PERCEPTIONS OF GOVERNMENT SUPPORT AND DEVELOPMENT CONSTRAINTS AMONG SMES IN THE EMERGING MARKET

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How to cite this paper: Zakirova, M., Shaikin, D., Kussainova, A., & Ashimova, I. (2026). Perceptions of government support and development constraints among SMEs in the emerging market. *Journal of Governance and Regulation, 15*(2), 281–288. https://doi.org/10.22495/jgrv15i2art24

ISSN Print: 2220-9352
ISSN Online: 2306-6784

Received: 30.11.2025
Revised: 19.02.2026; 01.04.2026
Accepted: 13.04.2026

JEL Classification: H0, O4, R1
DOI: 10.22495/jgrv15i2art24

Abstract

This article examines perceptions of government support and key barriers to the development of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Akmola Region of Kazakhstan. The study is based on qualitative data from focus groups with 20 representatives from services, trade, manufacturing, and agriculture. Despite the small sample, the research reveals hidden challenges that are difficult to capture through quantitative methods. Drawing on theoretical frameworks on the role of the institutional environment (Bokayev et al., 2023) and regional specificities (Syzdykova & Azretbergenova, 2025), the study identifies major obstacles: bureaucratic barriers, lack of information, limited access to loans, guarantees, and grants, as well as territorial and infrastructural disparities. The findings show that financial support mechanisms are more accessible to medium-sized enterprises, while micro and small businesses face significant constraints. Based on these results, the article proposes policy recommendations, including establishing regional entrepreneurship support centers, simplifying application procedures, revising guarantee schemes, improving transparency of grants and subsidies, and strengthening advisory support. The study highlights the need to align government support measures with the real needs of businesses in a transitional economy.

Keywords: SMEs, Government Support, Qualitative Research, Barriers, Kazakhstan, Policy Recommendations

Authors' individual contribution: Conceptualization — M.Z.; Methodology — M.Z.; Software — D.S.; Formal Analysis — M.Z., D.S., and A.K.; Investigation — M.Z., A.K., and I.A.; Data Curation — D.S. and I.A.; Writing — Original Draft — M.Z., D.S., A.K., and I.A.; Writing — Review & Editing — M.Z., D.S., and I.A.; Supervision — M.Z.

Declaration of conflicting interests: The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements: The Authors express their gratitude to the entrepreneurs of the Akmola Region for participating in the focus groups. The research was carried out within the doctoral program of Manash Kozybayev North Kazakhstan University and was funded by the Ministry of Science and Higher Education of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) play a critical role in the development of a market economy by providing employment, diversifying production, enhancing innovation flexibility, and strengthening economic system resilience (Aibossynova & Uruzbayeva, 2024; Bokayev & Issenova, 2022). In the context of globalization and increasing competition, the ability of SMEs to adapt to a changing economic environment has become a strategic factor in regional development. In Kazakhstan, government policy actively promotes SMEs through subsidies, grants, credit guarantees, and infrastructure development. Despite these efforts, official statistics indicate an increase in the number of registered enterprises and production volumes; however, they do not always reflect the quality of business operations or the extent of entrepreneurial engagement in active economic participation.

Some scholars argue that formal growth in enterprise numbers may be largely symbolic, while real obstacles for SMEs, including bureaucracy, complex procedures for obtaining government support, and uneven infrastructure provision, reduce the effectiveness of government policy (Syzdykova & Azretbergenova, 2025; Zarubina et al., 2024; Bokayev et al., 2023). In particular, farmers and micro and small enterprises in rural areas often face difficulties in accessing concessional financing and grant programs, creating a significant gap between official statistics and actual business activity (Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 2020, 2022).

In addition to financial instruments such as loans and subsidies, infrastructural and advisory support, as well as access to information, play a crucial role in enabling entrepreneurs to effectively utilize support measures. International studies confirm that successful SME support policies should be comprehensive, combining financial, institutional, and advisory measures to ensure equal opportunities for business development in both urban and rural regions (Stam, 2015; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

This study aims to fill a gap in the literature regarding the lack of qualitative data on the subjective experiences of entrepreneurs. By adopting an institutional framework, the research seeks to identify the institutional barriers hindering the growth of SMEs and to determine the factors underlying the low effectiveness of government support measures targeted at micro-enterprises. The empirical component of the study focuses on analyzing the lived experiences of SME representatives in the Akmola Region, emphasizing their perceptions of current support measures and existing constraints. Through qualitative analysis, the study explores how entrepreneurs interpret the effectiveness of government policy and identify institutional and policy gaps that remain obscured in official statistics. The significance of this research lies in the necessity of adapting policy instruments to the specific needs of rural areas.

The structure of this article is as follows. Section 2 provides a review of the relevant literature. Section 3 outlines and analyzes the research methodology employed in the empirical study and describes the characteristics of the participants. Section 4 presents the findings. Section 5 offers the discussion and policy recommendations, and Section 6 concludes the article.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

SMEs are widely recognized in global economic scholarship as a key driver of economic growth, innovation, and social development. Classical economists, such as Schumpeter (1934), emphasized entrepreneurs as “agents of change” who stimulate innovation, dismantle outdated economic structures, and contribute to technological progress. Kirzner (1973) further developed this perspective through his theory of entrepreneurial discovery, positing that entrepreneurs identify market opportunities and correct market imbalances, thereby enhancing overall economic efficiency.

More recent international studies highlight the multifaceted role of SMEs in socio-economic adaptation. For instance, Baumol (1990) views entrepreneurship as a mechanism to increase economic dynamism and social mobility, while Audretsch and Thurik (2001) emphasize that SMEs contribute to regional economic diversification, foster innovation, and create sustainable employment. Stam (2015), in the context of European and Dutch economies, underscores that SMEs constitute a primary source of innovative activity and economic flexibility, particularly during crises when large enterprises are less adaptable.

International research organizations also identify financial instruments as a critical component of SME support. The OECD (2020, 2022) documents the effectiveness of credit guarantees, interest rate subsidies, and concessional lending in mitigating banking risks and expanding access to capital for startups and microenterprises. The European Union’s experience is particularly noteworthy, as such measures are used not only to stimulate innovation but also to support entrepreneurs in rural and economically disadvantaged regions. European studies highlight the importance of synergy between financial and non-financial support: even the most attractive credit measures lose effectiveness in the absence of adequate infrastructure and high-quality advisory services (OECD, 2023; Defourny & Nyssens, 2010).

Social entrepreneurship has also received considerable attention in international literature. Defourny and Nyssens (2010) systematize European experience, demonstrating that social enterprises simultaneously fulfill economic and social functions by promoting the integration of vulnerable groups and supporting educational initiatives. Similarly, Battilana and Lee (2014) emphasize that the success of social enterprises depends on a combination of public incentives, private-sector support, and access to mentoring.

Against this global backdrop, particular attention is given to the survival and resilience of SMEs in transition economies. Utami et al. (2026) demonstrate that financial flexibility is a key moderator of SME performance in developing markets, enabling firms to reduce risks under volatile conditions. These findings are supported by studies of Kazakhstani scholars: Aibossynova and Uruzbayeva (2024) note that the resilience of Kazakhstan’s entrepreneurial ecosystem depends

directly on the quality of the institutional environment, with state regulation of the credit sector playing a decisive role in ensuring access to capital. Safitri et al. (2026) emphasize the need for careful credit risk assessment when expanding lending to micro- and small enterprises, while Bokayev and Issenova (2022) highlight the importance of balancing loan accessibility with the financial stability of the banking sector.

Alongside credit issues, recent research increasingly highlights institutional effectiveness and regional inequality. Nadirashvili et al. (2026) argue that implementing effective risk management systems in the public sector is a prerequisite for creating a favorable business environment. In Kazakhstan, Zarubina et al. (2024) confirm that deep infrastructural disparities between central and peripheral regions create an "uneven playing field", limiting the competitiveness of rural entrepreneurs. Syzdykova and Azretbergenova (2025) further emphasize that formal growth in the number of enterprises often masks a lack of genuine innovation, highlighting the need to shift from quantitative to qualitative approaches in evaluating state support measures.

Finally, current academic debate considers the impact of sectoral specificity and macroeconomic factors on regional markets. Staugaitis and Christauskas (2024) analyze factors affecting the profitability of agricultural contracts, which is particularly relevant for agrarian regions such as the Akmola Region. Complementary findings by Ashimova et al. (2023) indicate that SME integration into agro-industrial clusters requires specific risk insurance mechanisms and transparency in subsidy allocation. Therefore, contemporary support for entrepreneurship must consider not only direct access to finance but also the regulatory implications of adopting new reporting and management standards, as further evidenced by analyses of investment efficiency in Tan and Wong (2026).

Synthesizing international and regional literature highlights three key dimensions of effective SME support: financial instruments, institutional and advisory measures, and socio-economic integration, implemented through social entrepreneurship and inclusiveness mechanisms.

To structure the investigation, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: There is a significant disparity in access to credit instruments between medium-sized and micro-enterprises.

H2: Institutional barriers (platform complexity, bureaucracy) outweigh the potential financial benefits for rural entrepreneurs.

H3: The effectiveness of support for social entrepreneurship is constrained by reporting complexities rather than a lack of available grants.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The empirical component of the study was based on focus group discussions with representatives of SMEs in the Akmola region.

This research employs a mixed-methods logic, triangulating qualitative focus group data with an efficiency analysis of specific financial instruments.

The research was conducted between March and May 2025, and the sample was formed using purposeful sampling, taking into account the following criteria: sector of activity (services, trade, processing, agriculture), legal form (individual entrepreneur (IE), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), peasant farm), experience with government support measures (presence or absence), and geographic location (urban/rural). A total of 20 respondents participated, which allowed for capturing a wide range of situations and enhancing the reliability of the qualitative analysis. Data were collected over two focus group sessions, each comprising 8–12 participants, with a total recording time of approximately eight hours.

In designing the study, alternative methods were considered, including quantitative surveys, which would have allowed for a broader sample of respondents. However, this approach was rejected, as it does not provide an in-depth understanding of individual barriers and the nuances of entrepreneurs' personal experiences. A case study approach was also considered, but focus groups were chosen to ensure representation across different sectors of the regional economy within a qualitative framework, allowing for the identification of common patterns in the perception of government support measures.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis following Braun and Clarke's (2006) procedure, which included familiarization with the data, coding, theme development, review and refinement, naming, and report writing. To enhance the reliability of the analysis, coding was conducted independently by two researchers and subsequently compared. Ethical considerations were ensured through informed consent, anonymization of statements, and guarantees of confidentiality.

The study involved 20 representatives of SMEs in the Akmola region, including 16 men and four women, partially addressing the gender gap in the previously collected sample. Participants represented diverse economic sectors, including services, trade, processing, and agriculture.

A key limitation of this study is the inclusion of only one representative from the agricultural sector, which precludes the generalization of findings to the entire industry. However, this participant's responses serve as a "critical case", highlighting specific barriers unique to rural areas. While demographic data on gender and age are provided for contextual background, the research focus remains strictly on firm-level characteristics.

Age distribution of respondents was as follows: 25–34 years — four participants; 35–44 years — eight participants; 45–54 years — five participants; and 55+ years — three participants. Most respondents were within the active working-age group of 35–44 years.

Experience with government support measures indicated that 11 participants had previously applied for subsidies, grants, or credit guarantees, whereas nine entrepreneurs had no prior experience with government support instruments.

The size and legal form of the enterprises were distributed as follows: seven participants represented micro-enterprises (primarily IEs in the service and trade sectors, predominantly in rural areas), four represented small enterprises (IEs and LLPs in both urban and rural areas), three represented medium-sized enterprises (LLPs in processing and trade, mostly urban), one participant represented a farming enterprise, and five participants represented social enterprises.

The summary table below presents the distribution of participants across categories and their key characteristics.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of focus group participants

Participant category	*Gender*	*Age*	*Sector of activity*	*Legal form*	*Geographical location*	*Experience with government support*
Micro-enterprises	5M, 2F	25–44	Services, trade	IE	Rural areas	3 of 7 applied
Small enterprises	3M, 1F	30–50	Processing, trade	IE, LLP	Urban/Rural	3 of 4 applied
Medium enterprises	3M	35–55	Processing, trade	LLP	Mainly urban	3 of 3 applied
Farming enterprises	1M	45	Agriculture	Farm enterprise	Rural areas	1 of 1 applied
Social enterprises	2M, 3F	30–50	Education, healthcare, and social services	IE, LLP	Various regions	5 of 5 applied

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Thus, the sample encompasses a diversity of entrepreneurial forms, age groups, and territorial characteristics, providing a comprehensive understanding of the perception of government support measures and barriers to SME development in the Akmola region. The inclusion of women, although limited, broadens the gender context of the analysis and allows for consideration of the experiences of both men and women within the regional entrepreneurial environment.

4. RESULTS

4.1. Perceptions of formal small and medium-sized enterprises' growth and activity levels

Most focus group participants noted that official statistics indicate growth in the number of registered SMEs; however, entrepreneurs' perceptions differ substantially. Many respondents argued that a significant portion of registered enterprises are formal and do not engage in active operations. This was particularly evident among sole proprietors in rural areas, who described "inactive enterprises" and "tax fiction" (R3 — farmer, Atbasar district; R7 — IE, rural trade). According to their accounts, registration numbers increase, but only a handful of companies are actively conducting business (R3, R7, R12 — IE, service sector). Some entrepreneurs in trade noted that enterprise registration dynamics often correspond to attempts to access short-term incentives, subsidies, or government contracts rather than sustainable business development (R1 — trade, Kokshetau; R9 — agricultural processing).

4.2. Experience with financial instruments: subsidies, guarantees, and grants

Participants highlighted significant differences in access to credits and subsidies depending on enterprise size and sector. Successful utilization of credit guarantees and subsidies was more common among medium-sized enterprises and businesses engaged in agricultural processing and trade (R2, R5 — processing; R8 — trade), while micro- and small enterprises, as well as farmers, encountered bureaucratic barriers (R4 — farmer, rural area; R11 — IE, services). Main difficulties included long application review periods (often exceeding three months), extensive documentation requirements (including income verification, collateral, and employment contracts), ambiguous bank and fund criteria, and insufficient information on project evaluation.

Despite these challenges, entrepreneurs who received subsidies or grants emphasized that such support was critical for initiating or expanding production, particularly in technological and agro-industrial projects (R5, R9, R15 — dairy processing). One participant noted that without a grant, launching a dairy processing line would have been impossible, essentially saving the enterprise (R5 — processing, Tselinograd district).

4.3. Summary of small and medium-sized enterprises' experiences with state support measures

The systematic experiences of SMEs, based on focus group data, are summarized in Table 2. The table presents key barriers, examples of support utilization, and territorial/infrastructural characteristics across different enterprise categories.

Table 2. Small and medium-sized enterprises' experiences in Akmola Region: Perceptions of state support and development barriers

Respondent category	*Main barriers to state support*	*Examples of support utilization*	*Territorial/Infrastructure features*
Micro-enterprises (IE, services, trade)	Bureaucracy, documentation complexity, information gap	Very limited use of subsidies and grants; occasional successful examples (R6, R12)	Mostly rural; limited access to infrastructure (R3, R7)
Small enterprises (IE, LLP, manufacturing)	Long application review, collateral requirements, information gap	Partial use of credit guarantees and grants; positive effects on project launch and expansion (R4, R11)	Mixed locations; better access to infrastructure than micro-enterprises (R10, R13)
Medium enterprises (LLP, manufacturing, trade)	Collateral requirements, complex reporting	Extensive use of subsidies, credit guarantees, and grants; successful production expansion (R2, R5, R8)	Mainly urban; minimal infrastructural barriers (R1, R10)
Farming enterprises	Inaccessibility of concessional finance, complex procedures	Some successfully obtained grants for technological and agro-industrial development (R5, R9, R15)	Rural: high infrastructure costs and long connection times (R3, R13)
Social entrepreneurship (IE, LLP)	Complex reporting, bureaucracy	Grants obtained for vulnerable groups, but management restrictions apply (R16, R17)	Various regions; support requires tailored advisory and mentorship

Source: Authors' elaboration.

4.4. Institutional and informational barriers

An information vacuum was highlighted as a major obstacle to effective support. Entrepreneurs reported fragmented guidance, inconsistencies among local authorities, banks, and funds, and difficulties in obtaining consultations (R6 — IE, services; R14 — trade). Participants emphasized the complexity of online application platforms, including unclear instructions, unintuitive interfaces, and insufficient support when problems arise (R8, R12, R18 — IE, services).

4.5. Infrastructure access and regional disparities

Participants positively evaluated state efforts to develop engineering infrastructure, including electricity, water, sewage, and construction modules (R1, R10 — processing; R13 — farmer). However, they noted that these measures primarily benefit larger enterprises and high-investment projects, leaving small businesses and farmers underserved. Urban areas enjoy considerably higher infrastructure access than rural areas, exacerbating inequalities for small enterprises (R3, R7, R12).

4.6. Social aspects and support for social entrepreneurship

Participants involved in social entrepreneurship (R16–R20) emphasized the importance of programs supporting vulnerable populations (people with disabilities, retirees, and large families) and highlighted the need for more flexible financial and grant mechanisms. While grants were received, complex reporting requirements often redirected time from project development to bureaucracy (R16, R17).

4.7. Overall assessment and subjective expectations

Entrepreneurs agreed that government support is necessary but identified systemic shortcomings. Their expectations included clear and accessible instructions, shorter application review periods, reduced bureaucracy, effective guidance throughout the subsidy/grant/guarantee process, and adaptation of support programs to the specific needs of micro- and small enterprises, especially in rural areas (R1, R4, R6, R12, R15). Many participants emphasized that under these conditions, support measures could genuinely foster business growth and stability, reduce social and economic risk, and enhance regional quality of life (R2, R5, R9, R16, R20).

To ensure the objectivity of the findings and mitigate potential sampling bias, the qualitative data were verified by cross-referencing them with three dimensions of successful SME support established in international practice (OECD, 2022; Stam, 2015). This approach allowed for the alignment of participants' subjective perceptions with the study's research hypotheses:

Financial dimension: Focus group results support *H1*. Access to subsidies and guarantees is systematically skewed toward medium-sized businesses, leaving micro-enterprises in a high-risk financial zone.

Institutional dimension: H2 is confirmed. The complexity of digital platforms and bureaucratic hurdles creates an "information filter" that effectively disconnects rural entrepreneurs from government support.

Social dimension: H3 is confirmed. For social entrepreneurship, the primary barrier is not a lack of funding but rather a deficit of specialized mentorship and overly complex reporting requirements.

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. Key findings on the effectiveness and limitations of SME state support

The results of the focus groups highlight both the achievements and the existing limitations of state support for SMEs in the Akmola region. Participants confirmed official data regarding the increase in the number of registered SMEs; however, they identified a significant gap between statistical registration and actual business activity. This phenomenon aligns with international observations, where the growth in SME registrations often does not correspond to increased production activity or economic contribution (Beck et al., 2005; Ayyagari et al., 2007). According to the focus group data, formal registrations are frequently used to access short-term benefits and subsidies, a pattern also observed in Eastern European countries, where enterprise registration can sometimes be symbolic and not accompanied by real business activity (European Commission, 2019).

Experience in accessing financial support instruments, including subsidies, grants, and credit guarantees, revealed uneven access, particularly for micro and small enterprises. A similar situation is observed internationally: small businesses often face high transactional and administrative costs when accessing public support, whereas medium-sized enterprises obtain funding more efficiently and promptly (Cowling et al., 2018).

Institutional barriers, including information gaps and the complexity of electronic application platforms, are comparable to international contexts. In the European Union and the United States, entrepreneurs report that complex interactions with government institutions, lack of transparency, and conflicting instructions reduce the effectiveness of support programs (OECD, 2025; Mason & Brown, 2014). These barriers are especially relevant for regions with low business density and limited infrastructure.

Differences in access to infrastructural support reveal a territorial imbalance, consistent with international findings. Evidence from developing and transition economies shows that regional disparities in access to electricity, water supply, logistics, and transport infrastructure significantly affect the growth potential of small businesses (World Bank, 2020; Stam, 2015). In the Akmola region, urban enterprises have a clear advantage over rural ones, reducing equality of opportunity and limiting economic mobility for small entrepreneurs.

Social entrepreneurship also warrants particular attention. The increased representation of social enterprises in the sample allowed for the identification of unique barriers: complex reporting requirements, the need to balance social and economic objectives, and limited capacity to fully utilize grants and subsidies. Participants noted

that while grants were obtained, bureaucratic demands often diverted resources away from direct project implementation. These findings align with international literature, highlighting that the success of social enterprises depends on a combination of government support, tailored advisory programs, and access to mentoring resources (Defourny & Nyssens, 2010; Kerlin, 2009; Nicholls, 2010). Including social enterprises in the analysis provides a more comprehensive assessment of SME support effectiveness and underscores the necessity of addressing their specific needs.

5.2. Policy recommendations

Based on the study findings, a set of measures can be proposed to enhance the effectiveness of state support for SMEs in the Akmola region.

To enhance the measurability and systematic coherence of the proposed measures, the recommendations are categorized into three key levels (in response to the reviewer's comments):

1. *Institutional level*: Establishing comprehensive regional support centers based on a "one-stop-shop" principle to reduce bureaucratic pressure and provide turnkey project support.

2. *Financial level*: Revising the guaranteed conditions of the Damu Fund and second-tier banks specifically for micro-businesses, including the possibility of partially waiving hard collateral requirements for small loans.

3. *Informational level*: Shifting from passive to active information dissemination — implementing mobile consultancy centers for remote rural areas and digitalizing the application process alongside comprehensive user training.

Firstly, regional support centers operating on a "one-stop-shop" principle should be established to provide free advice and guidance on all lines of state support, including subsidies, grants, credit guarantees, and infrastructural programs. This approach is consistent with international evidence highlighting the importance of centralized support mechanisms to increase SME participation and reduce administrative barriers (OECD, 2025; Mason & Brown, 2014).

Secondly, procedures for accessing support should be simplified and standardized, including reducing the number of required documents, implementing electronic platforms for applications and tracking, and clarifying requirements set by banks and funds. Digitalization and process standardization have been shown to significantly increase SME engagement and reduce bureaucratic burdens (Beck et al., 2005; Cowling et al., 2018).

Thirdly, credit guarantee schemes should be revised. For micro and small enterprises, the requirement for additional collateral should be reduced or eliminated, and state risk guarantees strengthened. For social enterprises, flexible schemes that account for social objectives are particularly critical. International experience demonstrates that transparency enhances SME participation and strengthens confidence in public support programs (European Commission, 2019; Nicholls, 2010).

Transparency in grants and subsidies should be enhanced by regularly publishing selection criteria, lists of approved projects, and program implementation reports. This approach builds trust in government institutions and reduces the risk of corruption.

Support policies should also include advisory, informational, and institutional assistance, particularly for farmers, micro and small enterprises in rural areas, as well as social enterprises. Remote consulting, mobile services, and mentoring can help equalize opportunities for entrepreneurs in both urban and rural contexts (Spear, 2006; Stam, 2015).

Finally, monitoring qualitative indicators of SME development should be implemented alongside formal statistical measures. These indicators should include business survival, actual employment, profitability, financial sustainability, and social impact. Such monitoring allows the adjustment of support measures based on real outcomes rather than solely on formal registration metrics (Beck et al., 2005; Ayyagari et al., 2007).

Overall, a combination of financial, advisory, and institutional support, enhanced procedural transparency, and a focus on qualitative indicators provides the foundation for an effective SME support policy that addresses the actual needs of entrepreneurs.

6. CONCLUSION

This study on the perception of government support measures in the Akmola Region provides a comprehensive understanding of the institutional environment in which Kazakhstan's SMEs operate. By shifting from a simple analysis of statistical reports to exploring the "lived experience" of entrepreneurs, this research uncovers critical points of divergence between government strategy and the reality of the private sector.

The findings confirm the proposed hypotheses, demonstrating that the effectiveness of government support is far from uniform. It was established that the region's support infrastructure functions on a "benefit-to-the-prepared" basis, where medium-sized enterprises derive the greatest advantage (*H1*). The central conclusion is that formal growth in the number of SMEs in the Akmola Region is often declarative and fails to reflect qualitative changes in business sustainability. We identified an "institutional trap" phenomenon, where procedural complexity and stringent collateral requirements (*H2*) render state resources virtually inaccessible to the most vulnerable segments, rural micro-enterprises, and novice farmers.

The scholarly value of this research lies in the conceptualization of SME development barriers within a transition economy. Unlike existing studies that focus primarily on funding shortages, this research proves that informational and bureaucratic filters play an equally critical role. We introduce the concept of "symbolic entrepreneurship" into academic discourse, a situation where business registration is motivated by the pursuit of one-time state aid, which, in the long term, distorts market statistics and leads to the inefficient allocation of budget funds.

The recommendations developed in this article offer a concrete path for transforming regional policy. Adopting a "one-stop-shop" model and implementing mobile consultancy centers for rural areas can reduce institutional inequality.

Of particular importance is the proposed revision of the key performance indicator system for government agencies: we argue for the integration of qualitative metrics, such as the "three-year post-subsidy survival rate" and the "sustainable job creation coefficient". This would allow the state to evaluate real socio-economic impact rather than merely the process of fund distribution.

Despite these significant findings, the study has certain limitations. A sample of 20 respondents, while sufficient for qualitative analysis and the identification of in-depth issues, does not allow for the extrapolation of results to all sectors of Kazakhstan's economy with high mathematical precision. In particular, the agricultural sector's experience was represented on a limited basis, necessitating further specialized research in rural districts.

Future research should focus on conducting a large-scale quantitative survey across all regions of the country to verify the barriers identified here. Additionally, a comparative analysis of SME support effectiveness in Kazakhstan versus other Central Asian countries would be promising to identify best supranational practices in public sector management.

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