

# Designing a Structural Policy-Making Model for the Development of Iran's Cinema Industry

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**Abstract:** One of the key areas in cultural industries and the cultural economy is cinema, which holds significant importance from cultural, social, and economic perspectives. Moreover, the cinema industry serves as a primary tool for cultural formation within society. The cinematic space, by creating unique conditions for the audience and instilling specific ideas, plays a fundamental role in changing societal attitudes. One of the pathways to achieving development is the adoption and implementation of accurate and timely policies. Therefore, the aim of the present study is to design a policy-making model for the development of Iran's cinema industry. The method used is applied in terms of purpose and employs a mixed-method approach with a descriptive nature. The analysis method in the qualitative phase is thematic analysis, and in the quantitative phase, it is interpretive structural modeling. The statistical sample of the study included 10 cinema industry experts in the qualitative phase and 12 individuals in the quantitative phase. The sampling method in both phases was purposive non-random sampling. Based on documented policies, including approvals, regulations, and directives, as well as the programs of the Ministers of Culture and Islamic Guidance in different periods and interview analyses, 20 categories for the development of Iran's cinema industry were identified. These categories were then considered as inputs for interpretive structural modeling, and a hierarchical structuring was carried out based on them. Indicators such as "government participation and oversight in production, distribution, and content," "development of the cultural economy," "attention to guilds and non-governmental associations," "export of cinematic works," "intellectual property rights of works," "participation in festivals," and "employment and livelihood of artists and filmmakers" were identified as the foundation and basis of the policy-making structure for the development of the cinema industry.

**Keywords:** Policy, Development, Industry, Cinema, Cultural Industries.

## 1. Introduction

The subject of policy-making is one of the significant topics in the field of management science that has received serious attention from scholars over the past three decades. Public policy-making, as a young discipline, emerged after World War II [1]. The primary role of governments in the modern world is "public policy-making." Governments, which encompass the executive and legislative branches, shape public policies, implement them,

and then evaluate the outcomes of these implementations [2, 3]. Policies guide our thinking in decision-making processes [4]. Policy determines the boundaries within which future decisions must be made. Policies can be categorized based on their subject matter, such as personal policies, among others. Policy is a public program that serves as an operational guide for managers [5]. Evidence from various studies indicates that public policy is a set of relatively stable, consistent, and purposeful government actions aimed at solving public problems or concerns within society [6, 7].

Although researchers worldwide have long focused on the issue of selecting policy implementation tools, recent years have seen the emergence of a new theory of policy tool selection in theoretical foundations, attracting significant attention from researchers. Considerable efforts have been made to understand this new theory, known as the policy tool mix, and to identify the factors influencing its selection and design [8]. Early studies on policy tool selection theory emphasized single-tool approaches. However, in the late 1990s, due to various factors such as market failures in achieving policy objectives, the inability to meet multiple goals with a single policy tool, involvement of multiple sectors and actors [9], informational limitations, uncertainties, and the wave of privatization and deregulation, the selection pattern shifted [1], giving rise to the theory of mixed public policy tools. Subsequently, extensive research was conducted to define the policy tool mix and identify specific factors, criteria, and characteristics for selecting and optimizing tool combinations.

These studies demonstrated that mixed policy tools offer more benefits to policymakers compared to single-tool approaches, including increased effectiveness and higher implementation probability of policies [10]. Since there is no universal optimal model, the optimal selection and design of policy tool mixes depend on the context and setting of each country [11]. Senior managers play a prominent role in determining the overall policy of an organization. The execution method for organizational programs is determined by policy, making it an effective tool for operational control [12, 13].

Given the significance of culture in society, cultural policy and cultural policy-making have gained substantial importance in recent years. The practical interpretation of cultural policy has undergone a shift in recent years. In the past, cultural policies in many countries focused extensively on creative arts at all levels. However, in recent years, the emergence of the creative industry and the growth of cultural industries have shifted the focus of these policies towards potential industrial development and the arts [14]. Enhancing economic efficiency is one of the primary objectives of government policy-making, which must manage the free market economy in the present era.

Industry development pertains to recognizing the relationships and interactions between the domains of production and creation, consumption, and the market. It facilitates economic prosperity by uncovering the connections between the economy and industry. Instead of merely evaluating and judging the normative aspects of industrial and artistic activities, it aims to analyze the economic impacts of these activities and identify the factors influencing actions, policies, programs, activities, and the preferences governing the supply and demand of cultural and artistic goods [15].

In the context of film industry policy, Gerow and Aaron (2022) underscore that personal experiences are vital for highlighting the individual qualities and values necessary for effective policy-making. Moreover, Gomez et al. (2021) contend that sustained political commitment, clear delineation of responsibilities, coordination, and genuine engagement at all government levels are prerequisites for efficient policy implementation [16]. Likewise, Hill et al. (2020) propose considering the film industry, as a significant cultural contributor, an economic factor within development policies [17]. Focusing on cultural policy shifts, Mostafavi (2023) points out how national governments previously leveraged cultural policies for nation-building but, due to intensifying social and political

transitions, such responsibilities are increasingly devolving to metropolitan areas [18]. In the Iranian context, Karimi (2022) shows that ticket prices negatively affect cinema demand, while per capita income, annual expenditure on recreation, number of theaters, and available seating positively influence it; further, cultural, individual, psychological, policy-related, planning, and film-specific factors bolster the inclination to attend cinemas [19]. Finally, Morshedi and Khalaj (2021) reveal that the nation's cultural policies suffer from excessive state intervention, varying with each administration's approach, and that tensions between religious and scientific (academic) cultures remain inadequately addressed [20].

The significance of cinema industry development prompted the European Commission in 2007 to announce its decision to adopt strategies and policies based on the role of culture in economic growth and intercultural dialogue. Industry development encompasses a broad spectrum, including cinema, which holds considerable cultural, social, and economic importance. Additionally, cinema serves as a primary cultural instrument in society. The cinematic space, by creating unique conditions for the audience and instilling specific ideas, plays a critical role in shaping societal attitudes and public opinion. The extent to which cinema is utilized as a cultural development indicator is a key measure in society [21].

Cultural industries have recently become a cornerstone of development doctrines in developed countries. Many countries worldwide have made extensive investments in these industries, which have generated substantial economic value. For example, studies indicate that approximately 11% of the United States' GDP and about 10% of South Korea's GDP come from cultural industries. India's highest revenues are from cinema and software production industries [20]. Investment in recreational and cultural industries is one of the top cultural priorities of the Australian government. According to a study by Ernst & Young, 34% of global creative and cultural industries' revenue is generated in Asia-Pacific, 32% in Europe, 28% in North America, 6% in Latin America, and 3% in Africa and the Middle East [22].

Unfortunately, existing evidence and statistics reveal that Iran's cultural economy is not in an ideal state compared to other countries, despite its immense cultural potential and talent. According to statistics provided by officials, the global cultural industries' financial turnover exceeds two billion dollars, while Iran's share is nearly zero [23]. Achieving an ideal position in the cultural industries' economy necessitates proper policy-making and strategic planning to establish the necessary infrastructure for utilizing the country's vast cultural capacities.

Cultural industries encompass a wide range of arts, industries, and cultural heritage, including computer games, animation, and tourism, which can be focal points in the cultural economy [24]. Assessing past policy-making and strategies can help achieve the desired state. Identifying weaknesses, oversights, and errors can guide the cultural economy's growth in the coming years.

This study aims to examine cinema-related policies and policy-making, as cinema is a cultural industry with significant potential in the cultural economy. The main research question is: How should the policy-making and strategies for the cinema industry be designed to achieve desirable development goals in the cinema industry?

## **2. Methodology**

The present study is an applied research in terms of its purpose and utilizes a mixed-method research approach with a sequential-exploratory design. In this design, qualitative data were first collected and analyzed, followed by the collection and analysis of quantitative data in the second phase. The analysis method in the qualitative phase was thematic analysis, while in the quantitative phase, interpretive structural modeling was employed.

The data collection method in the qualitative section involved interviews and document analysis, while in the quantitative section, data were collected through questionnaires. In the qualitative part of this research, semi-structured interviews and analysis of written policies, including documents, approvals, and regulations, were used in line with the research objectives. The interviews were conducted in person, with some being recorded (with the interviewees' permission) and others noted down. After conducting interviews with experts and specialists, the interviews were transcribed, and the collected data were analyzed and integrated. Participants in the qualitative and quantitative phases were academic experts and cinema industry policy specialists, respectively. The statistical sample in the first phase consisted of 10 cinema industry experts. The sample size in the second phase was 12 participants (in the interpretive structural modeling questionnaire), with the acceptable range for expert samples being between 10 and 15 individuals (Kannan et al., 2009). A purposive non-random sampling method, a type of purposive sampling, was employed in this study.

To ensure qualitative content validity, the researcher sought the opinions of 10 experts and specialists to review the qualitative questionnaire based on criteria such as grammatical accuracy, appropriate wording, necessity, importance, and proper placement of phrases, and to provide feedback and suggestions. Accordingly, necessary modifications were made to each item based on expert feedback. For quantitative content validity and to ensure the selection of the most important and accurate content (necessity of the questions), the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) was used. Additionally, the Content Validity Index (CVI) was utilized to confirm that the questions were designed to best measure the content, with an acceptable value of 0.81 obtained.

To determine the credibility (confirmability) of the findings, three techniques were used: data collection from multiple sources, analysis of negative cases, and methodological flexibility. Data sources were diverse, and triangulation was employed. The researcher resolved contradictory interpretations within the negative case analysis of interviews. Additionally, the interview protocol was repeatedly reassessed, and its content and processes were reviewed to ensure flexibility in interpretations, suggestions, and findings. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to assess the reliability of the questionnaire, yielding an acceptable value of 0.83.

### 3. Findings

In the present study, data were initially collected from interviews with 10 cinema industry experts and academic specialists, as well as from the analysis of written policies, including documents, approvals, and regulations. These interviews resulted in a set of initial themes, which were gathered and coded through the coding process to extract the underlying themes. Based on the categorization of policies and governmental strategies during different periods after the Islamic Revolution, the categories, which serve as indicators for the development of Iran's cinema industry, are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Main Categories of Iran's Cinema Industry Development**

No.	Main Category	Code
1	Government participation and oversight in production, distribution, and content	C1
2	Production of cinematic works	C2
3	Participation in festivals	C3
4	Employment and livelihood of artists and filmmakers	C4
5	Increase in the number of cinema halls	C5
6	Private sector participation	C6
7	Tourism	C7
8	Education	C8
9	Increase in cultural consumption in society	C9

10	Attention to guilds and non-governmental associations	C10
11	Intellectual property rights of works	C11
12	Preservation and maintenance of cinematic works	C12
13	Development of cinematic activities	C13
14	Development of the cultural economy	C14
15	Export of cinematic works	C15
16	Employment of skilled workforce	C16
17	Cinema equipment	C17
18	Attention to social capital	C18
19	Cultural diplomacy	C19
20	Hosting festivals and exchanges with other countries	C20

To analyze the quantitative data and design the policy-making model for the development of Iran's cinema industry, Interpretive Structural Modeling (ISM) was employed. Based on Table 3 and interviews with 12 experts, 20 indicators were used to structure the policy-making model for the development of Iran's cinema industry. In the second phase, the experts evaluated the research indicators through pairwise comparisons using the following symbols: V (unidirectional relation from i to j), A (unidirectional relation from j to i), X (bidirectional relation between i and j), and O (no relation between i and j) (Azar et al., 2013). Accordingly, the experts indicated the relationships between the research indicators using these symbols in the questionnaire, as shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Structural Self-Interaction Matrix**

I	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	-	A	V	O	A	A	V	O	A	X	O	O	A	V	O	V	O	A	A	O
2		-	O	A	V	O	V	X	O	O	A	V	O	O	V	V	V	A	O	O
3			-	A	A	A	V	X	V	O	V	V	V	O	A	A	O	O	V	V
4				-	V	A	V	A	O	O	V	V	X	O	A	V	O	O	V	V
5					-	A	V	X	V	X	X	V	V	A	A	V	O	A	A	O
6						-	V	V	O	V	A	V	V	O	V	V	V	V	O	V
7							-	A	X	X	X	O	V	O	A	X	V	X	O	O
8								-	V	V	A	A	O	O	O	V	O	A	O	V
9									-	O	A	O	A	O	A	A	O	A	A	O
10										-	O	A	O	A	V	V	O	A	O	X
11											-	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V	V
12												-	O	V	A	O	A	A	V	O
13													-	A	A	A	A	X	O	O
14														-	O	V	V	O	O	O
15															-	V	O	A	O	O
16																-	V	V	O	V
17																	-	A	A	O
18																		-	A	V
19																			-	V
20																				-

In the third stage, the initial reachability matrix is the 0-1 structural self-interaction matrix, which is derived by converting the symbols V, A, X, and O as follows: if the relationship between the indices is V, then  $(i,j)=1$  and  $(j,i)=0$ ; if the relationship is A, then  $(i,j)=0$  and  $(j,i)=1$ ; if the relationship is X, then  $(i,j)=1$  and  $(j,i)=1$ ; and if the relationship is O, then  $(i,j)=0$  and  $(j,i)=0$ . If i equals j, a value of 1 is placed in the matrix diagonal. In the fourth stage, the initial reachability matrix must be adjusted to include transitivity in the relationships between indices. Transitivity implies that if index i leads to index j and index j leads to index k, then index i also leads to index k. The method for obtaining the reachability matrix is based on Euler's theory, where the adjacency matrix is added

to the identity matrix, and then the resulting matrix is raised to the power of  $n$  until no changes occur in the matrix elements. The following formula demonstrates the method for determining the reachability matrix using the adjacency matrix:

$$A + I \quad (1)$$

$$M = (A + I)^n \quad (2)$$

where matrix  $A$  is the initial reachability matrix,  $I$  is the identity matrix, and  $M$  is the final reachability matrix. The matrix exponentiation must follow Boolean rules, where  $1 \times 1 = 1$  and  $1 + 1 = 1$ . The result is shown in Table 3, where the values marked with an asterisk indicate that they were initially zero in the reachability matrix but changed to one after adjustment.

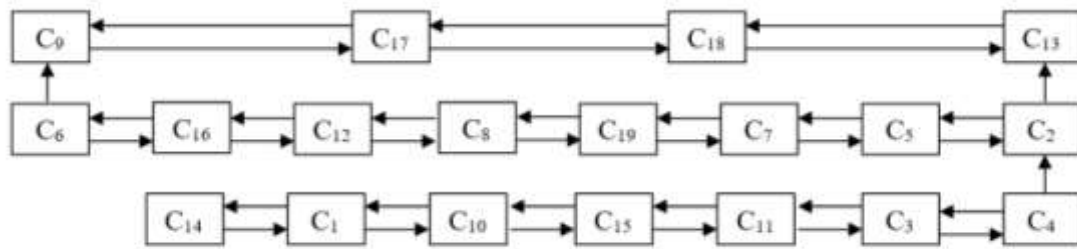
**Table 3. Final Reachability Matrix**

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
1	1	0	1	0	1*	0	1	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1*
2	1	1	1*	1*	1	0	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1	1	1	1*	1*	1*
3	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	0	1	1	1	1*	1	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1*
4	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1	1	1	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1	1
5	1	0	1	1*	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1
6	1	1*	1	1*	1	1*	1	1	1*	1	1*	1	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1*	1*
7	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1	1	1	1*	1	1*	1*	1	1	1	1*	1*
8	1*	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1*	1*	1*	0	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1
9	1	0	1*	0	0	0	1	0	1	1*	1*	0	1*	1*	0	1*	1*	1*	0	0
10	1	0	1*	1*	1	0	1	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1	1*	1*	0	1
11	1*	1	1*	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1*	1	1*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
12	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	0	1*	1	1*	1	0	1	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1*
13	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	0	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1*
14	1*	0	1*	1*	1	0	1*	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1	1	1*	1	1	1*	0	1*
15	1*	1*	1	1	1	0	1	1*	1	1	1*	1	1	0	1	1	1*	1*	1*	1
16	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	0	1	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1	0	1*	1	1	1	1*	1
17	1*	0	0	1*	0	0	0	1*	1*	1*	0	1	1	1*	0	0	1	1*	1*	0
18	1	1	1*	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1*	1	1	1*	1	1*	1	1	1*	1
19	1	1*	1*	0	1	0	1*	1*	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1	1	1	1
20	0	1*	0	0	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	0	1	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1*	1

In the next stage, the final reachability matrix is categorized into different levels by obtaining the output and input sets for each index. The input set includes the index itself and the indices that affect it (the number of ones in each column), while the output set includes the index itself and the indices it affects (the number of ones in each row). Subsequently, an intersection set is prepared, comprising indices that appear in both the input and output sets. Indices with identical output and intersection sets are placed at the highest level of the interpretive structural modeling hierarchy. To determine the components of the next level, the highest-level components are removed from the table, and the process is repeated to identify the next level components.

Based on the variable levels and the final reachability matrix, the ISM model is drawn. In other words, by integrating the relationships between indices, a network diagram of their interactions is developed. This model illustrates the hierarchical positioning of factors and their relationships, where higher-level indices are influenced by lower-level indices. The resulting model is essentially a graphical representation of the computed tables from previous stages. The indices are arranged from bottom to top according to their levels. In the present study, the indices are categorized into four levels, as shown in Figure 1.





**Figure 1. Initial Model Output**

According to Figure 1, the indices "government participation and oversight in production, distribution, and content," "development of the cultural economy," "attention to guilds and non-governmental associations," "export of cinematic works," "intellectual property rights of works," "participation in festivals," and "employment and livelihood of artists and filmmakers" are critical and essential indices, serving as the foundation of the policy-making structure for the development of the cinema industry.

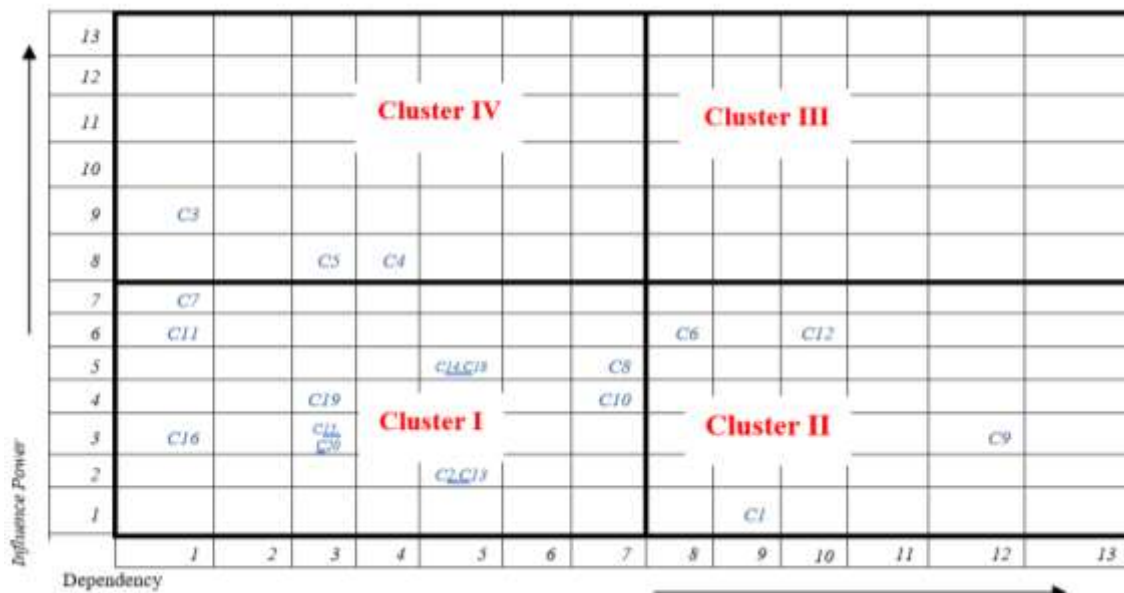
In the final stage, the fuzzy MICMAC is formed by repeatedly multiplying the fuzzy direct relationship matrix until the influence and dependency values are stabilized, as shown by the following rule:

$$C = A, B = \max k [\min (aik, bkj)] \quad (3)$$

$$A = [aik] \text{ and } B = [bkj] \quad (4)$$

In this study, the fuzzy stabilized matrix was obtained after six iterations.

In fuzzy MICMAC analysis, indices are categorized into four clusters based on their influence and dependency power. These clusters include autonomous (cluster 1, with low influence and low dependency), dependent (cluster 2, with low influence and high dependency), linkage (cluster 3, with high influence and high dependency), and independent (cluster 4, with high influence and low dependency) indices. Figure 2 presents the fuzzy MICMAC analysis of the policy indices for cinema industry development.



**Figure 2. MICMAC Output**

According to Figure 2, the experts determined that none of the cinema industry development policy indices fall into the linkage cluster, meaning that no single index can influence the entire system. Additionally, indices in

the independent cluster are identified as key system indices due to their high influence, exerting the most significant impact on other indices.

#### 4. Discussion and Conclusion

One characteristic of today's society is its strong demand for transformation and development. The initiation and continuation of development is not possible without having a dynamic and developed culture. On the other hand, in many areas, society's culture lacks the necessary conditions and cultural prerequisites for development. Therefore, it can be said that the priority and starting point for achieving development is cultural development. The cultural sector's development has various dimensions, but the simplest and most fundamental is the development of cultural products with content compatible with development. The cultural economy is a response to this need [25]. Moreover, in recent years, the production volume of cultural goods has escalated exponentially, and culture has become a very important part of the global economy. It is believed that the production and sale of cultural goods—both globally and in different countries—will continue to increase, and widespread participation in the global cultural sector may create opportunities to improve living conditions in the future. The cultural economy can shape this future [26].

Cultural industries form the core of the cultural economy. Cinema is one of the very important components of this sector from both economic and cultural perspectives. Everyone agrees on the principle of planning and the need for policy-making; similarly, there is almost a consensus regarding the importance and necessity of planning and policy-making in the field of culture, though opinions differ on its content and form. Perhaps planning and policy-making cannot make the unattainable attainable, but undoubtedly, their absence may render the attainable unattainable. Accordingly, achieving the cultural ideals that the Islamic Revolution has placed before the Islamic Republic's government necessitates greater attention to cultural planning [27]. Cultural policy plays a fundamental role in shaping the economic characteristics of the cultural sector, and cultural economists pay considerable attention to how cultural policy-making functions. Cultural policy strives to guide the cultural sector toward specific objectives, which are often contrary to market outcomes [28].

Given the country's current economic circumstances and the adoption of a resilient, non-oil economy by policymakers, it appears that culture and the cultural economy constitute the most important resources for economic growth and prosperity at present. Developed countries have made extensive efforts to utilize their cultural capacities for development. Therefore, one way to achieve development is to adopt and implement accurate and timely policies accordingly. To this end, one must first examine how cultural economy policies—specifically in cinema, which can be highly influential—have been formulated and to what extent they have facilitated the realization of these goals. Unfortunately, there has been insufficient, substantial research on cinema industry policy-making to date. Clearly, conducting studies of this type can address existing gaps in our knowledge of resources. Moreover, the results of this research could be valuable for officials, researchers, policymakers, and those interested in this field. Based on these findings, we may revise future policies or adopt proper implementation strategies.

According to data analysis, based on the categorization carried out on the policies and government strategies in various periods following the Islamic Revolution, 20 categories—each considered an indicator for the development of Iran's cinema industry—were presented. In this study, to achieve the ultimate objective and answer the research questions through interpretive structural modeling, the identified factors from the previous phases were considered as ISM inputs, and they were then stratified accordingly. According to obtained model, the indices



“government participation and oversight in production, distribution, and content,” “development of the cultural economy,” “attention to guilds and non-governmental associations,” “export of cinematic works,” “intellectual property rights of works,” “participation in festivals,” and “employment and livelihood of artists and filmmakers” were extracted as the foundation of the policy-making structure for cinema industry development.

Since contemporary films play a role far exceeding mere entertainment and hold a significant position in cultural formation, public opinion shaping, and public diplomacy, governments impose various types of oversight on such productions, taking into account the legal structure and norms of their society. This issue holds greater importance in Iran’s legal framework because the government plays a very prominent role—referred to as “oversight”—throughout all stages of producing a cinematic work, from writing the screenplay (the first step) to the home entertainment network (the last step). This oversight is mixed, involving both prior and subsequent supervision at all stages of film production and distribution.

Despite the expansion of science and technology—alongside a proliferation of tools and different entertainment industries—over the past few decades, the volume of film production and the number of cinema screens worldwide has consistently been on the rise. According to specialized research and estimates, this upward trend is expected to continue. The cinema economy involves substantial annual expenditure and yields considerable revenue. Considering the transformations that have occurred in Iran over past decades—including the victory of the Islamic Revolution, the Iran-Iraq War, and the adverse impacts of severe international sanctions—it is indisputable that the country’s cultural industries, including cinema, have been influenced by these developments (economic, political, etc.). Studying the future patterns of film production and distribution in Iranian cinema is crucial, especially in view of the increasing economic growth rate in development programs. Although, due to the nature of the product, film cannot be assessed purely based on profit and loss—like other consumer goods in the market—it is still a reality that financial returns are important in any productive activity. A film, as a product, cannot ignore economic issues at any stage of production or distribution.

Numerous specialized and professional workers in Iranian cinema belong to a guild, which, together with other cinema guilds, forms the “Iranian Alliance of Motion Picture Guilds” (commonly known as the House of Cinema) as a comprehensive guild institution. Therefore, the most significant component concerning cinema guilds and associations is the House of Cinema, or the Iranian Alliance of Motion Picture Guilds.

With globalization accelerating, companies can no longer achieve appropriate growth merely by producing goods and services for domestic markets. To develop economically, they must engage in international exchanges of goods and services, technology transfer, information flows, and financial and capital flows. Entering foreign markets and conducting international exchanges allow companies to discover new ideas, enhance the quality of their products for both domestic and foreign markets, and reduce risks by diversifying their sources of income. Today, exporting cinematic works is regarded as one of the key elements of a knowledge-based economy, acting as an engine for economic development and, at a deeper level, social-cultural development within societies. As market share for cultural product exports is increasingly distributed among a greater number of countries—undermining the previously dominant position of the United States and Europe—every country now has the opportunity to offer its cultural products in global markets. Through this process, countries not only promote their cultural uniqueness but also attain economic-political power and cultural influence. Nonetheless, many countries, including Iran, have been unable to seize these opportunities effectively and remain on the fringes of the global cultural market. Deciding to enter the international arena requires an assessment of readiness to meet commitments and participate in global markets. Such decisions should be guided by comprehensive studies and in-depth analyses of a company’s

potential and capabilities, as well as its environment. Consequently, to utilize opportunities in global markets, it is essential to systematically investigate the strengths and weaknesses of the cinema industry so that weaknesses can be addressed and strengths reinforced within an integrated framework, thereby preparing it more fully to operate in global markets.

Various factors contribute to the creation and success of a cinematic work, each of which may in some way hold exclusive rights to that work. Among the most crucial factors are the producer, director, main actors (especially the lead), screenwriter, and cinematographer. Determining the final owner of the exclusive rights is thus challenging. Today, worldwide recognition acknowledges that one cannot disregard the roles of different contributors in a film's success, a perspective clearly reflected in national and international film festivals and the final judging of cinematic works. Awards for editing, cinematography, directing, lead actors, etc., illustrate the importance of various film components. In any case, determining the owner of a cinematic work is vital from numerous standpoints, such as transferring or assigning rights. Hence, national legal frameworks, international regulations, and ultimately Iran's legal approach regarding the intellectual property rights of cinematic works must be examined.

An essential way to showcase artistic products is to highlight their economic value and significance. For instance, the value of artistic pursuits is evident when focusing on foreign income derived from tourism, as foreign tourists pay to visit and view artworks and to attend arts festivals. This viewpoint has gained such popularity that the famous expression "non-artistic demand for artistic goods" has been coined to describe it. Although this approach may yield certain benefits and considerations, it can be detrimental if misapplied, potentially leading to the destruction of artistic resources. Nonetheless, it is steadily gaining greater prominence.

Generally, cultural activities are used to enhance the conditions and image of the areas in which they occur. In this regard, activities geared toward restoring cultural and historical sites can have the greatest impact on improving the appearance of urban areas, but festivals may also be employed to achieve similar goals. Emphasizing cultural activities helps citizens restore their confidence in the city's growth potential, become optimistic about improving their future, gain motivation to undertake new initiatives, and reduce the outflow of youth from towns and other regions.

One of the most critical indices in the cinema economy is the number of jobs created in this industry. Interviews with experts and cinema officials indicate that, regrettably, no formal statistics exist for this important metric, and current figures are merely estimates derived from factors such as the number of films, projects under development, and ongoing productions. From the perspective of the Deputy of Cinematic Development and Technology at the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, each cinema employs 20 individuals, each full-length feature film employs 300 individuals, each video film employs 50 individuals, each laboratory or studio employs 8 individuals, and each animation project employs 35 individuals. Thus, an increase in the production of cinematic works boosts cinema-related employment. This is in addition to the ancillary jobs created around cinemas, for instance, shops attached to movie theaters, restaurants and food outlets, and stores selling cinema-related items (magazines, CDs, etc.). The greater the production and screening of films, the higher the level of both direct and indirect employment in this sector.

Overall, the policies and strategies for developing Iran's cinema industry have been influenced by the political discourse prevailing in different eras and administrations, such that changes in individuals and officials lead to policy modifications and, consequently, different outcomes. Cinema policymakers in each period, operating within the existing political discourse and its corresponding political culture, have shaped film and cinema policies. Policymakers and cultural managers within the principlist and reformist movements have imposed their dos and

don'ts on the public, criticizing each other's policies on the grounds that cinema is not aligned with people's values and beliefs, thereby calling each other's cultural and cinematic policies into question. Despite this, audiences of Iranian cinema have consistently embraced films that combine religious values with political-social values [27].

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- Incorporate cultural dimensions into international development policies with greater attention to cultural rights and cultural industries.
- Support private sector entities as well as cinematic and artistic institutes and associations, delegating part of the responsibility to them.
- Organize conferences and panel discussions in cultural centers and cultural complexes to critique and review current films with the participation of artists.
- Provide financial resources and equipment to the private sector for producing cinematic works.
- Establish electronic infrastructure to develop e-commerce and facilitate the trade of cinematic works.
- Create opportunities for startups and other modern platforms to enter the cinema industry and offer cinematic products.
- Increase the production of cinematic films and works.
- Expand the per capita number of movie theaters and multipurpose cultural complexes that also feature businesses such as restaurants and stores.
- Focus on global markets and marketing, particularly sales and exports to countries with shared cultural and religious values.
- Participate in foreign film festivals to raise awareness of Iranian cinema and identify export markets.
- Open cinemas in regions of other countries with sizable Iranian populations (e.g., certain areas of the United States, Canada, etc.), where Iranian films can be screened for these communities.

#### **Authors' Contributions**

Authors equally contributed to this article.

#### **Ethical Considerations**

All procedures performed in this study were under the ethical standards.

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#### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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