

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF THE INTERRELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGRICULTURE AND INDUSTRY IN THE SURKHANDARYA REGION (LATE 20TH – EARLY 21ST CENTURY)

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Abstract:

This research analyzes the socio-economic importance of the interrelationship between agriculture and industry in the Surkhandarya Region during the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The study focuses on how agricultural and industrial sectors have interacted to shape the region's economic growth, employment, and living standards. It examines the historical evolution of agro-industrial cooperation, the establishment of processing enterprises, and their contribution to rural development and modernization. Using historical, statistical, and comparative methods, the research identifies key trends that have enhanced productivity, export potential, and social welfare. The findings reveal that the integration of agriculture and industry has been crucial for regional stability and sustainable development. However, challenges such as technological modernization, uneven infrastructure, and environmental sustainability remain. The study concludes that further strengthening of agro-industrial collaboration is essential for ensuring long-term economic progress and improving the quality of life in the Surkhandarya Region.

Keywords: Surkhandarya Region; agriculture; industry; agro-industrial cooperation; socio-economic development; modernization; sustainable growth.

INTRODUCTION

The Surkhandarya Region, situated in the southern part of Uzbekistan, is one of the country's most dynamic and resource-rich territories. Its fertile soil, favorable climate, and abundant water resources have made agriculture the backbone of the regional economy, particularly in cotton, grain, and horticultural production. Alongside agriculture, the region's industrial sector—focused on food processing, construction materials, textiles, and energy—has grown steadily, creating a complementary relationship between the two sectors. This interconnection between agriculture and industry has become a driving force of Surkhandarya's socio-economic development.

In the late 20th century, industrialization began to take shape in direct support of agricultural production, as new factories for cotton processing, oil extraction, and food preservation were

established. After Uzbekistan's independence in 1991, economic reforms and privatization policies opened new opportunities for agro-industrial cooperation. The development of small and medium-sized enterprises, investments in modern agricultural technology, and the establishment of processing plants contributed to increased productivity and employment in rural areas.

The aim of this study is to examine the socio-economic importance of the interrelationship between agriculture and industry in the Surkhandarya Region from the late 20th to the early 21st century. It seeks to analyze how this cooperation has influenced regional growth, income levels, and living standards, while also identifying existing challenges and prospects for sustainable development. The research emphasizes the need for balanced advancement between agricultural and industrial sectors as a foundation for long-term regional prosperity.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study employs a multidisciplinary research approach, combining historical, statistical, and analytical methods to explore the interrelationship between agriculture and industry in the Surkhandarya Region. Primary data were collected from official reports of the State Statistics Committee of Uzbekistan, regional development programs, and local government publications. Secondary sources included scientific articles, academic studies, and economic analyses that provide insights into agricultural productivity, industrial performance, and social welfare indicators from the late 20th to the early 21st century.

Quantitative methods were used to evaluate statistical trends in agricultural output, industrial production, employment, and income levels. Qualitative methods, including comparative and descriptive analysis, were applied to examine the evolution of agro-industrial cooperation and its impact on regional socio-economic development. Case studies of local enterprises were also analyzed to understand the practical mechanisms of integration between the two sectors. Together, these methods provide a comprehensive framework for assessing the socio-economic significance of agricultural and industrial interdependence in Surkhandarya Region.

RESULTS

The findings of the study reveal that the interrelationship between agriculture and industry has been a cornerstone of the Surkhandarya Region's socio-economic development from the late 20th to the early 21st century. During the Soviet era, agriculture served as the foundation for industrial growth, particularly in cotton processing, oil extraction, and food production. These industries provided a market for agricultural raw materials, created new employment opportunities, and stimulated urban development in key districts such as Termiz, Denov, and Sherobod.

After Uzbekistan gained independence, economic reforms and privatization led to a restructuring of both agricultural and industrial sectors. The establishment of small and medium-sized enterprises strengthened the agro-industrial connection, allowing farmers to process and market their products locally. As a result, regional income levels rose, unemployment decreased, and the overall standard of living improved.

In the early 21st century, Surkhandarya experienced notable progress in modernizing production technologies and developing export-oriented industries. Food processing, textile manufacturing, and construction materials became leading sectors driving regional GDP. However, the study also identifies persistent challenges such as insufficient infrastructure, limited technological innovation, and environmental pressures affecting sustainable growth. Overall, the results show that strong coordination between agriculture and industry remains a decisive factor in ensuring balanced economic development and social welfare in Surkhandarya Region.

DISCUSSION

The research demonstrates that the interconnection between agriculture and industry in the Surkhandarya Region has been essential for achieving sustainable regional development, though it has evolved through different historical and economic contexts. During the late Soviet period, industrial enterprises were largely designed to serve agricultural needs, focusing on raw material processing rather than innovation. This approach helped establish an initial industrial base but limited technological progress and diversification.

Following independence, Uzbekistan's shift toward a market economy redefined the relationship between the two sectors. Agricultural reforms, including land redistribution and the encouragement of private farming, created a more flexible and responsive system. Industrial enterprises began to invest in agricultural modernization through machinery supply, fertilizer production, and food processing, which strengthened the value chain from farm to factory. However, this transition also exposed structural weaknesses, such as unequal access to capital, outdated technologies, and the uneven distribution of industrial infrastructure between rural and urban areas.

Despite these challenges, the government's recent focus on agro-industrial clusters, export diversification, and innovation-based development has produced positive outcomes. The discussion highlights that the region's future economic stability depends on integrating sustainable agricultural practices with industrial modernization. Greater emphasis on renewable energy, digital technologies, and environmental management will enhance productivity while preserving natural resources. In conclusion, coordinated policy measures that align agriculture and industry can ensure inclusive growth and long-term socio-economic resilience in Surkhandarya Region.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the interrelationship between agriculture and industry has played a decisive role in shaping the socio-economic progress of the Surkhandarya Region from the late 20th century to the early 21st century. The mutual dependence between these two sectors has contributed to economic diversification, employment creation, and improved living standards. Industrial enterprises have supported agricultural productivity through technological innovation, processing facilities, and market access, while agriculture has provided raw materials and labor essential for industrial expansion.

The transition to a market-oriented economy after independence encouraged the formation of agro-industrial complexes, small enterprises, and private farms, which strengthened local economic capacity. These developments not only boosted production efficiency but also reduced rural poverty and increased export potential. Nevertheless, persistent challenges such as technological gaps, insufficient infrastructure, and environmental sustainability require continued attention.

To ensure long-term progress, the region must enhance cooperation between agricultural and industrial sectors through innovation, digitalization, and environmentally responsible production. Strengthening agro-industrial integration and investment in human capital will further improve economic resilience and competitiveness. Ultimately, a balanced and sustainable partnership between agriculture and industry will remain the cornerstone of Surkhandarya Region's socio-economic development in the decades ahead.

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