

Analysis of Scientific and Theoretical Approaches to the Evaluation Criteria of Youth Policy Effectiveness in Uzbekistan



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ABSTRACT: In this article, the scientific-theoretical views on the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of state policy on youth in Uzbekistan are analyzed, and its goals and priorities are implemented in the evaluation of the effectiveness of state policy on youth. Also, when defining the concept of efficiency in this field, approaches that exclude elements related to efficiency and resources in its structure are considered.

KEYWORDS: youth work, youth policy, effectiveness, local youth policy, regional youth policy, national youth policy, youth policy effectiveness indicators, health index, education index, income index, youth employment, youth education.

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, the issue of evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy is considered a complex and multifaceted problem. This is evident at every stage of its development and implementation. In particular, there are ongoing debates regarding the definition of its goals and objectives, as well as the criteria used to evaluate the outcomes achieved.

Accordingly, the problematic aspect of assessing the effectiveness of state youth policy lies, on the one hand, in clearly defining the concept of its effectiveness, and on the other hand, in precisely identifying the indicators that measure effectiveness at the micro (local youth policy), meso (regional youth policy), and macro (national youth policy) levels [1].

The structure of the general concept of the effectiveness of state youth policy can be defined as the ratio between the goals, the outcomes, and the means necessary to achieve specific objectives within a particular direction of that policy.

Effectiveness serves as an evaluative measure that determines the success of any initiative, including projects within the field of state youth policy. When applied to youth policy, it is understood as an indicator that reflects the kind of changes the implemented measures (often in the form of targeted programs) have brought about for young people [2].

It is important to emphasize that the effectiveness of state youth policy is closely linked to the realism of the project at the design stage. In this context, the directions of the programs being developed are taken into account.

The degree of realism of a project is determined by how well it aligns with the internal and external conditions under which the program is expected to be implemented [3].

Literature Review on the Topic

Among the scholars who have conducted analyses on the normative and legal foundations of implementing international standards in youth policy—considered a key direction—are well-known researchers such as M. Qirg'izboev, Q. Quronboev, A. Jalilov, O. Hasanov, F. Ravshanov, J. Yusupov, A. Boliev, N. Boymuradov, O'. Shakarov, A. Yuldasheva, N. Turg'unova, and D. Kattaxanova. In addition, scientific and theoretical perspectives on this field have also been reflected in the scholarly works, articles, and monographs of several foreign researchers.

Research Methodology

In the course of the research, the following methods were used: objectivity, historicism, comparative-historical analysis, structural and structural-functional approaches, analysis and synthesis, induction and deduction, document analysis, data processing, and classification.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In this study, the effectiveness of state youth policy is defined as a system of quantitative and qualitative evaluation criteria—formed as the outcome of a clearly planned and purpose-driven set of specific measures—designed to develop a model for

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assessing the effectiveness of youth policy implemented within the institutional systems of society, where youth policy functions as an integral subject.

The effectiveness of youth policy is determined based on its results. The effectiveness of state youth policy, in turn, is understood as a set of performance indicators that reflect the ratio between concrete outcomes and the resources expended. It also reflects the alignment between the results and the problematic aspects that arise from inconsistencies during the development and implementation phases of youth policy, as well as the level of interaction with the actors involved in the implementation process [4].

In this regard, state youth policy can be considered effective only when its priority areas address the real problems faced by young people, when the system of governing entities, legal mechanisms, and the capacity for their implementation are in place, and when the policy ensures active participation of youth as a vital resource in its implementation.

According to a strictly polarized approach, youth policy can be divided into effective and ineffective forms, without considering the existence of different implementation models.

Youth policy may be considered effective when the planned and positive outcomes significantly outweigh the negative and unexpected ones.

Moreover, the principles of effectiveness must be regularly aligned with ethical norms and societal values. The effectiveness of youth policy is also determined by the extent to which young people are fully informed about the measures being implemented.[5].

At this point, it is also necessary to consider the conditions that ensure the effectiveness of state youth policy. These include the full alignment of the selected youth policy model with social reality, the provision of a solid social foundation for the sector, the stability of this foundation, the social orientation of the stakeholders' interests, the consistency of organizational structures related to the sector with the tasks assigned, the active cooperation of these structures with relevant stakeholders, effectiveness, professionalism in management, consideration of local, regional, and national characteristics, as well as the implementation of social monitoring based on well-grounded indicators that allow tracking the dynamics and processes occurring within the field.

An effective state youth policy is characterized by adaptability, openness to public oversight and collaboration, tangible results, pragmatism, a high level of public understanding and support, strong scientific and informational support, and the continuous, proactive nature of the measures undertaken within the policy [6].

Among the necessary conditions for the effectiveness of state youth policy, a well-defined evaluation system—more specifically, the theoretical and practical coherence of such a system within a specific model—is of critical importance.

An analysis of sources related to youth policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan—including articles, concepts, and project documents—reveals the absence of a current model for evaluating state youth policy, as well as the fact that many of the implemented measures appear to have a declarative nature rather than offering practical solutions to the existing issues.

This situation further complicates the field and hinders constructive development within youth policy. In this regard, based on the theoretical and empirical aspects of developing models for evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy—and considering the above reflections—we have attempted to describe its general characteristics from a structural perspective.

In this context, a model for evaluating the effectiveness of youth policy is understood not merely as a set of data covering specific parameters, but as a system of indicators that reflect the alignment between the goals outlined in the early stages of the project and the results actually achieved.

As previously mentioned, the concept of the effectiveness of state youth policy consists of two key aspects: on the one hand, the effectiveness of youth policy itself, and on the other hand, the effectiveness of its implementation.[7].

When discussing a model for evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy, the concept of effectiveness should be understood as the alignment between the two aspects mentioned above—namely, youth policy that addresses the real problems of young people and the availability of resources necessary for its implementation.

A clearly defined system of criteria that enables the creation of a framework for classifying evaluation parameters serves as a necessary foundation for developing a model to assess the effectiveness of state youth policy [8].

Before discussing the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy, attention should be paid to several key points that are frequently emphasized in numerous studies on this topic. In assessing the effectiveness of state youth policy, it is important to consider socio-political, ethno-social, organizational, and ideological criteria, which are often overlooked in contemporary evaluation stages but belong to the broader group of socio-economic indicators.

In addition, criteria related to various spheres of social life—presented within the juventological (youth studies) concept and analyzed through the lens of youth socialization problems—also hold significant relevance. According to this concept, the main areas of social life are comprised of the ecumene (cultural-spatial dimension), economic, political, social, and ethno-cultural spheres [9]. To determine the applicability of this system of criteria, a specific theoretical and empirical analysis must be conducted.

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The issue of developing evaluation criteria for the effectiveness of state youth policy can also be addressed by deriving them from the goals and corresponding directions of youth policy, which are aimed at eliminating the negative trends widely observed among young people.

Based on this, the following scheme can be presented:

Field of real problems faced by youth → Formulation of the goals and objectives of youth policy → Identification of policy directions → Development of evaluation criteria for each direction [10].

The clear categorization of evaluation criteria into specific groups allows their application across different directions of state youth policy.

Additionally, there remains the challenge of operationalizing the selected criteria and identifying the concrete parameters to be used in developing a model for evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy.

In our view, the developed indicators should correspond to specific levels of youth policy implementation—national, regional, or local—and the relationship between the indicators and these levels should be both vertical (between indicators and different levels) and horizontal (between indicators within the same level).

In the proposed model, the parameters derived from a specific system of criteria should reflect the essence of youth policy as an operational activity.

From this perspective, the selected parameters must be subject to empirical analysis, as they serve as a tool for designing a system of indicators that enables both quantitative and qualitative evaluation of the effectiveness of state youth policy [11].

The indicators that determine the effectiveness of youth policy are proposed to be understood as the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the social relations formed between youth and socio-political actors.

It is important to emphasize that the system of developed indicators must meet the following requirements:

1. The set of indicators should be limited in quantity and possess the ability to remain valid over a defined period of time.
2. The indicators should reflect well-studied and practically tested phenomena in the field of youth policy. During the transition from one socio-economic formation to another, it is necessary to seek out new and innovative indicators.
3. The set of indicators used should be regularly improved and updated.

At present, one of the key tasks for researchers is the development of a dynamic system of both theoretical and practical indicators that can be applied within a specific model for assessing the effectiveness of youth policy.

In any effectiveness evaluation model, there exists the issue of eliminating uncertainty regarding evaluation institutions, which includes:

- The legal framework of evaluation institutions;
- The management system of their activities;
- The establishment of information exchange and cooperation between evaluation institutions [12].

In our view, providing the evaluation process with a solid theoretical and methodological foundation should become a priority direction in the activities of these institutions.

In this regard, the process of developing the model we propose for evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy consists of the following key components:

- The existence of evaluation criteria and corresponding assessment parameters;
- The development of specific qualitative and quantitative indicators for each parameter;
- The identification of the institutional framework for implementing measures to evaluate the effectiveness of state youth policy;
- The creation of necessary conditions for the operation of institutions responsible for youth policy evaluation.

Discussing the problematic aspects of evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy, as well as the assessment of its development and implementation across different levels, is impossible without analyzing the internal structure of youth policy itself. This also involves examining the mechanisms through which it is developed and implemented.

Such an analysis helps to identify potential causes that explain the absence of a dynamic model for assessing the effectiveness of youth policy and allows us to uncover the mechanisms of disruption that have occurred within the current situation.

To objectively evaluate the effectiveness, results, and adaptability of ongoing activities in the field of youth policy, there is a need for a unified system of indicators and benchmarks [13].

To this day, there is still no unified approach to evaluating the effectiveness of state youth policy. This leads to a subjective interpretation of policy effectiveness by government institutions operating at various levels of youth policy implementation.

Often, large-scale events held at the national or regional level are mistakenly interpreted as youth policy in themselves.

Several years ago, studies in the field of state youth policy began to employ composite indicators—similar in content and methodology to human development indices—to assess the extent to which youth policy objectives and tasks had been achieved. These indicators formed what is known as the Youth Development Index, which allows for the evaluation of human potential development among young people.

The methodology for calculating these indicators is based on the Health Index, Education Index, and Income Index [14].

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In calculating the Health Index, the causes of death among young people are used, and these causes are classified into two main groups: various diseases and accidental incidents. The second group includes suicide, injuries sustained during military actions, and poisoning or injuries resulting from drug and alcohol use, as well as other external factors.

In calculating the Education Index, attention is given to factors such as the literacy rate among youth, the level of youth enrollment in different stages of education, and the quality of education they receive. The quality of education is determined based on the results of state examinations conducted among young people.

The final component of the Youth Development Index is the Income Index, which is calculated using data provided by the State Statistics Committee.

The overall Youth Development Index is derived by calculating the average value of the individual indicators that comprise it.

CONCLUSION / RECOMMENDATIONS

In the monitoring conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of youth policy in the Republic of Uzbekistan, the data collected from different regions and the process of data collection itself highlighted the priority areas in working with youth. The findings revealed that, in certain regions, the effectiveness of state youth policy is determined by indicators such as low youth unemployment, and low rates of drug addiction, crime, and recidivism among youth.

Of course, there are parameters rooted in social processes and values—such as spiritual development, patriotism, and tolerance—which are more difficult to express through direct quantitative indicators. As a result, accurately evaluating effectiveness in these areas is relatively complex. It is therefore recommended to avoid using rigid indicators that provide limited data in these cases.

Nevertheless, at the current stage, it is essential to develop a relatively objective list of statistical indicators that allows for the assessment of the effectiveness of youth policy being implemented in Uzbekistan.

In addition, attention must be paid to the following factors when evaluating the effectiveness of youth policy in Uzbekistan: differences between regions; between urban and rural areas; between males and females; and between permanently and temporarily residing youth populations within a region.

The assimilation and comparison of these indicators enable the formation of a comprehensive picture for assessing the effectiveness of state youth policy. It also allows for the creation of "youth work passports" for specific regions based on sectoral data.

The combination of the factors listed above forms a universal system for evaluating the effectiveness of government and societal efforts across various levels of youth policy management.

Furthermore, it enables a comprehensive view of the current state of youth policy in Uzbekistan for the given year, helping to identify ineffective sectors and assess the performance of mechanisms and technologies applied within them. Based on this analysis, a program of measures can be developed and implemented in the following year to improve underperforming sectors and enhance the applied mechanisms and technologies.

Another important advantage of such a practice is that it allows for the tracking of the year-on-year dynamics of youth policy effectiveness, which in turn provides an opportunity to clearly define a long-term strategic vision for future years.

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