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ANALYSIS OF APPROACHES TO JOB CREATION AND POVERTY REDUCTION THROUGH SUPPORT FOR YOUNG ENTREPRENEURS AND THE STAGES OF THEIR DEVELOPMENT



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ABSTRACT. This study examines approaches to job creation and poverty reduction through the support and development of youth entrepreneurship. It analyzes the key stages of entrepreneurship development, ranging from identifying business opportunities and developing entrepreneurial competencies to improving access to finance, establishing new enterprises, and expanding employment opportunities. Particular attention is given to financial assistance, mentoring, entrepreneurial infrastructure, digital technologies, and access to markets as essential mechanisms for supporting young entrepreneurs. The study also explores the role of cooperation among government institutions, educational organizations, and the private sector in overcoming barriers to youth entrepreneurship and fostering sustainable economic development.

Keywords: youth entrepreneurship, job creation, poverty reduction, entrepreneurship support, access to finance, entrepreneurial competencies, sustainable economic development.

АННОТАЦИЯ. Исследование посвящено анализу подходов к созданию новых рабочих мест и сокращению бедности посредством поддержки и развития молодёжного предпринимательства. Рассматриваются основные этапы развития предпринимательской деятельности молодёжи, начиная с выявления бизнес-возможностей и формирования предпринимательских компетенций и заканчивая расширением доступа к финансированию, созданием новых предприятий и повышением уровня занятости. Особое внимание уделяется финансовой поддержке, наставничеству, предпринимательской инфраструктуре, цифровым технологиям и обеспечению доступа к рынкам как важнейшим механизмам поддержки молодых предпринимателей. Также рассматривается роль взаимодействия государственных учреждений, образовательных организаций и частного сектора в преодолении барьеров, препятствующих развитию молодёжного предпринимательства, и обеспечении устойчивого экономического развития.

Ключевые слова: молодёжное предпринимательство, создание рабочих мест, сокращение бедности, поддержка предпринимательства, доступ к финансированию, предпринимательские компетенции, устойчивое экономическое развитие.

ANNOTATSIIYA. Tadqiqotda yoshlar tadbirkorligini qo'llab-quvvatlash va rivojlantirish orqali yangi ish o'rinlarini yaratish hamda kambag'allikni qisqartirishga qaratilgan yondashuvlar tahlil qilinadi. Yoshlar tadbirkorligini rivojlantirishning asosiy bosqichlari, jumladan, biznes imkoniyatlarini aniqlash, tadbirkorlik kompetensiyalarini shakllantirish, moliyalashtirish imkoniyatlarini kengaytirish, yangi korxonalarni tashkil etish va aholi bandligini oshirish masalalari ko'rib chiqiladi. Yosh tadbirkorlarni qo'llab-quvvatlashning muhim mexanizmlari sifatida moliyaviy yordam, ustoz-shogird tizimi, tadbirkorlik infratuzilmasi, raqamli texnologiyalar va bozorlarga chiqish imkoniyatlariga alohida e'tibor qaratiladi. Shuningdek, yoshlar tadbirkorligini rivojlantirishga to'sqinlik qiluvchi omillarni bartaraf etish hamda barqaror iqtisodiy rivojlanishni ta'minlashda davlat muassasalari, ta'lim tashkilotlari va xususiy sektor o'rtasidagi hamkorlikning ahamiyati yoritiladi.

Kalit so'zlar: yoshlar tadbirkorligi, ish o'rinlarini yaratish, kambag'allikni qisqartirish, tadbirkorlikni qo'llab-quvvatlash, moliyalashtirish imkoniyatlari, tadbirkorlik kompetensiyalari, barqaror iqtisodiy rivojlanish.

INTRODUCTION

Supporting young entrepreneurs is an important component of employment policy because it creates opportunities for both business owners and the people they employ. The contribution of entrepreneurship to poverty reduction is strengthened when enterprises generate sustainable earnings, maintain their operations

beyond the initial establishment stage, and provide productive employment. A newly registered business represents the beginning of this process and serves as a foundation for achieving long-term socioeconomic outcomes.

The international context demonstrates the importance of improving young people's economic opportunities. According to the International Labour Organization, the global unemployment rate among people aged 15–24 was 13% in 2023, corresponding to 64.9 million unemployed young people. In the same year, 20.4% of young people were not in employment, education, or training. These indicators describe different aspects of youth economic participation: unemployment concerns young people actively participating in the labour market, while the latter measure also captures broader opportunities for strengthening engagement in employment and learning [1].

In Uzbekistan, recent presidential resolutions have strengthened the institutional framework for youth entrepreneurship. Presidential Resolution No. RP-60¹ of 14 February 2025, concerning improvements to the support system for youth entrepreneurship and business projects aimed at youth employment, established a State Targeted Fund for the Development of Youth Entrepreneurship under the Youth Affairs Agency. The resolution connects support for entrepreneurial initiatives with competitive production, service provision, and additional employment opportunities. Its significance lies in providing youth enterprise development with a dedicated institutional mechanism [2].

Presidential Resolution No. RP-62² of 14 February 2025, on additional measures for developing youth entrepreneurship and ensuring employment, approved the “Yoshlar biznesi” programme for 2025–2027. The programme sets targets to reach 350,000 young people and create at least 100,000 additional jobs for people aged 18–30. It also designates Aloqabank as a principal bank for providing comprehensive services and financial support to young entrepreneurs. These figures represent programme targets and provide a basis for assessing subsequent implementation results [3].

The demographic importance of these measures was highlighted during the President's dialogue with young people on 14 February 2025. The official account stated that more than 600,000 young people enter Uzbekistan's labour market annually. It also described planned funding allocations of USD 100 million for the Youth Affairs Agency's fund, USD 100 million for graduate-oriented banking support, and USD 200 million for Aloqabank's youth business activities. These announcements illustrate the scale of the policy commitment at that time and provide a basis for assessing the amount of financing delivered to beneficiaries and the number of sustainable jobs created [4].

LITERATURE REVIEW

The OECD and European Commission report *The Missing Entrepreneurs 2023* provides a useful framework for understanding the factors that influence the transition from entrepreneurial interest to business activity. It identifies access to finance, skills, networks, and external resources as important influences on business creation. During 2018–2022, approximately 5% of young people aged 18–30 in the European Union were working on a start-up, while approximately 4% were operating a new business. The corresponding OECD figures were approximately 9% and 5%. The report emphasises that finance is an important component of youth entrepreneurship programmes and that combining financial support with complementary measures can contribute to entrepreneurial success [5].

The present analysis suggests that support for young entrepreneurs should be tailored to their individual characteristics and business needs. A university graduate developing a digital service may require customer validation and access to specialised networks. A rural entrepreneur establishing a repair workshop may need equipment, a suitable workplace, and reliable local demand. A young parent may benefit from additional support related to childcare and flexible working hours. Providing support packages tailored to applicants' individual needs can therefore contribute to addressing the most important factors influencing their entrepreneurial development.

David McKenzie's study, *Small Business Training to Improve Management Practices in Developing Countries: Reassessing the Evidence for “Training Doesn't Work”*, examines evidence from evaluations of business training. Its synthesis suggests average improvements of approximately 5–10% in profits and sales. The study also explains that effects of this size require sufficiently precise experimental designs to be reliably detected. Approaches incorporating mentoring, local adaptation, simplified decision rules, and behavioural elements offer opportunities to improve conventional training, with results varying across interventions. These findings concern small businesses in developing countries and provide a useful analytical basis for examining entrepreneurship support programmes for young entrepreneurs in Uzbekistan [6].

1 <https://lex.uz/uz/docs/7388320>

2 <https://lex.uz/docs/7387089>

For the proposed framework, the main implication is that training should lead to observable improvements in business decisions. In addition to attendance certificates, the assessment of training outcomes can include participants' ability to calculate production costs, distinguish revenue from profit, manage inventory, and assess repayment capacity. A practical training programme could therefore require participants to prepare a cash-flow forecast, interview potential customers, compare suppliers, and test a product before undertaking a larger investment.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a descriptive-analytical research design based on secondary sources. The evidence consists of presidential resolutions, official implementation reports, international labour-market publications, World Bank poverty information, and research on entrepreneurship support. The analysis is based on existing documentary and statistical sources rather than original household surveys, enterprise surveys, or experimental evaluations.

The analysis separates legal provisions, programme targets, administrative outputs, and socioeconomic outcomes. Legal provisions establish institutional responsibilities and programme arrangements. Targets describe intended achievements. Administrative outputs record reported activities or beneficiaries. Outcomes concern changes in employment, business performance, and household welfare. Keeping these categories separate ensures a clear distinction between planned achievements and completed results.

Statistical comparisons use explicitly identified reference periods. National poverty rates are compared using Uzbekistan's national poverty measure, while international dollar-based poverty thresholds are considered separately. International youth statistics retain the age definitions used by their respective sources. They provide comparative context and complement Uzbekistan-specific estimates.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The review identifies a plausible pathway connecting entrepreneurship support with poverty reduction: appropriate assistance can help an enterprise begin operating, improve its performance, generate income, and eventually employ additional workers. Each transition depends on specific conditions that can be assessed through indicators extending beyond loan disbursement and business registration.

Uzbekistan's poverty statistics provide an important background to this discussion. The World Bank's October 2025 Poverty & Equity Brief reports that the national poverty rate declined from 17.0% in 2021 to 8.9% in 2024. It also identifies business and agricultural income growth, together with higher employment, as important contributors to poverty reduction in 2024. Between 2023 and 2024, the poverty rate decreased by 2.8 percentage points in rural areas and 1.5 percentage points in urban areas [7]. The World Bank's country overview subsequently reports a further reduction in the national poverty rate to 5.8% in 2025, alongside income growth favouring lower-income households. The overview identifies wage income growth as a major driver of household income gains during that year. Thus, the poverty trend reflects several economic mechanisms, including the potential contribution of youth entrepreneurship programmes alongside other factors influencing household welfare [8].

Table 1. Selected indicators relevant to youth entrepreneurship, employment, and poverty reduction³

Indicator	Period and coverage	Reported value	Interpretation
Global youth unemployment rate	2023; ages 15–24	13.0%	International labour-market context [1]
Global youth NEET rate	2023; ages 15–24	20.4%	Share outside employment, education, and training [1]
Planned coverage of “Yoshlar biznesi”	Uzbekistan, 2025–2027	350,000 young people	Programme target for assessing implementation results [3]
Planned additional jobs under “Yoshlar biznesi”	Uzbekistan, 2025–2027; ages 18–30	At least 100,000	Employment target [3]
National poverty rate	Uzbekistan, 2021	17.0%	National poverty measure [7]
National poverty rate	Uzbekistan, 2024	8.9%	National poverty measure [7]
National poverty rate	Uzbekistan, 2025	5.8%	National poverty measure [8]

³ publications listed in references [1], [3], [7], and [8]. International and national indicators describe different populations and should not be combined into a single performance measure.

Based on the reported national rates, poverty declined by 8.1 percentage points between 2021 and 2024. Between 2024 and 2025, the poverty rate declined by a further 3.1 percentage points, representing a relative reduction of approximately 34.8% compared with the 2024 rate. These descriptive calculations provide a basis for examining poverty reduction trends and assessing the contribution of individual policies through further evaluation.

Administrative information provides a more direct picture of youth business activity and a basis for further assessment. An official presidential report published in 2026 stated that, during the preceding year, 15,000 young people launched businesses through the “Yoshlar Biznesi” and “Kelajakka Qadam” programmes, employing 50,000 people. The same report announced further support and regional business incubators offering training, accounting, marketing, and market-access assistance. The officially reported employment figure highlights the programme’s contribution to employment and provides a foundation for assessing the sustainability of newly created jobs [9].

The broader importance of small enterprises is supported by the ILO’s Small Matters report. Using evidence from 99 countries, it found that self-employment, microenterprises, and small enterprises together accounted for approximately 70% of employment. The employment importance of small economic units highlights the value of examining job productivity, employment security, working conditions, and informality to assess their overall contribution to economic development [10].

The initial stage is opportunity identification. Prospective entrepreneurs need to establish whether a product or service responds to actual demand. Local assessments can identify market opportunities, available skills, supply development opportunities, and existing competitors. At this stage, the proposed support model emphasises inexpensive market testing before major financial commitments.

Consider a hypothetical tailoring enterprise established by a young entrepreneur. Monthly sales reach UZS 30 million. Materials and other non-wage operating expenses amount to UZS 17 million, while wages for two employees total UZS 8 million. The remaining UZS 5 million is available before taxes, financing costs, depreciation, and the owner’s remuneration. This example demonstrates the importance of distinguishing sales revenue from household income and profit. The enterprise’s ability to sustain two jobs depends on the expenses that remain and the stability of customer orders.

A second hypothetical example concerns a digital services business started by a recent graduate. Initially, the owner handles customer acquisition, design, and invoicing alone. After securing repeat contracts, the business recruits an assistant. The development sequence matters: demonstrated demand supports recruitment, while recruitment based on expected future contracts requires appropriate cash-flow planning. Under the proposed framework, support would first strengthen sales and delivery capacity, followed by expansion assistance when justified by business records.

A third example illustrates employment retention. Suppose a pilot programme supports 100 businesses, each initially reporting two paid employees, excluding the owners. The reported initial total is 200 employee jobs. After twelve months, 80 businesses remain active, and each retains two employees, leaving 160 retained employee jobs. Retention relative to the initial total is therefore 80%. These hypothetical figures illustrate a measurement method and provide a basis for evaluating actual programme results. Moreover, retained jobs and net additional jobs represent distinct indicators, as some employment may have existed independently of programme support.

Poverty outcomes require a separate household assessment. An increase in enterprise profit may contribute to improvements in household welfare and facilitate the transition above the poverty threshold. Household size, other earnings, seasonal variation, inflation, and changes in transfers can affect the result. Evaluation should therefore connect enterprise records with a consistent measure of household welfare.

The analysis consequently supports a monitoring system that follows participants beyond the approval stage. Records should distinguish owners from employees, permanent from temporary work, and gross reported employment from estimated additional employment. Information on business continuity and development should also remain in the dataset to ensure a comprehensive and accurate assessment of programme performance.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Support for young entrepreneurs can contribute to job creation and poverty reduction when it enables commercially viable businesses to generate lasting income. Uzbekistan’s recent presidential resolutions provide dedicated institutions and programme arrangements for this purpose. Reported business activity and declining national poverty rates establish the relevance of the policy area and provide a basis for further evaluating the contribution of individual programmes.

The literature indicates that financial access and entrepreneurial capability should be addressed together. The proposed development framework therefore connects opportunity identification, preparation, financing,

consolidation, expansion, and sustained improvements in household welfare. Assistance should respond to the enterprise's stage of development and the participant's individual circumstances.

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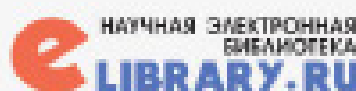
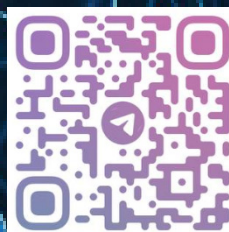
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