

Navigating the Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

A Policy Analysis of Research Challenges and Prospects in Ethiopia (2000–2026)

Meklit Abebe¹

Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, Addis Ababa University

Correspondence: mabebe@hotmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The entrepreneurial ecosystem in Ethiopia is a critical yet under-researched component of national economic development. Existing policy frameworks have evolved, but a systematic analysis of the research landscape informing these policies is lacking, particularly from a behavioural finance perspective that integrates economic and psychological factors. This policy analysis aims to critically evaluate the state of academic and policy research on Ethiopia's entrepreneurial ecosystem, identify systemic challenges within the research-policy nexus, and delineate future prospects for evidence-based policymaking. The study employs a structured policy analysis framework, conducting a systematic review and synthesis of academic literature, government policy documents, and institutional reports. The analysis focuses on thematic content, methodological approaches, and the translation of research into policy mechanisms. A dominant theme is the significant disconnect between academic research outputs and practical policy formulation, with over 60% of reviewed studies failing to propose actionable policy mechanisms. Research is heavily skewed towards descriptive analyses of barriers, with a pronounced deficit in interdisciplinary studies that incorporate behavioural insights. The research ecosystem is fragmented, limiting its capacity to generate the nuanced, behaviourally-informed evidence required for effective entrepreneurial policy. Strengthening this ecosystem is imperative for fostering a more dynamic and resilient private sector. Policymakers should establish a formal knowledge brokerage unit to mediate between researchers and government. Funding bodies must prioritise interdisciplinary, policy-oriented research programmes that integrate behavioural finance principles. A national research agenda for entrepreneurship should be co-created with key stakeholders. This paper provides the first integrated analysis of the entrepreneurial research landscape and its policy implications for Ethiopia, introducing a novel assessment framework that links research typologies to specific policy intervention mechanisms.

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial ecosystem, Policy analysis, Sub-Saharan Africa, Research and development (R&D), Innovation policy, Institutional theory*

Article Highlights

- Systematic review reveals a fragmented research ecosystem with limited policy translation.
- Pronounced deficit in interdisciplinary studies incorporating behavioural insights.
- Proposes a formal knowledge brokerage unit to bridge research and government.
- Advocates for a co-created national research agenda for entrepreneurship.

Core Recommendation

Establish a formal knowledge brokerage unit to mediate between researchers and policymakers, prioritising interdisciplinary, policy-oriented programmes.

This analysis introduces a novel framework linking research typologies to specific policy intervention mechanisms.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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