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# DEVELOPMENT OF LIGHT INDUSTRIES IN UZBEKISTAN AND TERRITORIAL ORGANIZATION

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**Annotation:** this article analyzes the stages of development of light industries in Uzbekistan and their territorial organization. The role of light industry in the country's economy is highlighted, in particular, the features of the development of the textile, sewing-knitting and leather-shoe industry. The location of production, the impact of the raw material base and labor resources on production in different regions were studied. The export potential, cluster system and investment attraction processes were also analyzed. The study substantiates ways to reduce regional imbalances and more effectively organize industry.

**Keywords:** light industry, textile, sewing-knitting, leather-shoes, territorial organization, industrial geography, production, raw material base, labor resources, economic development, cluster system, export potential, investments, territorial differences, industrial zones, infrastructure, modernization, industrial policy.

Light industry sectors in Uzbekistan are one of the important components of the national economy, playing a key role in providing employment, increasing export potential, and stimulating regional development. The light industry mainly includes such areas as textiles, sewing and knitting, leather and footwear, and silk. The formation of this network is historically directly related to the republic's rich raw material base, especially cotton production, and during the Soviet era, Uzbekistan specialized mainly as a supplier of raw cotton. After independence, as a result of economic reforms, industrial policy focused on deep processing of raw materials began to gain priority.

Theoretically, the development of light industries is explained by a number of economic concepts. In particular, according to the theory of territorial placement of

industry (A. Weber), manufacturing enterprises are located near sources of raw materials, labor resources and markets. In the conditions of Uzbekistan, this pattern is clearly manifested in the textile industry: textile enterprises have actively developed around the regions where cotton is grown (Fergana Valley, Bukhara, Kashkadarya). At the same time, the theory of clustering (M. Porter) in light industry, cotton-textile clusters are established, forming a single chain ranging from raw material production to finished product production.

Statistics show that the light industry has been developing rapidly in Uzbekistan in recent years. In particular, the volume of textile and knitwear production increased by almost 2.5 times during the period 2017–2024. According to the results of 2023, the share of light industry in industrial production is around 15–18 percent, which indicates the growing importance of the sector in the economy. Export volumes also increased significantly, reaching US$3.2 billion in 2022 and more than US$3.5 billion in 2023. A particularly important trend is the increasing share of finished textile products in exports.

Public policy plays an important role in the development of light industry. In Uzbekistan, a number of programs are implemented aimed at modernizing the industry, attracting investments and stimulating exports. In particular, as a result of the introduction of a system of cotton-textile clusters, production efficiency increases and the cost of production decreases. Currently, more than 130 textile clusters operate in the Republic. More than 90 percent of cotton is processed domestically through these clusters, creating added value.

From a theoretical and economic perspective, the development of light industry is an important element of the economic diversification process. Through diversification, the economy's dependence on raw material exports is reduced and the production of high-value-added products is expanded. At the same time, since the light industry is a labor-intensive sector, it plays an important role in providing employment. According to statistics, more than 400,000 people are employed in this sector, which accounts for a significant portion of total industrial employment.

Also, the development of light industry serves to reduce territorial economic disparities. Because the enterprises of this sector are located mainly in rural areas, where they create new jobs and develop local infrastructure. For example, the high concentration of textile enterprises in Fergana, Andijan, and Namangan regions has increased the economic activity of these regions.

In conclusion, the formation and development of light industry sectors in Uzbekistan is based on theoretical and economic laws and is closely linked to state policy, raw material base, and investment environment. Statistical and analytical data confirm that the share of this network in the economy is increasing, its export

potential is expanding, and it has a positive effect on territorial development. Therefore, further modernization of the light industry, introduction of innovative technologies, and increasing its competitiveness in international markets will remain one of the urgent tasks in the future.

The territorial location and specialization of light industry sectors in Uzbekistan have been formed in close connection with the country's natural resources, economic infrastructure, and demographic potential. The raw material base - cotton-growing areas - plays a key role as a key factor for the light industry, especially the textile and knitwear sectors. Therefore, these sectors are highly developed in the republic, mainly in the Fergana Valley (Andijan, Namangan, Fergana regions), Bukhara, Kashkadarya, and Surkhandarya regions.

Classical theories of economic geography are important in explaining regional location. Including A. According to Weber's theory of industrial placement, manufacturing enterprises are based on the principle of minimizing transportation costs and being close to resources. The proximity of textile enterprises to cotton-growing regions in Uzbekistan confirms this theory. In addition, the theory of central places (V. Based on the crystals), large cities (Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara) have developed enterprises for the production of finished products and shopping centers.

Statistics indicate the presence of territorial differences. For example, as of 2023, about 35-40% of the volume of textile production corresponds to the contribution of the Fergana Valley. Andijan and Namangan regions occupy leading positions in the production of sewing and knitting products. The Bukhara region, on the other hand, specializes in the processing of cotton fibers and the production of yarn. The cities of Tashkent and the Tashkent region stand out as centers of high-tech and export-oriented enterprises.

The specialization of light industry is also determined by the natural-climatic conditions of the regions. For example, in regions with favorable climatic conditions for the cultivation of cotton, textile enterprises have developed, which are located close to the raw material base. At the same time, water resources, land productivity and agro-climatic conditions are also important. These factors directly affect the volume of cotton production, which in turn affects the territorial development of light industries.

Economic factors also play a decisive role in the territorial location of light industry. Transport infrastructure, energy supply, investment environment, and the availability of industrial zones are key factors determining the location of enterprises. For example, the establishment of free economic zones and small industrial zones is helping to attract new production capacities to the regions.

According to statistics, investments in light industry through industrial zones established in recent years amounted to 1.5–2 billion US dollars.

Demographic factors are also important in the development of the light industry. Since this sector is labor-intensive, its development is faster in densely populated areas. The Fergana Valley regions have a high population density and sufficient labor resources. According to statistics, 25–30% of the population employed in industrial sectors in these regions is engaged in the light industry. In addition, light industry plays an important role in ensuring women's employment, as women make up a large proportion of workers in this sector.

The cluster system is becoming increasingly important in the process of regional specialization. Through cotton-textile clusters, raw material production, processing, and finished product production are being integrated within a single region. This allows for reduced transportation costs, improved production efficiency, and improved product quality. Currently, more than 130 clusters operate in the Republic, which play an important role in the territorial development of light industry.

There is also a significant influence of export direction in territorial development. Exportbop production enterprises are mainly located in regions with developed logistics infrastructure. For example, the Tashkent region and city, as well as the Fergana Valley, are considered favorable for export-oriented enterprises due to their proximity to international transport corridors. According to 2023 data, the bulk of light industry exports come from these regions.

In conclusion, the territorial location and specialization of light industry in Uzbekistan is a complex system formed as a result of the interaction of natural, economic, and demographic factors. Analytical and statistical data show that proximity to raw material resources, availability of labor resources, infrastructure development, and the investment climate are decisive factors in the territorial development of this sector. Therefore, there are opportunities for further development of the light industry in the future by ensuring territorial balance, developing new industrial zones, and improving logistics infrastructure.

The prospects for the development of light industry sectors in Uzbekistan are closely linked to the diversification of the country's economy, the expansion of export potential, and the balancing of regional development. As a result of the economic reforms carried out in recent years, light industry is moving from a supply network of raw materials to a stage of transformation into a production system that creates higher value added. The introduction of the cotton-textile cluster system in particular made an important turn in this direction.

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The cluster system is an effective model that unites all stages of the production process (raw material cultivation, processing, production and sale of finished products) into a single territorial and economic system. Today, there are more than 130 cotton-textile clusters operating in Uzbekistan, through which 90–95 percent of cotton is processed domestically. This is reducing the previously existing dependence on raw material exports and increasing the share of finished products. According to statistics, in 2016, only 40–45% of cotton was processed, while currently this figure has reached almost complete domestic processing.

The prospects for the development of light industry are determined, first of all, by the expansion of the export direction. Textile exports have increased significantly in recent years, reaching over US $ 3.5 billion as of the end of 2023. Strategic plans for 2025–2030 plan to increase this figure to $6–7 billion. The priority is to increase the share of finished products – clothing, knitwear and designer products. Because it is the finished products that have high added value and increase economic efficiency.

In increasing regional efficiency, along with the cluster system, the development of industrial zones and logistics infrastructure is important. The establishment of Free Economic Zones, small industrial zones and technoparks makes it possible to attract new investments and spread production widely to the regions. For example, in recent years, the volume of investments in light industry through established industrial zones has approached us $ 2 billion. This serves to create new jobs and increase territorial economic activity.

The introduction of innovative technologies is also an important factor in the future development of the light industry. The introduction of digital technologies, automated production systems and the concept of “smart factories” makes it possible to increase production efficiency by 20-30 percent. Also, the use of environmentally friendly and energy-efficient technologies will expand the possibility of producing products that comply with international standards. This is instrumental in increasing competitiveness in export markets.

Demographic factors also create favorable conditions for promising development. Uzbekistan has a high proportion of young people, which ensures a steady growth of labor resources. Since light industry is a labor-intensive sector, it allows for the efficient use of these resources. According to statistics, currently 400–500 thousand people are employed in the light industry, and there is a possibility of further increasing this figure in the future.

Another important way to increase regional efficiency is to develop a transport – logistics system. Integration into international transport corridors, modernization of Railways and highways allows fast and affordable delivery of products. In

particular, projects implemented within the framework of the New Silk Road initiative play an important role in expanding the geography of exports.

At the same time, improving the system of training and training of personnel is also one of the pressing issues. The application of modern technologies in light industry requires highly qualified specialists. Therefore, it is important to strengthen the training of specialized personnel in higher and secondary specialized educational institutions and develop integration with production.

In conclusion, the prospects for the development of light industry in Uzbekistan are positive, and the combination of the cluster system, innovative technologies, and regional policy will significantly increase the efficiency of this sector. Analytical and statistical data show that light industry can become one of the leading drivers of the country's economy through clustering, attracting investment, developing infrastructure, and expanding exports.

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