



Evaluating the Theoretical and Practical Dimensions of the Educational System in Girls' Technical and Vocational Schools

* Mahya Rahmani

** Majid Darabi

***Tayebeh Mousavi Amiri

* MA Student of Educational Planning, Educational Sciences, Shahed University, Tehran, Iran.
mahya.rahmani@shahed.ac.ir

** Faculty Member, Department of Educational Sciences, Shahed University, Tehran, Iran.
majid.darabi@shahed.ac.ir

*** Faculty Member, Department of Educational Sciences, Shahed University, Tehran, Iran.
t.mousavi@shahed.ac.ir

Received: 15.02.2026

Accepted: 02.06.2026

Abstract

In today's fast-paced world, an efficient educational system must focus on technical and vocational training as a vital bridge between the classroom and the labor market to train a skilled workforce for the sustainable development of society. Accordingly, this study aimed to evaluate the theoretical and practical dimensions of the educational system in girls' technical and vocational schools. The research method was descriptive-evaluative, and the statistical population consisted of all teachers and students in technical and vocational schools in Tehran. The samples were selected using a multi-stage cluster sampling method, and data were collected through researcher-made questionnaires. The findings showed that, from the perspective of the statistical population, the educational system of girls' technical and vocational schools faces critical vulnerabilities in both theoretical and practical dimensions. The mean score of vulnerability in the theoretical dimension (3.14 for teachers and 3.29 for students) is on the verge of entering the high vulnerability level. This situation is more critical in the practical dimension, with higher means (3.28 in the teachers' group and 4.00 in the students' group) falling within the high vulnerability range.

Keywords: Practical Dimension, Theoretical Dimension, Educational System, Technical and Vocational Schools.

Corresponding Author: Majid Darabi- Majid.darabi@shahed.ac.ir



Introduction

Systematic education plays a fundamental role in shaping professional competencies and preparing individuals for personal and social life. Educational systems, especially in the field of technical and vocational training, are organized to improve skills and continuously adapt to the needs of the labor market. However, realizing the effective functions of skills training requires establishing a precise balance between theoretical and practical education. Separation or inconsistency between these two parts leads to a weakness in the transfer of learning and disrupts the application of skills in the real work environment. In technical and vocational schools, the theoretical dimension teaches the scientific foundations of each field, while the practical dimension deals with the development of workshop skills. The main problem is that, based on evidence, the theoretical dimensions of this educational system have not been comprehensively evaluated, and the focus has mainly been on applied skills. This neglect has led to a decline in educational quality, insufficient integration of theoretical knowledge with skills, and ultimately the weakening of the "theory-practice link". Therefore, the present study seeks to comprehensively evaluate the theoretical and practical dimensions of the educational system of girls' technical and vocational schools in Tehran and identify the pattern of existing vulnerabilities in this system.

Methodology The present study is applied in terms of its purpose and descriptive-evaluative in its methodology. The statistical population includes all students and teachers of technical and vocational schools in Tehran, selected through a multi-stage cluster sampling method. Researcher-made questionnaires were used for data collection, the components of which were identified and set based on the research background. To investigate content validity, Content Validity Ratio (CVR) and Content Validity Index (CVI) were used ; the results showed that the obtained values for the theoretical dimension (CVR=1 and CVI=0.92) and the practical dimension (CVR=0.78 and CVI=0.88) were higher than the critical values, confirming the tools. Reliability was also obtained by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the students' questionnaire at 0.957 and the teachers' questionnaire at 0.972. The data were organized on a 5-point Likert scale and evaluated through descriptive and inferential statistical tests (one-sample t-test).

Findings The findings from the statistical analysis indicate that, from the perspective of the studied population, the educational system of technical and vocational schools experiences serious vulnerabilities in both dimensions, which are significantly higher than the baseline. In examining the theoretical dimension, the mean vulnerability from the perspective of teachers was 3.14 and from the perspective of students was 3.29, indicating serious challenges in content coordination, resource up-to-dateness, and the practical application of topics, which is on the verge of entering a high level of vulnerability. In contrast, the vulnerabilities in the practical dimension are reported to be much more critical. The mean vulnerability of the practical dimension for the teachers' group was evaluated at 3.28 (only 0.06 units away from the threshold of high vulnerability) and for the students' group at 4.00, which is classified in the definite and high vulnerability range. These figures indicate that problems such as the depreciation of workshop equipment and the non-compliance of education with industrial standards are felt with much greater urgency and intensity.

Conclusion The results of this study confirm the existence of a systematic vulnerability in the theory-practice link in the educational system of girls' technical and vocational schools. In the theoretical dimension, the dominance of abstract topics and the lack of alignment of content with



technological developments have promoted superficial learning and memorization. In the practical dimension, problems such as a lack of infrastructure and unrealistic projects have distanced workshop spaces from their primary role as experiential learning environments. This vicious cycle prevents theoretical knowledge from properly supporting practical experience and makes skills untransferable to the real work environment. To correct this trend, it is suggested that theoretical curricula be fundamentally revised and updated, and non-applicable abstract topics be replaced with knowledge linked to real work issues. In the practical dimension, modernizing workshop equipment based on current standards and creating integrated (project-based) courses should be prioritized. Also, expanding systematic cooperation with the industrial sector and holding continuous courses to empower teachers in using competency-based teaching methods are strongly recommended to reduce the school-to-labor-market gap.

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