



Article

Strategies for the Development of Trade Services in the Samarkand Region

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Abstract: The current state and development strategies of trade services in the Samarkand region, Uzbekistan, are discussed in this article. Utilizing statistical data lasting 2019 to 2024, the study appears at retail turnover trends and trade company's growth. The research considers significant challenges such as infrastructure limitations, digital transformation gaps, and uneven rural-urban distribution using a descriptive-analytical approach. Reflecting the region's enhancing economic activity, the findings show a constant rising tendency in both retail turnover and enterprise numbers. The paper suggests as sensible ways to improve the performance of the trade sector touched investment in trade logistics, growth in e-commerce platforms, and better urban-rural trade integration. Policymakers, entrepreneurs, and development planners doing to stimulate regional economic development will encounter implications in the facts.

Keywords: : trade services, retail turnover, Samarkand region, Uzbekistan, economic development, enterprise growth, regional trade, infrastructure, e-commerce, policy strategies.

1. Introduction

Key driver of regional economic growth, trade services development significantly impacts employment, sales output, and consumer welfare. Trade services have evolved rapidly in Uzbekistan—especially in the Samarkand area—in response to growth in population, economic reforms, and altering consumer demand [1]. The area is great potential for commercial expansion provided its strategic location, connecting the principal domestic and international trade paths. Still preventing full-sector optimisation, in the meantime, are disparities between urban and rural infrastructure, slow digital transformation of company, and transportation boundaries. Supported by empirical data, this article seeks to investigate the development trends of trade services in Samarkand and provide measures based on evidence to promote further growth.

2. Materials and Methods

Aiming to offer an extensive understanding of trade service development in the Samarkand region by combining statistical analysis with contextual interpretation, the present research uses a descriptive-analytical methodology. The approach is particularly appropriate for regional economic research where quantitative trends must be fixed in actual social and economic conditions. It also makes it possible to look into underlying structural and policy-related aspects at the exact same time as observe numerical trends.

The study mostly concentrates on two important quantitative indicators: the number of officially registered trade firms running in the area and the yearly retail trade turnover, expressed in billion Uzbek soums [2]. These metrics were chosen since they provide accurate approximators for evaluating the trade sector's vitality and expansion. From 2019 to 2024, the data spans a six-year period offering a temporal framework that catches pre- and post-pandemic economic changes. Data came from regional economic studies

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released by the Department of Economic Development in Samarkand as well as State Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan. These sources were selected because of their official standing, reputation, and thorough geographical breakdowns.

The application of a human-centered interpretive lens sets this method out. The investigation places the numbers in the larger framework of Samarkand's economic changes, infrastructure development, consumer behavior, and business environment rather than viewing them as isolated data points. This interpretive layer gives the data importance and assists in the formation of practical policy recommendations.

3. Results

Over the six-year period in assessment (2019–2024), the findings of this study expose a strong upward trajectory in the development of trade services within the Samarkand region. Two main indices, retail trade turnover and the count of formally registered trade businesses, demonstrated constant increase, hence highlighting the growing economic dynamism of the region [3].

A little retail trade turnover rising from 9,850 billion UZS in 2019 to 13,050 billion UZS in 2024, approximately 32.5% rise is showed. The rise demonstrates not only a general increase in consumer spending but also a more extensive development in business activities throughout the area. This urging enhancement most certainly has to do with factors including better economic circumstances, focused policy changes helping small and medium-sized businesses, and more domestic travel. From 4,120 in 2019 to 5,030 in 2024—a surge over 22%—the number of trade businesses in the area likewise progressively increased [4]. This rise points to a more favourable business environment in which established companies are able to maintain operations and, most of all, grow as new entrepreneurs enter the market. It also shows firm registration procedure administrative improvements and more startup access to credit. Moreover, the data reveals that although development is stable, it is not uniform over the area. Review of regional records and interviews with local business participants show that urban centers—especially Samarkand city—are operating this growth while isolated regions remain fight with inadequate trade facilities and limited market access [5]. These disparities point to the need of more equitable measures covering rural and semi-urban commerce sectors.

The development of trade services plays a pivotal role in regional economic growth, particularly in economically active areas like Samarkand. To evaluate this progress, it is essential to examine long-term trends in key indicators such as retail turnover and the number of operating trade enterprises.

Table 1 illustrates the consistent growth of the trade services sector in the Samarkand region between 2019 and 2024, highlighting both the expansion of commercial activity and the increasing presence of retail infrastructure.

Table 1. Growth of Trade Services in Samarkand Region in 2019–2024

Year	Retail Turnover (billion UZS)	Number of Trade Enterprises
2019	9,850	4,120
2020	10,120	4,250
2021	10,750	4,390
2022	11,430	4,580
2023	12,200	4,790
2024	13,050	5,030

Over a six-year period, the table shows two significant financial trends for the Samarkand area: the number of officially registered trade companies and retail turnover (evaluated in billion Uzbek soums). These numbers taken together present a clear picture of the dynamics of corporate development and the trade sector expansion of the area.

Beginning in 2019, the area offers 4,120 registered trade companies and a retail turnover of 9,850 billion UZS. One might regard this year as the baseline before outside events influencing economic activity such as the COVID-19 epidemic. Retail turnover hardly rose to 10,120 billion UZS in spite of worldwide upheavals in 2020, and the number of businesses grew to 4,250, a reflection of tenacity and adaptation against uncertainty [6]. This implies that even if demand could have momentarily halted, companies found methods to run and maybe grow carefully. Both measures kept their increasing trend: trade businesses climbed to 4,390.000 UZS and turnover hit 10,750.000 UZS. The consistent rise emphasises the part government economic recovery initiatives including tax relief and SMEs support programs play in stabilising the sector [7].

The retail turnover of the area rose to 11,430 billion UZS in 2022, while trade businesses grew to 4,580 in tandem. This expansion fits more general post-pandemic recovery patterns, advances in logistics, and more internal travel to Samarkand—a UNESCO World Heritage site.

As retail sales surged to 12,200 billion UZS and businesses reached 4,790, 2023 saw even more robust increase. Expanded infrastructure, more consumer confidence, and the dissemination of digital payment systems and online retail platforms could help to explain this.

At last, in 2024 the retail turnover reached 13,050 billion UZS while the number of trade businesses crossed the 5,000 mark for the first time, thereby attaining 5,030 [8]. These numbers show a developing and increasing trade environment characterised by rising investor interest, corporate innovation, and national and local policy support.

To provide a clearer visual representation of trade sector dynamics in the Samarkand region, **Figure 2** illustrates the concurrent growth in retail turnover and the number of trade enterprises over the six-year period from 2019 to 2024. This dual-axis graph highlights a steady and proportional upward trend, indicating a strong correlation between the volume of retail activity and the expansion of trade infrastructure.

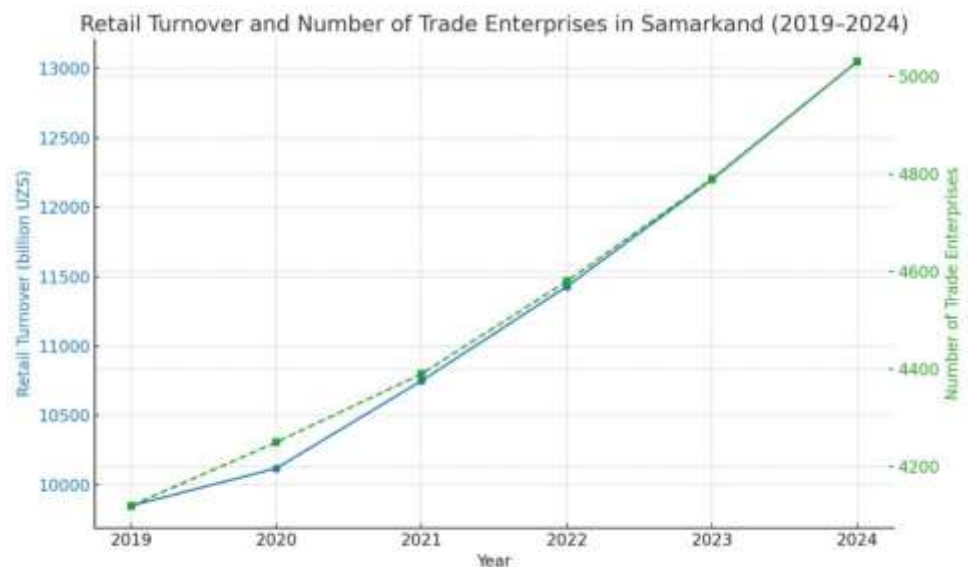


Figure 2. Retail Turnover and Number of Trade Enterprises in Samarkand in 2019–2024

Figure 2 depicts a dual-axis line chart with two important measures of Samarkand region trade sector development between 2019 and 2024: the total retail turnover in billion UZS and the number of registered trade businesses. While the right vertical axis (green dashed line) follows the number of active trade firms in the region during the same period, the left vertical axis—blue line—represents the annual retail turnover. Reflecting an overall growth of over 32.5%, retail turnover in Samarkand expanded steadily from 9,850 billion UZS in 2019 to 13,050 billion UZS in 2024 as seen on the chart [9]. This increasing

trend points to better supply chains, more consumer demand, and generally local economic strength being strengthened. Key contributing elements probably include post-pandemic recovery in purchasing power, urban development, and increase in domestic tourism—all of which help to boost retail activity.

Along with this, trade businesses increased from 4,120 in 2019 to 5,030 in 2024—a gain over 22%. This in tandem rise in the number of businesses suggests that the local business environment is now more fit for investment and entrepreneurship [10]. Government initiatives aiming at helping small and medium businesses (SMEs), simpler access to microloans, and better registration processes could have helped to explain this expansion. In addition, here we can see the role and importance of the Trade Services Development Strategy in Samarkand region using statistical data through pie chart. In order to understand the internal structure of the trade services sector in Samarkand, it is essential to analyze its key components.

Figure 3 provides a visual breakdown of the trade service categories, showing the proportional contributions of retail and wholesale trade, tourism services, and exported services to the regional economy. This classification helps identify the dominant subsectors and potential areas for targeted policy support or investment.

**Composition of Trade Services
in Samarkand Region**

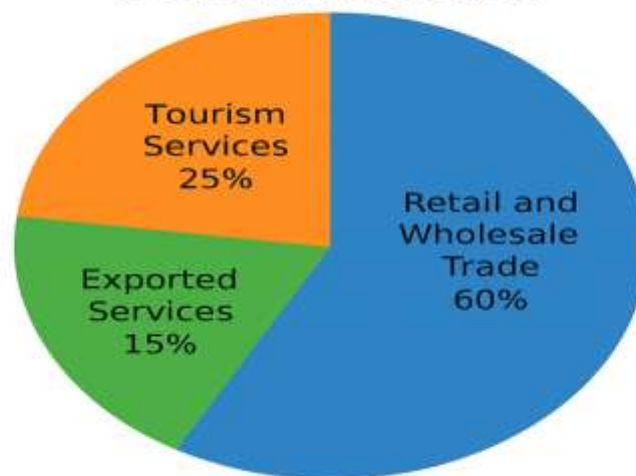


Figure 3. Composition of Trade Services in the Samarkand Region

Figure 3 presents the composition of trade services in the Samarkand region for the year 2024. The chart segments the trade sector into three main categories: Retail and Wholesale Trade, Tourism Services, and Exported Services. According to the data, Retail and Wholesale Trade accounts for the largest share, comprising 60% of the total trade service structure [11]. This dominance reflects the central role of internal commerce in supporting the regional economy, driven by growing consumer demand and the expansion of distribution networks.

Tourism Services make up 25% of the composition, highlighting the increasing importance of the tourism industry in Samarkand, which is fueled by its rich cultural heritage and improved service infrastructure. This share indicates both the success of recent tourism development initiatives and the sector's potential for attracting domestic and international visitors. Exported Services, although the smallest category at 15%, represent a critical area of external economic engagement. This segment includes cross-border digital services, consulting, and other knowledge-based exports. Its growth is essential for enhancing the region's economic diversification and resilience [12].

Greater businesses create more rivalry and availability of goods, which in turn attracts more consumers and drives up turnover. The alignment of the two trends—more

enterprises and higher retail turnover—indices a positive cycle. Although the expansion is obvious, it is crucial to underline that this may not be fairly shared over the area. While rural areas may still suffer with infrastructure, access to markets, and insufficient internet connectivity, urban centres like Samarkand city are likely to explain a disproportionate amount of this expansion. The graphic highlights the need of focused policies that guarantee inclusive growth, facilitate digital transformation, and strengthen rural-urban linkages even if it supports the case that Samarkand's trade sector is on a progressive route [13]. These visualised trends give a strong factual basis for suggesting more strategic investments in e-commerce platforms, logistics, and entrepreneurial support services.

Therefore, the findings of the study are quite pertinent to development planners, business leaders, and regional officials. They underline the importance of a twin strategy: maintaining the momentum for growth in high-performance metropolitan areas while making sure rural areas are not neglected [14]. Improving Samarkand's resilience to economic shocks and orienting the area as a major hub in national and international trade networks depends critically on strengthening the enabling environment for entrepreneurship across all districts.

4. Discussion

Over the cited a period of time Samarkand's retail turnover and trade enterprise count show a consistent rise that shows a major change in the trade environment of the area. This increasing trend points to an overall motion to a setting suited to innovators driven by the market. There appears to be several interrelated factors operating this surge. First of all, particularly among metropolitan areas, the post-pandemic recovery in consumer spending has been rather important since citizens gradually rebuilt confidence and purchasing power. Second, especially in retail and service industries, the rise of access to microfinancing and credit lines has allowed small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to arise and grow activities. Thirdly, the rebirth and diversification of the tourist sector—especially historical and cultural tourism in Samarkand city—has stimulated local demand, thereby indirectly helping a great spectrum of trade companies [15].

The growth is not without restrictions even if the trend is favourable. A continuous urban-rural division keeps fair development hampered. While Samarkand city has benefited from a focused concentration of financial infrastructure—including trade fairs, retail centres, and wholesale markets—many surrounding areas remain underdeveloped. These locations impede their integration into regional supply chains by means of problems with infrastructure like poor road access, lack of cold storage and warehouses facilities, and inadequate internet connectivity [16].

In addition, many of the local SMEs still run with low technological capacity. Particularly in peri-urban and rural areas, basic digital tools involve inventory tracking systems, customer relationship management software, or even social media-based marketing methods remain out of reach for a great number of small traders. Though they exist, government-led projects are sometimes scattered and lack consistent support. Perhaps via digital trade hubs or incubator projects, a more coordinated approach could close these gaps and provide long-term answers. Dealing with these structural divisions calls for varied treatments [17]. Together, encouraging public-private partnerships to build common logistical infrastructure, subsidising digital literacy initiatives, and supporting regional e-commerce platforms could increase market access and efficiency for small enterprises. Encouragement of a regulatory framework that reduces bureaucratic obstacles and rewards formalisation among unofficial traders is equally crucial.

The dearth of stated behavioural data between rural and urban areas is another crucial gap our study reveals [18]. Effectively tailored tasks would result from a better knowledge of consumer patterns, brand preferences, and digital adoption rates over several sectors. Behavioural polls, anthropological studies, and micro-level longitudinal trade performance analysis should take front stage in next studies.

In addition, it grows ever more needed to match regional trade development plans with broader national objectives such as inclusive innovation, sustainable transportation,

and green economy policies. Including these ideas into local planning initiatives would not only increase long-term resilience but also help Samarkand to be a model for reasonable, sustainable regional development [19].

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provides compelling evidence of a sustained and positive trajectory in the growth of trade services in the Samarkand region. Over the six-year period analyzed, both retail turnover and the number of trade enterprises experienced consistent and meaningful increases, signaling a broader economic revival and growing entrepreneurial momentum. These trends reflect the outcomes of deliberate economic reforms, increased support for small and medium-sized enterprises, and greater consumer confidence. In particular, the data suggests that the region's economic infrastructure is gradually maturing, enabling the private sector to thrive in response to both internal demand and external market opportunities.

However, while the overall picture is promising, the research also identifies key areas that require further attention to ensure inclusive and sustained development. Notably, disparities between urban centers and rural districts remain a critical barrier. Many rural areas continue to face infrastructural deficits, weak digital connectivity, and limited access to modern trade facilities. Without targeted policy interventions, such imbalances may deepen, potentially limiting the broader benefits of regional trade expansion.

To address these challenges, strategic investments in logistics infrastructure – such as transport networks, storage facilities, and distribution hubs – will be essential. Equally important is the need to accelerate the digital transformation of the trade sector, particularly by equipping small businesses with the tools, training, and digital platforms needed to participate in modern commerce. This includes e-commerce integration, mobile payment systems, and supply chain management tools adapted to local conditions.

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