



# Preference and Optimization Strategies for Primary and Secondary School Students' Choice of Research Travel Policy Tools

## Quantitative Analysis Based on 22 Provincial Policy Texts

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**Abstract.** Study travel for primary and middle school students plays an important role in connecting school and after-school education, and is an important way to implement the fundamental task of moral education and deepen comprehensive practice education. Using the two-dimensional analysis framework of policy tools and content elements, the measurement and content analysis of the research travel policies of 22 provincial governments. The study found in the dimension of policy tools, the provincial governments overuse Command Type and Symbol-exhortation policy tools, the proportion of System-transformation and Incentive tools is small; in the dimension of content elements, the adaptation of policy elements and policy tools is insufficient, the choice preference of policy tools has short-term effect. Optimize the combination of policy tools, effectively realize the complementary role of policy tools; match policy tools and content elements to increase the supply of policy tools for weak links; select policy tools to take into account long-term benefits and improve the policy system of study travel.

**Keywords:** Insert Policy Tools, Research Travel for Primary and Secondary School Students, Choice Preferences, Optimization Strategy.

## 1 Introduction

In 2016 the Ministry of Education and other 11 departments jointly issued the opinions about promoting primary and middle school students studies travel, the primary and middle school students studies travel a comprehensive regulation, clear requirements "studies travel into the school education teaching plan", marks the national level for studies travel provides policy support. However, the implementation of policies at the national level cannot be separated from the specific implementation of provincial governments, and provincial government policies can be said to be the refinement, continuation or diffusion of national policies, so it is crucial to conduct in-depth investigation of the implementation of national policies. From the preliminary

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research, it can be found that there are two basic perspectives of research travel of primary and middle school students: the first is the theoretical perspective, mainly from the basic connotation of study travel of primary and middle school students<sup>[1]</sup>, value orientation<sup>[2]</sup>, Foreign comparison<sup>[3]</sup>Curriculum implementation<sup>[4]</sup>With the evaluation<sup>[5]</sup>, Base construction<sup>[6]</sup>, And the security guarantee<sup>[7]</sup>In other aspects, it analyzes the "real" form of primary and middle school students' study travel, and puts forward the specific reform "should be" strategy. The second is a practical perspective, mainly in HeFei, AnHui Province<sup>[8]</sup>, Gansu Province, BaiYin City, primary and middle school students comprehensive practice base<sup>[9]</sup>, Beijing primary and secondary school study travel course implementation<sup>[10]</sup>, As well as the Ministry of Education of primary and secondary school study travel pilot work<sup>[11]</sup> As the investigation object, analyze the practical problems, summarize the practical experience and put forward the reform strategy. On the whole, the first research provides important reference for improving the policy design of study and study travel for primary and middle school students and reflecting on the implementation of the policy. However, we rarely analyze and discuss the study and study travel policy text of primary and middle school students as a policy event.

Objectively speaking, "policy tools are the basic way to achieve policy goals, and the choice of policy tools is the key to the success or failure of policy."<sup>[12]</sup>It could even be said that "the core of policy implementation is to select and design effective tools<sup>[13]</sup>",Therefore, from the perspective of policy tool analysis, with 22 provincial government to carry out the primary and middle school students studies travel policy text as the research object, the key analysis of provincial government policy tool type use frequency, policy content element importance, policy tools and content elements of matching degree, and policy tool choice preference and real problems, to optimize the system of primary and middle school students studies travel.

## 2 Research Design

By searching the authoritative policy documents published on the websites of the education departments of provincial governments, 22 effective policy texts were obtained. The content analysis method was used to carry out the research. Firstly, the clauses were the basic unit, the types of policy tools and policy content elements, and the contents of 22 policy documents were analyzed and coded one by one. Among them, the authoritative tool of policy tool type X dimension is A, symbol-exhortation tool is B, incentive tool is C, Capacity-building tool is D, and System-transformation tool is E; "thought guidance" is a, "course construction" is b, "Base Construction" is c, d, "faculty" is e, "Safety Responsibility" is f, and "Safeguard Measures" is g. The basic format of policy text coding is "X/Y dimension coding-Policy Document Number-Serial Number". For example, in the third policy text of study travel "Implementation Opinions of Shaanxi Provincial Education Department and other 12 Departments on Promoting Study Travel for Primary and Secondary School Students", the first authoritative tool is coded "A-3-1", and the fourth content element of "Safety Respon-

sibility" is coded f-3-4. According to the above coding rules and coding standards, and through Nvivo software, 22 policy documents were a total of 1844 coding units.

## **2.1 Horizontal Dimension: Policy Tool Type X Dimension**

As an effective guarantee of policy implementation, policy tools can realize the transformation from policy ideal to policy reality, and have the most direct impact on the effect of policy implementation. At present, there are many studies on the theory of policy tools at home and abroad, and there are two most representative categories in the division of the types of policy tools. The first category is McDonnell and Elmore proposing the classification framework of policy tools based on the nature of government power resources, including command, incentive, Capacity-building, System-transformation and advisory tools<sup>[14]</sup>; The second category is Schneider and Ingram dividing policy tools into authoritative, motivating, competent, symbolic-exhortation and learning tools based on policy-maker theoretical assumptions about the behavior of policy performers. Combined with primary and middle school students studies of travel policy attributes, through the fusion of two analytical framework, in McDonnell and Elmore classification, on the basis of the introduction of "symbol-exhortation tool" type, because the provincial government primary and middle school students studies travel policy target object is mainly primary and secondary schools, the third party and other local institutions, so cannot ignore the target group behind the belief and value of its behavior related to policy influence. As the "learning tool" type serves as a process tool, the target group is mainly the agent who chooses the power of the policy tool, while institutions such as primary and secondary schools do not obtain such power as the target group, so it is not considered. Therefore, the following five types of policy tools are taken as horizontal dimensions: (1)Command Type tools often appear in the form of "prohibition, standards and supervision", To "requirements, must, must not" and other texts; (2) Symbol-exhortation Type tools often present the form of "encouragement call, public opinion publicity, social guidance and so on", To present with "hope, encouragement, support" and other texts; (3) Incentive Type tools often present the form of "funding, power and legal sanctions", Presented with "fee reduction, no violation" and other texts; (4) Capacity-building Type tools take the form of "system building, resource support, education and training and consulting services", Presented in "consultation system, base platform, training and assessment" and other texts; (5) System-transformation Type tools often present "system change, function transformation and power reorganization", It is presented in "leading role, discussion mechanism, development plan" and other texts.

## **2.2 Vertical Dimension: Policy Content Element Y Dimension**

Primary and middle school students studies travel as a collection of research learning and travel experience as one of the comprehensive practice education new way, the policy goal is through deepening the reform of basic education curriculum, adjust measures to local conditions to carry out studies travel, form the quality of primary and middle school students active participation, activity steady rise, organization and

management norms, the basic conditions to ensure compliance, Safety Responsibility in place, culture positive healthy studies travel development system, so as to promote the quality education of primary and secondary schools, promote the socialist core values (Figure 1). In line with this objective, Based on the policy contents of the guidance of 11 departments including the Ministry of Education, On the basis of the coding and classification of the policy texts of the 22 provinces (autonomous regions and municipalities), Specifically, the following seven aspects are taken as vertical dimensions: (1) "Ideological Guidance" refers to the publicity and education of the policy target groups, Make the policy target group realize the important significance and guiding ideology of study travel, And the work objectives and basic principles, Enhance the ideological basis of the policy target group; (2) "Curriculum Construction" refers to the design and development of nature, history, geography, science and technology, humanities, experience and other rich types of activity courses, To form a curriculum resource system with regional characteristics, clear levels of local feelings, county conditions, provincial conditions and national conditions; (3) "Base Construction" refers to the regulation of base access standards, evaluation system, exit mechanism and so on, With camps and bases as important bases, To promote the joint construction and sharing of resources, Establish a reasonable layout and interconnected research and study travel platform network; (4) "Fund Raising" means to raise funds for research and study travel through various ways and channels, Establish a fund raising mechanism jointly undertaken by the government, schools, society and families, Ensure the sustainable and regular development of research and study travel; (5) "Teaching Staff" refers to the training, access, training and assessment of the prescribed study travel instructors, Establish a combination of full-time guidance team, Promote the standardization and professional construction of research and study travel teachers; (6) "Safety Responsibility" refers to the formulation of study travel Safety Responsibility implementation, accident handling, responsibility definition and dispute handling work procedures, Clear study travel Safety Responsibility layer by layer implementation; (7) "Safeguard Measures" means that through the establishment of research and study travel organizations, Improve the operation supervision mechanism, Create a good social environment, Ensure the standard and orderly implementation of research and study travel.

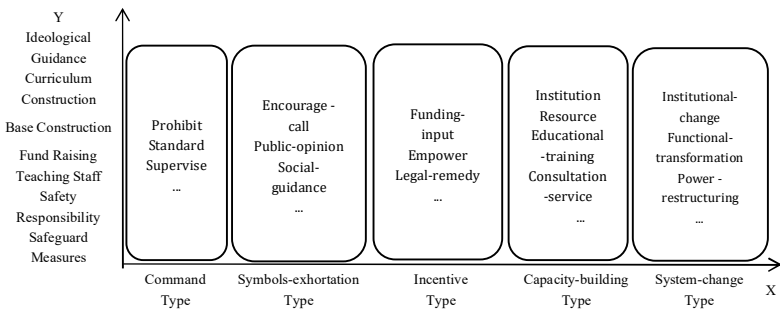


Fig. 1. Two-Dimensional Framework of Policy Analysis of Study Travel for Primary and Middle School Students.

### 3 Data Analysis

#### 3.1 X Dimension Analysis of Policy Tool Types

From the point of Table 1, the provincial government in policy text involves the use of five types of policy tools, but the frequency of various policy tools use differences, Command Type accounted for the most, shows that the provincial governments try to through top-down policy implementation path, guide the policy target group quickly take measures to carry out the studies travel. Specifically, first, Command Type is used most frequently and occupies the dominant position. Command Type are used 1101 times (59.7%); by province, Jilin Province is the most used. Generally speaking, Command Type contains mandatory nature, which has the advantages of low implementation cost, high effectiveness and quick effect. Provincial governments generally frequently use Command Type to limit and regulate the behavior of policy objects, so they have become the first choice of provincial government policy tools for research and travel policy tools. Second, the use of Capacity-building tools is more frequently, in a secondary important position. Capacity-building tools were frequently used 287 times (15.6%). Capacity-building tools emphasize long-term capacity improvement and focuses on the realization of cyclical goals. It can be found that most provincial governments realize that the standardization and institutionalization of research and study travel cannot be accomplished overnight. Third, the use frequency of symbol-exhortation tools is in the middle, and the degree of attention is general. The symbol-exhortation tool was used 254 times (13.8%); by province, Hainan province was the most used. As an important supplement to the Command Type, the symbol-exhortation tool can mobilize the enthusiasm and initiative of the policy objects from the level of policy transmission value, and eliminate the reverse psychology caused by the Command Type. Fourth, the use frequency of incentive tools is generally low, and has not attracted enough attention. The frequency of incentive tools was 114 times (6.2%). Incentive tools, mainly through the form of positive return or negative punishment feedback, can induce the policy objects in a short time to take the actions stipulated by the policy, which are involved in all provinces except Fujian Province. Fifth, the System-transformation tools are used the lowest frequently, almost in the state of the edge.88 (4.8%). Due to the high cost and high risk of system change, the policy implementation process is easy to encounter obstacles, and the effect of policy implementation may deviate, not the more the better, so the System-transformation tools are used less frequently.

#### 3.2 Y Dimension Analyses of Policy Content Elements

From the perspective of Table 1, provincial governments basically involve seven aspects in the policy text, including Ideological Guidance. Due to the different attention levels of various policy content elements, the use ratio of policy tools is also unbalanced. Specifically, first, the Safeguard Measures are used most frequently in the contents of the study travel policies. The occurrence frequency of Safeguard Measures was 604 times (32.8%). As a key link to promote the sustainable develop-

ment of research travel, it is in line with the original intention of provincial governments to strengthen policy implementation. Second, the Ideological Guidance is second only to the important elements of the Safeguard Measures. The frequency of thought guidance was 353 times (19.1%). Studies travel to adhere to the educational, practical, safety and public welfare four basic principles, including the educational principle as the fundamental value orientation, the provincial government realize thought guide can relieve heavy "studies" light "travel" exam-oriented education tendency, also can prevent heavy "travel" light "studies" target down. Third, the Safety Responsibility, Base Construction and Fund Raising of the attention. The frequency of Safety Responsibility is 241 times (13.1%), safety first is an important guarantee for study travel, so the safety management system of provincial governments; the frequency of Base Construction is 215 (11.7%), the Base Construction is an important site of study travel, and the policies of provincial governments; the frequency of Fund Raising is 200 times (10.8%). It is proposed in the policy texts of provincial governments that the main sources of study travel funds are from families, government, schools, society, indicating that provincial governments know that if a more systematic and determined funding sharing mechanism is not established in reality, it is easy to lead to a single source of funding. Fourth, the importance of Curriculum Construction is relatively low. The frequency of course construction was 176 times (9.5%). In terms of the importance of Curriculum Construction, it is necessary for provincial government policies to further enhance the importance of Curriculum Construction. Fifth, the teaching staff is the lowest attention. The frequency of teachers was 55 times (3.0%). Actually studies travel normalized implementation need careful planning and design, curriculum development, whether or Base Construction, have primary and secondary school teachers, tourism management workers and education researchers multi-subject cooperation, but most provinces of teaching staff construction is just a simple description, vague broad teachers responsibilities.

**Table 1.** Two-Dimensional Framework of Distribution of Policy Content Elements and Policy Tool Types

Policy-content Policy-instrument	Authoritative		Symbols- exhortation		Incentive		Capacity-building		System- transformation		Amount	
	Q/times	%	Q/times	%	Q/times	%	Q/times	%	Q/times	%	Q	%
Ideological Guidance	197	10.7	101	5.5	17	0.9	31	1.7	7	0.4	353	19.1
Curriculum Construction	143	7.8	13	0.7	0	0	18	1.0	2	0.1	176	9.5
Base Construction	139	7.5	38	2.1	0	0	25	1.4	13	0.7	215	11.7
Fund Raising	64	3.5	29	1.6	84	4.6	3	0.2	20	1.1	200	10.8
Teaching staff	36	2.0	0	0	0	0	17	0.9	2	0.1	55	3.0
Safety Responsibility	172	9.3	9	0.5	1	0.1	57	3.1	2	0.1	241	13.1
Measure of Safeguard	350	19.0	64	3.5	12	0.7	136	7.4	42	2.3	604	32.8
Amount	1101	59.7	254	13.8	114	6.2	287	15.6	88	4.8	1844	100

## **4 The Practical Problems of Study Tour Policy**

### **4.1 The Proportion of Policy Tools Used Is Different Among Different Policy Content Elements**

Authority and symbol-exhortation policy tools used overflow, both use frequency of 1355 times (73.5%), reflects the provincial government emphasizes "leadership-obey" choice preference, trying to use the government instruction form, quickly establish studies travel policy requirements, but this "hard" policy requirements may cause policy agencies and target groups in the short term blind behavior, easy to form the plight of the perfunctory. The frequency of System-transformation and incentive tools are low, and the frequency of use is 202 times (11%), indicating that the top-level policy design of study travel by provincial governments is insufficient, and the corresponding use of guarantee, promoting incentive tools and punitive tools are not perfect.

### **4.2 Lack of Adaptation Between Policy Content Elements and Policy Tools, and Relatively Weak Policy Supply of Curriculum Construction and Teaching Staff**

The policy text of provincial government study puts more policy tools into two aspects of Safeguard Measures and Ideological Guidance, the frequency of both is 957 times (51.9%), reflecting the importance attached to the core content of policy construction. Relatively speaking, there was a relative lack of policy tool investment in Curriculum Construction and teachers, with a frequency of 231 times (12.5%). If the Curriculum Construction policy tools investment is insufficient, the important features of "research + travel" are difficult to highlight, which may lead to the reality of "farmhouse, spring travel" and "travel" without research "or" research ", resulting in the education function of research travel; insufficient investment of faculty policy tools may lead to the imbalance between the quality of faculty and research travel demand, and then dwarf the "teaching staff" function.

### **4.3 The Combination of Policy Tools Is Biased Towards Short-Term Benefits**

The construction of research travel system needs long-term and systematic adherence, but the authoritative policy tools are overused in the policy texts of provincial governments, and the policy tools that prefer long-term benefits, such as incentive, Capacity-building and System-transformation, are insufficient. The selection of policy tool combination presents the characteristics of preferring short-term effect. From the statistical and analytical data, the sub-tool of "funding investment" in the incentive tools is less used, and most provincial governments do not explicitly guarantee the funds for study travel in the policy text. Among them, Hainan Province clearly stated that students from grade 4 to grade 8 to grade two will be allocated to the standard of 100 Yuan / student / year, and the insufficient funds will be borne by the students themselves. The provincial finance shall bear the actual number of students, and the

actual number of schools (including the private schools) shall share by the provinces and counties in a ratio of 5:5. In terms of "education and training" sub-tool, most provincial governments do not support the education and training of teachers in the policy text, which will inevitably lead to the lack of sustainability in the implementation of research travel policy due to the lack of teachers. Among them, Guangdong Province clearly points out that study travel tutors should receive professional training such as theme determination, organizational management, logistics support, safety management and emergency response of study travel, and be included in the continuing education and training system for primary and secondary school teachers. In the System-transformation tools, the "development planning" sub-tool is used too little. Most provincial governments do not put forward the development plan of research travel in the policy text. In practice, it is easy for the policy target groups to timely realize the necessity, importance and key tasks of research travel.

## **5 Improvement Strategies for Study Tour Policies**

### **5.1 Optimize the Combination of Policy Tools for Research and Study Travel, and Give Full Play to the Complementary Role of Policy Tools**

From the theory of policy tools, different types of policy tools themselves contain their own advantages and disadvantages, and at the same time involve the scope of application and specific conditions. Therefore, when the provincial governments adopt the policy tools to implement the research and study travel policies, first of all, they should optimize the proportion structure and realize the comprehensive use of the policy tools. Provincial government studies travel policy makers should play "combination", improve the Command Type and cohesion mechanism of various policy tools, appropriate expansion of other types of policy tools, fully arouse the enthusiasm of the policy target group, ensure both policy text mandatory and flexibility, avoid policy implementation into pure "design mode". For example, the study travel policy needs to fully consider the different regional structure, urban and rural structure of the eastern, central and western regions, as well as the structure of learning segments. Secondly, anchor the policy objectives and give full play to the complementary advantages of the policy tools. The selection of policy tools is usually based on the realization of the policy goals, so it is necessary to choose the policy tools with high fit with the policy objectives of research travel, reduce the frequency of single policy tools, break the path dependence on mandatory tools, enrich and enrich the policy toolbox, and improve the integrity and effectiveness of the use of policy tools. For example, according to the attributes of policy objectives and policy tools, if the policy target group is expected through financial investment, it should choose the incentive tool and the authoritative tool as the auxiliary; if the expected behavior of the policy target group is stimulated through value guidance, the symbol-exhortation tool should be the main and the authoritative tool; if the existing capacity of the policy target group is not enough to respond to the policy expectation, it should choose the Capacity-building and the System-transformation as the auxiliary.



## **5.2 Match the Policy Tools and Content Elements, and Increase the Supply of Policy Tools in Weak Links**

The scientific allocation of "policy tool type-policy content elements" is not only an important entry point to improve the rationalization of policy formulation, but also a key variable affecting the effectiveness of policy implementation. The research and study travel policies of provincial governments have initially formed the principle of allocating policy tools according to the policy content elements, but on the whole, the policy content elements are mainly used by Command Type. Based on this, on the one hand, the adaptation of the policy tools and content elements of research travel should be systematically improved. On the basis of considering the matching degree between policy tool classification standard and research travel policy attributes, Ideological Guidance is more suitable for Command Type and symbol-exhortation tools; course construction, base construction, teaching staff and Safety Responsibility are more suitable for Capacity-building tools; fund raising is more suitable for incentive tools; and Safeguard Measures are more suitable for System-transformation tools. On the other hand, we should increase the investment in Curriculum Construction and Teaching Staff policy tools in the study travel policy. Curriculum Construction, as an important carrier of the implementation of study travel policies<sup>[15]</sup>, Focus on answering "what to teach" to study travel, Provincial governments shall use sub-tools such as system construction and resource support, Follow the students' physical and mental development characteristics, Combined with the subject knowledge system of different students, Optimize the design of study travel from the aspects of course objectives, course content, course implementation and course evaluation, Integrate research travel into the curriculum management system and practical curriculum management system of primary and secondary schools<sup>[16]</sup>. Give full play to the growth value of curriculum education; With the teaching staff as the human resources support for the implementation of the study travel policy, Focus on answering the research trip "who will teach", The policy texts of provincial governments should increase input in sub-tools such as education, training and advisory services, Strict access, training, assessment and withdrawal mechanism of research tutors, Improve the comprehensive quality of research tutors and their professional ability to solve complex problems<sup>[17]</sup>.

## **5.3 The Choice of Policy Tools Should Take into Account Long-Term Benefits and Improve the Policy System of Study Travel**

A scientific and reasonable policy system needs to consider the choice of policy tools from the long-term benefit of the policy objectives, and establish a supporting policy system compatible with the policy value. On the one hand, the choice of policy tools needs to take into account the short-term effect and long-term benefits. Although the Ministry of Education officially issued the Opinions on promoting the study and travel of primary and secondary school students in December 2016, it can be said that it started relatively late, but it should not be too hasty. The choice of policy tools of provincial governments should not stop at the short-term effects, but should take into account the long-term benefits. Studies travel policy implementation needs not only

the manpower, material resources and financial support, but also through Capacity-building and System-transformation policy tools to establish and improve the system, the education administrative guidance, education institutions and social forces support strength, create a good environment for studies travel policy construction<sup>[18]</sup>, to better realize the long-term benefits of policy. On the other hand, it pays attention to the systematization, coordination and matching of research travel policies. From the national level, as a public policy, the research travel policy has no supporting basis in the national legal dimension. The research travel policies of provincial governments only have guidance but no superior laws to follow. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate the study travel policies into the process of national rule of law construction. For example, Singapore has formulated the Children and Youth Act, The Singapore Land Transport Management Act, the Singapore Road Transport Management Law and the Food Management Law concerning the development of study travel policies, transportation and food, so as to regulate and guide the sound development of study travel. From the provincial level, the provincial government policy makers should keep open attitude, actively introduce information tools, market tools and socialization means such as new policy tools, strengthen the unified management of studies travel policy, further clarify the education administrative department for the construction of studies travel policy led and centralized management, promote the coordination mechanism of studies travel policy development, and improve the studies travel policy supporting policies and implementation rules at the same time, gradually from the development planning, capital management, base management and supervision and evaluation to improve the studies travel policy system.

## 6 Conclusion

To sum up, in the 22 provincial government primary and middle school students studies travel policy, on the basis of quantitative analysis from the policy tools and policy content choice preference, actually reflects the provincial government primary and middle school students studies travel policy design value characteristics and problems, generally reflects the Command Type for absolute advantage, other tools for auxiliary role, policy tool configuration mainly based on the characteristics of the policy content elements. The selection of policy tools prefers short-term effects and lacks long-term planning and systematic changes. It is recommended to optimize the combination of policy tools and strengthen curriculum construction and teacher training in order to achieve the long-term benefits of the policy objectives.

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