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## NAVOI REGION: STUDY OF THE LIGHT AND FOOD INDUSTRY AS A TOPICAL TASK (1991–2023)

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**Abstract:** This study provides a scientific analysis of the development of the light and food industries in the Navoi region during 1991–2023, examining structural changes resulting from economic reforms, investment processes, and the territorial specifics of sectoral development. The research also highlights existing challenges, alignment with global demands, and the future prospects for the industry’s advancement.

**Keywords:** Navoi region, light industry, food industry, market reforms, structural changes, innovation, investment processes, development prospects.

### INTRODUCTION

#### The relevance and necessity of the topic

Ensuring the supply of environmentally friendly food products and high-quality light-industry goods to the global population is regarded as a critical issue within the United Nations Millennium Development Programme. This, in turn, necessitates the continuous technological upgrading of light and food industry enterprises with modern equipment aimed at improving product quality and production efficiency.

In leading research centres of developed countries such as the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Japan, South Korea, and China, extensive scientific research is being conducted to address global challenges related to shortages in light- and food-industry products. In particular, the scientific analysis of structural transformations within these industries, the identification of solutions to issues arising from the growing needs of the population, and the development of opportunities for continuous monitoring of this system collectively underscore the urgency and necessity of the chosen research topic.

In New Uzbekistan, the ongoing economic reforms have created opportunities to further develop the light and food industries, reach new milestones, keep pace with global trends, and protect the interests of the population. As stated, “it is necessary to increase the number of modern enterprises, deepen the processing of cotton raw materials, and expand the export of finished products.”[1] This, in turn, makes it essential to conduct scientific research aimed at introducing advanced innovations that meet international standards and are required for the sustainable development of the light and food industries.

The Decree of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan No. PF-5853 of October 23, 2019, “On the Strategy for the Development of Agriculture of the Republic of Uzbekistan for 2020–2030,” the Resolution No. PF-60 of January 28, 2022, “On the Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan for 2022–2026,” the Resolution No. PQ-3418 of November 30, 2017, “On Ensuring the Stable Supply of the Population with Basic Types of Food Products During the Winter–Spring Seasons of 2017–2018,” the Resolution No. PQ-3484 of January 19, 2018, “On Measures to Accelerate the Development of the Oil and Fat Industry,” the Resolution No. PQ-4453 of September 16, 2019, “On Measures to Further Develop the Light Industry and Stimulate the Production of Finished Products,” along with other regulatory and legal documents related to the sector’s development, collectively underscore the relevance of this dissertation and the contribution it can make toward fulfilling the tasks set forth in these policy documents.

### **Degree of Study of the topic**

When determining the level of scientific investigation of the problem, it is advisable to analyze the existing literature and research works related to the topic by dividing them into two groups. The first group consists of works published during the independence period that are directly connected to the subject matter, while the second group includes foreign scientific studies falling within the scope of the research. The history of industry—particularly the light and food industries that play a crucial role in meeting the daily needs of the population—has long served as an important object of research not only for historians but also for economists. The first group of literature and scholarly works created during the years of independence examines the reforms carried out in the light and food industries, the problems of the sector, and issues related to their solution [2].

Regarding the study of the light and food industries of Navoiy region, R. M. Karshiyev conducted research covering the period 1958–1990 [3]; M. Vohidova examined the impact of international economic integration on the development of entrepreneurship in Uzbekistan (with Navoiy region as a case study) [4]; F. U. Shamiyev defended a dissertation on intensifying the process of attracting foreign investment (based on the industrial complex of Navoiy region) [5]; and G. I. Norquvatova studied “Improving the organizational and economic mechanisms of developing and regionally structuring the light industry” (based on the example of Navoiy region) [6].

During the years of independence, several scientific works dedicated to the regional study of the history of the light and food industries have been defended in the republic [7]. For example, the research of A. G. Abdullayev focuses on analyzing the economic activity of this sector in Khorezm region. His work discusses the development of industry and its territorial organization in the early years of independence, the placement of food production capacities, the supply of food products to the population of Khorezm region, and the effective use of raw material resources in developing this sector [8].

Researcher N. M. Ziyavitdinova has examined issues related to enhancing the innovative activity of food industry sectors in Bukhara region, improving modern management systems in industrial enterprises, and strengthening investment activity within these enterprises [9].

X. R. Raupov conducted scientific research on ensuring the supply of consumer goods produced by the light and food industries to the population of Uzbekistan. The findings of this research were used for comparative regional analysis within this dissertation [10].

F. U. Kholmanova, in turn, revealed the history of the development of the light and food industries in Uzbekistan from 1991 to 2020 using Surkhandarya region as a case study [11].

The second group consists of scientific studies and literature authored by foreign scholars. For example, in Leonid Levitin's work "Uzbekistan at a Historical Turning Point," the strategy for developing and implementing economic reforms in Uzbekistan, designed by the government, is presented in an engaging way [12].

In his work, American researcher G. Gleason [13] discusses the economic challenges faced by Uzbekistan and other Central Asian republics during the transition to a market economy after gaining independence. Issues of attracting investments for the development of the light industry have been studied by foreign scholars such as G. Markowitz [14], P. Samuelson [15], S. Bruno [16], A. Kane and J. Alan [17].

Problems related to the development of textile industry enterprises have been addressed to some extent in the works of E. Body, Y. Briksma, and Van Horn. Furthermore, among CIS scholars, M. Dyupov [18], A. Khvorostyanaya [19], and N. Balanovskaya have conducted research on the development directions of the light industry, while Ye. Cherepennikova [20] and N. Leyberova [21] have carried out studies on the development of food industry technologies.

As noted above, although a number of studies have been conducted during the independence period on the development history of the light and food industries in Uzbekistan, this field has not been examined in a comprehensive manner. In particular, a detailed analysis of the achievements and outcomes attained by the light and food industries in Navoi region between 1991 and 2020, as well as an assessment of their future prospects, remains one of the urgent research tasks of today.

In conclusion, the development of the light and food industries in Navoi region from 1991 to 2023 is closely linked to the economic reforms, structural transformations, and innovative modernization processes that took place in the post-independence period. Global challenges related to the light industry and food security, international scientific developments, and strategic decisions adopted by the President of Uzbekistan further underscore the relevance of this dissertation topic.

Although national and international research studies exist on this subject, the evolution of the sector in Navoi region during the independence years—its investment processes, enterprise

activities, regional characteristics, and future development prospects—has not yet been thoroughly and systematically investigated. Therefore, this research holds significant scientific and practical importance, as it aims to provide an evidence-based analysis of the development dynamics of the light and food industries in the region, identify existing problems, and propose strategic directions for future progress.

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