

PRO-SOCIAL AND PRO-SELF NUDGE: SCHOLARS' NUDGING

ATTITUDES IN TURKIYE

TOPLUM YANLISI VE BİREY YANLISI DÜRTME: TÜRKİYE'DE AKADEMİSYENLERİN DÜRTME ALGILARI

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Abstract

Public authorities try to lead individuals to undertake actions and decisions in the interest of both themselves and society through public policies they create by nudging. Although this method is anticipated to yield favorable results due to individuals' limited rationality, the related literature often discusses possible adverse effects due to the paternalist quality of nudge. It is likely that the implications in the literature and individuals' perceptions and attitudes regarding nudge policies are influenced by a number of individual and societal factors such as the individuals' demographic features, the culture of the surrounding society. It is necessary to disclose these factors in order to take nudge theory forward. Departing from this, the present study aims at exposing the perceptions regarding pro-self and pro-social nudge policies among professor of Public Administration department in the context of Türkiye. For this purpose, a survey was conducted with 91 faculty members employed at Turkish state universities. Of the 8 different nudge policies mentioned in the survey, the respondents were seen to find all acceptable except for the one targeted at expanding organ donation. The respondents think that such policies do not have a considerable restrictive effect on individuals' freedom to choice.

Keywords: Scholars, attitude, pro-self nudge, nudge, pro-social nudge.

Öz

Kamu otoriteleri; dürtme yöntemi ile oluşturdukları kamu politikaları aracılığıyla bireyleri, kendileri ve toplum adına faydalı eylemlere ve kararlara yönlendirmeye çalışmaktadır. Bireylerin sınırlı rasyonalitesi nedeniyle bu yönlendirmelerin olumlu sonuçlar doğuracağı öngörülse de ilgili yazında dürtme yönteminin paternalist niteliğinin olumsuz sonuçlara yol açma olasılığı da sıklıkla değerlendirilmektedir. Bu değerlendirmelerde ve bireylerin dürtme politikalarına yönelik algı ve tutumlarında; demografik özellikleri, üyesi oldukları toplumun kültürü gibi pek çok bireysel ve toplumsal faktörün etkisi olasıdır. Dürtme teorisinin daha ileriye taşınabilmesi için bu faktörlerin ortaya konması gereklidir. Bu öngörüden yola çıkarak çalışma, Kamu Yönetimi Bölümü öğretim üyelerinin birey yanlısı ve toplum yanlısı dürtme politikalarına yönelik tutumlarını ortaya koymayı amaçlamıştır. Bu amaç doğrultusunda Türkiye'deki devlet üniversitelerinde görev yapan 91 öğretim üyesi ile bir anket çalışması gerçekleştirilmiştir. Araştırma sonucunda ankette yer verilen 8 farklı dürtme politikası içerisinde organ bağışını artırmak amacıyla tasarlanan dürtme politikası dışındaki politikaların hepsinin kabul edilebilir bulunduğu, bireylerin seçim özgürlüklerini önemli ölçüde kısıtlamadıkları algısı ortaya konmuştur.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Akademisyen, algı, birey yanlısı dürtme, dürtme, toplum yanlısı dürtme.

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INTRODUCTION

Behavioral economics emerged in reaction to the rational and selfish individual in classical economics. It basically asserts that human beings have limited rationality, and they are usually unable to make the right decisions because of the intrinsic and/or extrinsic factors affecting their decision making (Serim & Küçükşenel, 2020, p. 553). This perspective shift on the individual has closely influenced many disciplines but also brought about a vital effect on public policy generation. What is more, Thaler and Sunstein published “Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness” further reinforcing this effect by boosting the emphasis on behavioral principles and experimental methods in public policy process –though it is widely thought to date back to Adam Smith. In particular, the award of the Nobel Prize for Economics to Richard Thaler in 2017 has elevated nudge to a prestigious status in both academic studies and governments’ toolkit for designing policies.

Thaler and Sunstein (2008, pp. 4-7) regard nudge as a libertarian paternalistic method as they define it in the following way: “nudge is a choice architecture that alters human behaviour predictably without forbidding any options or significantly changing their economic incentives”. It can thus be said that nudge offers governments an alternative tool of policy design instead of conventional instruments of policy (laws, impositions, incentives, etc.) to manipulate the citizens slightly for the optimum decision to the interest of themselves and society (Özdemir, 2017, p. 184; Voyer, 2015, p. 3); nevertheless, frequent reference is made to limitations and weaknesses of this method in the literature (Amir et al., 2005; Engelen, 2019; John & Stoker, 2017; Kuyer & Gordjin, 2023; Oliver, 2013; Özdemiray, 2023; Schmidh & Engelen, 2020). For one thing, it is claimed that nudge hampers the development of the decision-making ability as it corrodes individuals’ freedom to choice (Schmidh & Engelen, 2020, pp. 4-7). It is accompanied by many other criticisms besides its strong sides for the individual and society, adding that the results in the literature vary depending on the individuals’ personalities and societal facts. These factors are a great many, a few of which can be listed as nudge policies’ target of raising pro-self or pro-social welfare, societies’ distinction in terms of the dominant culture of collectivism or individualism, individuals’ aptitude to analytical or intuitive thinking, and individuals’ level of confidence in the government designing nudge policies.

Studies focusing on possible factors that may affect the acceptability of nudge policies by individuals are expected to contribute to nudge theory while providing guidance for effective future policy designs. With this assumption, the current study attempted to find out perceptions

regarding selected eight nudge policies from the perspective of professors in the department of Public Administration across a number of state universities in Türkiye, which has a collectivist societal tissue appearing in culture studies. The main assumptions are that professors in this discipline have a relatively higher tendency to analytical thinking than others and they are well-informed about the literature on public policy. It is a quantitative study, so the data were collected by means of questionnaires to test the basic study assumptions and analyzed with SPSS 29.

The nudge policy designs in this study were presented against the backdrop of pro-self and pro-social nudge. This theoretical background was followed by research questions, the purpose and method of the research. The study was completed with findings and discussion.

1. Pro-self and Pro-social Nudge

After Herbert Simon introduced the concept of bounded rationality, the classical theories centered on the rational human began facing criticisms. Simon revealed that rationality in classical theories could be hindered by complexity in cost functions and environmental factors that prevent the best plan (Simon, 1964, pp. 4-5). R.H. Thaler and C.R. Sunstein developed a 'nudge' based on bounded rationality. They defined the definition of nudge as "a choice architecture that predicts human behavior without prohibiting options or altering much the economic incentives that people receive" (Thaler & Sunstein, 2022, p. 17).

In recent years, in line with the suggestions of Thaler and Sunstein, policymakers in many countries have frequently resorted to the nudge in the policy-making process. Some question marks are still pending about its legitimacy. One of the reasons is that nudge intervention must be carried out unnoticed by its target; in other words, it must be confidential, which carries the risk of legitimizing secret policy interventions by governments (Oliver, 2013). In addition, the nudge approach, although it claims to give citizens the freedom to choose or not to choose, is criticized for violating the principles of openness and transparency due to the lack of information of individuals. Moreover, nudge is designed by policy makers who have relatively more power and knowledge; therefore, it is thought to bring with it the risk of being used for manipulative purposes. Finally, the nudge approach is criticized in terms of autonomy because it restricts the freedom of individuals not to make choices (John & Stoker, 2017).

There must be some paternalistic practices for the nudge to be effective in human and social life. R.H. Thaler and C.R. Sunstein developed the concept of libertarian paternalism to this end. Thaler and Sunstein have positioned libertarian paternalism in the middle of the political line.

They offer it as a third way between strict norms and laissez-faire. The libertarian side of paternalism is that they are free to choose and not to choose, while the paternalistic side is that the architects of choice try to direct people's behavior. As a result, libertarian paternalism has been accepted as a soft type, since it does not prohibit any option and is not too intrusive (Thaler & Sunstein, 2022, pp.16-17).

The application of libertarian paternalism in nudges is divided into two to benefit the society or the person's self-benefit. Hagman and others (2015) stated that pro-self-nudge aims to encourage people to act in line with their interests and balances irrational behaviors with this purpose. Moreover, pro-self nudges are cheap and effortless, in line with libertarian paternalism. Pro-social nudges, unlike pro-self-nudges, can provide a distraction from rational behavior for community welfare. Contributing to the common good does not fit libertarian paternalism, unlike pro-self-nudges, as it is contrary to the interests of the individual. Pro-social nudges are designed to strike a balance between overuse of public goods and profit maximization (Hagman et al., 2015, pp. 442-444).

According to Penner and others (2005, p. 366), "pro-social behavior represents a broad category of acts that are defined by some significant segment of society and/or one's social group as generally beneficial to other people". These behaviors may differ from person to person or from society to society. Even a single person may have different reactions to events at other times. A person who saves a child from drowning may remain silent about female abuse another day. The costs people incur when deciding whether to help someone can keep the person from helping (Bierhoff, 2002, pp.178-179). This situation can be accepted as the bounded of the mentality of the societies. In certain situations, social norms may prevent us from doing what we think is right. In this case, pro-social nudges can get into it.

Pro-social nudges have been more controversial than pro-self-nudges, which prioritize personal benefit. Pro-self-nudges are based on increasing emotional well-being by fully complying with libertarian paternalism. However, pro-social nudges were seen as contrary to the central philosophy of nudges because they affect the benefit of others more than themselves, and research focused on the acceptability of pro-social nudges. Guala and Mittone (2015, pp. 385-386) discussed the issue of increasing the welfare of nudging citizens. In particular, they argued that pro-social nudges did not provide a significant increase in welfare. For example, they stated that the policies of politicians to nudge people to become organ donors benefit potential recipients rather than donors.

In support of Guala and Mittone, Bolton and others' research (2019) found that nudges that do not provide any benefit to the person and that do not prioritize self-interest fail. Although nudge aims to direct society and the individual to good behavior, it has been observed that, in some cases, it backfires. Some researchers have conducted experiments to prove that nudging does not always have positive results. In the experiment performed by Bolton and others, the effect of observability and the impact of economic influence on pro-social nudging were evaluated. It was concluded that pro-social nudges with no financial consequences fail.

Some studies have revealed that the nudges that prioritize society are as effective as those that increase self-interest. For example, Erlandsson and Tinghög (2021) tested the arguments that nudges can exclude pro-social behaviors. At the end of their fundraising experiment, they did not obtain any data that nudges excluded pro-social behavior. On the contrary, the three nudges they used in their experiment increased donations.

Gestel and others (2021) conducted a study on the acceptability of nudging. In the study conducted with 301 participants, they utilized pro-self and pro-social nudging to evaluate the acceptability of nudging. Healthy eating was used as a pro-self-nudge, and sustainable nudge was used as a pro-social nudge. As a result, they found that the acceptability of motivated nudges goes beyond individual benefits and includes behaviors that are advantageous to society.

Pro-self and pro-social nudges have been the subject of discussion in literature. In particular, the nature of pro-social nudges, which do not fully comply with libertarian paternalism, has been the main subject of research. However, in studies on the acceptability of pro-social nudges, it was concluded that people also prioritize community welfare. Thomas Hobbes's 'selfish human' model, who always runs to pleasure and to things that sustain your life (Ağaoğulları, 2009, p. 186), has emerged, and a human model that can prioritize benefit to society has emerged. However, since pro-social behaviors vary from society to society, the reactions of each society to these nudges may not be the same. While some societies were more collective, pro-self-nudges and pro-social nudges could be accepted similarly, while in other individualistic countries, pro-social nudges could not yield positive results.

In their experiment on Anglo-American and Asian-American children between the ages of 7 and 9, Iyengar and Lipper (1999) investigated the validity of the proposition "If the outcome of a choice you make will only affect you, you should be the only one to make that choice." Regardless of their origin or place of residence, in the laboratory experiment in which it was analyzed whether all individuals "walk the way they believe" while making a choice, in other

words, whether the choices were made individually, the children were divided into three different groups. All the groups were given many puzzles to solve and various pencils to use. Children in the first group were left free to choose the anagram puzzles they would unravel and the pencils they would use. For the children in the second group, a person the children did not know told them which puzzles they would solve with which pen. The children in the third and last group were advised by their mothers on the puzzle to solve and the pen to use. When the number of puzzles children solve in these three cases was analyzed, it was seen that the Anglo-American children solved two and a half times more puzzles when they made the choice themselves—compared to the choices made by their mother or the person they don't know. The fact that the choice was dictated by someone, regardless of who made it, had a depressing effect on their performance. It was concluded that the Asian American children performed best when they believed that their mothers made the choice for them. Iyengar explains this result by pointing out that making choices for Asian-American children is not only a way of defining their personalities but also a way of communicating and building harmony and showing trust and respect. Therefore, "the way they believe in" is not an individual way, but a "collective way." For this reason, it was concluded that it is the wrong conclusion to accept that everyone will grow up and develop under the pressure of choosing alone, as is the case with children of Anglo-American descent, and that this is the "best way" (Iyengar & Lepper, 1999).

Based on this nudge intervention, which states have frequently resorted to recently, decision-makers decide what is the right choice or decision that is good for individuals and society. Directing individuals towards this choice or decision forces individuals to make a choice, thus reducing their autonomy. It reminds the criticism of "restricting aspect" of nudge. Especially in collectivist societies, there is a possibility that a trusted figure making decisions for them rather than making personal decisions or making choices on their own, rather than a violation of autonomy, is more motivating. Therefore, the successful implementation of the nudge technique, which has been an important public policy tool in Türkiye, especially in the last ten years, depends on the perception of the society towards the nudge technique, and this perception depends on the characteristic features of the Turkish society (For some studies on relevant public policy examples, see Serim & Öztürk, 2021; Arısoy & Özdemiray, 2022; Ekonomi Bakanlığı, 2018; Erdoğan & Karagöl, 2019).

There have been studies examining the cultural structure and behavioral patterns of Turkish society. Hofstede (1984, pp. 84-85) examined the cultural dimensions of different countries in his experiment in 1984. This research is based on the employees of multinational companies in

their organizations in different countries. In the study, Türkiye got 37 points for individualism, 66 points for power distance, 85 points for uncertainty avoidance, and 45 points for the masculinity of society. Hofstede's research suggests that Türkiye is a collective and feminine society with an above-average power distance and a high tendency to avoid uncertainty. Apart from that, Paşa and others (2001, pp. 584-585) investigated the effects of cultures on leadership in 2001 and concluded that the most dominant feature of Turkish culture is collectivism.

Looking at the culture studies above, we can say that Turkish society is closer to Asian culture than European culture. Asian cultures differ from Western societies in group cohesion and pro-social behavior. In Asian culture, pro-social behavior is critical to the advancement of group members (Stevenson, 1991, p. 103). This pro-group behavior forms the basis of the attributes of the collective society. Hofstede listed the characteristics of collective society as follows: People are born into extended families or clans which protect them in exchange for loyalty, “we”-consciousness and stress on belonging; harmony should always be maintained; others are classified as in-group or out-group; opinions and votes are predetermined in-group members; transgression of norms leads to shame feelings; “I” language is avoided; the purpose of education is to learn how to do things; and relationship prevails over task (Hofstede, 2011, p. 11).

The features stated by Hofstede contain important elements of Turkish culture. Even though it has changed with the effect of globalization, it still shows the characteristics of a collective society. We assume that pro-social nudges, which are controversial in literature, will be welcomed in collective societies. We think that it is likely that Turkish society will respond positively to this situation. Yet it must be remembered that individuals' attitude towards nudge are steered by not only societal but also individual forces. Individuals' aptitude to rational (analytical) or intuitive thinking will inevitably their assessment of nudge policies. With these presumptions, the current study intends to measure understandings of a specific section of Turkish society, faculty members specialized in public administration, about pro-social and pro-self nudge policies.

2. Aim of Study and Research Questions

In recent years, public support has exerted a considerable impact on public authorities in achieving their desired results by means of nudge as a new alternative to traditional policy instruments in policy generation. The same impact is also evident in legitimizing the policies at hand. This necessitates measuring the people's attitudes regarding the policies proposed by

governments using nudge as a means of policy making. Nudge theory relies on the choosing bodies' manipulating the decision-making settings in preventing individuals from making mistakes due to their limited rationality and channelizing them into "the better, the right, and the good" to the interest of themselves and/or their community and thus orienting the individuals to the desired option. In this sense, nudge is about controlling the individuals' preferences by an external authority, and it is supported by Hagman and others (2015, p. 452) on the grounds of individuals' mindsets and life philosophies. They posit that individuals' attitudes towards nudges are determined by the existence of an individualistic or communitarian worldview as well as their awareness of predisposition to intuitive or analytical thinking. This study was built on this background and designed as a pioneering study measuring the views of professors in public administration about a total of eight pro-self and pro-social nudge policies. The survey was conducted on this population owing to the fact that they are scholars of public administration department and feed the process of policy making with their academic knowledge. Also, Halpern and Sanders (2016, p. 64) emphasized in their work the importance of policymakers and scholars working together to successfully design, test, and implement policies that affect behavior. The study was concretized with two main presuppositions: In general, scholars are more likely to think analytically compared to other members of society and Türkiye has been identified as a collectivist community in most research so far.

In this study, the following is assumed: Since academics rely on analytical thinking system and are relatively less likely to fail due to intuitive thinking, they will not consider nudge-involving policies to be intervening individuals' freedom to choice. They will think that all pro-social and pro-self nudge policies benefit the individuals and society in the long term, so they will approve such policies. The study seeks answers to the following research questions:

Research Question 1: From the perspectives of professors of Public Administration in Turkish state universities, are the eight different policy scenarios prepared with the nudge technique acceptable?

While pro-self nudges focus on private welfare, that is, maximizing the utility of individuals; pro-social nudges are interventions targeted at improving general social well-being in spite of conflicting with private well-being in the short term (Hagman et al., 2015, p. 451). Research associates in the field of public administration are informed that public policies foster public good and are comparatively more inclined to think analytically (Considering the collectivist characteristics of Turkish community as mentioned earlier, the research participants here might not be as analytical in their thinking system. Even under these circumstances, they are expected

to have a higher opinion of pro-social nudge policies). Hence, it is our prediction that they will find pro-social policies more acceptable than pro-self ones as formulated in the second research question below:

Research Question 2: From the perspectives of professors of Public Administration in Turkish state universities, are pro-social nudge policies more acceptable than pro-self nudge policies?

Besides the foregoing basic assumptions, the study also concerns itself with revealing the relationship between the faculty members' attitudes towards pro-self and pro-social nudge policies and their region of living, gender and age. The last research question was formulated as follows accordingly:

Research Question 3: Do professors of Public Administration in Turkish state universities have different attitudes regarding the eight different policy scenarios prepared with the nudge technique depending on their demographic variables?

3. Research Method

The study sample consisted of 1020 (this number was calculated from the web pages for the universities concerned) researchers with PhD degree employed at public administration departments of 129 state universities across Türkiye. The study participants were accepted from the departments of Political Science and Public Administration or Public Administration since the study sample was identified with the keyword "public administration". The sample was comprised of all instructors with a PhD degree ranging from research assistants to other faculty members including professors in public administration. The Ethics Committee Approval for the research was received from the Ethics Committee of Necmettin Erbakan University (10/11/2023, 11, 2023/497). Study data were collected by using the quantitative instrument of the questionnaire. The questionnaire was prepared on Google Forms and e-mailed to all of the potential participants. The recipient addresses were taken from the web pages for the scholars' employing university. The e-mail could not reach some of the recipients due to invalid account information, and 979 e-mails were delivered, 91 of which were replied by the participants. The questionnaire contained three demographic questions regarding gender, age, and region of residence, followed by four fixed statements assessing the 8 nudge-based policy scenarios under the sub-categories of pro-self and pro-social nudge.

1. I find this policy acceptable.
2. I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice.
3. I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual.

4. I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society.

A total of 32 statements in the survey were written in a 4-point "Likert scale" model (1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Agree, 4 = Strongly Agree). It is a highly reliable scale commonly used in surveys to determine the extent to which respondents agree with given judgments. The respondents were asked to mark the degree they found most appropriate among four equally spaced degrees of agreement.

In the preparation of the questionnaire, both pro-social and pro-self nudge scenarios were adapted into Turkish from the academic paper by Hagman and others (2015) titled "Public Views on Policies Involving Nudges". Collected data were analyzed with SPSS 29. The existence of a significant relationship between the demographic variables and the statements in the form were checked by applying 'T test' and 'Anova' to calculate the mean comparison. As regards the suitability of the data for factor analysis, Keiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test was applied, and the adequacy of the sample size was checked with Bartlett Sphericity Test. The benchmark values were taken from the literature. KMO value below 0.50 are not acceptable, while it becomes excellent at 1. Bartlett sphericity test must show a p value under 0.05 for factor analysis (Hoyle, 2000; Hair et al., 2014). The results of the KMO and Bartlett test performed on the data collection instrument are given in Table 1 and Table 2, confirming the suitability of the data for factor analysis.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett test results.

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.790
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2814.396
	Df.	496
	Sig.	<.001

There are quite a few methods used for reliability analysis to check whether the items in a measurement tool show internal consistency. Alpha (Cronbach) is the most widely used method of all. In order to use this method, the number of questions in the scale regarding the subject to be measured must be more than 20 and the number of respondents must be more than 50 (Ural & Kılıç, 2005, p. 258). A measurement tool is considered to have an acceptable level of internal consistency if the alpha coefficient reaches 0.7 (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 2. Reliability test results

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.742	32

The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was calculated as 0.742 for the 32 statements corresponding to a total of eight different nudge-based policy scenarios presented in the study. This value shows that the scale is at an acceptable level of reliability.

4. Findings and Discussion

To start with, the demographic details about the participating professors of public administration are demonstrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Participants' demographic information

Demographics	F	%
<u>Gender</u>		
Male	50	54.9
Female	41	45.1
<u>Age</u>		
20-30 years old	1	1.1
31-40 years old	41	45.1
41-50 years old	36	39.6
51- 60 years old	13	14.2
<u>Region of Residence</u>		
Western Anatolia	34	37.3
Aegean	9	9.9
Mediterranean	4	4.4
Southeastern Anatolia	2	2.2
Eastern Marmara	6	6.6
İstanbul	4	4.4
Central Anatolia	7	7.7
Eastern Black Sea	6	6.6
Central Eastern Anatolia	4	4.4
Western Black Sea	11	12.1
Northeastern Anatolia	2	2.2
Western Marmara	2	2.2

In the sample group; in parallel with the data across Türkiye, it is seen that the number of male professors of public administration is larger than that of females. If it is accepted that academicians between the ages of 33-55 in Türkiye are in the mid-career phase (Tülübaş & Göktürk, 2018, p. 35), it can be said that the majority of the participants in the study are at this stage. Special attention was paid to make sure a wide range of participants could be attracted into the study. Respondents from all parts of Türkiye were included in the study sample, but the highest number was recorded from Western Anatolia covering Ankara, Konya, and Karaman.

The arithmetic means of the respondents' answers to each statement about pro-social and pro-self nudge policies are given in Table 4.

Table 4. Means of participants' statements about 8 nudge-based policies

		I find this policy acceptable.	I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice.	I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual.	I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society.
Organ Donation	Pro-social	2.1538	2.7363	2.3077	2.4725
Climate Compensation	Pro-social	2.5055	2.4615	2.5495	2.8681
Energy Consumption	Pro-social	2.8791	1.9560	2.8791	2.9341
Avoiding Tax Evasion	Pro-social	3.0659	1.7253	2.7473	2.9231
Smoking Cessation	Pro-self	2.6484	2.4066	2.7582	2.8242
Smoking Discouragement	Pro-self	2.9560	1.9890	2.7253	2.8242
Re-design the Cafeteria	Pro-self	3.2527	1.9121	3.2088	3.2198
Food Labelling	Pro-self	3.3187	1.7582	3.2747	3.3295
General Average		2.8475	2.1181	2.8063	2.9229
	Pro-Social	2.6511	2.2198	2.6209	2.7994
	Pro-Self	3.0439	2.0165	2.9917	3.0494

The arithmetic means of the answers were interpreted by rating the scores of 1.00-1.75 as “Strongly Disagree”, 1.76-2.50 as “Disagree”; 2.51-3.25 as “Agree”; and 3.26-4.00 as “Strongly Agree”. The figures show that only “organ donation” among the pro-social policies was not approved by the professors. The remaining three policies focusing on social welfare (climate compensation, energy consumption, and prevention of tax evasion) were adopted, the

highest average score recorded with the policy of tax evasion prevention. The low score for “organ donation” can be accounted for by the belief that “it substantially restricts the individual’s freedom to choose”. As a matter of fact, the averages of the participants' answers to the statement "I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom of choice" presented to them for other pro-social nudge policies are seen as that they fall within the scope of expressing disagree (in the categories of climate compensation and energy consumption) and strongly disagree (in the category of preventing tax evasion). Additionally, the participants may have welcomed the three pro-social nudges except for organ donation by assuming that they have the potential of benefiting to both the individuals and society.

When it comes to the pro-self nudge policies, the mean value of the answers was over 2.5, which implies that all four examples in this sub-group were found acceptable by the professors. More particularly, there was a high rate of recognizing statement "I find this policy acceptable" in relation to the nudge policies on smoking cessation, quitting smoking and re-design the cafeteria. Even more positively, the responses regarding food labelling fell under “Strongly agree in parallel with this determination. It can be said that participants have the perception that the nudge policies designed for all four policy areas will have positive effects for both the individual and the society as a whole, and that the policies do not restrict individuals' freedom of choice. This deduction can be justified with the data in Table 4.

It can be inferred that professors of department of public administration in this study have a higher opinion of pro-self policies than pro-social ones. As evidence, the mean of their answers regarding the acceptability of pro-self policies was 2.6511, while the corresponding value for pro-social policies was 3.0439. It is also noteworthy that professors feel that pro-self nudges will have more favorable consequences on both individuals and society as a whole, compared to pro-social policies. Moreover, Table 3 displays a mean of 2.2198 for pro-social nudge and 2.0165 for pro-self nudges. These figures indicate the perception that both types of nudges do not restrict individuals' freedom to choice.

The findings serve to answer the research questions. Starting with the first research question (From the perspectives of professors of Public Administration Department in Turkish state universities, are the 8 different policy scenarios prepared with the nudge technique acceptable?), the participants accepted these policies partially.

Secondly, the next research question (From the perspectives of professors of Public Administration Department in Turkish state universities, are pro-social nudge policies more acceptable than pro-self nudge policies?) was resolved with a negative response.

In relation to the last research question (Do professors of Public Administration Department in Turkish state universities have different attitudes regarding the 8 different policy scenarios prepared with the nudge technique depending on their demographic variables?), the following results were reached. As stated in the related section, the analysis of the significance of difference between answers of the participants by gender was carried out with 'T test'. As a result, a significant difference was found between males and females under the nudge policy regarding "re-design the cafeteria" saying "I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society" (Sig. 0.012). It was found that the female participants' average perceptions of the presented nudges were higher than men. This demographic variable, age, was also checked in terms of its effect on attitudes regarding the nudges by using the ANOVA (analysis of variance) test. As a result, no significant difference was found between participants of varying ages. The relation between the overall attitudes and the other demographic variable, "region of residence", was again tested with 'Anova'. Significant differences were noted for some sub-groups. In relation to "organ donation", the statement "I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual" gained the highest score in sub-group 4 (Southeastern Anatolia) while the lowest score was gained by sub-group 1 (Western Anatolia) constituting a significant difference. The difference was also significant between sub-group 2 (Aegean) and sub-group 4 (Southeastern Anatolia) in favor of the former. The final significant difference was calculated between sub-group 4 (Southeastern Anatolia) and sub-group 7 (Central Anatolia) in favor of the former.

Table 5 shows the professors' average perceptions by gender. It can be said that male and female find both pro-social and pro-self policies acceptable and have a positive attitude that the relevant policies will have positive effects both on the individual and for the society as a whole. It implies that the participants' agreement rates with the statements presented to them did not differentiate significantly against gender. Also, it seems that there is a more positive attitude towards pro-social nudge policies among males, while the other gender has a better attitude towards pro-self nudges. Moreover, when Table 5 is examined to compare the males and females' reactions to the statement "I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice" concerning nudge policies of distinct types, it can be seen that males have a more negative attitude to both types of policies.

Table 5. Distribution of participants' perceptions by gender

		I find this policy acceptable.	I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice.	I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual.	I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society.
Female	Pro-social	2.6341	2.2317	2.6341	2.9146
	Pro-self	3.0976	2.0244	3.0366	3.1220
Male	Pro-social	2.6650	2.2100	2.6100	2.7050
	Pro-self	3.0000	2.0100	2.9550	2.9900

Table 6 shows the differences between the faculty members' agreement rates with the statements presented to them according to age criteria. The highest agreement rate with the statement "I find this policy acceptable" was found in the age range of 20 and 30 about pro-social policies. However, taking the small number of participants within this range into consideration, we prefer to be discreet and recommend checking of this finding in further studies. The favoring of pro-social policies was followed by those aged 51 to 60, 41 to 50 and 31 to 40, respectively. Considering the age categories and policies together, it becomes clear at the research associates aged 31 to 40 hold the lowest level of positive attitude regarding pro-social nudge policies. As regards the pro-self policies, they were found to be acceptable predominantly by participants aged between 41 and 50. On the contrary, the peers in the top age range (51-60) found these policies exhibited the most unfavorable views. At the same time, it is seen that participants across all age ranges disagreed with the statement "I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice." concerning the both policy categories (pro-social and pro-self).

Table 6. Distribution of participants' perceptions by age

		I find this policy acceptable.	I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice.	I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual.	I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society.
20-30	Pro-social	3.2500	1.5000	2.7500	3.2500
	Pro-self	3.0000	2.0000	3.0000	3.0000
31-40	Pro-social	2.6159	2.3110	2.6098	2.8293
	Pro-self	3.0549	2.0610	3.0183	3.0854
41-50	Pro-social	2.6458	2.1528	2.6042	2.7500
	Pro-self	3.1111	1.9236	3.0000	3.0625
51-60	Pro-social	2.7308	2.1731	2.6923	2.8077
	Pro-self	2.8269	2.1346	2.8846	2.9038

Table 7 shows the differences between the faculty members' agreement rates with the statements presented to them and their geographical area of residence. It is seen that all participants except for those around İstanbul found pro-social nudge policy designs acceptable. At the same time, it looks that the participants around İstanbul are of the opinion that pro-social policies restrict individuals' freedom to choice. Such nudge policies were considered most acceptable by those residing in Southeastern Anatolia. Unlike this type, pro-self nudge policy designs were found acceptable in all regions of residence, at a higher than pro-social policies. Pro-self nudge policies were welcomed most in Southeastern Anatolia Region, whereas they were regarded the least acceptable around İstanbul.

Table 7. Distribution of participants' perceptions by region of residence

		I find this policy acceptable.	I think this policy significantly restricts the individual's freedom to choice.	I think this policy has overall positive effects on the individual.	I think this policy has overall positive effects for the whole society.
Western Anatolia	Pro-social	2.6103	2.1838	2.6103	2.8529
	Pro-self	2.9779	1.9926	2.9118	3.0000
Aegean	Pro-social	2.6944	2.1667	2.4722	2.6389
	Pro-self	2.9722	2.0278	2.8611	2.9444
Mediterranean	Pro-social	2.8750	1.8125	2.7500	3.0000
	Pro-self	3.4375	1.6250	3.5000	3.5000
Southeastern Anatolia	Pro-social	3.3750	1.7500	3.2500	3.7500
	Pro-self	3.5000	1.8750	3.2500	3.2500
Eastern Marmara	Pro-social	2.5833	2.1667	2.5417	2.5833
	Pro-self	3.0417	1.9583	2.9167	3.0000
İstanbul	Pro-social	2.1875	2.6250	2.8125	2.8750
	Pro-self	2.8125	2.2500	3.1250	3.0625
Central Anatolia	Pro-social	2.6786	2.4286	2.5357	2.7500
	Pro-self	3.0357	2.5000	2.9643	3.0357
Eastern Black Sea	Pro-social	2.7083	2.1250	2.6667	2.6250
	Pro-self	3.1667	2.0000	3.1667	3.1250
Central Eastern Anatolia	Pro-social	2.8750	2.0625	3.0000	3.0000
	Pro-self	3.2500	1.8750	3.1250	3.1875
Western Black Sea	Pro-social	2.5000	2.5455	2.4318	2.5455
	Pro-self	3.0000	1.9773	2.8636	2.8636
Northeastern Anatolia	Pro-social	3.1250	1.7500	3.1250	3.2500
	Pro-self	3.2500	1.7500	3.3750	3.6250
Western Marmara	Pro-social	2.7500	2.2500	2.3750	3.0000
	Pro-self	3.0000	2.1250	3.2500	3.3750

For successful implementation of nudge policies and revealing the subtleties of nudge theory, credit must be given to individual and cultural factors in the perception regarding nudge policies, acceptability of the relevant policies namely (Hagman et al., 2015, p. 452). The current study was carried out in this position to shed light on the perceptions regarding nudge policies

of faculty members, who are thought to be more prone to analytical thinking. The study results show that the answer to research question 1 is partially positive while the answer to question 2 is completely negative. It means that the research associates of public administration with the minimal degree of PhD in Turkish state universities deem the majority of the listed nudge policies acceptable (only organ donation was judged differently) and that they look at pro-self nudge policies from a supportive stance.

Hagman and others (2015, p. 451) also conducted a study to scrutinize the impact of individual and cultural differences on individuals' perceptions of nudge policies. They noted that individuals with higher likelihood of analytical thinking are less likely to consider nudge policies as interfering with individuals' freedom to choice. The overall landscape obtained in the current study complies with the above mentioned generalization since the faculty members in this study perceive seven of the eight nudge policies nonintrusive being "organ donation" the exception. Also, the prevalent perception in the study group that both pro-self and pro-social nudge policy designs are beneficial for individuals and society implies that the nudge policies other than organ donation has high acceptability. Evidence comes from Table 4, which shows that the perception regarding potential societal benefits of pro-self nudge policies is more supportive than that about pro-social policies. The participants' higher credit for pro-self policies may have been caused by the anticipation that such policies will precipitate public benefits in the long run rather than motivating the citizens with their individual interests.

Among the 8 nudge policies included in the survey, only the one encouraging organ donation was found unacceptable. The participants think that such a policy will significantly restrict individuals' freedom to choice. It is also clear in the relevant table that the participants do not hold a high opinion about potential positive impacts of organ donation on individuals and society. The negative attitude towards organ donation might be due to the fact that the issue is considered as a high-risk area it is a choice relating to moral, religious or political values that cannot be easily reversed. Organ donation seems to call for more deliberative choices since it is an individual decision that engages religious and moral values, can be taken once in a life time, and increases social benefit contrary to private welfare. This might have contributed to the emergence of the liberty-restricting impression regarding the relevant nudge policies (Medina, 2020, p. 203) (For an alternative policy design to nudge policies to counteract the negative impact of these possible impressions on individuals' organ donation decisions, see Küçükşenel & Urhan, 2013). As Etheredge (2021, p. 988) points out "effectively, addressing

donor shortages requires a multi-faceted approach considering barriers to organ donation as they manifest across a society”.

As the starting point in this study, the academics were expected to approve of all the policies because they are relatively better analytical thinkers and thus better informed about the eventual social welfare of public policies and the collectivist social structure of Türkiye. However, the study was concluded with one surprising result to arouse several questions. “Has this result been invoked by the nonconformity of organ donation with the religious and moral values in the Turkish society or by the gradual erosion of the Collective world view in this society?” Alternatively, in confirmation of nudge theory, “Has it been influenced by societal, cultural and moral elements disrupting rational decision-making processes?” Otherwise, as initially suggested by Bolton, Dimant and Schmit (2019), “Is it unlikely to see the success of pro-social nudges which bear no financial consequences?” To answer these questions, future studies on nudge theory should look closer into individual and cultural peculiarities in connection with acceptability of nudge policies.

CONCLUSION

Recently, researchers and governments have frequently voiced the importance of nudge in producing effective public policies since this approach argues that individuals' irrational preferences and actions can be directed in a predictable manner by applying behavioral principles. However, the nudge approach, which is presented as a liberal paternalistic method, assumes the limited rationality of the individuals who are the target of public policies, but the full rationality of the actors involved in policy design, is subject to many criticisms when combined with the paternalistic qualities of the method.

In real life, not every nudge-based policy can attain the targeted objectives. By the same token, a nudge policy appreciated in any context may fail in another. Many individual and social factors play a role in individuals' attitudes towards nudge as well as their decision-making processes. It is less manageable than it looks to discover the possible factors in each context. Nevertheless, steps taken to this direction will add to nudge theory and provide important data in invention of effective public policies. As an effort this end, the present study analyzed the perceptions of Public Administration research associates working at Turkish state universities with regard to eight different nudge policies. Despite some contrary developments diminishing its established social structure, Türkiye is listed as a collective social body as a result of culture studies. The research addressed professors in public administration as they are assumed to have

a good command of the public policy literature and to a relatively higher tendency to think analytically making us think that they must have developed a positive attitude towards pro-self and pro-social nudge policy designs. Contrary to the expectations, the pro-social policy design boosting organ donation was not found considered acceptable among others. The scholars in the study might have developed such an attitude by thinking that organ donation would seriously limit one's freedom to choice.

In the study, all examples of pro-self nudge (smoking cessation, quitting smoking, re-design the cafeteria, food labeling) enhancing personal welfare and three of pro-self shared welfare nudges (climate compensation, energy consumption prevention of tax evasion excluding organ donation) enhancing the shared welfare were categorized acceptable. This is an important result as it proves the participating faculty members' beliefs that these policy designs will improve the individuals and the whole society.

The study also examined the variance in the faculty members' acceptance of the nudge policies in relation to demographic features such as gender, age and region of residence. The female respondents showed a higher approval of the "re-design of the cafeteria" on the grounds of gains for the whole society compared to their male peers in the study. Another meaningful variance was about "organ donation" in view of the region of residence. More specifically, the respondents living in different geographical areas judge the assets of this policy for individuals varied significantly.

In summary, the results of our study are not tenable with the final statement "To conclude, our findings suggest that the notion of "one-nudge-fits-all" of "Public Views on Policies Involving Nudges" by Hagman et al. (2015), which is the source of the sample nudge policy scenarios used here. The same paper also includes the statement "Recognizing this is an important aspect both for successfully implementing nudges as well as nuancing nudge theory." Our results are congruent with this conclusion. This agreement seems to be valuable support considering future research since the support is lent by a study representing scholars of Public Administration, whose preferences and decisions are more predictable than others due to their academic background.

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