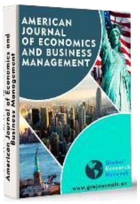

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Article

Organizational and Economic Mechanisms for Establishing Long-Term Cooperation with Clients in the B2b Market of Textile Enterprises

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Abstract: This article analyzed organizational and economic mechanisms for developing long-term customer relationships in the B2B textile market. The study integrated commitment-trust theory, network approach, and relationship marketing concepts. An empirical assessment was conducted based on Uzbekistan's textile export indicators. A conceptual model was developed, including institutional trust, contractual-legal, digital-information, and financial-economic mechanisms. The model was proposed to enhance partnership stability, improve export efficiency, and strengthen long-term customer relationships in B2B markets.

Keywords: B2B Marketing, Textile Industry, Long-Term Partnership, Trust, CRM, Export, Contracts

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1. Introduction

In the modern global economy, the textile industry continues to maintain its position as an important component of national wealth. The strategic importance of the sector is determined not only by production volume or employment levels, but also by its share in foreign trade structure, its value-added creation potential, and the degree of integration into international production chains. Globalization of competition in the light industry market, new consumer demands, and technological transformation have imposed high requirements on the quality of relationships across all segments of the supply chain. In such conditions, enterprises are strengthening their ability to adapt to market fluctuations by establishing long-term and trust-based customer partnerships [1, 2].

Over the past eight years, the textile industry of the Republic of Uzbekistan has undergone profound structural changes: consecutive stages of transition from raw material exports to semi-finished and finished goods exports have been implemented. According to official data, in 2024 the country's textile product exports amounted to 2.87 billion US dollars, accounting for 10.6% of total exports; within the export structure, yarn accounted for 43.2%, while finished textile products reached 39.2% [3]. The country supplied textile products to more than 55 countries, and its international market partnership network demonstrated a diversification trend [4].

The specificity of the business-to-business (B2B) segment is that its purchasing process is multi-stage, involves multiple participants, and has a long decision-making cycle. Large-scale purchases of fabrics, yarns, and finished goods often require long-term contracts, clearly defined quality standards, and a regular delivery schedule. In such conditions, the transactional approach is no longer limited to a one-time sales structure; instead, there is a need to move toward creating institutional and economic forms of continuous interaction [5, 6].

Leading schools of international marketing have proposed several scientific concepts for this transition process, including the trust and commitment theory developed by R. Morgan and S. Hunt, the interaction and network approach of the Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) Group, Meta-analytic studies on relationship marketing led by R. Palmatier also became part of such scientific foundations [7].

The scientific significance of the topic is determined by several aspects. First, there is still insufficient research that provides a systematic theoretical examination of long-term cooperation with B2B clients in the textile industry of Uzbekistan. Second, the task of adapting conceptual models confirmed in global and local academic sources to the practice of Uzbek textile enterprises remains unresolved. Third, in the first quarter of 2025, textile exports amounted to 629.3 million US dollars, which represents a 19.1% decrease on an annual basis [8]; Fluctuations in market conditions ("conjunctural volatility") have made the need to stabilize mechanisms of long-term cooperation even more evident. Fourth, presidential decrees and strategic policy documents have set the task of significantly increasing the share of finished products in total exports by 2028, as well as realizing the product potential in European and US markets [9]; Achieving the defined objectives has assigned an important role to the institutional organization of the quality of customer relationships.

The article follows a coherent approach aimed at transforming scientific theory into practical application. The main objective of the work was to provide a scientific justification of the organizational and economic mechanisms for establishing long-term cooperation with clients in the B2B market of textile enterprises, and to propose an integrated conceptual model adapted to the conditions of Uzbekistan. To achieve this objective, the following tasks were accomplished: leading theoretical approaches in international academic literature were synthesized; the export and production dynamics of the textile industry of Uzbekistan were assessed based on empirical data; and a conceptual model integrating institutional-trust, contractual-legal, information-digital, and economic-financial mechanisms was developed; evidence-based recommendations for the practical application of the model were formulated. The research results serve as a basis for strategic decision-making in industry enterprises, clarification of structural directions in state policy, and expansion of the research base for the scientific community [10].

Literature Review

The issue of establishing long-term cooperation with clients in the business-to-business market has been closely linked to several decades of intellectual development in international marketing. The buyer–seller relationship development stage theory proposed by F. Dwyer, P. Schurr, and S. Oh in 1987 laid one of the earliest methodological foundations for the transition from a transactional approach to a relationship-based approach. The authors identified stages of awareness, exploration, expansion, commitment, and possible dissolution in the development of interorganizational relationships [11]. In the following decades, this framework was further enriched: J. Anderson and J. Narus clarified the distinction between relationships and partnerships and provided a scientific justification for the roles of interdependence, adaptation, and joint investments [12].

R. Morgan and S. Hunt's 1994 work, *"The Commitment-Trust Theory of Relationship Marketing,"* has been recognized as a fundamental contribution to international marketing literature. The authors modeled trust and commitment as central mediating variables and empirically confirmed their impact on cooperation. This approach was subsequently transferred to various industries in later studies, and it was confirmed that the greater the depth of the relationship, the higher the continuity of supply and the level of value creation.

The Industrial Marketing and Purchasing (IMP) research tradition provided another important foundation. H. Hakansson and I. Snehota presented inter-firm relationships not as isolated bilateral structures, but as a complex set of interdependencies embedded within a broader network. The actor–resources–activities model, along with the interaction and network approach, has become a fundamental expression of the "market-as-network" paradigm in modern B2B marketing literature. In subsequent decades, research based on the IMP approach has confirmed that business exchange is carried out through continuous interactions, long-term investments, and the interdependencies of participants [13].

A comprehensive theory of relationship marketing was developed by L. Berry, who highlighted the strategic value of long-term customer relationships in the service sector. The approach later expanded by C. Grönroos placed the ideas of communication, dialogue, and co-creation of value at the center of relationship marketing. Meta-analyses conducted by R. Palmatier and his colleagues synthesized the results of dozens of empirical studies and identified the key factors influencing the effectiveness of relationship marketing. It was confirmed that variables such as communication quality, relationship duration, guaranteed commitments, and conflict management are directly associated with the economic performance of relationships [14].

Among the scientific sources directly related to the textile industry, empirical research on the impact of CRM systems on customer loyalty and market performance occupies a special place. Data-driven decision-making mechanisms were identified as the strongest predictor of loyalty, while personalization and responsive customer communication served as key factors ensuring competitive advantage. B. Paesbrugghe and colleagues' study revealed the micro-dynamics of long-term B2B partnership development at the salesperson level. The authors proposed a three-stage concept involving partner openness and the dynamics of mutual benefit evaluation. A study modeling the long-term effectiveness of supply chains confirmed the structural relationships between satisfaction, trust, commitment, and relationship-specific (adapted) assets using structural equation modeling techniques.

In the scientific literature on the textile industry of Uzbekistan, two main directions have taken a leading place. The first direction analyzes the sector's export potential, production dynamics, and structural changes through macroeconomic indicators [15]. The second direction examines the organizational and economic mechanisms of sustainable development of the sector within the context of the value-added chain, emphasizing the advantages of cluster-based management [16]. The authors discussed the structural advantages of cotton-textile clusters, the extension of value-added chains, and the integration of local producers with international brands. However, the organizational and economic mechanisms of long-term customer cooperation in the B2B market namely trust, contract architecture, digital information integration, and financial incentives as an integrated system have not been sufficiently addressed in the local literature.

The literature analysis made it possible to clearly identify the research gap: although well-developed theoretical frameworks exist at the international level such as the commitment-trust model, the IMP network approach, relationship marketing, and CRM studies they have not been integrated into a unified institutional-economic model for the context of Uzbekistan's textile industry. It was found to be scientifically necessary to develop a synthesis that takes into account the sector's export structure, the international characteristics of customers, and the incentive mechanisms of industrial policy. The theoretical and practical approach aimed at filling this gap is presented in the following sections.

2. Material and Methods

The research methodology was based on a theoretical-analytical approach and focused on integrating the concepts of B2B marketing and relationship marketing. During the research process, methods of systematic literature review, comparative analysis, and conceptual modeling were applied. Scientific sources included articles from internationally indexed journals, monographs, and official statistical databases.

The empirical basis of the study was formed by export indicators and production dynamics of the textile industry of Uzbekistan. Statistical data were summarized through descriptive analysis, and their consistency was verified using comparative methods.

At the central stage of the research, a four-component conceptual model was developed based on the commitment-trust theory and the network approach. The model covered institutional-trust, contractual-legal, information-digital, and economic-financial mechanisms. This methodology ensured the scientific validity of the research results and their practical applicability.

3. Results and Discussion

The textile industry of Uzbekistan has remained one of the most stable export sectors in the country's foreign trade portfolio. According to the results of January–December 2024, the sector's exports reached 2.87 billion US dollars, accounting for 10.6% of the country's total exports. In the export structure, yarn accounted for 43.2%, while finished textile products reached 39.2%. According to independent industrial analytics, yarn exports amounted to 1.237 billion US dollars, finished textile products to 1.124 billion US dollars, knitted fabrics to 292.1 million US dollars, and other fabrics to 145.9 million US dollars. The distribution geography covered more than 55 partner countries, demonstrating a clear trend of international diversification of the sector's network [17].

The production dynamics clearly reflected the technological modernization of the sector. In 2024, real production growth in textile products reached 10.7%, securing one of the leading positions among processing industry sectors. In the first eight months of 2025, the sector's production volume reached 58.5 trillion Uzbek soums, representing a 6.3% increase compared to the previous year [18]. These indicators demonstrated steady production growth and practically confirmed the effectiveness of state policy aimed at transitioning toward higher value-added segments.

At the same time, the sector remained sensitive to fluctuations in the external environment. In the first quarter of 2025, textile exports amounted to 629.3 million US dollars, representing a 19.1% decline compared to the previous year. This situation once again highlighted issues related to the quality of relationships with key partners in the network, delivery rhythm, and the flexibility of pricing mechanisms. In the overall structure of the country's foreign trade, China accounted for 18.9%, Russia 17.6%, Kazakhstan 6.5%, Turkey 4.5%, and South Korea 3.0%. Such geographical distribution has made the task of further accelerating the development of European and US market directions more urgent for textile enterprises.

The B2B segment plays a leading role in the formation of export revenues in the textile industry. The main share of yarn, fabrics, and knitted textiles is integrated into the supply chains of large industrial buyers, foreign garment manufacturers, and international fashion brands. Such purchases are typically characterized by large shipment volumes, rhythmic delivery requirements, and clearly defined quality standards. Therefore, in the B2B segment, relationship quality, contractual stability, and information transparency have become key factors of enterprise competitiveness. Within the framework of a presidential decree, strategic tasks have been defined to strengthen processing chains in the textile, garment, and knitwear industries. The document envisages increasing the share of finished products to up to 70% of total exports by 2028 [19].

Synthesizing approaches from international scientific literature made it possible to identify four interrelated mechanisms for establishing long-term cooperation in the B2B market of textile enterprises. Each mechanism simultaneously performed two functions: first, it reduced existing risks, and then it generated additional value. The mechanisms operated within an integrated system as mutually reinforcing elements; the weakness of any single mechanism limited the potential of the others, while the coordinated functioning of all four elements maximized the resilience of cooperation (Figure 1).

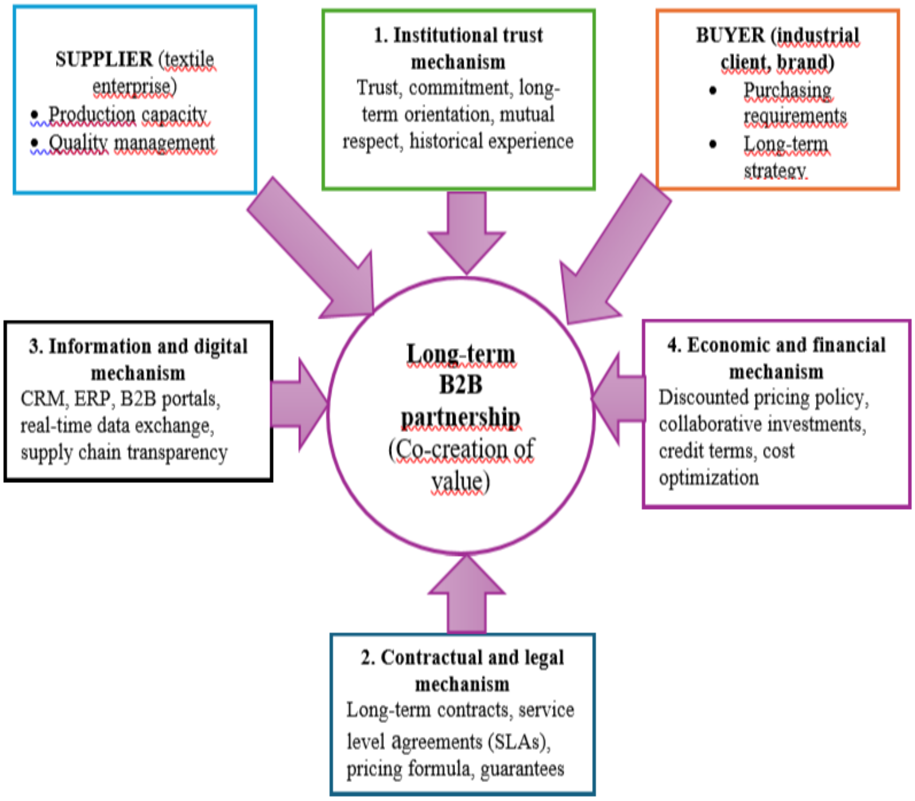

Figure 1. Conceptual model of organizational and economic mechanisms for forming long-term cooperation in the B2B market of textile enterprises

The core of the first mechanism was based on the concepts of trust and commitment. According to the principle proposed by Morgan and Hunt, trust reflects the level of confidence in a partner's reliability and integrity, while commitment is defined as the willingness to make maximum efforts to maintain the relationship [20]. In the B2B textile sector, these two constructs manifested in an institutionalized form: the renewal of long-term contracts, shared cooperation history, full fulfillment of mutual obligations, and the adoption of ethical norms reinforcing trust collectively created the institutional capital of relationships. This capital functioned as a key buffer during periods of inter-firm crises.

The system of international certifications and standards became a formal expression of institutional trust. The certification of cotton raw materials based on international standards strengthened the position of local enterprises within global value chains; the area of cotton fields certified under the Better Cotton Initiative expanded on an annual basis [21]. The institutional value of international certification lies in increasing the perceived level of technological and social responsibility of suppliers in the eyes of buyers, thereby creating a trust base for long-term contracts.

The micro-level expression of trust was formed through interpersonal interactions between employees. The European research tradition analyzing long-term B2B relationships confirmed that the communication process between sales representatives and client delegates progresses through three stages of mutual openness and mutual benefit assessment: becoming business partners, working jointly, and evolving into an integrated personal-business partnership. For textile exporters, long-standing communication with client representatives, technical negotiations at the level of managers and designers, and jointly developed quality control protocols created the micro-level infrastructure of institutional trust. The growth of trust capital reduced negotiation time for new contracts, increased flexibility in responding to price fluctuations, and improved the likelihood of maintaining partnerships during periods of crisis.

The contractual-legal mechanism functioned as the legal framework of relationships and ensured the formal expression of trust. Long-term purchasing contracts typically followed a five-part structure: the master agreement, specifications and service level agreements, pricing formulas, risk-sharing arrangements, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Unlike the transactional approach, such a structure eliminated the need for repeated negotiations for each individual delivery and created an important source of economic efficiency within the relationship.

The flexibility of pricing formulas in contracts played a particularly important role. In the textile sector, fluctuations in global cotton prices became the most sensitive variable in contracts; by using a combination of cotton futures, forward, and spot contracts, price indexation formulas were incorporated into agreements, while the stability of raw material costs was ensured through subsidies to farming households [22]. Such a pricing mechanism served as an institutional key that ensured budget predictability for buyers and revenue stability for suppliers.

The second important element of the contractual-legal mechanism was the risk-sharing arrangement. In long-term cooperation, responsibility for quality defects, delivery delays, exchange rate fluctuations, and geopolitical risks was predetermined. The mechanism of jointly shared risk formed the institutional foundation of relationship resilience and reduced the likelihood of opportunistic contractual behavior. In dispute resolution, mediation, arbitration, and procedures within international trade organizations were applied as more effective solutions compared to national court proceedings, as they helped preserve the possibility of continuing the relationship in the future.

Modern B2B relationships have changed rapidly based on digital platforms. At the core of the information-digital mechanism lie customer relationship management (CRM) systems, enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, electronic data interchange (EDI), and B2B portals. Empirical research on the impact of CRM systems in the textile industry confirmed that data-driven decision-making, personalization, and responsive customer communication are the main predictive factors of customer loyalty [19]. Digital integration within the network has increased supply chain transparency and provided the buyer with operational visibility at every stage.

The next component of the information-digital mechanism is analytical management. Customer behavior analysis, delivery cycle forecasting, inventory management, and real-time quality monitoring have been integrated within digital platforms. Such a management system created a “predictive advantage” for partners: information on seasonal demand fluctuations, customer usage patterns, and price sensitivity became the basis for long-term strategic decisions. Meta-analytic studies have identified communication quality as one of the strongest predictors of relationship effectiveness; the institutional value of digital information exchange further supports this conclusion.

For textile enterprises in Uzbekistan, an important direction of digital transformation is integration with international B2B platforms. Working with specialized textile catalogs oriented toward global markets, as well as digital marketing and automated communication systems, has provided enterprises with new tools for establishing and developing business relationships. This infrastructure has expanded institutional opportunities for local firms and reinforced the strategic importance of the information-digital mechanism.

The fourth mechanism created the economic content of cooperation and coordinated its material benefits. Long-term customer relationships generated a range of additional economic effects beyond transactional revenue, including cost predictability, intra-partnership efficiency, reduced risk exposure, and stable income flows through repeat orders. As relationship depth increased, negotiation time for new contracts decreased and operational efficiency improved; this result has been confirmed in meta-analytic studies as a positive economic outcome of relationship duration [23].

The main tools of the economic-financial mechanism were implemented in the following forms: volume-based discount pricing policies, bonus systems encouraging long-term contract renewal, joint investments, and financing based on raw materials or equipment. Cost optimization has been particularly important in the textile industry, where energy, raw material, and logistics costs constitute a significant share of total production expenses. Joint initiatives to reduce costs within long-term contracts ensured operational efficiency for suppliers and stable pricing conditions for buyers.

Financial incentive instruments of state policy strengthened the economic-financial mechanism of the sector. Based on presidential decrees, revenues from yarn and fabric exports were directed to export support funds, and commercial banks were granted the ability to provide preferential foreign currency loans to enterprises. The Development Strategy of New Uzbekistan sets the task of doubling textile production and expanding the value-added chain in light industry. Such structural policy provides enterprises with financial flexibility and institutional support for building long-term customer partnerships.

The integrated effect of the four mechanisms produced a result that was higher than the sum of their individual contributions. The mediating variable positions in Morgan and Hunt's model provided the theoretical foundation for the integration of these mechanisms. Institutional trust accelerated contract formation; the contractual-legal mechanism expanded the scope of information exchange; the information-digital mechanism ensured economic efficiency; and the financial mechanism provided a material basis for trust. The cycle was reinforced in a continuous loop, and the quality of relationships became an institutional attribute of industrial competitiveness.

As a practical outcome, enterprises that integrated all four mechanisms achieved several advantages. First, the predictability of export revenues improved; second, flexibility in responding to fluctuations in cotton and currency prices increased; third, deeper forms of cooperation emerged with international brands in product design and production planning; and fourth, the transition toward higher value-added stages, particularly finished goods markets, accelerated. These results contributed to the sector's real production growth of 10.7% in 2024 and strengthened the position of local enterprises within global value chains.

4. Conclusion

The results of the study show that the process of establishing long-term cooperation with clients in the B2B market of textile enterprises is systemic and multi-component in nature. According to the developed conceptual approach, institutional-trust, contractual-legal, information-digital, and economic-financial mechanisms operate in an interconnected manner and ensure the stability of cooperation. The analysis revealed that the synergy of these mechanisms increases the continuity of export operations, contractual discipline, and the sustainability of customer relationships. The current development indicators of Uzbekistan's textile industry confirm the practical significance of this approach.

The study also substantiates that long-term B2B cooperation is determined not only by price or product quality, but also by the level of institutional trust, clear contractual arrangements, and digital integration. In particular, it was found that increased information exchange and transparency strengthen operational coordination with clients.

The practical recommendations are as follows:

First, at the enterprise level, it is necessary to develop separate cooperation strategies for key customer segments. In this regard, it is recommended to increase the share of long-term contracts and ensure systematic management of relationships with strategic clients.

Second, to improve contractual-legal mechanisms, it is necessary to introduce clear provisions on price indexation, delivery schedules, and risk-sharing. This approach enhances operational stability.

Third, the development of information-digital infrastructure should be considered a priority direction. The implementation of CRM systems, electronic data interchange, and real-time monitoring tools will optimize customer interactions.

Fourth, it is necessary to expand economic and financial incentive mechanisms. Volume-based discounts, bonus systems for long-term contracts, and joint investment projects will increase cooperation efficiency.

Fifth, strengthening support measures at the state and sectoral levels is of critical importance. Export financing, expansion of certification systems, and development of logistics infrastructure will reinforce the institutional foundations of B2B relationships.

The proposed approach enables textile enterprises to build stable and economically efficient cooperation with clients, increase export potential, and strengthen competitiveness in international markets.

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