

Mechanism of State Management of Entrepreneurship Development Based on Behavioral Segmentation

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Abstract

The article examines the role of behavioral segmentation in improving state management of entrepreneurship development. The study focuses on differences in entrepreneurs' risk tolerance, innovation activity, investment intentions, and digital readiness. A differentiated approach to government support is proposed, based on identifying behavioral groups and matching them with appropriate financial, informational, and institutional instruments. The proposed mechanism includes diagnostics, segmentation, targeted support, monitoring, and policy adjustment. This approach can improve the effectiveness and targeting of government measures for entrepreneurship development.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, state management, behavioral segmentation, government support, innovation, digitalization, investment, business development.

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1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is an important driver of economic growth, employment, innovation, and diversification. Small and medium-sized enterprises contribute significantly to job creation, productivity, and local economic development. The OECD emphasizes that effective entrepreneurship policy increasingly requires differentiated support based on the characteristics and development potential of individual businesses [1].

Traditional government support mechanisms usually classify enterprises according to size, sector, turnover, or number of employees. However, such indicators do not fully reflect differences in entrepreneurs' risk tolerance, investment behavior, innovation activity, digital readiness, and growth intentions. Behavioral economics

shows that economic decisions are also influenced by perceptions of risk, cognitive factors, and the design of incentives [2; 3]. Therefore, behavioral segmentation can provide an additional basis for developing more targeted government policies.

Recent international research emphasizes the importance of differentiated support, timely data, monitoring, and evaluation in SME policy [1; 4]. These trends are particularly relevant for Uzbekistan. According to the National Statistics Committee, small businesses accounted for 51.5% of GDP in January–September 2025, demonstrating their significant role in the national economy [5]. In 2025, 82,386 new small enterprises and microfirms were established in the country [6]. Government policy has also increasingly focused on

expanding entrepreneurship, exports, employment, innovation, and start-up financing [7].

Under these conditions, behavioral segmentation can help identify different groups of entrepreneurs according to their development strategies and responses to government incentives. Such an approach can improve the targeting of financial, informational, educational, and institutional support measures.

The purpose of this study is to develop a conceptual mechanism of state management of entrepreneurship development based on behavioral segmentation and to identify differentiated government instruments corresponding to the characteristics and needs of different entrepreneurial groups.

2. Literature review

Recent academic research increasingly emphasizes that entrepreneurship policy should take into account the heterogeneity of firms and differences in entrepreneurial behavior. Rather than treating SMEs as a homogeneous group, researchers argue that businesses differ in their growth intentions, innovation activity, resource availability, risk perception, and ability to respond to government interventions.

Prasannath et al. (2024), based on a systematic review of 65 studies, demonstrate that government support policies affect SME performance through several mechanisms, including direct financial assistance, non-financial support, and changes in entrepreneurial orientation. The authors also emphasize that the effects of government support differ depending on the sector, growth intentions, and characteristics of SMEs [8]. This finding provides an important theoretical basis for behavioral segmentation because it demonstrates that identical policy instruments may generate different outcomes among different groups of entrepreneurs.

A particularly relevant contribution was made by Kariza, Chuah, and Arli (2025), who systematically examined the application of behavioral economics to entrepreneurship. Their study identifies risk propensity, overconfidence, heuristics, sunk-cost effects, and planning biases as important factors influencing entrepreneurial decisions. The authors argue that behavioral insights can be used to design more effective interventions aimed at encouraging entrepreneurial activity and improving policy implementation [9].

The issue of SME heterogeneity has also become increasingly important in international policy research. The OECD emphasizes that entrepreneurs differ considerably in terms of productivity, growth potential, digital maturity, access to finance, and innovation capacity. Therefore, effective entrepreneurship policy requires both broad framework conditions and targeted

interventions addressing the specific characteristics of different business groups [10].

Digital transformation represents another important dimension of contemporary entrepreneurial behavior. Bianchini and Lasheras Sancho (2025), using the OECD D4SME Survey, demonstrate that SMEs increasingly use artificial intelligence, fintech solutions, digital tools for sustainability, and cybersecurity practices. At the same time, the level and type of digital adoption vary significantly among SMEs, creating a need for differentiated policy support [11].

The growing importance of artificial intelligence creates an additional requirement for behavioral segmentation. The OECD's 2025 analysis of SME AI adoption identifies different categories of AI users according to digital maturity, complexity, and scope of application. The report emphasizes that SMEs require different combinations of connectivity, skills, data capabilities, technological infrastructure, and financing depending on their stage of digital development [12]. This approach is closely connected with the idea of behavioral segmentation because digital behavior can serve as an indicator of an enterprise's development readiness and support requirements.

Furthermore, OECD research highlights that effective SME policies should rely on granular and timely data, continuous monitoring, evaluation, and active engagement with entrepreneurs [13]. Consequently, modern government management is increasingly moving toward evidence-based and adaptive policy models in which support instruments can be adjusted according to observed entrepreneurial behavior.

Overall, the reviewed literature reveals three major trends. First, government support is more effective when it is adapted to the characteristics and development intentions of individual business groups. Second, behavioral factors such as risk perception, entrepreneurial motivation, and decision-making biases should be considered in entrepreneurship policy. Third, digital transformation provides new opportunities for identifying behavioral patterns and delivering personalized government support.

Despite these developments, the integration of behavioral segmentation into a comprehensive mechanism of state management of entrepreneurship remains insufficiently explored. This research therefore focuses on combining behavioral diagnostics, entrepreneurial segmentation, targeted support instruments, digital monitoring, and policy adjustment within a unified state management mechanism.

3. Methodology

This study applies systemic, institutional, and behavioral approaches to examine state management of

entrepreneurship development. The research focuses on differences in entrepreneurs' risk tolerance, investment activity, innovation orientation, digital readiness, and growth intentions.

Behavioral segmentation is used to classify entrepreneurs into relatively homogeneous groups according to their characteristics and responses to government support. The study combines comparative analysis, literature review, and conceptual modeling to identify appropriate policy instruments for each segment.

The proposed mechanism follows five stages: behavioral diagnostics → segmentation → targeted government

support → monitoring → policy adjustment. This approach provides a basis for developing more targeted and adaptive entrepreneurship policies.

4. Result and Discussion

The analysis demonstrates the significant and changing role of small business in Uzbekistan's economy. Official statistics show that small businesses accounted for 52.2% of GDP in 2025, compared with 53.5% in 2024 and 56.3% in 2021. At the same time, the contribution of small businesses to total employment increased from 74.5% in 2021 to 74.9% in 2025. [1]

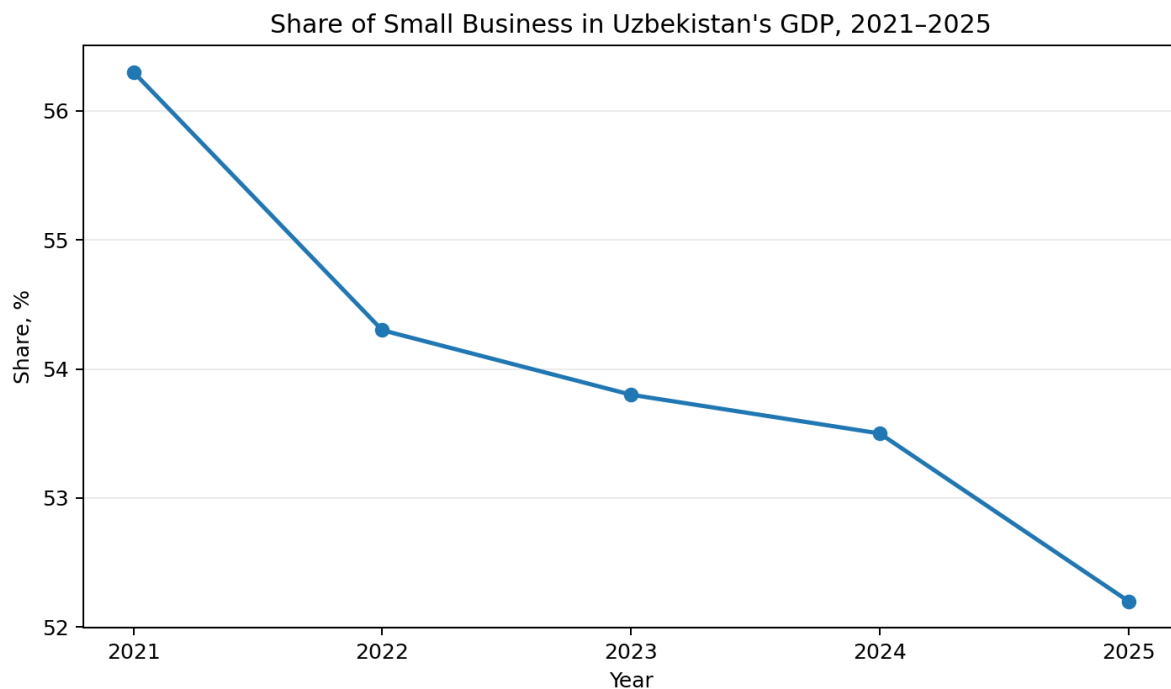
Table 1. Key Indicators of Small Business Development in Uzbekistan, 2021–2025

Indicator	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Share in GDP, %	56.3	54.3	53.8	53.5	52.2
Share in total employment, %	74.5	73.9	74.0	73.9	74.9
Share in total exports, %	20.0	31.2	27.9	34.1	36.6
Share in fixed investment, %	45.6	47.9	49.6	52.4	61.4
Share in industrial production, %	27.4	26.0	27.0	31.9	34.9

Source: Compiled by the author based on the National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, SIAT data. [1]

The data reveal several important structural tendencies. First, the share of small business in GDP decreased by 4.1 percentage points between 2021 and 2025. This does not necessarily indicate a fall in the absolute scale of small business, because overall GDP and the sectoral structure of the economy also changed during the period. Second, the employment contribution remained relatively stable, confirming the continuing importance of small businesses as a source of jobs. [1]

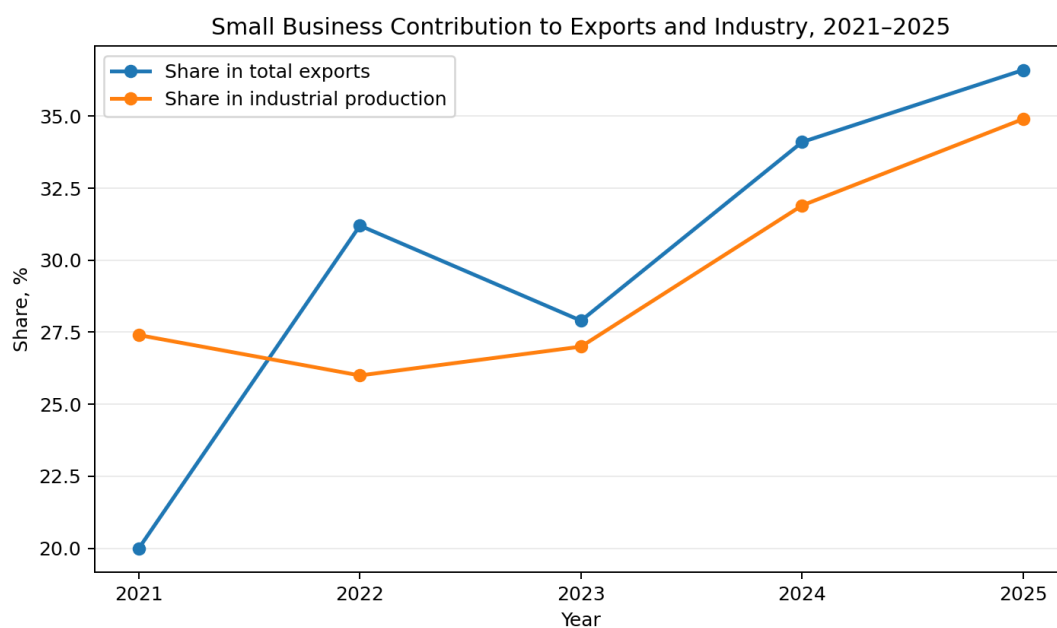
A particularly notable trend is observed in investment activity. The share of small businesses in total fixed investment increased from 45.6% in 2021 to 61.4% in 2025, an increase of 15.8 percentage points. Their share in industrial production also rose from 27.4% to 34.9% during the same period. These changes indicate growing participation of small businesses in productive investment and industrial activity. [1]

Figure 1. Share of Small Business in Uzbekistan's GDP, 2021–2025

Source: Author's visualization based on National Statistics Committee data. [1]

Another significant development concerns export activity. The share of small businesses in total exports increased from 20.0% in 2021 to 36.6% in 2025. The National Statistics Committee reports that the indicator

reached 47.2% in the second quarter of 2026, indicating continued strengthening of the role of small businesses in foreign trade. [2]

Figure 2. Small Business Contribution to Exports and Industrial Production, 2021–2025

Source: Author's visualization based on National Statistics Committee data. [1; 2]

The rapid increase in investment participation, export activity, and industrial production suggests that the entrepreneurial sector is becoming more heterogeneous. Some firms remain focused on maintaining stable operations, whereas others demonstrate stronger

expansion, investment, export, and innovation-oriented behavior. This heterogeneity supports the need for differentiated public management rather than uniform support measures.

Table 2. Newly Created Small Enterprises and Microfirms in Uzbekistan

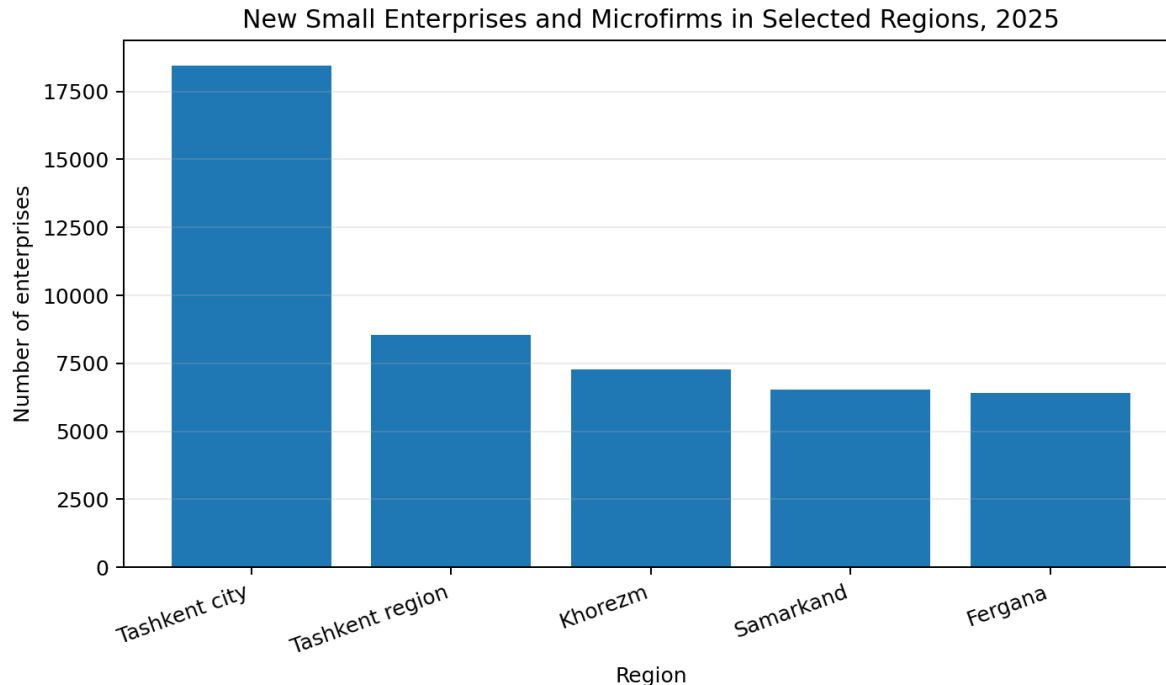
Year	Newly created small enterprises and microfirms
2021	98886
2022	90177
2023	86030
2024	77046
2025	82386

Source: National Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan. [2]

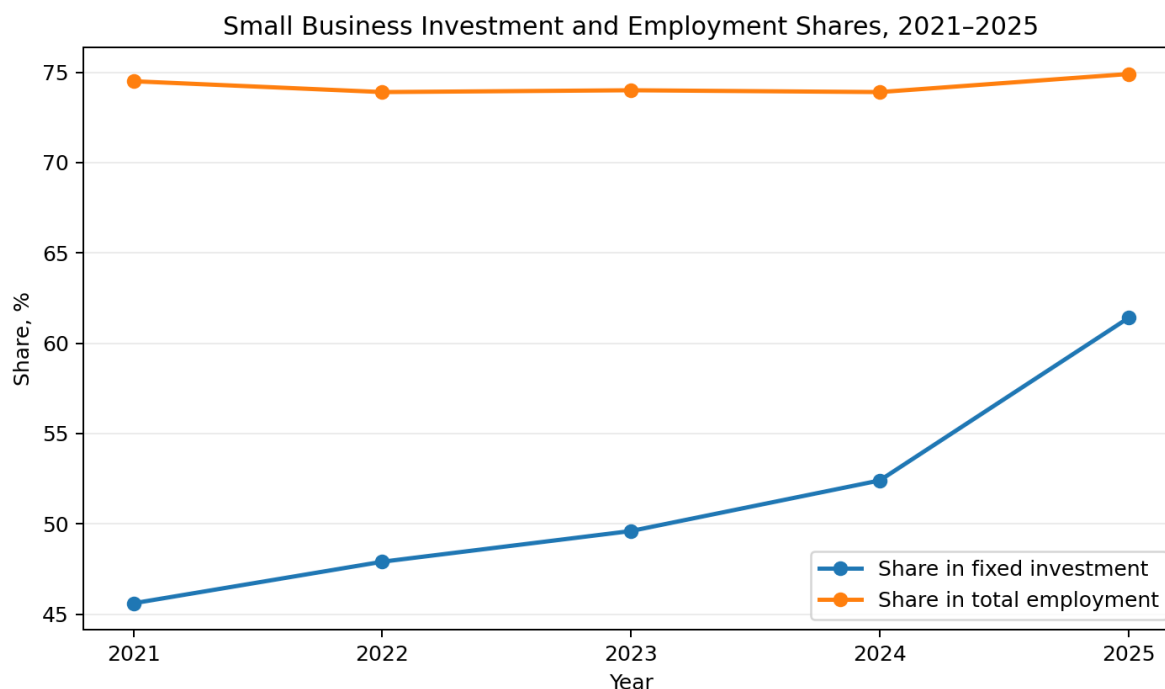
In 2025, 82,386 new small enterprises and microfirms were established in Uzbekistan, compared with 77,046 in 2024. As of January 1, 2026, small enterprises and microfirms represented approximately 85% of all operating enterprises and organizations in the country. [2]

Regional differences are also important for behavioral segmentation. In 2025, Tashkent city recorded 18,450 newly established small enterprises and microfirms, followed by Tashkent region with 8,556, Khorezm with 7,277, Samarkand with 6,548, and Fergana with 6,417. [2]

Figure 3. Newly Created Small Enterprises and Microfirms in Selected Regions, 2025



Source: Author's visualization based on National Statistics Committee data. [2]

Figure 4. Small Business Investment and Employment Shares, 2021–2025

Source: Author's visualization based on National Statistics Committee data. [1]

The international evidence also supports differentiated policy intervention. The OECD's 2025 D4SME Survey found substantial variation in SME digital maturity: around half of surveyed SMEs were classified as competent or better, while the main reported barriers to digitalization included maintenance costs, limited time for training, and hardware costs. [3]

These findings are directly relevant to the proposed behavioral management mechanism. Entrepreneurs with low digital maturity may require training and basic digital infrastructure, while digitally advanced firms may benefit more from support for artificial intelligence, fintech, cybersecurity, and international digital markets. Thus, behavioral segmentation enables the government to match policy instruments with actual entrepreneurial needs rather than providing identical measures to all businesses.

Based on the empirical evidence, the proposed state management model can be structured around five behavioral groups: stability-oriented, growth-oriented, innovation-oriented, digitally oriented, and emerging entrepreneurs. The main policy principle is to connect each segment with an appropriate combination of financial, informational, educational, technological, and institutional instruments.

Overall, the results demonstrate that Uzbekistan's entrepreneurial sector is economically significant, investment-active, increasingly involved in exports, and

heterogeneous across regions and business development stages. These characteristics provide an empirical basis for introducing behavioral segmentation into the state management mechanism of entrepreneurship development.

5. Conclusion

The study demonstrates that behavioral segmentation can become an effective methodological basis for improving state management of entrepreneurship development. Entrepreneurs differ not only in terms of business size and sector, but also in risk tolerance, investment behavior, innovation activity, digital readiness, and growth intentions. Therefore, the application of standardized support measures may not always correspond to the actual needs of different entrepreneurial groups.

The proposed mechanism is based on five interconnected stages: behavioral diagnostics, segmentation, targeted government support, monitoring, and policy adjustment. This approach makes it possible to connect specific entrepreneurial characteristics with appropriate financial, educational, informational, technological, and institutional instruments.

The analysis of Uzbekistan also demonstrates the economic importance and increasing heterogeneity of the entrepreneurial sector. In January–September 2025, small businesses accounted for 51.5% of GDP, while

82,386 new small enterprises and microfirms were established during the whole year [5; 6]. These developments underline the need for more differentiated and evidence-based approaches to public entrepreneurship policy.

Recent international research also indicates that targeted government support, digitalisation, access to finance, and innovation capacity should be considered together when designing SME policies [8; 10–12]. The growing use of artificial intelligence and digital technologies further increases the importance of identifying differences in firms' technological maturity and support needs.

Thus, the integration of behavioral segmentation into state management can contribute to more precise allocation of public resources, reduction of administrative barriers, stronger business–government interaction, and improved conditions for sustainable entrepreneurial development. Further research should focus on empirical testing of behavioral segments using enterprise-level data and evaluating the economic effects of differentiated government interventions.

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