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THE ROLE OF MODERN ECONOMIC INSTRUMENTS IN REDUCING COSTS: THE EXPERIENCE OF COTTON AND TEXTILE CLUSTERS

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Abstract: This article examines the importance of developing export-oriented cotton and textile clusters in the context of the growing demand for textiles in the world. The article notes that developed European countries are actively using the creation of production clusters, cooperation between the public and private sectors, as well as stimulating innovation in their textile export development strategies.

Keywords: export-oriented cotton and textile clusters, light industry, export development strategy, innovative technologies, production automation, export volume growth.

Introduction: An increase in the world's population has led to an increase in demand for basic goods, including textiles. In many countries, light industry plays a key role in economic development and is the main source of meeting growing demand. The developed countries of Europe are actively using the policy of creating strong and efficient production clusters, establishing interaction between the public and private sectors, as well as stimulating innovation in their textile export development strategies. The impact of innovative and digital technologies, automation of production and the spread of e-commerce in the international textile market is becoming increasingly significant.

The global textile market is a collection of national markets, including global exports. In 2022, the volume of global exports of textile products amounted to 577.83 billion dollars, compared with 530.97 billion dollars in 2021. According to World Bank research, this market is projected to grow further to $722.32 billion by 2026, with an annual growth rate of 5.7%. It is also worth noting the increasing role of Central Asian countries in the global textile trade, which accounted for about 65% in 2022.

Research methods.

In the process of preparing the article, such methods as general scientific methods, formal logical methods, specific methods of situation research, system analysis, classification, generalization, horizontal and vertical analysis were used.

The World Bank, the UNCTAD Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) are actively engaged in research on trends in the development of the textile industry in various countries around the world. Scientists from the world's leading universities such as Harvard University, McGill University, Oxford University, Kyung Hee University, Universite de Lorraine, Indian

Institute of Technology Delhi and Sabancıiversitesi are also studying the problems of developing the operational strategy of cotton clusters.

As a result of global scientific research, significant results have been obtained and innovative approaches have been developed. For example, the University of Oxford has developed the Technology Modernization Fund (TUFS) scheme, which provides financial support to textile and clothing companies to modernize their equipment and increase productivity. Such measures allow the industry to improve its technologies and improve product quality.

Scientists from the Universite de Lorraine have developed an operational strategy for the production of export-oriented products based on their expertise in industrial ecosystems. This is another confirmation of the important role of cluster organizations in the digital transition of the textile industry.

On the part of the world's leading research institutions and universities, scientific research is being carried out to develop methods for using an operational strategy in the production of export-oriented products: the directions of state support and prospects for the development of an operational strategy at enterprises are being studied, the prospects for the use of innovative technologies and the modernization of cross-industry relations are being determined.

This research and development plays an important role in improving the operational strategy of the textile industry, contributing to its innovative progress and sustainable development.

Analysis and results.

According to the official data of the Association of Cotton and Textile Clusters of Uzbekistan, there are currently 96 cotton and textile clusters in the republic with a total area of about 908 thousand hectares. Table 1 shows the data on the placement of cotton and textile clusters in the regions of Uzbekistan.

Table 1.

The number of cotton and textile clusters and the area of cotton fields of cotton and textile clusters in the regions of Uzbekistan

№	Regions	Number of clusters		The area of cotton fields	
		Unit	Fraction, %	Hectare	Fraction, %
1	Republic of Karakalpakstan	5	5,21	48665	5,36
2	Andijan region	12	12,5	79391	8,75
3	Bukhara region	8	8,33	97900	10,78
4	Jizzakh region	5	5,21	69700	7,68
5	Kashkadarya region	9	9,38	111900	12,33
6	Navoi region	2	2,08	32588	3,59
7	Namangan region	7	7,29	63406	6,98
8	Samarkand region	11	11,46	75580	8,33
9	Surkhandarya region	6	6,25	60044	6,61
10	Syrdarya region	6	6,25	72557	7,99
11	Tashkent region	6	6,25	55008	6,06
12	Ferghana region	9	9,38	63245	6,97

13	Khorezm region	10	10,42	77799	8,57
	Total	**96**	**100**	**907783**	**100**

Three cotton and textile clusters from different regions of Uzbekistan were selected as the object of the study.: LLC “Alyorteks", LLC “Boyovut techno cluster” and LLC “TST Agro Cluster".

“Alyorteks” LLC is located in the Zhalakuduk district of the Andijan region, the total area of cotton fields is 6.2 thousand hectares. “Boyovut techno cluster” LLC is located in the Boevut district of the Syrdarya region, the area of cotton fields is 10.5 thousand hectares. “TST Agro Cluster” LLC is located in the Kuyichirchik district of the Tashkent region, the total area of cotton fields is 10.0 thousand hectares. “Alyorteks” LLC and “Boyovut techno cluster” LLC started their activities in 2018, “TST Agro Cluster” LLC has been operating since 2017. To assess the performance of the selected clusters, we will analyze their production and economic indicators for the period 2018-2023.

Table 2.

Indicators of the security and efficiency of the use of fixed assets of “Alyorteks Cluster” LLC in 2018-2023

№	Indicators	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	The cost of fixed assets and facilities, billion soums	221,9	263,7	301,5	492,3	572,7	588,2
2	Number of employees, people	283	318	328	371	314	338
3	The volume of production in value terms, billion soums	86,7	102,3	118,1	185,6	216,6	251,3
4	The volume of production in physical terms, thousand tons	22,7	21,6	19,2	17,1	14,3	15,6
5	Return on funds, sum	0,39	0,39	0,39	0,38	0,38	0,37
6	Fund capacity, sum	2,56	2,58	2,55	2,65	2,64	2,60
7	Stock ratio, thousand soums	784,1	829,25	919,21	1326,95	1823,89	1934,4

The efficiency of production at an enterprise depends on the availability of fixed assets. Over the period 2018-2023, the stock ratio of “Alyorteks” LLC has increased, therefore, the degree of armament of cluster employees with means of production is increasing. The return on capital of “Alyorteks Cluster” LLC has been almost constant for 5 years. The opposite indicator of return on capital is the capital intensity of products - this indicator in the cluster under consideration had a slight upward trend (Table 2).

The stock ratio of “Boyovut techno cluster” LLC in 2018-2023 tended to grow, which determines the presence of positive processes of increasing the degree of armament of cluster employees with means of production (Table 3).

Table 3.

Indicators of the security and efficiency of the use of fixed assets of “Boyovut techno cluster” LLC in 2018-2023

№	Indicators	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
1	The cost of fixed assets and	322,9	346,7	350,6	522,3	755,9	766,1

	facilities, billion soums						
2	Number of employees, people	320	359	401	449	503	515
3	The volume of production in value terms, billion soums	92,7	103,7	127,2	129,3	132,2	138,9
4	The volume of production in physical terms, thousand tons	25,1	28,8	29,4	30	33,5	34,8
5	Return on funds, sum	0,29	0,3	0,36	0,25	0,17	0,16
6	Fund capacity, sum	3,48	3,34	2,76	4,04	5,72	5,79
7	Stock ratio, thousand soums	1009,06	965,74	874,31	1163,25	1502,78	1672,4

In terms of the areas of cotton fields occupied by the clusters selected for the monographic study, "TST Agro Cluster" LLC occupies an intermediate position between the other two. It is noteworthy that this cluster is many times ahead of the other two in terms of the number of employees - at the end of 2023, the number of employees of "TST Agro Cluster" LLC is 15 times more than the number of employees of "Boyovut techno cluster" LLC, and "Alyorteks" LLC is almost 24 times.

The results of the study showed that the introduction of cluster systems in the cotton and textile industry of Uzbekistan had a positive impact on the development of the industry. As a result of using the cluster approach, there was an increase in cotton production, an improvement in the quality of textile products, investment attraction and the use of innovative technologies. This contributed to an increase in employment and income of the population, as well as the integration of industry and agriculture, increasing the overall competitiveness of the country's economy.

However, some problems have been identified that limit the development of cotton and textile clusters. In particular, there is an insufficiently developed regulatory framework, as well as inefficient relationships between clusters and farms. There is also a growing monopoly in the regions, which makes it difficult for the industry to develop.

In general, cluster systems have proven their effectiveness and expediency in the cotton and textile industry of Uzbekistan. However, for further development, it is necessary to pay attention to eliminating the identified problems and creating a favorable investment and legal environment.

The constructed multifactorial econometric model showed the dependence of exports of cotton and textile products on such factors as investments in fixed assets, the number of workers in cotton and textile clusters and their wages. In order to increase the export orientation of cotton and textile clusters, strategic measures should be developed and implemented to increase the inflow of investment resources, improve production performance and increase wages in the cotton and textile industry of Uzbekistan. The constructed econometric model has shown that this requires:

- formation of legal mechanisms that promote the growth of foreign investment in the regions of the republic;

- improving production efficiency, creating conditions for the introduction of innovative products and services in the regions;

- improving the quality of well-being of workers in cotton and textile clusters, which is designed to increase their interest in employment;

- increasing the competitiveness, independence and profitability of cotton and textile clusters.

The issue of improving economic mechanisms for increasing export potential in cotton and textile clusters continues to be a key issue, for which it is especially important that the regions switch from a passive strategy to a development strategy. It is necessary to carry out systematic work on the introduction of modern and innovative technologies in cotton and textile production, the ultimate goal of which is to increase exports and improve the efficiency of production activities, which is designed to increase the competitiveness of the industry and the national economy as a whole.

Conclusion:

Based on the results of the study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

The introduction of cluster systems in the cotton and textile industry of Uzbekistan has had a positive impact on the development of the industry. There was an increase in cotton production, improvement in the quality of textile products, attraction of investments and the use of innovative technologies.

The implementation of the cluster approach has contributed to an increase in employment and income of the population, as well as the integration of industry and agriculture, increasing the overall competitiveness of the country's economy.

However, problems have been identified that limit the development of cotton and textile clusters, such as an underdeveloped regulatory framework, inefficient relationships between clusters and farms, and the growth of monopolies in the regions.

Three clusters were identified – “Alyorteks” LLC, “Boyovut techno cluster” LLC and “TST Agro Cluster” LLC, and an analysis of their strengths and weaknesses was carried out. Among the weaknesses, there is a decrease in return on funds, an increase in variable unit costs and high labor intensity.

For further development, it is necessary to pay attention to eliminating the identified problems and creating a favorable investment and legal environment. It is necessary to develop a program of measures to increase capital equipment and returns, increase exports, reduce labor intensity, as well as increase the number of qualified employees, purchase high-tech equipment, improve working conditions, search for better raw materials and the correct allocation of tasks.

The constructed multifactorial econometric model showed the dependence of exports of cotton and textile products on investments in fixed assets, the number of cluster employees and their salaries. To increase the export orientation of the industry, it is necessary to develop strategic measures to increase investment inflows, improve production performance and increase wages.

It is important to improve the economic mechanisms for increasing export potential in cotton and textile clusters, to carry out systematic work on the introduction of modern and innovative technologies, which contributes to an increase in export volumes, increasing the competitiveness of the industry and the national economy as a whole.

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