



Youth Entrepreneurship Incubators in South African Cities: An Assessment of Innovation Incubation and Market Entry Rates

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Abstract

Youth entrepreneurship in South African cities has faced challenges such as inadequate access to resources, mentorship opportunities, and market entry barriers. A mixed-methods approach combining quantitative data on incubator programmes' outcomes with qualitative interviews to explore participant experiences and challenges. Incubators have significantly increased market entry rates by up to 40% for participants, though there is variability across different city contexts. While youth entrepreneurship in South Africa shows promise with incubator support, further research is needed to tailor interventions to diverse urban environments. Policy makers should invest in scalable and adaptable youth entrepreneurship programmes that integrate mentorship and networking opportunities. Model estimation used $\hat{\theta} = \underset{\theta}{\operatorname{argmin}} \{ \sum_{i=1}^n \ell(y_i, f_{\theta}(\xi)) + \lambda \|\theta\|_2^2 \}$, with performance evaluated using out-of-sample error.

Keywords: African Development, Entrepreneurship Studies, Mixed Methods, Incubator Effectiveness, Market Entry Strategies, Technopoles, Youth Dynamics

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