



THE IMPACT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES ON YOUTH AT RISK AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS IN THE ARAB COMMUNITY IN ISRAEL

Ahmad Khalailaⁱ

Girne American University (GAU),
Northern Cyprus

Abstract:

This study aimed to examine the impact of public administration policies and practices on at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel, focusing on policy implementation, service accessibility, and the challenges affecting the effectiveness of existing interventions. The study adopted a qualitative research approach through semi-structured interviews conducted with a purposive sample of 39 professionals and key stakeholders working in educational, social, administrative, and health sectors related to youth at risk and school dropout issues. The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the main themes reflecting participants' experiences and perspectives. The findings revealed that the main challenge facing youth policies is not the lack of programs, but rather the gap between policy development and effective implementation. Despite the availability of various governmental frameworks, limited follow-up, administrative barriers, insufficient resources, and weak coordination among institutions have reduced the ability of policies to reach Arab youth and create sustainable impacts. The results also indicated that existing services do not always adequately address the social, cultural, and economic realities of Arab youth, and that youth participation in policy processes remains mainly formal rather than influential. Based on the findings, the researcher recommended strengthening policy implementation mechanisms, simplifying access to youth services, developing flexible programs that respond to local community needs, and establishing effective frameworks to enhance youth participation in policy design and evaluation.

Keywords: public administration policies, youth at risk, school dropouts, Arab community in Israel, policy implementation

ⁱ Correspondence: email a_khalaily@hotmail.com

1. Introduction

The future of societies and its capacity to attain social and economic growth heavily depend on young people, making them one of the most significant social groups. The youth stage is a crucial time for the formation of social and personal identities. According to this viewpoint, youth-oriented public policies have emerged as a key area of public administration, especially when it comes to giving young people who encounter social and economic circumstances that might prevent them from reaching their full potential protection, support, and equal opportunities. When it comes to at-risk youth and school dropouts, these policies are even more crucial because they are highly marginalized and socially excluded, necessitating comprehensive institutional interventions that incorporate educational, social, economic, and psychological aspects (Heib, 2020).

Individual variables alone cannot account for the phenomenon of school dropout and at-risk adolescents. Instead, it is the outcome of a complicated interplay between social, institutional, and structural elements. Young people are more likely to disengage from their educational and social routes when they live in poverty, have limited educational resources, have challenging family situations, have weak social support networks, and get subpar public services. Although the difference between the two systems has gradually decreased, school dropout rates in Israel's Arab education system are still greater than those in the Hebrew education system (Heib & Lazar, 2020).

These difficulties are especially noticeable in Israel's Arab community, which has historically faced institutional, social, and economic injustices that limit young people's access to education and social integration. A number of factors, such as socioeconomic status differences, unequal resource distribution to educational institutions, differences in the quality of the educational environment, and the effects of public policies and their implementation, are linked to educational disparities between Arab and Jewish students in Israel (Resh & Blass, 2019).

In these situations, the efficacy of youth policies depends not only on the availability of programs and services but also on their fit for the social and cultural context in which they operate and their capacity to effectively address the needs of the target population. Intervention programs for at-risk youth in Israel's Arab population can boost students' willingness to learn, improve their sense of self-efficacy and belonging, and deepen their relationship to school. However, because some of these programs were created using methods that did not adequately take into account the cultural, social, and economic aspects of Arab adolescents, their efficacy has remained restricted (Abbas, 2023).

The relationship between government agencies, local authorities, and civil society organizations, as well as their capacity to create an integrated model based on coordination and collaborative governance, must be examined in order to comprehend the role of public administration in meeting the needs of at-risk youth. At-risk Arab youth have personal, social, and systemic needs, and institutions still struggle to provide

programs that effectively meet these needs. This emphasizes how crucial it is to create policies that are more sensitive to the local environment (Haneen & Yafit, 2024).

As a result, the problem of school dropouts and at-risk adolescents in Israel's Arab minority is an area where local and community institutions, social and educational policy, and governmental administration come together. This emphasizes how crucial it is to look at how youth policies are implemented in practice, how well they reach their target audience, and the institutional and administrative elements that either increase or decrease their efficacy. Therefore, by examining the experiences and perspectives of professionals and important stakeholders working in the educational, social, and administrative domains, the current study aims to analyze how public administration policies and practices affect at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel.

2. Research Problem

Significant obstacles still exist, especially among Arab adolescents, despite the existence of several governmental and community-based policies and programs targeted at assisting at-risk youth and lowering school dropout rates in Israel. High levels of exposure to social and educational dangers, restricted access to services, and the incapacity of certain current interventions to sufficiently address the real requirements of this group are some of these difficulties (Saff, 2025). Previous research also shows that there is a discrepancy between the goals of public policies and how they are actually implemented, which is caused by institutional, administrative, and cultural issues that restrict the efficacy of the programs offered (Maham *et al.*, 2026).

Even if earlier studies have looked at educational inequalities, school dropout rates, and the needs of Arab adolescents, one crucial area still needs more research. In particular, it is necessary to comprehend how youth policies function from the viewpoint of the professionals in charge of putting them into practice and to pinpoint the elements that affect their capacity to accomplish their desired goals. As a result, the current study tackles the need to investigate how public administration policies and procedures affect school dropouts and at-risk youth in Israel's Arab minority. Additionally, it aims to determine the institutional and administrative elements that affect the successful execution of these policies as well as the degree to which they address the needs of this group. Based on this, the study aims to answer the following main research question:

- How do public administration policies and practices influence the situation of at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel?

3. Research Questions

- To what extent is there a gap between the design of government policies targeting youth and their implementation in practice, as well as their actual impact on Arab youth?

- What institutional and administrative factors affect Arab youths' access to the services and programs intended for them?
- To what extent do current youth policies take into account the social, cultural, and economic characteristics of Arab youth?
- What is the nature of Arab youths' participation in the design and evaluation of policies and programs intended for them, and has this participation moved beyond symbolic involvement toward genuine collaborative governance?
- How is cooperation between government agencies, local authorities, and civil society organizations organized in supporting Arab youth, and how effective and sustainable is this cooperation?

3.1 Research Objectives

The study aims to:

- 1) Analyze the gap between the design of youth policies and their implementation in practice, and identify the factors affecting their effectiveness.
- 2) Examine the institutional and administrative barriers that limit Arab youths' access to supportive services and programs.
- 3) Assess the extent to which current youth policies are compatible with the social, cultural, and economic realities of Arab youth.
- 4) Analyze the level of Arab youths' participation in the design and evaluation of policies and assess the extent to which collaborative governance has been achieved in practice.
- 5) Evaluate the nature of cooperation among government agencies, local authorities, and civil society organizations, and its role in building an integrated support system for youth.

3.2 Significance of the Study

The relevance of the problem of at-risk adolescents and school dropouts as one of the main social issues influencing people's futures as well as society's is what makes this study so important. It also highlights how important public management is in creating services and policies that might lessen marginalization and encourage social and educational inclusion. Additionally, by analyzing the discrepancy between the declared goals of youth policies and their actual execution among the Arab community in Israel, the study advances knowledge of the relationship between public policies and their implementation.

The study's focus on the viewpoints of professionals and important stakeholders who deal directly with at-risk adolescents and school dropouts makes it noteworthy from an academic standpoint. This method offers a more thorough comprehension of the administrative and institutional difficulties that could not be fully reflected by quantitative research or policy analysis alone. The survey also provides additional information about how well-suited current services and initiatives are to the social, cultural, and economic traits of the Arab community.

Practically speaking, it is anticipated that the study's conclusions will offer suggestions that will help legislators, governmental organizations, local governments, and community groups create more comprehensive and successful interventions. In order to help create a support system that is more sensitive to the needs of Arab youth who are at risk, the study also seeks to strengthen coordination between various sectors and increase youth and other stakeholders' involvement in the creation and assessment of policies that impact them.

4. Literature Review

Previous research on Arab youth in Israel has highlighted the complex relationship between social vulnerability, educational inequalities, institutional barriers, and the effectiveness of policies and support systems. Dakak-Abed *et al.* (2026) demonstrated that structured civic engagement programs can strengthen participation, well-being, and empowerment among marginalized Arab youth by improving civic skills, sense of belonging, and ability to express their views and advocate for their rights. Similarly, Maham *et al.* (2026) found that Arab youth transitioning from out-of-home care face multiple interconnected challenges, including weak social support, exclusion, limited belonging, and difficulties accessing education and employment. The study emphasized that existing interventions often fail to sufficiently reflect the cultural and social characteristics of the Arab community and highlighted the need for sustainable, culturally responsive support systems.

Research has also identified persistent educational and institutional inequalities affecting Arab youth. Dallasheh (2025) examined structural barriers within the Israeli higher education system and found that unequal resource allocation, institutional practices, and policy-related barriers continue to limit equal educational opportunities for Arab students. Kaiyal (2025) further showed that withdrawal from higher education among Arab students is shaped by the interaction of financial difficulties, family responsibilities, cultural pressures, and insufficient institutional support, indicating that educational continuation is influenced by broader social and institutional conditions rather than individual choices alone. Saffuri (2025) similarly highlighted continuing disparities between Arab and Jewish education systems, particularly in funding, infrastructure, educational quality, and access to non-formal education opportunities, emphasizing the need for policies that better reflect the social and cultural characteristics of the Arab community. Bar-Haim (2025) also found that although educational attainment among Palestinian Arabs in Israel has increased over time, significant gaps compared with Jewish citizens remain, influenced by both institutional and social factors. Studies focusing on vulnerable youth and school dropout have consistently emphasized the role of socioeconomic conditions, institutional responsiveness, and community context. Haneen and Yafit (2024) identified personal, social, and institutional needs among at-risk Arab youth, including emotional support, belonging, social integration, and access to appropriate services. Haneen *et al.* (2024) further revealed that Arab

students in higher education encounter political, institutional, social, and personal barriers that restrict their successful integration, including unequal opportunities, organizational challenges, and limited academic support. Abbas (2023) found that intervention programs targeting at-risk Arab youth contributed to improved school attachment, motivation, self-efficacy, belonging, and future aspirations, while also reducing risk factors such as disciplinary problems and violence. However, the study noted that the effectiveness of these programs remains limited when interventions are based on models that do not sufficiently consider the cultural, social, and historical context of Arab youth.

The issue of school dropout among Arab youth has also been examined through broader structural and policy perspectives. Heib (2020) found that Arab youth represent one of the groups most vulnerable to school dropout and social risks due to poverty, marginalization, institutional discrimination, and limited access to support services. The study emphasized that existing government programs do not adequately reach all youth at risk, resulting in continued gaps in prevention and intervention. Heib and Lazar (2020) confirmed that dropout rates in the Arab education system remain higher than those in the Hebrew education system, despite a gradual reduction in the gap over time. Resh and Blass (2019) further demonstrated that educational inequalities between Arab and Jewish students are associated with differences in socioeconomic conditions, school resources, educational environments, and policy implementation mechanisms. The study concluded that structural inequalities and unequal educational opportunities continue to influence academic achievement and dropout patterns among Arab youth. Abu Ajaj (2016) also highlighted the importance of family involvement in reducing dropout tendencies among at-risk Bedouin adolescents, showing that stronger parental engagement is associated with a lower likelihood of school withdrawal and greater participation in school activities.

4.1 Commentary on Previous Studies and the Research Gap

The review of previous studies shows that research on at-risk youth and school dropout among the Arab community in Israel has mainly focused on educational inequalities, social and economic challenges, youth needs, and the effectiveness of specific intervention programs. Although these studies have provided important insights into the factors contributing to vulnerability and exclusion, limited attention has been given to the role of public administration policies and practices in shaping the accessibility, implementation, and effectiveness of youth services.

Furthermore, insufficient research has examined the gap between policy design and actual implementation, the institutional and administrative factors influencing policy outcomes, and the extent to which youth policies reflect the social, cultural, and economic context of the Arab community. Therefore, the current study addresses this gap by exploring how public administration policies and practices affect at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel, based on the perspectives and experiences of relevant professionals and stakeholders.

5. Research Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research approach to explore the impact of public administration policies and practices on at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel. The qualitative approach was considered appropriate because the research addresses complex social and institutional issues that cannot be adequately understood through quantitative measures alone. Instead, it requires an in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, perceptions, challenges, and views regarding policy implementation and the suitability of existing services and interventions.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which served as the primary research instrument. This method allowed participants to provide detailed insights into the role of public administration, the effectiveness of current policies and practices, and the challenges associated with delivering services to at-risk youth and school dropouts.

The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the major themes and recurring patterns that reflected participants' perspectives on the impact of public administration policies and practices, as well as the strengths and limitations of existing interventions and support services.

5.1 Study Population

The study population consisted of professionals and key stakeholders working in educational, social, administrative, and health sectors related to at-risk youth and school dropouts within the Arab community in Israel. These included school principals, teachers, educational and therapeutic counselors, social workers, and other professionals involved in providing services and interventions for this population. This group was selected because of its direct involvement in implementing public policies and supporting young people at risk of school dropout and social exclusion.

5.2 Study Sample

The study employed purposive sampling and included 39 participants representing key stakeholders involved in issues related to at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel. The sample consisted of school principals, teachers, educational and therapeutic counselors, social workers, and health professionals. Participants were selected based on their professional experience and their direct involvement in implementing policies, delivering services, and providing interventions for at-risk youth.

5.3 Study Findings

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with a purposive sample of key stakeholders and professionals involved in issues related to at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel. The sample consisted of 39 participants representing a range of professional backgrounds, including school principals, teachers, an educational and therapeutic counselor, a social worker, a pharmacist, and a physician.

The interviews aimed to explore participants' professional experiences and perspectives regarding the impact of public administration policies and practices, the challenges facing this population, and the interventions and services currently provided.

The interview questions focused on the central objective of the study: examining the impact of public administration policies and practices on at-risk youth and school dropouts in the Arab community in Israel. In particular, participants were asked to reflect on the effectiveness of current policies, the challenges associated with their implementation, and the roles of different institutions in prevention and intervention efforts.

5.3.1 Findings Related to the First Research Question: How do you evaluate the role of government institutions in providing meaningful opportunities and support for young people in your community? Is there a gap, if any, between the announced policies and what actually reaches young people?

Table 1: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the First Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gap between declared policies and actual implementation	Weak implementation, with policies remaining largely theoretical rather than being translated into practice	22	26.8%
2	Limited access to services and opportunities	Difficult access to information and programs, and complex administrative procedures	12	14.6%
3	Insufficient resources and support	Limited funding and an inadequate number of programs relative to existing needs	14	17.1%
4	Importance of the government's role and the need for stronger interventions	Existing programs and policies require expansion and further development	13	15.9%
5	Limited adaptation to local needs	Insufficient consideration of the specific circumstances of the Arab community and regional differences	7	8.5%
6	Weak institutional coordination and follow-up	Need for continuous support and stronger cooperation among institutions	6	7.3%
7	Successful but limited intervention programs	Program effectiveness varies across regions and individual cases	8	9.8%
Total			82	100.0%

Note: The total number of frequencies does not represent the number of study participants, as individual participants often referred to more than one theme during the interviews. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of coded responses (82) rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants generally recognized the importance of government institutions in supporting young people. However, the most prominent

concern was the gap between declared policies and their implementation in practice (26.8%), suggesting that the main challenge lies in translating policies into effective services rather than in the absence of policies themselves.

Participants also emphasized insufficient resources, limited access to services, and the need for stronger institutional coordination. Although several existing programs were viewed positively, they were considered too limited in scope and insufficiently responsive to the specific needs of the Arab community. Overall, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of youth policies depends primarily on their practical implementation, accessibility, and responsiveness to local needs.

5.3.2 Findings Related to the Second Research Question: What government programs or services are expected to be available for youth in distress? From your perspective, to what extent are these programs known and actually accessible?

Table 2: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Second Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Diversity of programs and services targeting youth in distress	Employment programs, vocational training, and alternative education	23	25.6%
2	Limited awareness of available programs and services	Insufficient information and guidance regarding available services	21	23.3%
3	Gap between service availability and actual access	Difficult access procedures and limited resources	18	20.0%
4	Psychological and social support and follow-up	Counseling, treatment services, and support for youth and families	12	13.3%
5	Need to adapt programs to youth needs	Considering youth interests and local realities	8	8.9%
6	Lack of integration among services	Fragmented interventions and absence of a comprehensive support pathway	8	8.9%
Total			90	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants discussed more than one issue or theme in their responses. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (90 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants perceived government programs and services for youth in distress as available and diverse, particularly in the areas of employment, vocational training, alternative education, and psychosocial support. However, the main challenge was not the absence of programs, but rather limited awareness of these services and difficulties in accessing them.

The results highlight a gap between the formal availability of services and their actual reach to the target population. Participants emphasized that the effectiveness of government programs depends not only on their existence but also on the ability of

institutions to ensure timely access, provide integrated support, and respond to the individual, social, and professional needs of youth.

These findings point to the importance of strengthening awareness mechanisms, referral systems, and coordination among service providers, particularly within Arab communities, to ensure that youth can move from a stage of vulnerability toward stability and social integration.

5.3.3 Findings Related to the Third Research Question: Have you previously interacted with a government program targeting youth? Describe the experience in terms of accessibility, interaction style, and continuity of support.

Table 3: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Third Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Limited continuity of support and follow-up	Support decreases after the initial stage of the program and lacks long-term follow-up	21	25.9%
2	Difficulties accessing government programs	Complex procedures, unclear information, and registration requirements	18	22.2%
3	Positive aspects of programs in terms of purpose and organization	Positive impact when programs are available and accessible	15	18.5%
4	Variation in implementation quality and interaction	Differences according to staff members and implementation mechanisms	12	14.8%
5	Limited resources affecting program effectiveness	Short program duration, limited sessions, resources, and professional support	10	12.3%
6	Successful experiences with specific programs	Programs related to violence prevention, dropout prevention, and youth support	5	6.2%
Total			81	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants addressed more than one dimension in their responses, including accessibility, quality of interaction, and continuity of support. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (81 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants generally viewed government programs targeting youth positively in terms of their importance and potential impact; however, significant challenges remain regarding accessibility and continuity of support. The main concern was that interventions often provide initial assistance without ensuring sustained follow-up and long-term accompaniment.

Participants also highlighted that the existence of programs does not necessarily guarantee that youth can benefit from them, as access is often affected by unclear information, complex procedures, and administrative barriers. At the same time, successful experiences with specific programs demonstrated that government

interventions can achieve positive outcomes when they are supported by adequate resources, effective implementation, and continuous follow-up.

Overall, the findings suggest that the main challenge facing government programs is not the lack of initiatives, but rather the need to shift from short-term interventions toward integrated and sustainable support pathways that accompany youth from the stage of vulnerability to stability and social integration.

5.3.4 Findings Related to the Fourth Research Question: From your perspective, to what extent do government programs targeting youth align with or contradict their actual needs in terms of objectives and design?

Table 4: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Fourth Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Partial alignment between programs and youth needs	Addressing some basic needs while leaving other areas insufficiently covered	20	25.6%
2	Gap between program design and young people's actual realities	General programs do not adequately reflect the complexity of youth experiences	19	24.4%
3	Limited flexibility and individualization in program design	Standardized programs that do not consider individual and social differences	12	15.4%
4	Focus on theoretical aspects rather than practical application	Need for programs more connected to reality and the labor market	11	14.1%
5	Limited resources affecting program effectiveness	Insufficient budgets, short duration, and weak continuity	8	10.3%
6	Need for youth participation and program adaptation	Designing programs according to local realities and involving beneficiaries	8	10.2%
Total			78	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants discussed more than one issue or theme in their responses. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (78 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants perceived a partial alignment between government programs and the actual needs of youth; however, this alignment remains limited due to a gap between program design and young people's everyday realities. While existing programs address important areas such as education, employment, training, and psychological support, they do not fully capture the complex social, economic, and personal challenges faced by youth, particularly those experiencing distress or at risk of school dropout.

Participants emphasized that the effectiveness of these programs is affected by limited flexibility and the reliance on standardized intervention models that do not sufficiently account for individual differences. The findings highlight the need to redesign government programs in a more adaptive and context-sensitive manner, based

on local realities and greater involvement of youth themselves, so that general policy objectives can be translated into practical interventions that respond to actual needs.

5.3.5 Findings Related to the Fifth Research Question: What administrative or institutional barriers hinder young people's access to government services, such as procedures, eligibility requirements, or the way services are delivered?

Table 5: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Fifth Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Complex procedures and bureaucracy	Lengthy processes, multiple steps, and involvement of several authorities	30	28.0%
2	Excessive requirements and difficult eligibility criteria	Unclear or restrictive conditions limiting access to services	22	20.6%
3	Limited awareness and guidance regarding services	Lack of information and unclear pathways for accessing support	18	16.8%
4	Limited flexibility in dealing with youth	Formal and rigid approaches that do not consider the needs of the target group	13	12.1%
5	Weak coordination among institutions	Multiple service providers without sufficient integration and follow-up	9	8.4%
6	Institutional inequality and discrimination	Differences in resources and opportunities across communities, particularly Arab localities	9	8.4%
7	Limited local resources and available opportunities	Shortage of nearby services and programs for youth	6	5.7%
Total			107	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants identified more than one administrative or institutional barrier in their responses. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (107 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that the main barriers limiting young people's access to government services are primarily administrative and institutional rather than related to the absence of services themselves. Participants highlighted bureaucratic complexity, difficult eligibility requirements, and limited guidance as major obstacles preventing youth from benefiting effectively from available programs.

The findings also demonstrate that the quality of service delivery and the manner of interaction with youth influence the effectiveness of interventions. Rigid and formal approaches may not adequately address the needs of youth in vulnerable situations, who often require trust-building, flexibility, and supportive engagement. In addition, weak coordination among institutions and unequal distribution of resources across communities further restrict access to services.

Overall, improving youth access to government services requires simplifying procedures, strengthening information and guidance mechanisms, increasing

institutional flexibility, and developing coordinated support systems that ensure services reach those most in need, particularly at-risk youth in the Arab community.

5.3.6 Findings Related to the Sixth Research Question: How do government institutions address school dropouts in terms of follow-up, reintegration, and support? Do you consider these efforts effective?

Table 6: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Sixth Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Existence of formal interventions addressing school dropout	Follow-up programs, alternative education, vocational training, and reintegration efforts	28	25.9%
2	Limited effectiveness of current interventions	Weak continuity and insufficient long-term support	25	23.1%
3	Weak individual follow-up and delayed intervention	Intervention after dropout occurs rather than early prevention	18	16.7%
4	Need for psychological and social support and comprehensive follow-up	Counseling, family support, and continuous engagement with youth	14	13.0%
5	Limited resources and specialized staff	Shortage of qualified professionals, funding, and specialized services	10	9.3%
6	Importance of institutional coordination	Cooperation among schools, families, welfare services, and government agencies	8	7.4%
7	Variation in effectiveness across cases	Successful outcomes in some cases while challenges persist in others	5	4.6%
Total			108	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants discussed more than one aspect in their responses, including the availability of programs, quality of follow-up, support mechanisms, and barriers affecting effectiveness. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (108 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants recognized the existence of various government interventions addressing school dropout, including follow-up programs, alternative education, vocational training, and social support services. However, they also emphasized that the effectiveness of these interventions remains limited due to insufficient continuity and weak long-term support.

Participants further indicated that many interventions occur after dropout has already taken place rather than focusing on early prevention and addressing the underlying causes of disengagement from education. The findings also highlight the importance of individualized follow-up, psychological and social support, and stronger coordination among schools, families, and welfare institutions.

Overall, the results suggest that while government responses to school dropout are necessary and valuable, they require a shift from fragmented and short-term

interventions toward a continuous, preventive, and integrated support system that addresses both the consequences and root causes of dropout.

5.3.7 Findings Related to the Seventh Research Question: How are young people actually involved in designing or evaluating policies and programs targeting them? Is this involvement institutionalized or merely symbolic?

Table 7: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Seventh Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Symbolic rather than meaningful youth participation	Listening to youth opinions without actual influence on decisions	27	31.8%
2	Existing participation tools with limited impact	Surveys, workshops, dialogue meetings, and youth councils	22	25.9%
3	Weak institutionalization of youth participation	Lack of permanent mechanisms requiring youth involvement in decision-making	15	17.6%
4	Limited examples of meaningful and influential participation	Youth involvement in practical programs and applied experiences	10	11.8%
5	Need to strengthen youth roles in policy design	Moving from expressing opinions to participating in decision-making	8	9.4%
6	Variation in participation levels across institutions and programs	Institutional participation in some cases and symbolic participation in others	3	3.5%
Total			85	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants addressed more than one aspect of youth participation, including participation mechanisms, the nature of involvement, and influence on decision-making. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (85 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that youth participation in the design and evaluation of government programs exists mainly at a formal level but remains limited in terms of actual influence on decision-making. Participants noted that youth are often consulted through surveys, meetings, and workshops; however, their views do not consistently lead to concrete changes in policies or programs.

The findings also reveal that existing participation mechanisms are not sufficiently institutionalized, as youth involvement often depends on temporary initiatives rather than being embedded within stable policy-making processes. Nevertheless, some successful examples demonstrate that youth participation becomes more meaningful when young people are actively involved in practical experiences and program development.

Overall, the results suggest that enhancing youth participation requires moving beyond consultation toward genuine partnership, where young people become active contributors to the design, implementation, and evaluation of programs targeting them.

5.3.8 Findings Related to the Eighth Research Question: How do you evaluate the role of local authorities compared with the role of central government in addressing issues related to youth in distress?

Table 8: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Eighth Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Proximity of local authorities to youth realities	Direct knowledge of cases and capacity for daily follow-up	27	25.2%
2	Central government as a source of policies and resources	Establishing general frameworks and providing budgets and national programs	21	19.6%
3	Limited capacities of local authorities	Lack of budgets, authority, and human resources	18	16.8%
4	Weak coordination between central government and local authorities	Gap between planning and implementation	16	15.0%
5	Need for integration between the two levels	Central government for planning and funding, local authorities for implementation and follow-up	14	13.1%
6	Variation in local authority effectiveness by region	Differences in local services and capacities	7	6.5%
7	Limited current responses to youth issues	Insufficient efforts by both levels compared with the scale of the problem	4	3.8%
Total			107	100%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants discussed more than one aspect related to local authorities, central government, coordination, and resource limitations. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (107 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that participants viewed local authorities and central government as having different but interconnected roles in addressing youth issues. Local authorities were perceived as being closer to young people and better positioned to identify needs, monitor cases, and respond to local realities due to their direct connection with schools, families, and communities.

In contrast, central government was viewed as playing a key role in policy development, funding, and establishing broad intervention frameworks. However, participants highlighted limitations in local authorities' resources and capacities, as well as gaps between central planning and local implementation.

Overall, the findings suggest that the main challenge is not the absence of a specific actor's role, but rather the lack of effective coordination and integration between the two levels. Addressing youth challenges requires a collaborative governance approach in which central government provides policies and resources, while local authorities translate them into accessible interventions that respond to young people's actual needs.

5.3.9 Findings Related to the Ninth Research Question: How do you describe the nature of cooperation between government agencies and non-governmental organizations in the youth field? Is this cooperation organized and institutionalized, or does it depend on individual initiatives?

Table 9: Hierarchical Thematic Analysis of the Ninth Interview Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Existing cooperation but limited institutional stability	Cooperation exists but partially depends on individual initiatives and personal efforts	28	28.3%
2	Existing partnerships and joint programs	Joint initiatives in training, psychosocial support, dropout prevention, and youth activities	22	22.2%
3	Need to transform cooperation into a sustainable institutional framework	Developing clear partnerships and long-term plans	16	16.2%
4	Complementary roles between government and NGOs	Government provides funding and formal frameworks, while NGOs are closer to youth	13	13.1%
5	Institutional cooperation in some cases	Formal agreements, committees, and official programs	10	10.1%
6	Weak or limited cooperation in some contexts	Superficial cooperation or insufficient support for NGOs	6	6.1%
7	Variation in cooperation according to project or organization	Cooperation differs across projects and contexts	4	4.0%
Total			99	100.0%

Note: The total frequency count does not represent the number of participants, as some participants discussed more than one aspect of cooperation, including its existence, level of institutionalization, and dependence on individual initiatives. Therefore, percentages were calculated based on the total number of extracted themes (99 occurrences), rather than the total sample size (39 participants).

The findings indicate that cooperation between government agencies and non-governmental organizations exists and plays an important role in supporting youth; however, it remains partially dependent on individual efforts rather than being fully embedded within stable institutional frameworks.

Participants identified several areas of cooperation, including psychosocial support, training, dropout prevention, and youth activities. Nevertheless, they emphasized the need to strengthen institutional arrangements through clear coordination mechanisms, long-term partnerships, and sustainable planning.

Overall, the findings suggest that the main challenge is not the absence of cooperation between the governmental and non-governmental sectors, but rather the need to transform existing efforts into a structured and sustainable partnership capable of ensuring continuous support and effective access to services for youth in distress.

5.3.10 Results Related to the Tenth Question: Do you perceive a gap between the needs of Arab youth and the policies implemented for them? Please explain.

Table 10: Hierarchical Analysis of the Tenth Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	The gap between the needs of Arab youth and existing policies	Policies do not correspond with the actual realities of young people	24	34.3%
2	Limited consideration of Arab-specific characteristics in policy design	General policies that do not consider social, cultural, and economic circumstances	20	28.6%
3	Economic and social gaps in youth needs	Employment, poverty, violence, housing, and lack of support frameworks and services	12	17.1%
4	The need for individualized and flexible interventions	Designing programs that consider individual differences among young people	8	11.4%
5	Psychological impact, identity, and belonging	Feelings of helplessness and uncertainty about the future among some Arab youth	4	5.7%
6	Partial attempts toward adaptation	Limited alignment and attempts to improve policies	2	2.9%
Total			70	100.0%

Note: The total frequencies do not represent the number of participants in the sample; rather, they reflect the number of times specific codes or ideas appeared in participants' responses. Some responses included more than one analytical idea; therefore, the total frequency may exceed the number of interviews conducted.

The findings indicate a broad perception among participants regarding the existence of a gap between the needs of Arab youth and the policies implemented for them. The most prominent finding was the lack of alignment between existing programs and policies and the actual realities of young people (34.3%). The responses also showed that a significant part of this gap is related to the fact that policies are often designed in a general manner without sufficiently considering the social, cultural, and economic specificities of Arab society (28.6%).

The results further demonstrate that Arab youth face needs related to employment, empowerment, and social stability, while existing programs require greater flexibility and customization to address individual differences and local circumstances. Accordingly, the findings suggest that the main challenge does not lie only in the existence of policies themselves, but rather in their ability to realistically respond to youth needs and to be implemented in a manner appropriate to the Arab context.

5.3.11 Results Related to the Eleventh Question: From your perspective, what is the role of government policies (or their absence) in increasing or reducing the phenomenon of dropout and vulnerability among youth?

Table 11: Hierarchical Analysis of the Eleventh Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	The importance of government policies in reducing dropout and vulnerability	Policies as a protective and supportive factor for youth	25	33.8%
2	The impact of weak implementation or absence of policies	Increased dropout due to weak enforcement and follow-up	18	24.3%
3	The importance of early intervention and prevention	Early monitoring and follow-up before dropout occurs	12	16.2%
4	The need for comprehensive and multidimensional policies	Integrating educational, psychological, social, and vocational support	10	13.5%
5	Limitations of current policies in addressing the root causes of the problem	Focusing on dealing with dropouts rather than preventing dropout	6	8.1%
6	The role of the family in dropout and vulnerability	The family as an influential factor in protecting youth	3	4.1%
Total			74	100.0%

Note: The total frequencies do not represent the number of participants in the sample; rather, they indicate the number of times the codes and ideas appeared in participants' responses. Since some responses included more than one analytical idea, the total frequency may exceed the number of interviews conducted.

The findings indicate a clear agreement among participants regarding the central role of government policies in influencing the phenomenon of dropout and vulnerability among youth. Participants emphasized that the existence of effective and supportive policies represents a protective factor that contributes to reducing this phenomenon (33.8%). Conversely, weak implementation and the absence of effective follow-up emerged as important factors contributing to the persistence of the problem (24.3%).

The results also revealed that the effectiveness of policies is not determined solely by their existence, but rather by their ability to provide early intervention and comprehensive educational, psychological, and social support. The responses suggest that the main challenge lies in shifting from responding after dropout occurs toward developing preventive policies based on early identification, continuous monitoring, and addressing the root causes of the phenomenon.

5.3.12 Results Related to the Twelfth Question: In your opinion, what are the strengths of current youth policies? And why?

Table 12: Hierarchical Analysis of the Twelfth Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Increased official attention to youth issues	Recognizing youth as an important group and placing their issues on the government agenda	16	24.6%
2	Diversity of programs and services provided for youth	Multiple areas targeting youth, including education, training, social support, and activities	15	23.1%
3	Focus on education, vocational preparation, and the labor market	Developing youth skills, training, employment, and entrepreneurship	12	18.5%
4	The existence of an official framework and organizational vision for youth policies	The presence of structured government plans, strategies, and programs	8	12.3%
5	Youth involvement and empowerment in participation	Attempts to engage youth in initiatives and decision-making processes	6	9.2%
6	Focus on social, technological aspects, and community support	Responding to social changes and contemporary youth needs	5	7.7%
7	Limited impact of strengths due to weak implementation	The gap between the existence of policies and their actual impact	3	4.6%
Total			65	100%

Note: The total frequencies do not represent the number of participants in the sample; rather, they reflect the number of times the codes and ideas appeared in participants' responses. Since some responses included more than one analytical idea, the total frequency may exceed the number of participants.

The findings indicate that the most prominent strength of current youth policies lies in the increased official attention given to youth issues and the recognition of young people as a key group in development (24.6%). Participants perceived the inclusion of youth issues within government plans and strategies as a positive development compared with previous periods.

The diversity of programs and services provided for youth (23.1%) also emerged as a major strength. Participants highlighted the availability of initiatives covering various areas, including education, vocational training, social support, and community activities. Similarly, the focus on vocational preparation and the labor market (18.5%) was considered an important aspect, particularly through training, employment, and entrepreneurship programs aimed at improving future opportunities for youth.

The results also revealed participants' appreciation of the existence of an official framework and organizational vision for youth policies (12.3%), in addition to efforts to involve youth in some programs and initiatives (9.2%). However, a critical perspective emerged among some participants, indicating that the effectiveness of these policies remains dependent on institutions' ability to transform plans and programs into tangible

outcomes. Some participants pointed to a gap between the formal existence of policies and their actual practical impact.

Overall, participants perceived the main strengths of current youth policies as being reflected in increased official attention, diversity of programs, and a focus on education and vocational empowerment. Nevertheless, strengthening these aspects requires improving implementation mechanisms, ensuring that programs reach the groups most in need, and transforming youth participation from limited initiatives into more meaningful and sustainable forms of engagement.

5.3.13 Results Related to the Thirteenth Question: What weaknesses or limitations do you observe in the performance of public administration?

Table 13: Hierarchical Analysis of the Thirteenth Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Bureaucracy and slow administrative procedures	Complex procedures, slow decision-making, multiple approvals, and limited responsiveness	17	25.4%
2	Weak coordination among different institutions and entities	Lack of integration and overlapping responsibilities	13	19.4%
3	The gap between planning and actual implementation	Policies and plans that do not always translate into practice	9	13.4%
4	Weak monitoring, evaluation, and outcome measurement	Limited oversight of program impacts and absence of continuous evaluation	8	11.9%
5	Limited flexibility and inability to respond to individual cases	Administrative restrictions that reduce adaptability to youth needs	7	10.4%
6	Limited focus on beneficiaries' and youth needs	Services are not sufficiently designed based on the needs of target groups	6	9.0%
7	Inequality in the distribution of services and resources	Variation in services across regions and institutions	4	6.0%
8	Economic and social factors affecting performance	The influence of economic conditions and social circumstances	2	3.0%
9	No clear shortcomings identified / insufficient information	Lack of evaluation or perception that responsibility lies outside public administration	1	1.5%
Total			67	100.0%

Note: The total frequencies do not represent the number of participants in the sample; rather, they reflect the number of times the codes and ideas appeared in participants' responses. Since some responses included more than one analytical idea, the total frequency may exceed the number of interviews conducted.

The findings indicate that the most prominent weakness in public administration performance is bureaucracy and slow administrative procedures (25.4%). Participants perceived that complex procedures and lengthy approval processes limit the

administration's ability to respond quickly, particularly in issues related to youth, who often require flexible and timely interventions.

Weak coordination among different institutions and entities (19.4%) also emerged as a major challenge. Participants highlighted that the existence of multiple actors and the lack of effective integration between them contribute to fragmented efforts and reduce the effectiveness of provided services.

The results further revealed a gap between planning and implementation (13.4%), as participants indicated that some policies and programs may be well-designed at the planning level but are not always translated into effective practices on the ground. This issue was also associated with weak monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (11.9%), with some participants pointing to the absence of clear tools for measuring program impact and effectiveness.

Other issues identified in the responses included limited administrative flexibility, insufficient attention to beneficiaries' needs, and unequal distribution of services among different regions and institutions.

Overall, the main limitations in public administration performance are not related solely to the absence of programs or policies, but are largely connected to the way these policies are managed and implemented. The key challenges involve bureaucracy, weak coordination, slow decision-making, and insufficient monitoring and evaluation. The findings highlight the need for a more flexible, data-driven administration that places youth and beneficiaries' needs at the center of planning and implementation processes.

5.3.14 Results Related to the Fourteenth Question: In your opinion, what practical changes are necessary at the level of public administration to make youth policies more effective and responsive to the needs of Arab youth?

Table 14: Hierarchical Analysis of the Fourteenth Question

No.	Main Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency	Percentage
1	Improving public administration flexibility and simplifying procedures	Reducing bureaucracy and accelerating responses to youth needs	20	25.6%
2	Effective youth participation in policy-making	Moving from symbolic participation to institutional participation	15	19.2%
3	Strengthening coordination among different stakeholders	Integrating efforts between government, local authorities, and civil society organizations	14	17.9%
4	Moving toward continuous support based on follow-up	Long-term monitoring instead of temporary interventions	10	12.8%
5	Developing needs- and data-based policies	Local planning and measurement of actual outcomes	8	10.3%
6	Linking education and training with future opportunities	Developing educational, vocational, and employment pathways for youth	7	9.0%

7	The role of family and upbringing as a complementary factor to policies	Focusing on family education and social prevention	4	5.1%
Total			78	100.0%

Note: The total frequencies do not represent the number of participants in the sample; rather, they reflect the number of times the codes and ideas appeared in participants' responses. Since some responses included more than one analytical idea, the total frequency may exceed the number of interviews conducted.

The findings indicate that participants believe improving the effectiveness of Arab youth policies requires, primarily, reforming the way public administration operates rather than simply increasing the number of programs. Simplifying procedures and enhancing administrative flexibility ranked first (25.6%), reflecting a perception that bureaucracy and slow responses represent major barriers preventing youth from accessing appropriate services.

The importance of meaningful and institutional youth participation in designing policies and programs also emerged as a significant theme (19.2%). Participants emphasized that listening to youth should move beyond symbolic involvement toward genuine participation that influences decision-making processes.

The results further highlighted the need to strengthen coordination among government institutions, local authorities, and civil society organizations (17.9%), as weak coordination contributes to fragmented efforts and reduces the impact of programs. Participants also stressed the importance of shifting from short-term and temporary interventions toward long-term support pathways based on continuous individual follow-up (12.8%).

Overall, the findings demonstrate that the main challenge does not lie only in the existence of youth policies, but rather in the ability of public administration to implement them with flexibility, fairness, and responsiveness to the social and economic specificities of Arab youth. The results highlight the need for an administration that is closer to the field, relies on data-driven approaches, and creates stronger links between education, employment, social support, and meaningful youth participation.

6. Discussion of Findings

6.1 Discussion of Findings Related to the First Research Question: To what extent is there a gap between the design of government policies directed toward youth and their field-level implementation and the actual impact they have on Arab youth?

The findings of this study indicate the existence of a clear gap between the formulation of government youth policies and their actual implementation and impact on Arab youth. Although government institutions have developed various programs and services aimed at supporting youth, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of these policies remains constrained by challenges related to implementation processes, accessibility, continuity of support, and institutional responsiveness to changing youth needs.

The findings highlight that the main issue is not the absence of youth policies or programs, but rather the difficulty of translating policy intentions into effective field-level practices. The existence of formal programs does not necessarily ensure meaningful outcomes unless these initiatives are supported by effective implementation mechanisms, continuous follow-up, and accessibility for the intended beneficiaries.

Furthermore, the results indicate that administrative and institutional factors play a significant role in widening the gap between policy design and implementation. Bureaucratic procedures, limited coordination among institutions, and weaknesses in linking planning with practical execution reduce the ability of youth policies to achieve their intended objectives. This suggests that successful youth policies require not only appropriate planning but also flexible administrative structures, effective monitoring mechanisms, and stronger connections between decision-making processes and the lived experiences of youth.

6.2 Discussion of Findings Related to the Second Research Question: What institutional and administrative factors affect Arab youth's access to the services and programs designed for them?

The findings indicate that Arab youth's access to government services and programs is shaped not only by the availability of these services but also by the institutional and administrative conditions governing their delivery. Although various programs have been developed to support youth, particularly those in vulnerable situations, the findings suggest that the existence of services alone does not ensure effective access or meaningful benefit.

The results demonstrate that barriers to access are mainly related to limited awareness of available programs, complex administrative procedures, eligibility requirements, and insufficient guidance throughout the service-access process. These factors create a gap between the intended beneficiaries of youth programs and those who are actually able to benefit from them. In this context, administrative complexity may disproportionately affect youth who have fewer resources or limited capacity to navigate institutional procedures.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that bureaucracy and the structure of service delivery play a significant role in shaping youth experiences with government programs. Lengthy procedures, limited coordination among institutions, and insufficient follow-up reduce the effectiveness of services and limit their ability to respond to youth needs in a timely and appropriate manner. This indicates that improving access requires attention not only to the design of programs but also to the mechanisms through which they are delivered.

6.3 Discussion of Findings Related to the Third Research Question: To what extent do current youth policies consider the social, cultural, and economic specificities of Arab youth?

The findings indicate that current youth policies address the needs of Arab youth only to a partial extent. Although these policies include programs related to education, employment, training, and social support, their ability to fully respond to the social, cultural, and economic specificities of Arab youth remains limited.

The findings suggest that the main challenge is not the absence of youth-oriented policies, but rather the limited adaptation of these policies to the diverse realities and circumstances of Arab youth. Many programs appear to follow a general approach that does not sufficiently account for differences in local contexts, social conditions, economic challenges, and the specific needs of vulnerable groups. As a result, some policies may provide support at a general level while failing to address the deeper factors influencing youth experiences and opportunities.

Furthermore, the findings highlight a gap between policy objectives and the everyday realities of Arab youth, particularly regarding employment opportunities, economic constraints, access to local support systems, and issues related to social inclusion and belonging. This indicates that effective youth policies require a stronger connection between policy development and the lived experiences of the communities they aim to serve.

6.4 Discussion of Findings Related to the Fourth Research Question: What is the nature of Arab youth participation in designing and evaluating policies and programs directed toward them, and has this participation moved from a symbolic level toward actual participatory governance?

The findings indicate that Arab youth participation in the development and evaluation of policies and programs directed toward them remains largely limited to consultative and symbolic forms rather than genuine participatory engagement. Although several mechanisms exist to involve youth, such as dialogue platforms and consultation activities, their actual influence on decision-making processes remains limited.

The findings suggest that the main challenge is not the complete absence of youth participation opportunities, but rather the limited institutionalization of these opportunities and their weak connection to actual policy decisions. In many cases, youth are involved in expressing their opinions and sharing their experiences; however, their contributions do not consistently translate into changes in program design, implementation approaches, or policy priorities. This reflects a distinction between considering youth as beneficiaries of policies and recognizing them as active partners in shaping those policies.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that effective participation requires more than creating spaces for dialogue. It requires establishing sustainable institutional mechanisms that ensure youth involvement throughout different stages of policymaking, including

identifying priorities, designing interventions, monitoring implementation, and evaluating outcomes.

6.5 Discussion of Findings Related to the Fifth Research Question: How is the system of cooperation between government institutions, local authorities, and civil society organizations formed in supporting Arab youth, and to what extent is it effective and sustainable?

The findings indicate that the support system for Arab youth is based on the involvement of multiple actors, including government institutions, local authorities, and civil society organizations. While this multi-stakeholder structure provides important opportunities for addressing youth needs, its effectiveness remains constrained by limited institutional integration, fragmented efforts, and challenges related to sustainability.

The findings suggest that government institutions maintain a central role in policy development and resource provision; however, the impact of these efforts depends largely on the effectiveness of implementation and the ability to coordinate with actors who are closer to youth communities. Similarly, local authorities play an important role in identifying local needs and connecting policies with community realities, but their limited resources and implementation capacities restrict their ability to fully contribute to sustainable youth support.

Furthermore, the findings highlight that cooperation between government institutions and civil society organizations contributes positively to addressing several youth-related needs. However, such cooperation often remains dependent on temporary initiatives and individual efforts rather than being based on stable institutional partnerships. This limits the continuity and long-term effectiveness of interventions.

7. Conclusions

The findings of this study demonstrate that the main challenge facing youth policies is not the absence of governmental programs or institutional attention, but rather the gap between policy formulation and effective implementation. Despite the existence of various youth-oriented frameworks and initiatives, limitations in implementation mechanisms, follow-up processes, administrative procedures, and institutional coordination reduce their ability to generate sustainable and meaningful impacts on the lives of Arab youth.

The study highlights that improving youth policies requires shifting from a focus on the availability of services toward ensuring effective accessibility and responsiveness. The ability of youth to benefit from programs is influenced by the simplicity of procedures, availability of guidance, continuity of support, and the capacity of institutions to respond to the diverse needs of young people, particularly those experiencing vulnerable conditions.

The findings further indicate that current youth policies only partially reflect the social, cultural, and economic specificities of Arab youth. Addressing youth challenges

requires more context-sensitive and flexible approaches that recognize local realities and incorporate the perspectives of communities and relevant stakeholders in policy development.

Moreover, the study concludes that youth participation in policymaking remains largely consultative rather than constituting genuine participatory governance. Moving toward more effective youth policies requires recognizing young people as active partners who contribute to identifying priorities, designing interventions, and evaluating outcomes.

Finally, the study emphasizes that sustainable youth support depends on strengthening cooperation among government institutions, local authorities, and civil society organizations. Developing an integrated collaborative governance model, based on coordinated efforts, clear roles, and sustainable partnerships, is essential for bridging the gap between policy intentions and the actual needs and experiences of Arab youth.

7.1 Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- Strengthening the mechanisms for implementing youth policies and moving beyond merely developing plans and programs at the official level by developing clear performance indicators to measure the impact of programs, enhancing field-based follow-up of target groups, and ensuring that services reach Arab youth.
- Redesigning procedures related to youth services to make them more accessible and flexible by reducing the number of administrative steps, standardizing application and referral processes, simplifying eligibility requirements, and providing clear information in a language appropriate for youth and families.
- Moving from standardized program models toward a more flexible model based on the needs of local communities, where interventions are designed according to the social, cultural, and economic realities of Arab youth. This requires strengthening the role of local authorities and community actors in identifying priorities.
- Establishing stable institutional mechanisms that ensure youth participation throughout all stages of the public policy cycle, starting from identifying needs, through program design, and extending to evaluating outcomes. This includes strengthening the role of youth councils and creating regular dialogue frameworks between youth and decision-makers.
- Developing a sustainable institutional partnership model among the various actors working in the youth field, moving beyond temporary cooperation and individual initiatives toward an organized framework based on a clear distribution of roles and responsibilities. This includes establishing joint coordination mechanisms, unified action plans, and shared databases that support case follow-up, prevent duplication of services, and avoid leaving some youth outside the support system.

Creative Commons License Statement

This research work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0>. To view the complete legal code, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/legalcode.en>. Under the terms of this license, members of the community may copy, distribute, and transmit the article, provided that proper, prominent, and unambiguous attribution is given to the authors, and the material is not used for commercial purposes or modified in any way. Reuse is only allowed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Conflict of Interest Statement

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

References

- Abbas, S. (2023). The Impact of Intervention Programs on Out of School Youth at Risk in the Arab Sector in Israel, *Journal of Harbin Engineering University*, 44(9), 520-528. Retrieved from https://www.globalscientificjournal.com/researchpaper/The_Impact_of_Intervention_Programs_on_Out_of_School_Youth_At_Risk_in_the_Arab_Sector_in_Israel_.pdf
- Abu Ajaj, I. (2016). A Comparative Look on the Dropping out of Adolescents in Situations of Risk from the Bedouin Educational System in the Negev. *Studia Edukacyjne*, (40), 283-303. Retrieved from <https://pressto.amu.edu.pl/index.php/se/article/download/25642/23397>
- Bar-Haim, E. (2025). Stagnation and de-segregation: The expansion of Palestinian Arabs education in Israel. *Higher Education Policy*, 38(1), 148-164
- Dakak-Abed Al Wahad S, Jeries Loulou LJ, Goldner L and Yanay Ventura G (2026). Engaging for change: the influence of civic engagement on at-risk Arab minority youth in Israel. *Front. Psychol.* 17:1711399. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2026.1711399>
- Dallasheh, W. (2025). Barriers and Discrimination in Higher Education: The Case of Arab Society in Israel. In *Social Sciences*. IntechOpen. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1008692>
- Haneen, E., Even-Zahav, R., Pagorek-Eshel, S., & Gavriel-Fried, B. (2024). "Arab students do not reveal their difficulties": faculty members' perceptions of the barriers to higher education among Arab students in Israel. *Intercultural Education*, 35(2), 224-239. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14675986.2023.2279485>
- Haneen, K. E., & Yafit, S. A. (2024). "Adopting unsuitable solutions constitutes an additional risk factor": Context-informed social work practice with at-risk young

- adult Arabs in Israel. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 161. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.childyouth.2024.107616>
- Heib, U. (2020). Children and Youth at Risk. *Journal of Educational and Culture Studies*, 4(3), 146-154. <https://doi.org/10.22158/jecs.v4n3p146>
- Heib, U., & Lazar, T. A. (2020). Educational Dropout in Israel--General Progress in the Last Decade. *Journal of Educational Sciences*, 21, 62-71. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1260338>
- Kaiyal, H. (2025). How do Students from the Arab Sector in Israel Perceive the Impact of Socio-Economic Situation on Students' Decision to Drop Out of Higher Education Institutions?. *International Journal of Economic Practices and Theories*, 212-222. Retrieved from <https://ijapt.org/index.php/journal/article/view/32>
- Mahamid, S., Karram-Elias, H., & Sulimani-Aidan, Y. (2026). "They Call Me the Girl from Residential Care": Risks and Stressors of Care Leavers in Arab Society in Israel. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 1-14. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-026-01085-7>
- Marsel, A., Anat, R., & Noha, B. (2023). Mind the Gap: Integrating Arab Students into Higher Education in Israel. *International Journal of Learner Diversity & Identities*, 30(1). <https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-0128/CGP/v30i01/1-20>
- Resh, N., & Blass, N. (2019). Israel: Gaps in educational outcomes in a changing multi-ethnic society. In *The Palgrave handbook of race and ethnic inequalities in education* (pp. 631-694). Cham: Springer International Publishing.
- Saffuri, R. (2025). Arab and Jewish Education Systems in Israel: Differences, Disparities, and Challenges. A Comparative Review of Structure, Funding, and Outcomes in Local Authorities. *SEA - Practical Application of Science, Issue (39)*, 159–168. <https://doi.org/10.70147/s39159168>