definition provides a more sophisticated understanding than it appears in three ways. It represents the government as the "primary agent of public policy-making," therefore, it defines the government as the main authority in the process; it attributes the government a role to decide whether a particular issue is a problem or not and then whether to act on it; and represents "public policy as a conscious choice of government" (p.5). Even though this explanation provides a clearer understanding of public policy, it still undermines the substantial impacts of the private sector and civil society in the policy process. The involvement of these actors in the public policy process has become a crucial issue resulting from globalization and governance reforms around the world.

Public policy analysis stands as “ an applied social science discipline which uses multiple methods of inquiry and arguments to produce and transform policy-relevant information that may be utilized

in political settings to resolve policy problems" (Dunn, 1981, p.35). By enabling an insight into the policy process, public policy analysis also provides an understanding of governments' decision-making mechanisms. Policy analysis is concerned with explaining the causes and consequences of policies through reliable research (Dye, 2013).

Conducting a public policy analysis is also a challenging task (Sabatier, 2007). Policy process involves numerous actors from interest groups, multiple levels of government agencies, researchers, analysts, and legislatures, which requires a sufficient amount of time around a decade and experience (Kirst and Jung, 1982). However, in the globalizing world, with an increased number of problems that are interconnected, policymakers need to provide effective policies as solutions in a narrower time. The interconnectedness and involvement of numerous different actors in solving these problems also create technical debates with disputes over values, interests, and financial assets (Sabatier, 2007).

Theoretical frameworks enable analysts to decrease the scope of complexities in researching phenomena by also providing a logical interconnectedness and specificity of variables (Sabatier, 2007). Stages heuristic approached by Lasswell (1956) and utilized as cycle model by Jann and Wegrich (2007) is the pioneer of policy analysis frameworks. Stages heuristic is composed of a succession of policy stages -agenda-setting, policy formulation and legitimation, implementation, and evaluation- leading to the creation of public policy (Sabatier, 2007). The framework has been used until the mid-1980s mainly by American scholars and subjected to criticism in the late 1980s by Nakamura (1987), Sabatier (1991), and Sabatier, and Jenkins (1993). The main criticism of the model focuses on the lack of causal connections of policy stages and causal drivers, descriptive inaccuracy of policy stages, and the top-down approach with neglection of external influences into the policy process. Furthermore, Sabatier claims that "the usual process of multiple, interacting cycles involving numerous policy proposals and statutes at multiple levels of government" is simplified with "the assumption that there is a single policy cycle focused on a major piece of legislation" (2007, p.7).

The second theoretical framework is the institutional rational choice model. This model focuses on the influences of institutional rules and the rational behaviors of individuals based on the assumption that individuals are rational human beings seeking material interest. Even though this model provides a broader scope for policy analysis, it neglects the individuals' irrational behaviors.

Originated from the garbage can model[4] of Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972), multiple streams (MS) framework stands as another framework for policy analysis. Kingdon (1984) approaches the policy process as a combination of three streams of problems, politics, and policies. While the problem stream is a collection of perceived problems, the policy stream is composed of potential policy solutions to these problems, and politics stream is elections leading to elected officials for developing policies as solutions to the problems. Unless a policy window as a window of opportunity enables policy entrepreneurs to intervene, these streams work independently (Zahariadis, 2016). With the window of opportunity, policy entrepreneurs intervene in the process and create a new policy. This framework has been criticized with its lack of falsifiable hypotheses, and therefore, the lack of empirically-based conclusions. Critics, as Mucciaroni (1992) and Bendor, Moe, and Shotts (2001) also criticized the independency claim on streams by arguing that streams of problems, politics, and policies are rather interconnected than independent.

[4] In garbage can model, policies are regarded as an outcome of irrational decision-making process and problems, solutions, and choice moments are 'dumped' in garbage cans leading to coincidental coherence. "A decision is an outcome or interpretation of several relatively independent streams-problems, participants, solutions and choice opportunities- within an organization" (Cohen, Mark, Olsen, 1972, pp.2-3).

Punctuated Equilibrium (PE) is another framework for analyzing policies. Baumgartner and Jones (1993) developed PE to analyze the policymaking in the United States, which they argue is defined by stability and incrementalism. PE framework explains marginal and large-scale policy changes as a result of an "interaction of multilevel political institutions and behavioral decision-making, a combination that creates patterns of stability and mobilization or punctuated equilibria" (Baumgartner, Jones & True, 2007, p.156). Even though the framework is US focused, the scope of PE has broadened and employed to analyze abroad policy subsystems (Sabatier, 2007). However, as the framework became generalized, the policy process analysis enabled by the framework became vaguer in empirical referent (Baumgartner, Jones & True, 2007, p.180).

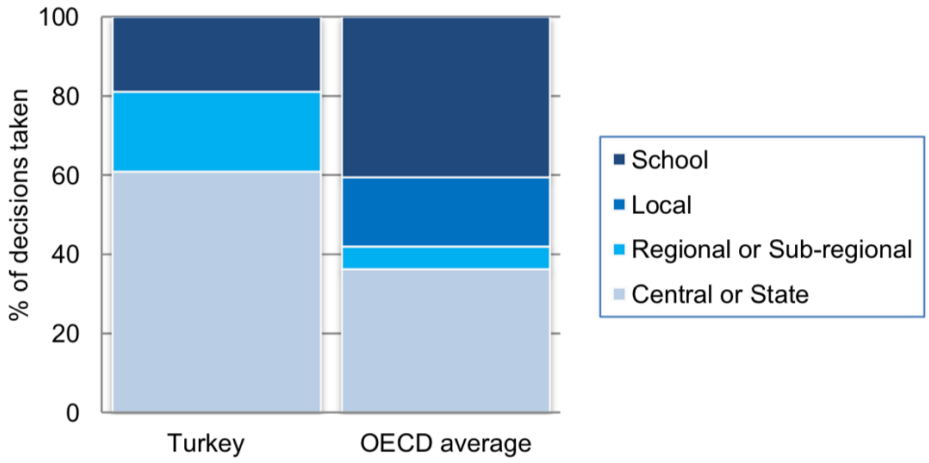
Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith's advocacy coalition framework (ACF) (1988, 1993), approaches policy analysis from policy subsystems and explains policies as outcomes of interactions between advocacy coalitions. As advocacy coalitions have different belief systems and values, interactions of competition and changes in belief systems lead to development of new policies. This framework is mainly used for analyzing policies in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries. ACF has been criticized for neglecting collective action problems by Schlager (1995). Ostrom (2005) also claims that one of the underdeveloped aspects of ACF is its lack of conceptualization and operationalization of institutional variables in forming coalitions and coalition behaviors. Lastly, the self-criticism of developers of ACF includes the lack of clear and explicit concepts regarding casual processes on policy sub-systems, the role of power, and political opportunity structures (Sabatier & Weible, 2007, p. 209).

Even though there are different theoretical frameworks for policy analysis, actors, ideas, and structures are the key elements that are addressed in each of these frameworks, albeit differently (Howlett et al., 2009). By raising issues, opinions, deciding on solutions, and implementing these solutions as policies, actors are either the subjects or objects of policies. As Howlett et al. (2009) claim, "these actors can be seen as subjects trying to advance their interests, or as objects influenced by the circumstances of their surrounding environment" (p.48). Policy analysis also requires an understanding of ideas that shape policy deliberations (Howlett et al., 2009). Policy ideas range from particular, self-interested viewpoints to broader belief systems (Howlett et al., 2009, p.48). Social, political, and economic structures in which the policies are formulated and implemented are also main elements requiring attention as they shape and influence the policy process. These structures "set the 'rules of the game' for the competition among different interests and the clash of distinctive ideas" (Howlett et al., 2009, p.48). In this sense, actors, issues, and structures stand as the cornerstones of understanding the policy process in public policy analysis.

3.2. Education Policy in Turkey

The National Education System in Turkey, determined by National Education Basic Act No. 1739, consists of two main parts of formal and non-formal education. According to the Ministry of National Education (MoNE), formal education is a regular education with specific education programs for certain age groups at the same education level. Pre-primary, primary school lower secondary school, upper secondary and higher education institutions are included in formal education. Under the general objectives of national education, non-formal education is for the people who have never entered the formal education or left it.

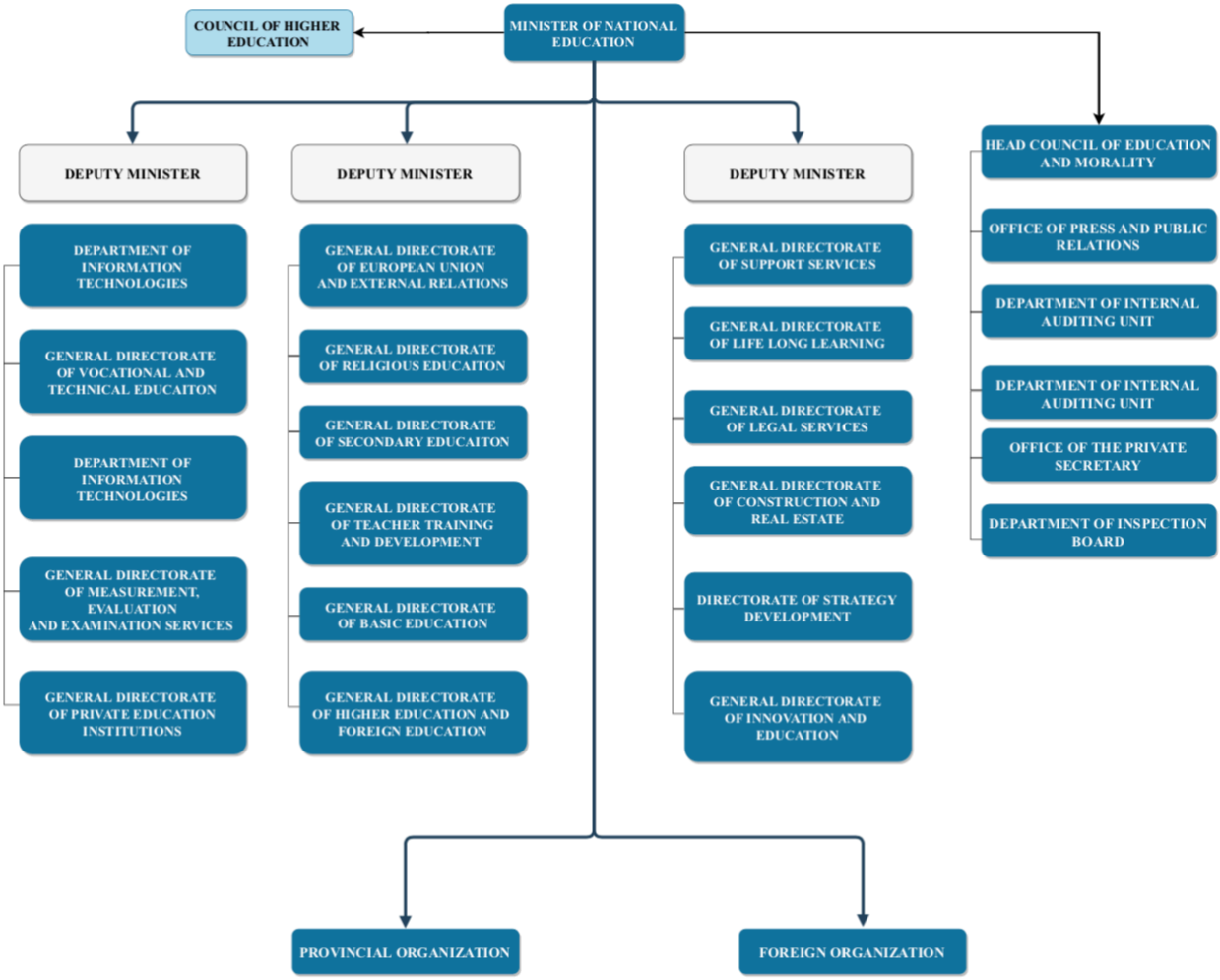
Figure 1: Percentage of Decisions Taken in Public Lower Secondary Schools at Each Level of Government, 2011



Source: OECD, 2012, p. 16

The Turkish education system has a centralized governance structure in which schools have little autonomy (Figure 1). The education policies are prepared by the Turkish Grand National Assembly and administered by MoNE. General directorates and sub-units are responsible for policy compliance and the education system's implementation at different education levels. Provincial administrations and district national education directorates over 81 provinces also maintain the implementation of education policies. As Figure 2 illustrates, MoNE's internal hierarchical structure with various institutions also support and shape the implementation of education policies.

Figure 2: Organization Structure of MoNE in 2019-2020 Education Year



Source: Adapted from MoNE, 2019

Recent education policies include the Basic Education Program adopted in 1997, which increased the compulsory basic education form four years to eight years. Reform projects to improve the quality of education, such as the Secondary Project (2006-11) and the Master Implementation Plan (2001-2005), were also supported by international organizations of the World Bank and United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). Furthermore, Turkey has been implementing projects for providing equal opportunity in the education system, such as the Movement of Enhancing Opportunities and Improving Technology Project (FATIH)[5].

According to OECD (2013), three recent documents are prominent in steering the Turkish education system. The Strategic Plan for the Ministry of National Education (2010-14) defined medium and long-term education goals. Tenth Development Plan (2014-18) was adopted as an overall government strategy and included the aim of improvement in the quality of education. Lifelong Learning Strategy Paper (2014-18) was also adopted as a link to the European Union's education strategies. According to OECD's document (2013:15) with these projects, the Turkish government aimed to

[5] FATIH Project is an e-learning project that aims to create an information society and to make technology useful in education by providing primary, lower secondary and upper secondary education with interactive white boards, tablets and computers.

> *"…achieve a society of educated individuals; launch the FATIH Project, which aims to equip each classroom with an interactive whiteboard and each student with a tablet computer; increase participation rates in pre-school, basic and secondary education to 100%; promote the importance of vocational education."*

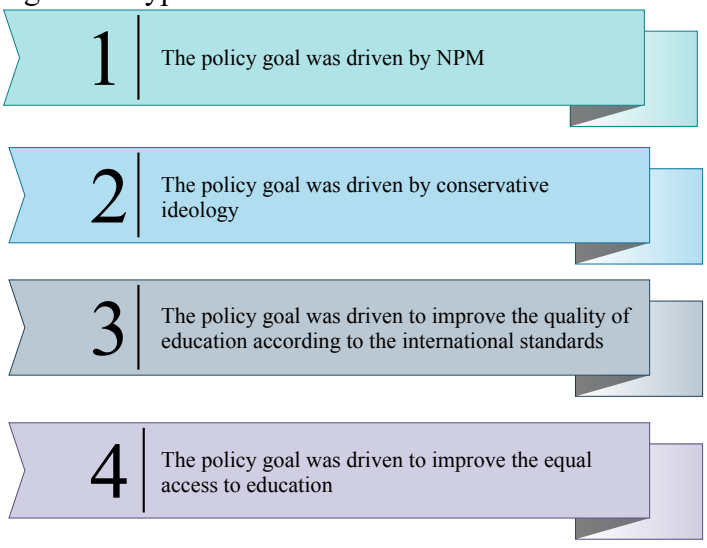
Turkey went through a NPM-driven reform process in 2003-2005. As a public management reform, NPM goals include increasing efficiency and effectiveness of public sector, including market-type mechanisms, disaggregated, and multifunctional organizational forms (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). One of the sectors that are highly influenced by NPM-reforms is the education sector. However, due to the security concerns about Turkey's Kurdish population, devolution of the education sector did not take place under NPM-driven reforms. (Tan, 2019). The most recent education policy as a system change, following this reform process, is the 4+4+4 policy, adopted in 2012. It increased the compulsory education from eight years to twelve years and introduced the gradual education system consisting of three levels of four years period[6]. The new legislation decreased the starting age for primary school from six to five and a half years old.

Akkoyunlu-Wigley and Wigley (2013) criticize the 4+4+4 system's unsuccessfulness in increasing the quality of education (p.313). The authors define the main criticized aspect of the new education system as the aim of decreasing the age for Imam Hatip Schools[7] from fourteen to ten (p.312). As Wigley et al. Bayırbağ (2015) claims, with AKP coming into power after the 2001 economic crisis, the neoliberal reforms in the education system left their place into more conservative ones.

4. Research Hypotheses

Through the policy cycle framework, this study first asks whether the policy goal was driven by NPM. Then it continues with the question of whether the policy goal was driven by conservative ideology. Thirdly, it is questioned whether the policy goal was driven to improve the quality of education according to the international standards. Lastly, it is asked whether the policy goal was driven to improve equal access to education.

Figure 3: Hypotheses



Source: Personal elaboration

[6] Primary, lower and upper secondary education.

[7] Imam Hatip schools are religious schools with the formal foundation purpose of raising Muslim preachers and priests. Imam Hatip schools were first opened in 1951 by then Demokrat Parti government, and Imam Hatip middle schools were closed by then prime mister Mesut Yilmaz in 1997 with the adoption of 8-year compulsory primary education law numbered 4306. The Imam-Hatip middle schools were reopened with the adoption of the new education system in 2012.

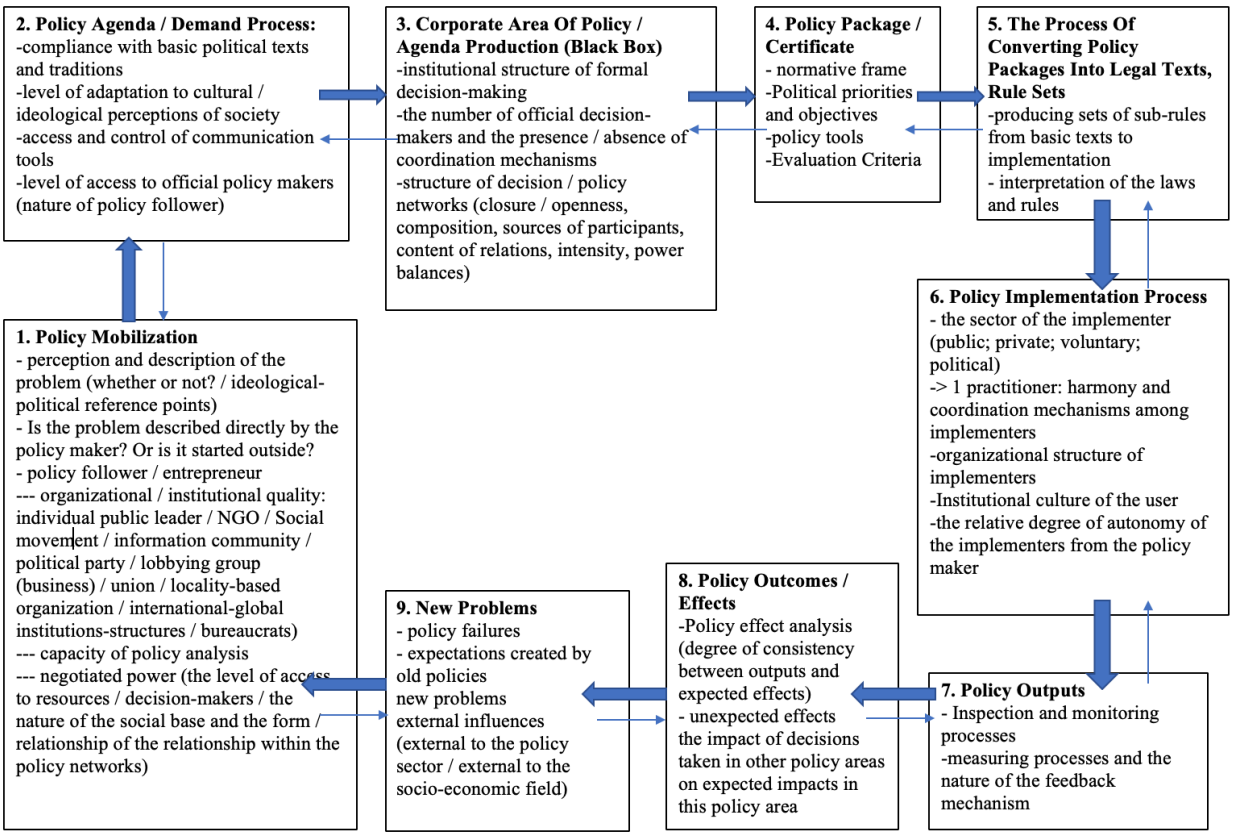
5. Theoretical Framework

By drawing on Lasswell's stages heuristic and Jann and Wegrich's work, Bayırbağ proposes a revised version of the policy cycle framework for analyzing public policies by emphasizing the importance of policy as a process and the interconnectedness of the policy stages. The increased scope of Bayırbağ's framework (Figure 4), and the emphasis of the feedback mechanism between the policy stages, aim to revise the stages heuristic according to Sabatier and Jenkin's (1993) criticisms of the descriptive inaccuracy of policy stages and Sabatier's criticism arguing the oversimplification of "the usual process of multiple, interacting cycles involving numerous policy proposals and statutes at multiple levels of government" with assuming "that there is a single policy cycle focused on a major piece of legislation" (Sabatier, 2007, p.7). New stages as policy mobilization also aim to provide inclusion of street-level bureaucrat's[8] impact on the policy process, which brings Lipsky's (2010) argument on the critical role of street-level bureaucrats in the policy process. Fisher et al. (2007) claim that the policy cycle model stands as one of the most criticized yet, commonly used frameworks for public policy analysis.

By acknowledging Jann and Wegrich's (2007) cycle model criticisms, this thesis employs Bayırbağ's revised policy cycle model as a theoretical framework for analyzing 4+4+4 education policy. The policy process in Bayırbağ's cycle framework (Figure 4), starts with the perception of a problem and the decision to respond to this problem in the policy mobilization and policy agenda stages. After policy options in responding to the perceived problem are produced in the agenda-production stage, policy priorities and objectives are defined normatively in the policy package. Policy package is turned into legal texts in the next stage through the interpretation of the laws and rules. Policy implementation process refers to policy in action, and street-level bureaucrats are defined as policy implementers. The policy outputs stage stands as an inspection and monitoring of the implemented policy's outputs, leading to the creation of policy outcomes. Policy outcomes appear as policy effects on society, and unexpected effects also impact the policy area. The new problems stage represents failures of the implemented policy.

[8] Street-level bureaucrats are defined as "public service workers" who "constitute the services delivered by government" (Lipsky, 2010, p3).

Figure 4: Bayırbağ's Cycle Model



Source: Public Policy Analysis Diagram. Yıldız (2013), p.60

The reason for employing Bayırbağ's policy cycle framework is its strength in approaching public policy as a problem-solving process in which decisions and actions are intertwined, especially in 'policy mobilization,' 'policy agenda,' and 'process of converting policy packages into legal texts' stages. The detailed explanation of each policy stage provides the analysis of a clear framework. By adding 'policy outcomes,' 'new problems,' and 'policy mobilization' stages into the traditional cycle framework, Bayırbağ's revision provides a more detailed and realistic approach to policy analysis.

6. Methodology

6.1.Research Design

As the motivation for this research is to understand whether the 4+4+4 reform has been successful in its aims through analyzing the policy process, a case study design with convergent mixed method is adopted. By enabling detailed and intensive analysis, case study design provides a holistic, in-depth understanding of a single case. (Bryman, 2012).

The lack of public policy analysis on the new Turkish education policy in the literature and the need for an understanding of education reforms in conjunction with administrative reforms motivated this research. As a Turkish national, this interesting and unique case encouraged a focus on my home country for pragmatic reasons. By acknowledging the criticisms of case study design in its limitations on generalization, this study analyzes the policy process of 4+4+4 in detail. Through a case study design, political discourse is analyzed to understand the motivations for the policy. It is also aimed to understand whether the criticisms of the new education system or Bayırbağ's argument suggesting that the actual aim as creating a conservative education system is more substantial.

6.2.Data-collection

In answering the proposed research questions, a case study with the convergent mixed method will be utilized. Convergent mixed methods is a mixed design in which the researcher simultaneously collects both qualitative and quantitative data, and interprets the overall results of these converged data (Creswell & Creswel, 2018). The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data in this method neutralizes the weaknesses of each form of data and enables data triangulation for this research (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) scores as quantitative data will be utilized to assess the quality of education according to international standards. PISA stands as a cumulative assessment for education and learning outcomes of 15-year-olds in reading, mathematics, and science. As an education assessment for the OECD countries, PISA scores are collected since 1990 by experts, educators, and scientists, which provides reliability and measurement validity for this research. This primary source is used in the education literature by researchers to assess the quality of education. Therefore, the utilization of the same type of data provides replicability for this research.

As Koliba, Meel, and Zia (2011), this study assesses policy inputs as capital flows and policy tools, which are the budget of MoNE and the number of teachers for 4+4+4 education policy. The numbers of schools, classrooms, and students in formal education are utilized as policy outputs, indicating performance measures of products and services of the new education policy (Koliba et al., 2011). Policy outcomes, which are performance measures related to policy goals, are assessed as net schooling rate and PISA scores in this study. Besides PISA scores, all quantitative data on formal education over the years between 2006 and 2019 will be collected from MoNE's publications on the National Education Statistics. These primary sources utilize the data collected by the Turkish Statistical Institute (TSI). Even though experts criticize these data, TSI is the only formal institution that collects nation-wide statistical data. The data collection methods of TSI are developed by scientists and experts in statistics, which provides reliability and replicability for this research.

For qualitative data, this research uses the data from the primary source documents of the proposed education bill, Basic Law of National Education, the related parts of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, related laws, the newspaper reports on the issue, publications of EĞİTİMSEN and Third Sector Foundation of Turkey (TÜSEV). The reports of education faculties of Ankara, Boğazici, Ege, Hacettepe, Maltepe Universities, and the Middle East Technical University on 4+4+4 education system will be employed to provide expert knowledge on the policy. MoNE's publication on the 4+4+4 education policy will also be utilized to provide an in-depth understanding of the policy process. While the employment of government documents and legislations provide reliability for this research, the utilization of non-governmental documents aims to provide an understanding of how the 4+4+4 policy is perceived in the broader society.

Secondary sources (i.e., academic articles, books) on the 4+4+4 system will be utilized to compensate for any lack of data. Even though this research contacted with the deputies that proposed the education bill, and then-Minister of Education Ömer Dinçer to provide primary knowledge on the agenda-production of the 4+4+4 policy, the lack of communication from these officials prevented this aim.

6.3.Data Analysis

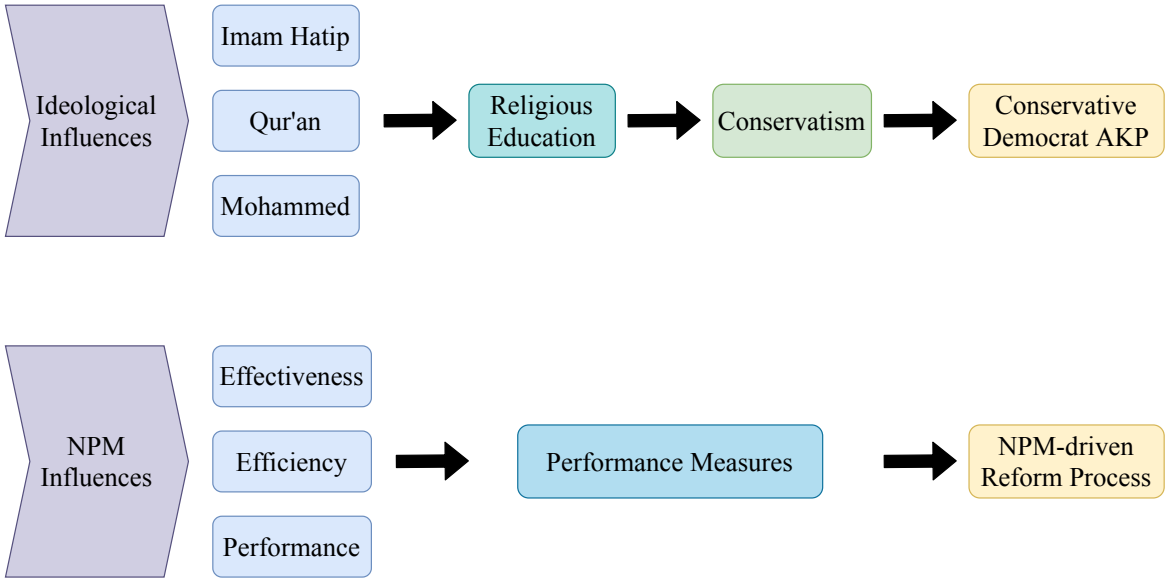
Public policy as a socio-political reality is created through discourses. Thus, analyzing a public policy requires an understanding of the relationship between discourse and reality (Hardy, 2002). Therefore, this research employs discourse analysis with an inductive approach as the qualitative method. Discourse analysis "involves the development of analytical categories that are used to construct a coding frame that is then applied to textual data" (Hardy, 2004, p.20). As this research aims to provide an understanding of the motivations for the 4+4+4 policy, analysis through a quantitative method (as content analysis) is counterproductive for this research (Hardy, 2002). Even though other types of analysis provide more systematic and laborsaving forms of analysis, the aim of this research, in line with discourse analysis, is to define a variety of meanings assigned to texts to understand the motivations of the 4+4+4 policy. By acknowledging the "issues of validity and reliability do not play out in the same way" in discourse analysis, this research aims to increase the benefits of contextual and interpretive sensitivities of discourse analysis through increasing the number of documents under study (Hardy, 2002, p.79). According to Hardy (2004, p.21), discourse analysis has "validity in form of performativity i.e., demonstrating a plausible case that patterns in the meaning of texts are constitutive of reality".

Creation of discursive categories related to hypotheses (H1 and H2) (Figure 5) and going over the texts to see if they contain any of these words will be the first step of the discourse analysis. After marking these words and rereading these parts, the textual data will be measured by the rhetorical mechanism of word groups to identify how the various statements function at the level of language. This process will enable an understanding of whether the texts deploy words that have a common contextual background. The discursive category of conservatism is generated to understand the discursive strategy of the data in assessing whether the policy goal was driven by conservative ideology. Under the religious education theme, conservatism is linked to discursive categories of 'Imam Hatip,' 'Qur'an,' and 'Mohammad' in this study.[9] As the core claim of NPM is to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the government, and the most common mechanism in measuring these changes is through performance indicators, NPM themes of 'effectiveness,' 'efficiency' and 'performance' are codified to analyze the influence of NPM-driven reform process on the 4+4+4 system (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017).[10] Potential deployment of these discursive categories in the textual data will point out contextual backgrounds of the documents and enable an interpretation of the motivations of the 4+4+4 policy.

[9] For a textual unit of analysis of these terms Imam Hatip, Kur'an-I Kerim, Hz. Muhammed, in order, will be utilized in Turkish.

[10] As the same Turkish words 'verim,' 'verimlilik,' and 'performans' connote both terms of efficiency, and performance, for practical reason of providing validity, this research does not provide one single definition of efficiency and performance. For effectiveness, the words 'etkin,' and 'etkinlik' will be tracked in the texts. However, as all of the above-mentioned Turkish words are covering terms related to NMP, they are treated as concepts related to NPM influences in the related texts.

Figure 5: Discursive Categories Used in Discourse Analysis



Source: Personal Elaboration

For discourse analysis, the above-mentioned codifications will be tracked in related documents in order of; proposed bill, 4+4+4 law, TÜSEV's publication, MoNE's publication on 4+4+4, and secondary sources. Through examining these texts, potential influences of NPM and conservativism in the development of 4+4+4 policy will be assessed.

The quality of education in the third hypothesis will be measured with PISA scores, and equal access to education in the fourth hypothesis will be measured by the ratio of private schools. Numerical data will be visualized through EXCEL to complement discourse analysis. Changes in these data between 2006 and 2019 will be examined in assessing the influences of NPM, education quality, equality and conservatism on policy inputs, outputs, and outcomes.

The analysis will pursue the following steps;

Phase 1: Each stage of the 4+4+4 policy will be applied to the analytical framework and through discourse and statistical analyses. The proposed education bill, Basic Law of National Education, the related parts of the Constitution of the Republic of Turkey, and MoNE's publications on 4+4+4, will be analyzed through discourse analysis. It is anticipated that this analysis will provide an insight into the policy goals, implementation process, outputs, outcomes, and new potential problems regarding the education system in Turkey.

Simultaneously, numerical data from the National Education Statistics on the changes in the policy inputs, outputs, and outcomes will be compared through statistical analysis to assess the influential factors in the development of the 4+4+4 policy and effectiveness of the policy will be questioned. Changes in PISA scores will enable an understanding of whether the reform improved the quality of education. Examination of changes in the number of Imam Hatip and private schools will complement previous findings; hence, will reveal whether the policy goal was in line with NPM aims of efficiency[11] and effectiveness[12] or was ideologically driven.

[11] "Efficiency is the ratio between inputs and outputs" (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p.16).
[12] Effectiveness in policy analysis stands as "the degree to which the desired outcomes result from the outputs" of a given policy (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017, p.16).

Phase 2: The responsiveness of the findings to hypotheses will be assessed. Thus the motivations for the 4+4+4 policy will be revealed. Implementation of Bayırbağ's cycle framework in analyzing of 4+4+4 education policy will be discussed, and a new public policy analysis framework will be presented.

Phase 3: This part will be denoted to conclude the research and to provide a roadmap for further research.

7. Analysis of the 4+4+4 Policy

7.1. Policy Mobilization

The new education bill was proposed in 2012 by the group deputy chairmen of AKP to the parliament. One of the two main problems described in the proposed bill is the eight-years compulsory and continuous education (85392). According to the bill, eight-years stands as a short period for compulsory education compared to developed countries such as England, France, and the U.S.A, whose gradual education system has been proved successful. As the policy proposers perceive, this shortness stands as a barrier against any development in the quality of education and leads to an inefficient education system. The second problem is defined in the proposed bill as low levels of vocational training, which was 44% in 2012.

The bill was supported by party members and independent members of the parliament[13]. However, it was criticized by media and non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) such as EĞİTİMSEN with the arguments of the bill being ideologically-driven to create a conservative Turkish youth (EĞİTİMSEN, 2012). However, discourse analysis of the bill illustrates no religious, ideological-political references. The analysis points out that economic effectiveness and efficiency in the education sector were influential variables in creating the bill.

7.2. Policy Agenda/Demand Process

The solution for continuous education is defined in the bill as the introduction of the gradual system (p.10). When the proposed education bill is compared to the Basic Law of National Education, the texts of both documents comply in terms of principles of the Turkish education system. According to Basic Law of National Education (1973), the basic values and principles stand as universality, equality, personal and societal needs, right to education, equal opportunities, Atatürk's principles and reforms, democracy education, laicism, science, planning, and providing education anywhere possible[14]. Even though Ataturk's principles and reforms are not mentioned, the bill focuses on the importance of equal opportunities, right to education, personal and societal needs by emphasizing the cruciality of education age and environment (85392).

The drafting of the bill into law was not a participatory process and was done by the Department of Laws and Resolutions (TBMM, 2011). The bill was proposed on 20 February 2012 and passed on 11 March 2012. During this period protests and petitions against the 4+4+4 system raised in Antalya, Istanbul, and Zonguldak with the participation of parents, NGOs such as Confederation of Public Employees' Trade Unions (KESK), Confederation of Progressive Trade Unions of Turkey (DİSK), EĞİTİMSEN, and Body of Lawyers.[15] As a response to these protests, a subcommittee on

[13] According to the general parliamentary election results of 2011, TBMM was composed of %49,83 of AKP, %25,98 CHP, %13,01 MHP, and %6,57 independent deputy members. https://www.sabah.com.tr/secim-sonuclari

[14] https://www.mevzuat.gov.tr/MevzuatMetin/1.5.1739.pdf

[15] https://www.cnnturk.com/2012/turkiye/09/05/istanbulda.4.4.4.protestosu/675623.0/index.html
https://www.haberler.com/4-4-4-icin-imza-topluyorlar-3924197-haberi/
https://www.haberler.com/zonguldak-ta-4-4-4-protestolari-3921908-haberi/

National Education, Culture, Youth and Sports was founded to include civil society into the policy process. However, according to TÜSEV besides the abolishment of provisions enabling open education and apprenticeship education between fifth and eighth grades and leaving compulsory secondary education to the initiative of the Council of Ministers, the subcommittee meetings did not lead to any change in the bill (2013, p.5). Furthermore, "'Qur'an' and 'the life of Mohammad,' which have not been discussed in the committee meetings with civil society representatives, were included in the text of the new law as elective courses" (TÜSEV, 2013, p.5). Even though the education faculties of various universities[16] and EĞİTİMSEN published on the potential problems and policy recommendations on 4+4+4, the policy was limited in taking public opinion into account, and it was not discussed with the education community (Kılıç, 2014).

7.3. Corporate Area of Policy/Agenda-Production (Black Box)

The institutional structure of the formal decision-making system in Turkey was a parliamentary system in 2012. The decisions were made with a simple majority vote[17], and the authority to propose a bill lay in the council of ministers and deputies. The decision-making process of 4+4+4 policy started with the proposal of five group deputy chairperson of AKP.[18] However, as a general issue for public policies, drafting of the bill stands as a black box. (Bayırbağ, 2013).

According to TÜSEV (2013), the establishment of sub-commission in the consultation process after the creation of the law proposal created a deficiency in public-NGO relations. This process was limited in time and participation of civil society members (TÜSEV, 2013). Policy analyst Aytuğ Şaşmaz argues that due to the lack of sufficient discussion at the General Assembly of the Council, and the compositional change in the commission for the majority of the members of the Ministry and the government, political decision on 4+4+4 does not have sufficient legitimate grounds (TÜSEV, 2013).

Although there is a law on access to information, it is difficult to acquire data on agenda-production because of the lack of communication information of the deputies involved[19], and the lack of media coverage on this process, which limits further information on the process.

7.4. Policy Package/Certificate

The General Preamble of the education bill states the reasoning behind the development of the new education policy as increasing the quality of education. In this sense, the policy goal of the proposed bill is to increase the quality of education. Other policy goals are not directly stated, and the vague language used in the bill prevents an in-depth understanding of the further objectives of the 4+4+4 policy.

In 2012, MoNE published a document to inform the public on the goals, objectives, and implications of the new education policy. The reading of this publication on the new education system provides a clearer picture of defining the policy goals. One of the two main goals of the new education policy was defined as increasing the compulsory education period from eight years to

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[16] Ankara University (2012), Boğazici University (2012), Ege University (2012), Hacettepe University (2012), Maltepe University (2012), METU (2012).

[17] https://www.tbmm.gov.tr/anayasa/anayasa_2011.pdf

[18] Adiyaman deputy Ahmet AYDIN, Istanbul deputy Ayse Nur BAHCEKAPILI, Giresun deputy Nurettin CANIKLI, Kayseri deputy Mustafa ELITAS, and Kahramanmaras deputy Mahir UNAL. https://www2.tbmm.gov.tr/d24/2/2-0358.pdf

[19] There is no contact information of the deputies that proposed the bill, and then Minister of Education Ömer Dinçer. Therefore, even though I have tried to send emails or to call these deputies and Mr. Dinçer, due to this lack of communication information I could not reach any of the people involved in the policy process.

twelve years and decreasing the provincial differences in terms of schooling rate (MoNE, 2012, p.9). The second policy goal was stated as democratization and flexibility of the education system by providing the students with elective course options from the fifth grade onwards (MoNE, 2012).

According to MoNE's publication, policy priorities and objectives were to divide the education into three stages of four years of primary school, four years of middle school and four years of high school; to decrease the education age to six so that these children will begin to work a year early; increasing the vocational education (2012, p.9). The inclusion of the religious discursive codes in this document compared to the bill indicate an ideological influence of conservative democrat AKP on the education policy. However, the analysis does not provide any findings related to the efficiency of the education system.

7.5. The Process of Converting Policy Packages into Legal Texts, Rule Sets

The comparison between the bill and law points out divergence in terms of content. When article 10 of the bill is compared to article 9 of the law, both of which point out the change in the same article in the same law[20], the divergence becomes clear. Even though the proposed education bill did not include any information regarding Imam Hatip schools, the law reintroduced Imam Hatip secondary schools into the education system with article 9. Furthermore, the law initiated elective courses on the Qur'an and the life of Mohammad, both of which have not been mentioned in the proposed bill. This points out the discursive strategy in including ideological influences on the adoption of the new education policy. While religious themes were not stated in the bill, these themes come to fore in the law. Discourse analysis on the bill and new education law point out the opposite for the NPM themes. While NPM-related themes were prominent in the bill, these terms are not mentioned in the law. However, the reason for this change is that these terms were stated in the bill as the reasons for the adoption of the new policy.

7.6. Policy Implementation Process

The only objective defined in the bill is the realization of the change in the Provincial Special Administration Law[21] on the devolution of the "responsibility and competence in providing services for the provision of land for primary and secondary education institutions, construction, maintenance and repair of buildings and meeting other needs" (2012, p.10). As a tool for NMP reforms, devolution aims "to strengthen local governments by granting them the authority, responsibility, and resources to provide services and infrastructure" (Cheema & Rondinelli, 2007, p.3). However, "SPAs have been contested as a local government due to the central government's direct involvement in the decision-making process" in Turkey (Tan, 2018, p.3). Furthermore, the administrative status of SPA governors has changed into regulatory status with the adoption of new legislation in 2003-05 (Tan, 2018, pp.3-4). Therefore, the NPM driven reform process and the new education policy did not provide decentralization of education in Turkey.

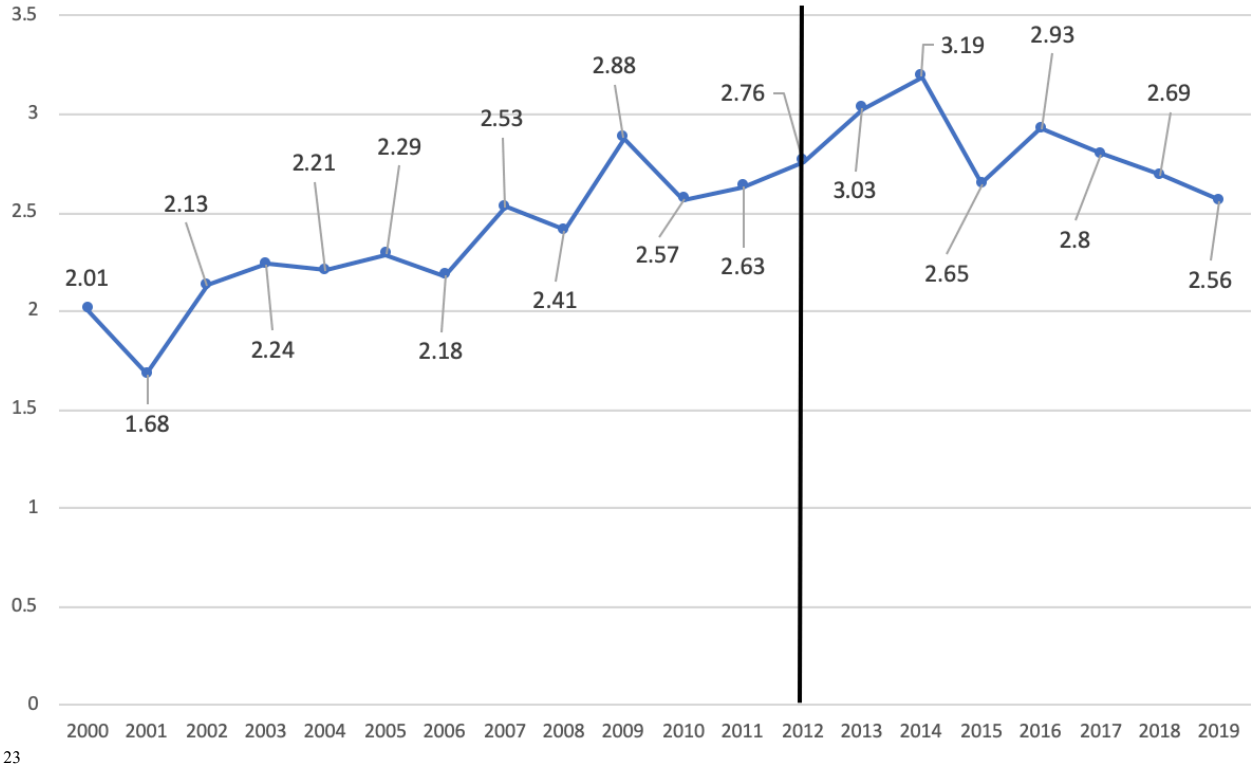
Besides institutional implementation, headmasters and teachers in public and private schools stand as street-level bureaucrats in the implementation of 4+4+4. Rapid increases in numbers of teachers in private schools[22] illustrate the increasing role of the private sector in the implementation of the education policies. Increased involvement of the private sector in education illustrates that even though decentralization did not take place, 4+4+4 introduced a rapid privatization of the education sector.

[20] Article 25 of law numbered 1739.
[21] Law numbered 5302 was adopted in 22.02.2005.
[22] See ANNEX-V

7.7. Policy Outputs

A comparison between the inputs and outputs is needed to understand whether the policy achieved efficiency.
The budget of MoNE as policy input, between 2000 and 2019 has rapidly increased, especially after the adaptation of the 4+4+4 policy. The examination of the changes in the ratio of MoNE's budget in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), which takes economic changes into account, provides more valid findings. This ratio increased with the adaptation of the new education policy until 2014 and decreased in the following year (Chart 1). Even though the ratio increased in 2016, the following years demonstrate a decreasing trend below the level before the law passed.

Chart 1: Change in the Ratio of MoNE's Budget in GDP from 2000 to 2019 (%)



[23]

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

Examination of the number of teachers in formal education as policy input illustrates an increasing trend. While the number of teachers in Imam Hatip high schools has already been constantly increasing, the 4+4+4 policy introduced a rapid increase. This increase is also illustrated with the reopening of Imam Hatip schools in lower secondary education. The number of teachers in private schools has also been constantly increasing over the years until 2015. In 2015/'16 education year, this number rapidly increased as a result of 6528 numbered decree-law concerning private teaching institutions[24], which led to the closure of these institutions and reopening of them as private schools[25].

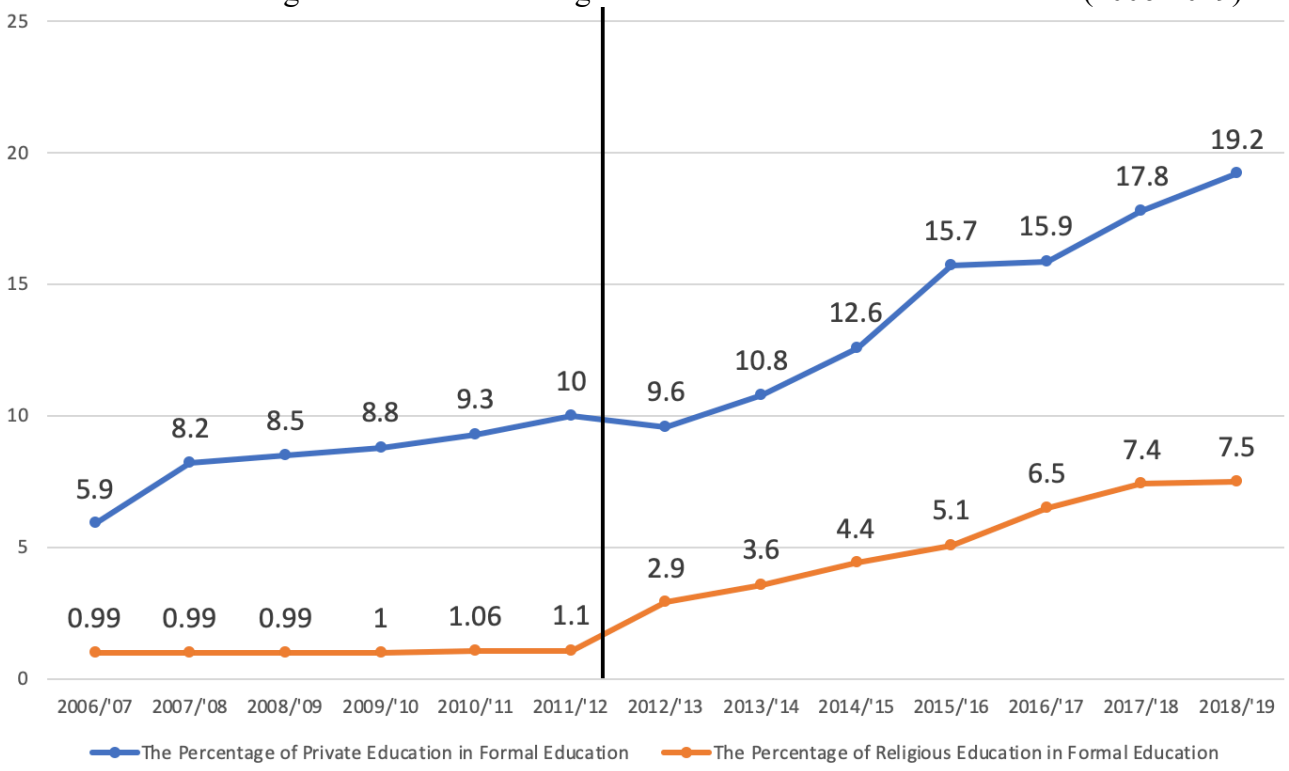
Changes in policy inputs point out an ideologically driven neoliberal education policy.
The decreases in the ratio of MoNE's budget in GDP, the ratio of MoNE's budget in the consolidated budget, and rapid increases in numbers of teachers in both Imam Hatip and private

[23] The black vertical line illustrates the year the new education law passed.
[24] Dershane
[25] https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/03/20140314-1.htm The 6528 decree-law was adopted in 2014. Gulenist private teaching institutions and private schools were also closed down following the Gulenist coup d'état in 2016, also leading to a shift from dershanes to private schools.

schools stand as a shift to a conservative education with an increasing role of the private sector in the implementation of the education policies.

As the examination of policy output data from MoNE points out, the number of schools, classrooms, and students in formal education continuously increased over the education years from 2006/'07 to 2018/'19 except 2014/'15. The reason for this decrease stems from 6528 numbered law[26] about the closure of private teaching institutions[27][28]. The reason for closing these institutions was defined by then-Prime Minister Erdoğan as to provide equal opportunity in education[29]. Even though some of the institutions were closed down, the rest turned into private schools and study centers. Therefore, rather than providing equal opportunity, this process led to further privatization of the education sector.

Chart 2: The Percentages of Private and Religious Education[30] in Formal Education (2006-2019)



Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

The number of private schools and classrooms in these schools in 2012/'13 increased rapidly, which points out the emphasis on the private sector in the implementation of the policy. Furthermore, the rise in the number of students in private schools illustrates a shift of demand to the private sector in education. Changes in the same variables for Imam Hatip high schools and lower secondary education provides a link between the conservative ideology and the 4+4+4 policy. Firstly, the new education policy enabled the reopening of lower secondary Imam Hatips, which were closed in 1997. Secondly, the number of opened lower secondary Imam Hatip schools stands as a dramatic number when compared to the number of Imam Hatip High schools in the same year (2012/'13). A steady increase has followed these rapid increases in the following years (Chart 2). These policy output trends provide a potential link between the privatization and ideology argument, as the policy inputs have already illustrated.

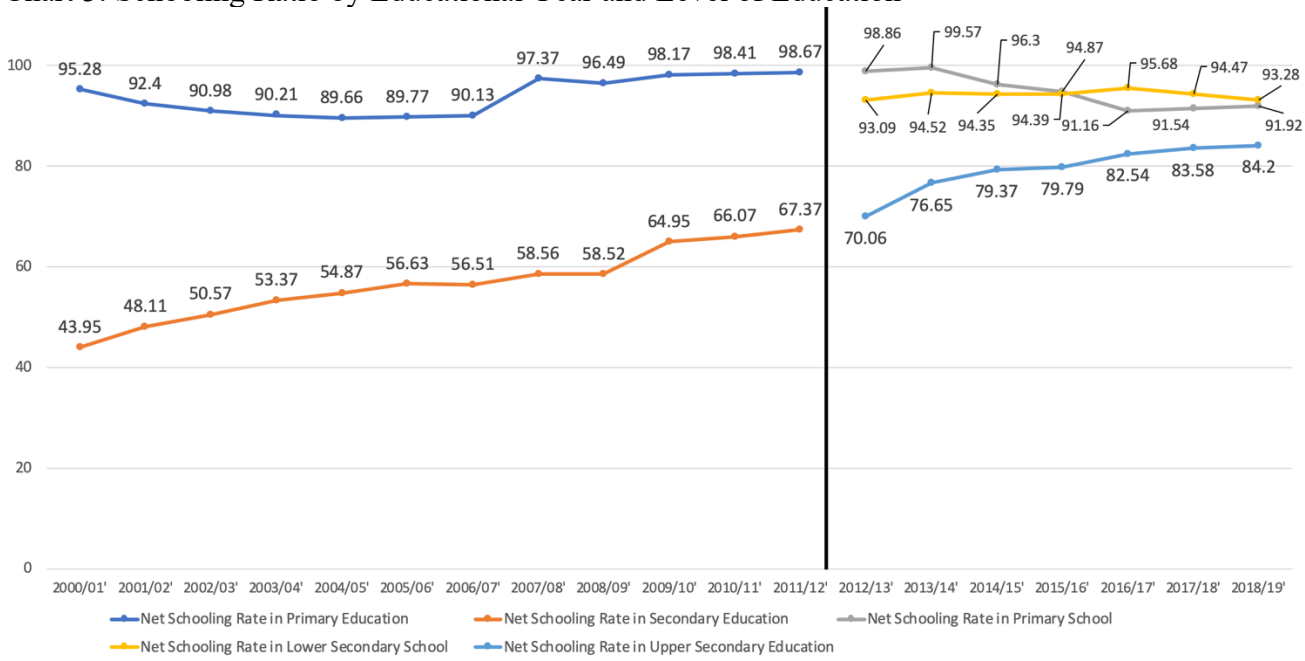
[26] 6528 numbered law entered into force on 14 March 2014.
[27] Dershane
[28] https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2014/03/20140314-1.htm
[29] https://www.takvim.com.tr/guncel/2013/11/21/basbakandan-dershane-aciklamasi
[30] Religious education refers to the education given by Imam Hatip schools (MoNE, 2019).

When the changes in policy inputs and outputs are compared for the efficiency[31] argument of NPM, the decrease in the ratio of MoNE's budget of GDP and increases in the policy outputs point out that the 4+4+4 policy has achieved efficiency in budgetary spending.

7.8. Policy Outcomes/Effects

The net schooling rates in primary and secondary education before the adaption of the new education policy illustrate a slight increase between 2000 and 2012 (Chart 3). As the new education policy changed the eight-years continuous education into twelve-years continuous education, the schooling system changed from a primary-secondary education to primary-lower secondary-upper secondary education in the 2012-2013 educational year.

Chart 3: Schooling Ratio by Educational Year and Level of Education



[32]

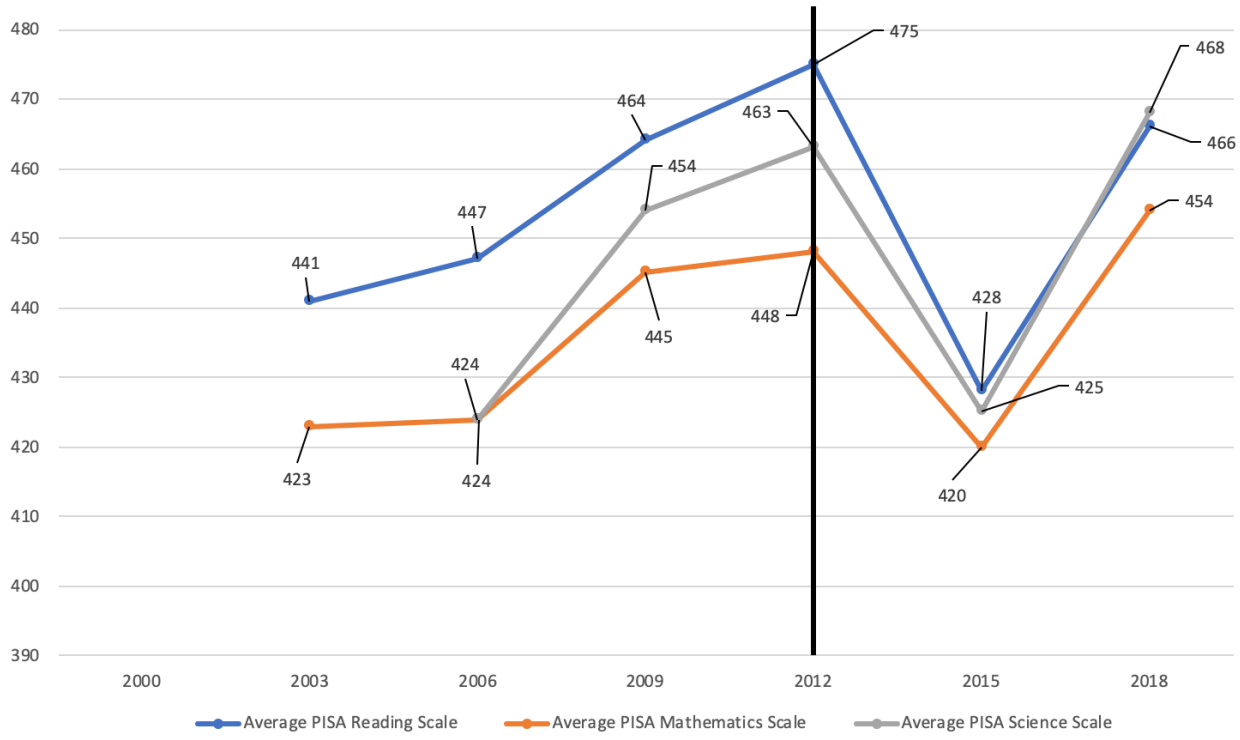
[33]

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

Examination of the net schooling rates in primary, lower secondary, and upper secondary education as the policy outcome illustrates a slight increase in the net schooling rate in upper secondary education (Chart 3). The variable in primary and lower secondary schools, on the other hand, has slightly decreased since the new education policy adopted. MoNE (2019) explains this situation by claiming that while both active and passive students[34] were included in calculating schooling ratios in educational year 2013-14 and before, with 2014-15 passive students, were not included.

[31] Efficiency also refers to an increase in outputs while the budgetary inputs decrease or stand at the same level. According to Pollitt (2010) this refers to "doing more with less" (p.22).
[32] The black vertical line illustrates the year the new education law passed.
[33] The new education system replaced the primary/secondary education division with primary/lower secondary/upper secondary education division.
[34] Passive students are defined as students who are enrolled but "moved abroad, died or were oriented to open education" by MoNE (2015).

Chart 4: Average PISA Reading, Mathematics, and Science Scale by Years (Turkey)



[35]

Source: Personal elaboration from the data collected by OECD.

The overarching policy goal of the 4+4+4 policy was to increase the quality of education. As the examination of PISA scores illustrate (Chart 4), while there has been an increasing trend in overall science, mathematics, and reading scores until 2012, these scores have rapidly decreased with the adoption of the 4+4+4 until 2015. Even though the decreases were followed by a sharp increase from 2015 until 2018[36], the scores were still below the level before the law passed. Therefore, the 4+4+4 policy did not improve the quality of education according to international standards.

Another goal of the policy was to increase the compulsory education period from eight to twelve years and to decrease the provincial differences in terms of schooling rate. The examination of parts of MoNE's publications (2007-2019) on schooling ratio by the provincial level in the educational years between 2008/'09 and 2018/'19 illustrate an increase in secondary education from 2008/'09 to 2013/'15. Nevertheless, this rate decreases in 2014/'15 and rises again in the following years. The schooling rate for primary education has rapidly increased from 2008/'09 until 2013/'14, and slightly decreased until 2018/'19. As the examination points out, while achieving its goal of

[35] The black vertical line illustrates the year the new education law passed.

[36] A new strategy plan, MoNE's Strategic Plan (2015-19), for overcoming the problems related to the implementation of the new education system was developed in 2015 by the Turkish government. Though this plan government managed "the main strategies for Turkey's education system by setting the medium- and long-term education goals. The plan was first prepared and implemented in 2010-14." (https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/a85d5b7b-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/a85d5b7b-en#tablegrp-d1e52479)
However, the decreasing trend for education quality and other problems regarding access to education, education quality, and institutional capacity. "Following consultation with the central and provincial organisation units and related stakeholders, the plan was replaced by a new set of five-year targets and goals around three main themes: access to education and teaching; quality in education and instruction; and institutional capacity" which led to a positive trend in PISA scores of Turkish children (https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/sites/a85d5b7b-en/index.html?itemId=/content/component/a85d5b7b-en#tablegrp-d1e52479).

decreasing the provincial differences in the upper secondary education schooling rate, the 4+4+4 policy has failed in decreasing the provincial differences in primary education schooling rate.

Democratization and flexibility of the education system by providing students with elective course options from the fifth grade onwards were also defined as a goal of the 4+4+4 policy. This aim is also achieved with the introduction of a variety of elective courses[37] into the new education system. However, as the outputs point out the 4+4+4 policy was not effective in achieving all of the policy goals.

7.9. New Problems

Goals of the 4+4+4 bill and previous education law comply as both of them aimed to increase the quality of education. The study conducted with school managers and assistant directors[38] in Muratpaşa district in Antalya by Kaştan and Kaştan (2016), and another study by Gün, and Başkan (2014) state the new problems of the education policy as the dissatisfaction and complaints of parents, school time, teaching personnel problems, double-shift schooling, substitute teacher problems, inadequate school equipment, and problems about auxiliary staff. Related educational problems were also defined as the negative impact on teachers' motivation, inadequate physical conditions of social activity fields, parental neglect, problems regarding cleanness, absenteeism, crowded classrooms, bringing home habits to school, and short break-times (Kaştan & Kaştan, 2016). Understaff and teachers' problems regarding permanent staff stood as the administrative problems (Kaştan & Kaştan, 2016).

The children enrolled in school at the age of 60 and 72 months also had problems of orientation, getting bored quickly, crying, resentment, and the inability of personal care (Kaştan & Kaştan, 2016). These children also experienced problems of the improper curriculum to their age, dependency on mother, inability to go to the school canteen and to participate in social activities, and unwillingness to go to school. Teachers had anxiety problems with teaching the first grade[39] (Gün & Başkan, 2014). Furthermore, while there was no enrollment of 60-months old children in two schools, the enrollment rate was 20% in six schools concerning the same age. This rate was %50 in three schools and was %80 only in one school (Kaştan & Kaştan 2016, p.149)

8. Discussion

To conclude this case study, the responsiveness of the findings to hypotheses need to be assessed.

The first hypothesis anticipated that the policy goal was driven by NPM. This hypothesis was developed by asking how efficient were the policy inputs in meeting policy goals in terms of financial performance. The decrease in the ratio of MoNE's budget of GDP and increases in the policy outputs point out that the 4+4+4 policy has achieved efficiency in budgetary spending. The increased number of teachers in formal education with this decreased budget also supported the efficiency argument.

Potential decentralization in the education system is also questioned to test this hypothesis. Even though devolution on the competences in service provisions such as construction and repair of buildings were introduced with 4+4+4, the education policy did not provide decentralization of education in Turkey due to the regulatory status of Special Provincial Administration's (SPA).

[37] According to MoNE's (2012) publication on the new education system, new elective courses were introduced in the subject areas of 'religion, morality, and values,' 'language and expression,' 'foreign languages,' 'sciences and mathematics,' 'art and sports,' and 'social sciences'. Detailed course schedule can be found in ANNEX-IX.
[38] 15 managers, and 20 assistant directors, 35 managers in total.
[39] This was due to the decreased age of children in the first grades (Gün, & Başkan, 2014).

The second hypothesis predicted that the policy goal was driven by conservative ideology. Discourse analysis combined with statistical analysis of policy outputs and outcomes provided a link between the conservative ideology of the AKP government and the 4+4+4 policy. By enabling the reopening of lower secondary Imam Hatips and leading a rapid increase in the number of lower secondary Imam Hatip schools, the 4+4+4 education system reflects the ideological influence of the AKP government. Discourse analysis also pointed out the discursive strategy of the 4+4+4 policy. While the efficiency and effectiveness arguments were prominent and religious codifications were not mentioned in the bill, the adoption of 4+4+4 policy reversed the NPM emphasis to a conservative one.

The third hypothesis proposed that the policy goal was driven to improve the quality of education according to international standards. The sharp decrease in Turkish PISA scores with the adoption of 4+4+4, was aimed to be compensated after 2015 with the adoption of the new Strategic Plan. However, increases after 2015 are still below the level before the law passed. Therefore, the 4+4+4 policy has not improved the education quality according to the international standards.

The last hypothesis anticipated that the policy goal was driven to improve equal access to education. Even though then-Prime Minister Erdoğan claimed this as a policy goal, a rapid increase in the number of private schools illustrated that the 4+4+4 policy has failed to provide equal access to education.

Thus, it is concluded that the new education reform policy of 4+4+4 was NPM-driven with conservative influences. Even though the new education policy provided efficiency in terms of budgetary decreases, it was not effective in achieving policy goals. Furthermore, it did not bring decentralization to the Turkish education system, failed to improve the education quality, and the increased number of private schools prevented an improvement in equal access to education.

Analysis of the 4+4+4 policy provides valuable reconsiderations on employing the cycle framework to analyze public policies. Even though this model includes street-level bureaucrats' crucial contributions in the policy process, it fails to provide an analysis outside the government. Therefore, it prevents a holistic insight into the policy process. In the case of the 4+4+4 system of Turkey, even though the new problems stage of the cycle aimed to grasp the policy failures, the framework was limited in tracking societal influences/complaints/appreciations of the system.

8.1. A New Public Policy Analysis Framework: The Snail Model

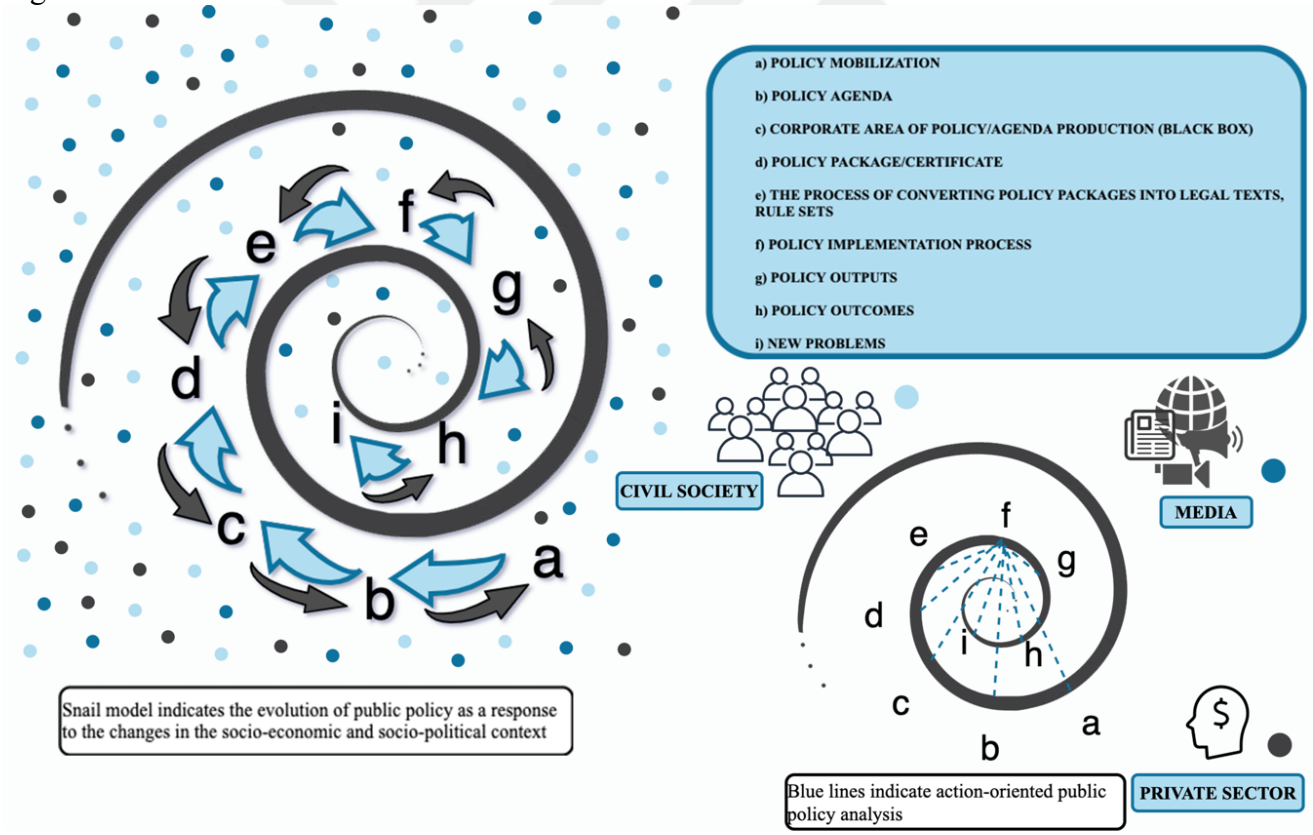
Cycle framework's neglect of the external influences on the policy process motivated the development of the snail model (Hjern & Hull 1982; Sabatier 1986). Even though Bayırbağ aims to move away from the focus on government by including 'policy outcomes/effects,' 'new problems,' and 'policy mobilization' stages, the revised cycle framework still has little to say about external influences on the policy process. To overcome this limitation, a new model- the snail model- is proposed in this thesis. The snail model (Figure 6) brings civil society and media throughout the policy process besides the private sector.

Bayırbağ emphasizes the intertwined nature of decisions and actions, especially in 'policy mobilization,' 'policy agenda,' and 'process of converting policy packages into legal texts' stages (2013). However, this overemphasis undermines the direct impact of policy outcomes on the agenda-setting part. Even though Bayırbağ (2013) acknowledges the policy process as an ongoing cycle, the visualization of the framework represents policies as if they have a fixed life cycle with a single, linear, repetitive, and a constant process. (Howlett et al., 2009; Sabatier, 2007). This undermines the longitudinal changes in the societal context. By bringing a more dynamic view on

how change happens in the policy process, the snail model suggests that policy outcomes have not only a direct impact on the agenda-setting part but also an indirect impact through its influence on the new problems impacting policy mobilization and policy agenda stages. Building on the cycle framework, the snail model aims to illustrate the overlapping and intertwining stages of the policy process. Furthermore, it represents policymaking as an evolving and shifting process to indicate a longitudinal approach in examining education policies.

Even though frameworks aim to simplify the complexity of a given phenomenon for research purposes, the revised cycle model's oversimplified visualization undermines the multidimensional nature of the policy process. To overcome this shortcoming, snail model suggests that the feedback and influence mechanisms between different stages of the policy cycle are not sequential as the revised cycle model implies, but rather each step has more or less an impact in the consecutive steps. The narrowing diameter of the snail model refers to the limited time available to respond to ever-increasing, expanding, and evolving problems that policymakers have to deal with. Borrowing the idea of the loop process from the cycle model, it also emphasizes the "feed-back process between outputs and inputs of policymaking, leading to the continual perpetuation" (Jann & Wegrich 2007, p.44). In this sense, a new public policy is needed either because of the failure of previous policies in responding to public demands/needs or the emergence of new problems within the ever-changing societal context.

Figure 6: Snail Model



Source: Personal elaboration

9. Conclusion

This study aimed to provide an in-depth understanding of the motivations and the policy process of the 4+4+4 education system in Turkey. This thesis also asked whether criticisms by some members of the public and academic world were substantial. By employing a case study with a convergent mixed method through discourse analysis, policy stages were examined in detail through Bayırbağ's cycle framework. The discursive strategy in the development of the new education policy pointed out that even though NPM-related codifications were prominent and the ideological references were not mentioned in the proposed bill, conservative ideology came to fore in the following policy stages. The statistical analysis also supports this finding. While the efficiency of the education system increased, the policy was not effective in achieving policy goals. Moreover, equal access to education could not be achieved and the quality of education did not improve with the 4+4+4 policy. As NPM does not aim to provide equality, these findings do not contradict with each other. The case study of 4+4+4 policy illustrated that the new education system of Turkey was driven by NPM, and conservative ideology.

Several limitations of Bayırbağ's framework are also addressed in this study. The limited scope of actors involved in the policy process, oversimplification of "the usual process of multiple, interacting cycles involving numerous policy proposals and statutes at multiple levels of government" with "the assumption that there is a single policy cycle focused on a major piece of legislation" prevented the inclusion of the third sector into the policy analysis (Sabatier, 2007, p.7). Therefore, the snail model is proposed for future analysis of public policies.

This paper contributes to Turkish educational policy literature by providing an in-depth analysis of the 4+4+4 policy. As the literature review pointed out, academic works in analyzing education policies in Turkey are limited in scope. Through the snail model, this research suggests that public policy analysis should not be limited to governmental implementations, but public demands and opinions should also be taken into account. It is also crucial to understand that policy outcomes do not only have a direct impact on agenda-setting, but also an indirect impact on the new problems through its influence, which also impacts policy mobilization, and policy agenda stages. Therefore, it is crucial to include these elements in further research. Also, statistical analysis and the issue of causal inference prevented a further analysis on the causal link between the law and changes in the policy outcomes in this thesis. Therefore, a quasi-experimental research on the impact of the law on the policy outcomes concerning PISA scores can provide more insight into the impact of the law on Turkey's quality of education.

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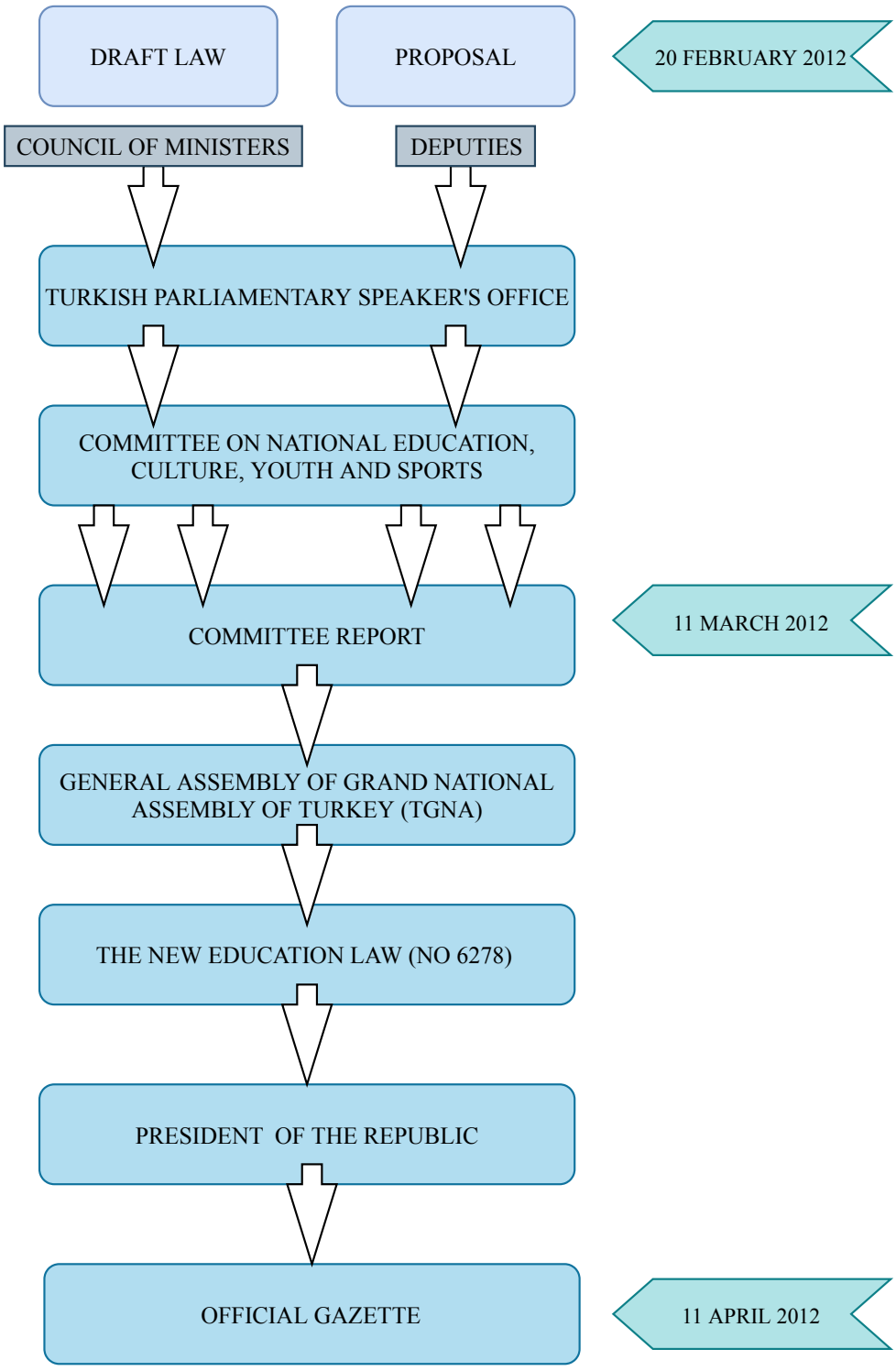
ANNEX-I

Policymaking of 4+4+4 Education System



Source: Personal elaboration

ANNEX-II

Number of Schools, Classrooms and Students in Formal Education

Education Year	Number of Schools in Formal Education	Number of Classrooms in Formal Education	Number of Students in Formal Education
2006/'07	45 812	/	14 874 496
2007/'08	45 973	452 976	14 817 654
2008/'09	45 969	468 916	15 351 849
2009/'10	46 100	488 915	16 137 436
2010/'11	46 287	503 749	16 845 528
2011/'12	46 427	515 426	16 905 143
2012/'13	61 592	538 442	17 234 452
2013/'14	61 936	562 882	17 532 988
2014/'15	59 509	589 902	17 559 989
2015/'16	61 203	651 828	17 588 958
2016/'17	63 153	654 434	17 702 938
2017/'18	65 568	686 800	17 885 248
2018/'19	66 849	706 015	18 108 860

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-III

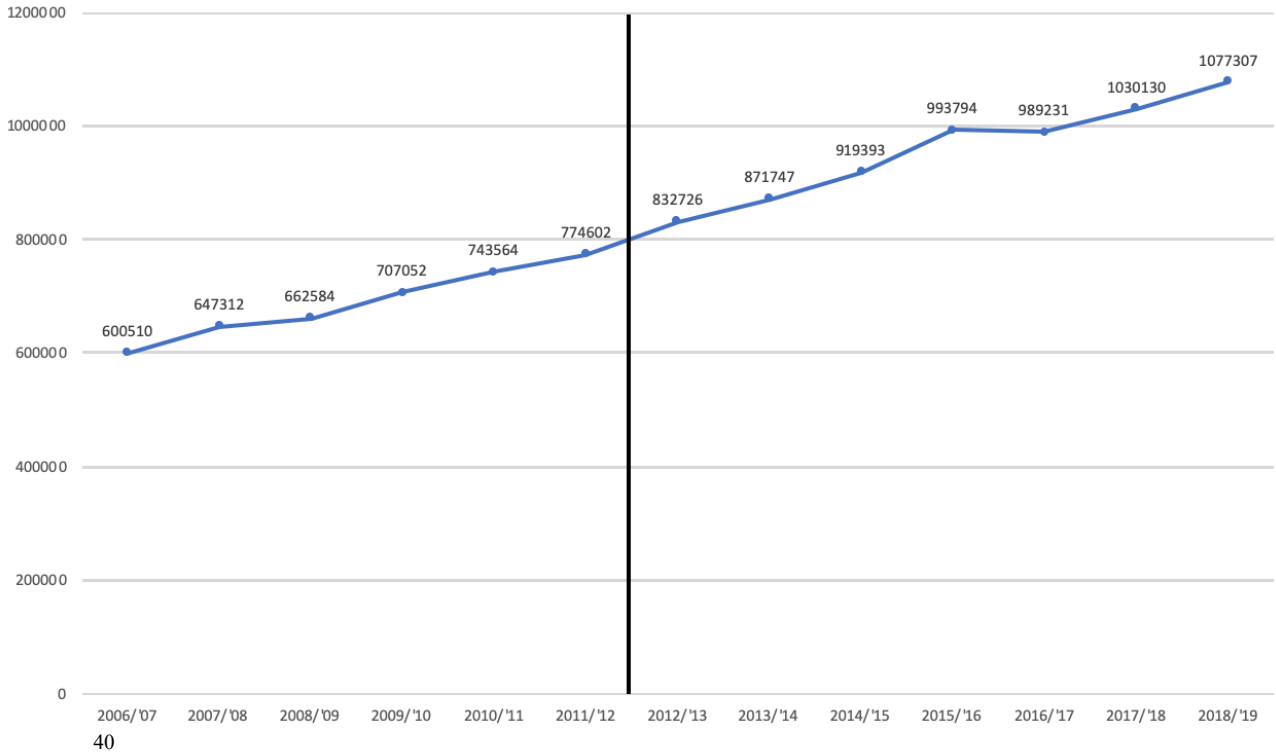
Budget of MoNE as Policy Input

Year	GDP (Gross Domestic Product) (TL)	Consolidated Central Government Budget (TL)	Budget of MoNE (TL)	Ratio of MoNE's Budget in GDP (%)	Ratio of MoNE's Budget in Consolidated Budget (%)
2000	166 658 021 460	46 827 436 000	3 350 330 000	2,01	7,15
2001	240 224 083 050	48 519 490 000	4 046 305 625	1,68	8,34
2002	350 476 089 498	98 131 000 000	7 460 991 000	2,13	7,60
2003	454 780 659 396	147 230 170 000	10 179 997 000	2,24	6,91
2004	559 033 025 861	150 658 129 000	12 366 236 276	2,21	8,21
2005	648 931 711 812	156 088 874 910	14 835 422 184	2,29	9,50
2006	758 390 785 210	174 958 100 699	16 568 145 500	2,18	9,47
2007	843 178 421 420	204 988 545 572	21 355 634 000	2,53	10,42
2008	950 534 250 715	222 553 216 800	22 915 565 000	2,41	10,30
2009	952 558 578 826	262 217 866 000	27 446 778 095	2,88	10,47
2010	1 098 799 348 446	286 981 303 810	28 237 412 000	2,57	9,84
2011	1 297 713 210 117	312 572 607 330	34 112 163 000	2,63	10,91
2012	1 416 798 489 819	350 898 317 817	39 169 379 190	2,76	11,16
2013	1 567 289 237 901	404 045 669 000	47 496 378 650	3,03	11,76
2014	1 748 167 816 609	434 995 765 000	55 704 817 610	3,19	12,81
2015	2 338 647 000 000	472 943 000 000	62 000 248 000	2,65	13,11
2016	2 608 526 000 000	570 507 000 000	76 354 306 000	2,93	13,38
2017	3 035 450 000 000	645 124 000 000	85 048 584 000	2,80	13,18
2018	3 445 782 000 000	762 753 000 000	92 528 652 000	2,69	12,13
2019	4 450 000 000 000	960 976 000 000	113 813 013 000	2,56	11,84

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-IV

Change in the Number of Teachers in Formal Education



40

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

[40] The black vertical line illustrates the year the new education law passed.

ANNEX-V

Number of Teachers in Formal Education, Religious and Private Schools as Policy Input

Education Year	Number of Teachers in Formal Education	Number of Teachers in Religious Schools in Formal Education (Lower Secondary Education)	Number of Teachers in Private Schools in Formal Education	Number of Teachers in Religious Schools in Formal Education (High Schools)
2006/'07	600 510	/	38 021	9 099
2007/'08	647 312	/	42 907	9 227
2008/'09	662 584	/	46 665	9 846
2009/'10	707 052	/	50 853	10 617
2010/'11	743 564	/	55 734	12 909
2011/'12	774 602	/	64 520	15 049
2012/'13	832 726	5 484	74 745	21 531
2013/'14	871 747	11 408	84 503	29 556
2014/'15	919 393	17 325	90 316	35 844
2015/'16	993 794	23 834	130 668	39 091
2016/'17	989 231	35 184	120 962	40 891
2017/'18	1 030 130	39 356	149 457	42 879
2018/'19	1 077 307	43 112	169 740	46 812

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-VI

Number of Schools, Classrooms, and Students in Private Schools

Education Year	Number of Private Schools in Formal Education	Number of Classrooms in Private Schools in Formal Education	Number of Students in Private Schools in Formal Education
2006/'07	2 718	/	335 939
2007/'08	3 785	35 407	386 797
2008/'09	3 896	35 049	423 253
2009/'10	4 091	38 200	458 108
2010/'11	5 335	37 008	498 118
2011/'12	4 664	40 157	535 788
2012/'13	5 942	45 153	613 064
2013/'14	6 710	55 157	698 912
2014/'15	7 474	61 228	823 515
2015/'16	9 581	98 762	1 174 409
2016/'17	10 053	100 029	1 217 755
2017/'18	11 694	118 155	1 351 712
2018/'19	12 809	134 664	1 440 577

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-VII

Number of Schools, Classrooms, and Students in Religious Lower Secondary Schools

Education Year	Number of Religious Schools in Formal Education (Lower Secondary Education)	Number of Classrooms in Religious Schools in Formal Education (Lower Secondary Education)	Number of Students in Religious Schools in Formal Education (Lower Secondary Education)
2012/'13	1 099	4 323	94 467
2013/'14	1 361	7 134	240 015
2014/'15	1 597	10 385	385 830
2015/'16	1 961	15 792	524 295
2016/'17	2 671	23 101	651 954
2017/'18	3 286	25 163	723 108
2018/'19	3 394	24 853	761 785

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-VIII

Number of Schools, Classrooms, and Students in Religious High Schools

Education Year	Number of Religious High Schools in Formal Education	Number of Classrooms in Religious High Schools in Formal Education	Number of Students in Religious High Schools in Formal Education
2006/'07	455	7 123	120 668
2007/'08	456	7 197	129 274
2008/'09	458	7 444	143 637
2009/'10	465	8 038	198 581
2010/'11	493	8 671	235 639
2011/'12	537	9 616	268 245
2012/'13	708	12 903	380 771
2013/'14	854	16 845	474 096
2014/'15	1 017	20 708	668 381
2015/'16	1 149	23 781	677 205
2016/'17	1 452	30 203	645 318
2017/'18	1 605	32 805	627 503
2018/'19	1 624	34 467	605 869

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

ANNEX-IX

Elective Courses That Are Introduced with the New Education Policy

<table>
<tr><td rowspan="2">SUBJECT AREAS</td><td colspan="6">ELECTIVE COURSES</td></tr>
<tr><td>Religion, Morality and Values</td><td>Language and Expression</td><td>Foreign Languages</td><td>Sciences and Mathematics</td><td>Arts and Sports</td><td>Social Sciences</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="5">COURCES</td><td>Qur'an</td><td>Reading Skills</td><td rowspan="5">Foreign Languages (Languages that are accepted by the decisions of the Council of Ministers)</td><td>Science Implementations</td><td rowspan="2">Visual Arts (Painting, Traditional Arts, Plastic Arts, etc.)</td><td>Popular Culture</td></tr>
<tr><td>Basic Religious Knowledge</td><td>Writer and Writing Skills</td><td>Mathematics Implementations</td><td rowspan="2">Media Literacy</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Life of Mohammad</td><td rowspan="3">Living Languages and Dialects</td><td>Music</td></tr>
<tr><td>Environment and Science</td><td>Sports and Physical Activities</td><td rowspan="3">Law and Justice</td></tr>
<tr><td>Information Technologies and Softwares</td><td>Drama</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="4"></td><td>Intelligence Games</td><td>Thinking Training</td></tr>
</table>

Source: Personal elaboration from the data published by MoNE.

(END PAGE)