TERRITORIAL AND SECTORAL DISTRIBUTION OF LABOR RESOURCES IN THE UZBEK SSR (second half of the 20th century)

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ABSTRACT: This article analyzes the socio-economic characteristics of the use of labor resources and the process of their territorial and sectorial distribution in the Uzbek SSR during the second half of the twentieth century. Within the scope of the study, changes in employment ratios in material production and non-productive sectors are examined, as well as the condition of labor resources between agriculture and industry. Particular attention is given to demographic processes, natural population growth, and the influence of territorial settlement factors on the structure of labor resources. Distinctive features of the republic's labor resource composition in comparison with union indicators are identified. The low level of female employment, territorial imbalances, and the state of development of social infrastructure and service sectors are assessed as key factors determining the efficiency of labor resource utilization. Based on the experience of the Uzbek SSR, the article scientifically substantiates the necessity of a systematic approach to labor resource management.

Keywords: labor resources, employment, territorial distribution, industry and agriculture, female employment.

INTRODUCTION

The 1960s–1970s constituted a period of particular significance in the economic development of the USSR with regard to the use of labor resources. Scientific and technological progress accelerated, and intensive factors of production came to the forefront. Under these conditions, the rational allocation of the existing workforce, along with its balanced territorial and sectorial distribution, became one of the key factors determining the efficiency of social production.

The Uzbek SSR exhibited distinctive characteristics within these processes. High demographic growth, a substantial share of the rural population, a relatively low level of female employment, and the predominance of the agrarian sector differentiated the mechanisms of labor resource utilization in the republic from those of other Union republics. For this reason, the issue of reallocating labor resources across regions and sectors had not only economic but also social significance. This article analyzes the process of labor

resource utilization in the Uzbek SSR during the second half of the twentieth century, the proportions between material production and non-productive sectors, as well as aspects related to territorial and demographic factors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study is based on the historical-analytical method. Statistical data, indicators of the national economy of the Union and the Uzbek SSR, as well as materials from scholarly works by economists of the period, were used as primary sources. A comparative approach was applied in the analysis, with the state of labor resources at the level of the Soviet Union compared to republican indicators. Changes in the share of employment by sector were examined dynamically. In addition, territorial differences, particularly the characteristics of employment in urban and rural areas, were given special attention.

From a methodological perspective, demographic factors, technological progress, and changes in the production structure were analyzed in close interconnection with the movement and utilization of labor resources.

RESULTS

The findings of the study indicate that in the Uzbek SSR the share of the population employed in material production consistently declined, while employment in non-productive sectors expanded. Although this process corresponded to all-Union trends, it unfolded at a distinct pace within the republic.

- The reduction in the proportion of the population employed in agriculture led to the reallocation of labor resources in favor of industry, construction, and service sectors. However, because the pace of industrial development in the republic remained insufficiently high, its capacity to fully absorb surplus labor resources was limited.
- Female employment remained at a low level. High fertility, traditional lifestyles, and the underdevelopment of preschool institutions and household service sectors hindered the involvement of women in social production.
- From a territorial perspective, densely populated regions experienced strong pressure on labor resources, which in turn necessitated the redistribution of jobs across regions.

DISCUSSION

In the second half of the twentieth century, one of the key characteristics of the Union's economic development was the sectorial redistribution of labor resources. In official statistics, this process was reflected primarily in shifts in the proportion of workers employed in material production and in non-productive sectors. At first glance, such indicators seem to point to a certain "maturation" of the economy. However, interpreting them without due regard for the historical context, the institutional mechanisms of the planned economy, and territorial disparities would be methodologically inadequate.

According to available data, during this period the share of employees engaged in material production in the USSR as a whole declined from 83 percent to 76.5 percent, while

in Uzbekistan this figure fell from 84.7 percent to 77.4 percent. At the same time, employment in non-productive sectors increased from 17 percent to 23.5 percent at the Union level, and from 15.3 percent to 22.6 percent in the republic. [1; 13-14]. Although these figures indicate that structural shifts in the economic systems of the Union and Uzbekistan proceeded in the same general direction, their substance and underlying causes cannot be regarded as identical.

At the all-Union level, the reduction in the share of employment in material production was primarily associated with technological re-equipment in industry and construction, as well as with rising labor productivity. Under conditions of a centralized planned economy, the establishment of large industrial enterprises and the mechanization of production processes made it possible to produce greater volumes of output with a relatively smaller workforce [2; 10]. As a result, employment in material production sectors continued to grow, but at a slower pace, while surplus labor resources were redirected to social sectors and service systems.

In Uzbekistan, however, this process assumed distinct characteristics. Owing to the long-standing specialization of the republican economy in agriculture, particularly cotton growing, the share of employment in material production remained relatively high. The accelerated development of industry and construction also unfolded against this background. Nevertheless, this growth was often extensive in nature and was not always accompanied by fundamental qualitative changes in labor productivity [3; 8]. For this reason, the high share of material production did not reflect the technological superiority of the republican economy, but rather the predominance of labor-intensive sectors.

The increase in the share of non-productive sectors also requires a critical assessment. In official interpretations, this process was explained by the expansion of education, healthcare, and cultural services aimed at meeting the needs of the population. In practice, however - especially under Soviet conditions - the growth of this indicator was also associated with the expansion of the bureaucratic administrative apparatus and the increasing complexity of planning and control systems. In Uzbekistan, the development of service sectors often proceeded not so much in response to actual social demand as through adaptation to norms and targets set by the central authorities.

The employment ratios between agriculture and industry, beginning from the mid-twentieth century, were regarded in Soviet economic policy as one of the key indicators of labor resource reallocation. In theoretical terms, this process was interpreted as a movement toward an optimal form of the division of labor. However, practical developments revealed that this scheme contained a number of internal contradictions.

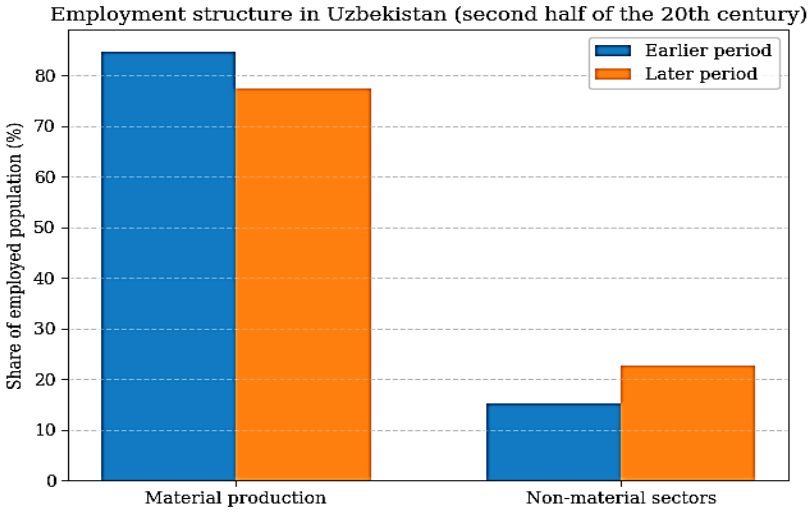


Figure 1. Employment structure in Uzbekistan in the second half of the twentieth century.

Analysis shows that during the 1960s-1970s in Uzbekistan, the share of those employed in agriculture steadily declined, while labor resources were redistributed in favor of industrial sectors. In particular, during this period the number of people engaged in industry increased by approximately 16-17 thousand, largely as a result of certain mobilization and organizational measures. [4; 83]. These changes led to noticeable shifts in the structure of employment in the republic.

If we turn to the figures, in 1960 the share of those employed in agriculture within total employment amounted to 48.2 percent [5; 65], whereas by 1970 this indicator had declined to 42.5 percent. At the same time, the share of employment in industry increased from 16.1 percent in 1960 to 18.4 percent in 1973. This situation indicates the growing impact of the industrialization process on the labor structure of the republic. However, these shifts were achieved not through a sharp increase in labor productivity, but rather through organizational and administrative forms of guidance and mobilization.

One of the noteworthy aspects is the growth of employment in non-productive sectors. During the period under study, the average annual growth rate of employment in these sectors amounted to 2.4 percent at the USSR level, while in Uzbekistan it reached 3.7 percent. [6; 633-634]. This, in turn, indicates a relatively faster expansion of service activities, social sectors, and administrative systems within the republic. At the same time, such growth was not always proportionate to the real needs of the population; rather, it often stemmed from the institutional requirements of a centralized planned economy.

The evidence presented demonstrates that in Uzbekistan during the 1960s-1970s the structure of employment in social production differed markedly from the average all-Union indicators. The relatively low share of those employed in social production in the republic

was not accidental, but the result of the interaction of demographic, ethnic, social, and economic factors. High rates of natural population growth, the predominantly rural settlement pattern, and the insufficient development of service sectors-especially in rural areas-generated systemic imbalances in the utilization of labor resources.

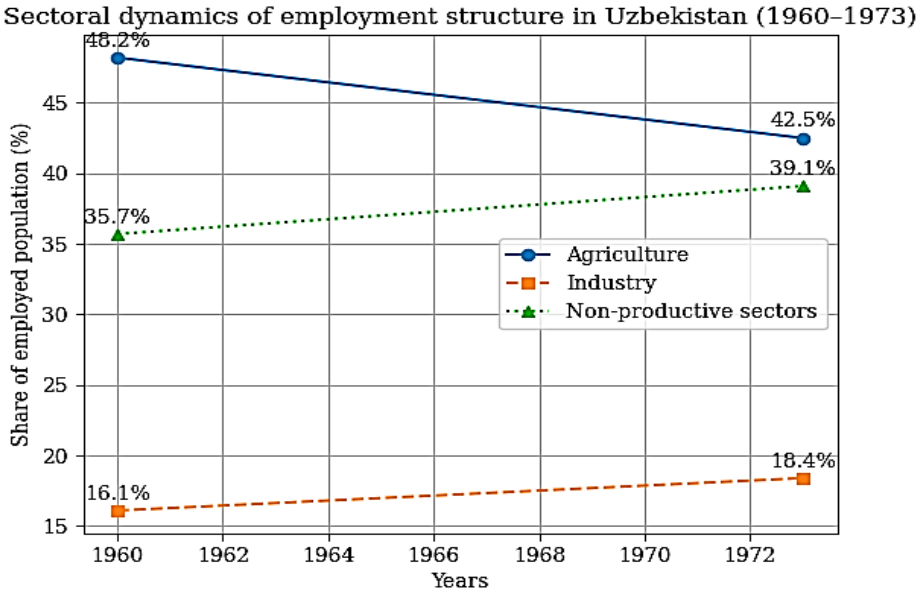


Figure 2. Sectorial dynamics of employment structure in Uzbekistan.

During the period from 1960 to 1970, the 18.3 percent increase in population employment in agriculture constitutes an important indicator of this process. On the one hand, this growth was associated with the rapid increase of the rural population; on the other hand, it reflects the inability of industry and service sectors to generate sufficient alternative employment opportunities in rural areas. As a result, labor resources were largely "retained" within agriculture, which limited the diversification of the employment structure.

At the same time, the relatively slow pace of industrial development in Uzbekistan culminated in an increase of only 13.9 percent during the 1960s - 1970s [7; 42]. This situation hindered the achievement of a balanced distribution of labor resources across sectors of the national economy. The limited expansion of industry was unable to fully absorb labor released from agriculture, and consequently structural problems in employment persisted.

One of the key distinctive features of Uzbekistan's labor market was the low level of women's participation in social production. While female employment at the USSR level reached 51 percent, in the republic this figure did not exceed 42 percent. This disparity in women's employment was further reinforced by territorial factors. In urban areas, the relatively developed sectors of industry, construction, transport, and services expanded employment opportunities for women, whereas in rural areas the limited production base and the heavy burden of household labor resulted in persistently low female employment.

For example, in 1971 the number of home-based workers in Fergana Region amounted to only 342 persons, representing a negligible share of the total regional population. The majority of this group was engaged in services linked to light industry enterprises; in the cities of Fergana, Kokand, and Marginal, home-based workers numbered 132 persons, or 38.6 percent of the total [8; 45]. However, this form of employment did not become established as a stable source of work.

In addition, cases in which trained workers shifted to other types of employment within a short period were widespread. This process particularly intensified shortages of skilled labor in certain industrial sectors. For instance, in 1973 in the city of Tashkent only 60 percent of graduates of vocational and technical schools were employed in positions corresponding to their specialty, while the remainder found employment in other enterprises and household service outlets. As a result, a gap emerged between workforce training and the retention of personnel in practical industrial activity in several branches of industry.

CONCLUSION

The process of labor resource utilization in the Uzbek SSR was shaped not solely by criteria of economic efficiency, but emerged as a complex historical phenomenon closely intertwined with demographic growth, social structure, and territorial disparities. Rapid population increase, the predominance of rural settlement, and the uneven spatial distribution of the production base generated persistent difficulties in the mobilization and effective use of labor resources within the republic.

One of the central challenges of republican economic policy was the rational territorial and sectorial allocation of labor resources. Addressing this task was not limited to the establishment of new industrial enterprises and production capacities alone; it also required the expansion of vocational education, the development of social infrastructure, and the modernization of service sectors. Because these components were not harmonized in a consistent manner, the efficiency of labor resource utilization failed to reach the expected level.

In conclusion, the experience of the Uzbek SSR clearly demonstrates the necessity of a comprehensive, multi-factor approach to labor resource management. This historical case illustrates how insufficient consideration of territorial and demographic specificities under conditions of a centralized economic system led to structural imbalances. In this respect, the findings are of not only historical significance, but also of practical and scholarly relevance for the analysis of contemporary labor markets and employment policies.

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