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Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13961

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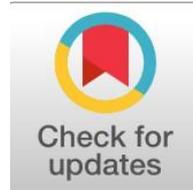
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Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13961

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Improving the Economic Mechanism for Increasing the Efficiency of Service Enterprises

Mullayeva Mexrangiz Axtam Qizi, mehrangizmullaeva6@gmail.com (*)

PhD Researcher, Department of Digital Economy, Samarkand State University, Uzbekistan, Uzbekistan

(*) Corresponding author

Abstract

General Background: The service sector is a major driver of economic growth, employment, and structural transformation in modern economies. **Specific Background:** In the Samarkand region, service enterprises have expanded significantly during 2015–2024, supported by institutional reforms, digitalization, and growing demand for services. **Knowledge Gap:** Despite positive growth, challenges remain, including uneven infrastructure, limited financial resources, low technological modernization, and human capital constraints, indicating the absence of an integrated economic mechanism for improving efficiency. **Aims:** This study aims to analyze development trends and propose a scientifically grounded economic mechanism model to improve service enterprise efficiency. **Results:** The findings show more than fivefold growth in service volume, increased employment, rising labor productivity, and expanding digital services. Key determinants include institutional support, financial accessibility, infrastructure development, digital transformation, and human capital. **Novelty:** The study develops a comprehensive economic mechanism model integrating state regulation, market processes, innovation, and digital transformation to optimize service enterprise performance. **Implications:** The proposed model provides a foundation for regional economic policy, supporting productivity growth, service quality improvement, and balanced regional development in the service sector.

Highlights:

- Service Output Expanded Over Fivefold Alongside Rising Workforce Participation
- Digital Adoption and Infrastructure Expansion Linked to Productivity Gains
- Integrated Framework Combining Policy, Innovation, and Enterprise Systems Proposed

Keywords: Service Sector, Service Enterprises, Economic Efficiency, Digital Transformation, Regional Development.

Published date: 2026-03-29

Introduction

The service sector plays an increasingly important role in the structure of modern economies. In developed countries, services contribution to gross domestic product is above 70 percent whereas it has turned out to be the key driver of economic growth, employment and innovation in developing nations. The development of service activities brings not only a factor for economic diversification, but also an improvement in the quality of life of the population. In the last decades globalization, technological advancement and traceable digitalization have radically transformed the nature of service activities. A growing number of service enterprises are introducing new technologies, digital platforms and management methods to enhance the quality of their services. Consequently, the increase in productivity of service enterprises is one of the main goals of the economic policy in many countries.

Economic transformations of a global scale focused on the modernization of the national economy are being actively carried out in Uzbekistan. Government policies have focused on encouraging around sustaining small businesses, strengthening service infrastructure and improving conducive environment for entrepreneurship development in service sector. As a consequence, the proportion of services in national economy has been growing steadily. Recent statistical data indicates that the service sector occupies a considerable share of employment and is a key factor in regional economic development. Service enterprises, in particular, help increase the number of small businesses, create new jobs and improve living standards. But besides the dynamics of positive development, there are still a number of problems with effective functioning of service enterprises. These issues are as follows: insufficient technological modernization, limited financial resources, lack of highly qualified personnel, and the development of a service infrastructure that is not uniform in all regions.

Therefore, these problems indicate the need to form effective economic incentives aimed at improving the efficiency of service enterprises. Such systems would enable optimal allocation of available resources, increase production efficiency/service quality, and improve service enterprises' competitiveness.

Service sector in the economic development of Uzbekistan's Samarkand region Abstract The Samarkand region is one of the most powerful and significant economic regions of Uzbekistan, where the service sector occupies an important role in regional economic growth. There is a significant capacity for the future development of tourism, trade, transport and other types of service activities in the region. Thus, the study of service enterprises in the Samarkand region and development of mechanisms for enhancing their efficiency are scientifically and practically relevant. The general goal of the research is to study the problem of development dynamics of service enterprises and formulate scientifically grounded recommendations for improving the economic mechanism aimed at increasing their efficiency.

The research objectives include:

- analyzing theoretical approaches to service enterprise efficiency;
- studying the development trends of the service sector in the Samarkand region;
- identifying key factors affecting service enterprise efficiency;
- Construction of a comprehensive economic mechanism model for enhancing the efficiency of service enterprises.

It is expected that the results of the study will contribute to the development of scientific approaches in improving the efficiency of service enterprises and develop practical recommendations for regional economic policy.

Literature Review

Modern economic researches discussed outwardly the growth of service sector and effectiveness of service enterprises. Since the coming decades, thinkers have highlighted the expanding function of services on economic development growth, job creation and innovation procedures. As stated by Kotler (2017), the service sector is one of the most crucial scales in contemporary economies, considering the value of a quality product lies, not just in palpable goods offered to customers but also adequate delivery processes and customer-based solution. The author insists that service businesses are competitive primarily on the basis of service quality, creativity and positive managerial practices. As per Fitzsimmons and Fitzsimmons (2019), the service enterprise performance is driven by key components such as operational productivity, quality of service, innovation in technology and human resources management. Their research highlights the need for service enterprises to continuously enhance their operational processes in order to stay competitive, especially under changing market conditions. Innovation in the traditional manufacturing sector has been closely linked to improved performance (Rollins, 2015), where Porter (2008) suggested that competitiveness, whether of goods or services provided, depends mostly on enterprises' ability to develop and implement innovation strategies and enhance operational effectiveness. Porter's theory of competitive advantage substantiates that the enterprises which are capable of managing its resources well and innovating produces higher productivity in a sustainable manner. Digital transformation has emerged as a significant driver of the development of the service sector in recent years. As Brynjolfsson and McAfee (2016, p.134) have pointed out, not only do these digital technologies significantly boost productivity through algorithms⁸ but also reduce transaction costs⁹ and open up new avenues for service innovation¹⁰: The digitalization of platforms, e-commerce and online services have resulted in the evolution of service delivery methods. Many researchers also stress the importance of small firms in service sector formation. Small and medium enterprises operating in the service sector hold a vital importance of employment generation and economic diversification in developing countries (World Bank, 2023). A key aspect in the development of the service

sector is the efficiency improvement of service enterprises. Various service enterprises usually measure their efficiency using parameters like productivity, profitability ratio, quality of services and satisfaction ratio. According to Grönroos (2015), the effectiveness of service firms shouldn't only be assessed by financial aspects, but also by qualitative features like service quality, customer experience and innovative capabilities. Under the perspective of service management theories, firms that harmoniously integrate operational excellence with high service quality earned superior competitive advantage in the market. Researchers have further drawn attention to the role of infrastructure enhancement, institutional backup, and regional policy in driving growth in service sectors across regions (in particular see [64]). Regional Data Gaps in Infrastructure, Investment and Human Capital: The design of service enterprises is also influenced by regional disparities in terms of infrastructure, investment and human capital. In Uzbekistan, the service sector has been growing rapidly in recent years due to economic reforms and initiatives aimed at promoting entrepreneurship. Programs implemented by the government to promote tourism, transport, trade and digital services have contributed a lot to the growth of service activities. However, despite the positive trends in developing the direction of improvement of service enterprises efficiency, a number of problems still remain. This includes constraints such as limited financial capabilities, low digitalization levels, lack of technological modernization and human capital gaps. Thus, in order to enhance the efficiency and quality of service enterprises it is necessary to overcome the mechanisms of their economic functioning as such an integrated approach that does: combine institutional, technological, financial and organizational moments. This will enable rational utilization of available resources and foster innovation driven development of service enterprises. The current research adds to the literature on this topic by (1) developing a holistic model of an economic mechanism for the implementation of measures aimed at improving the efficiency of service enterprises in regional economies, including with regard to their organization within specific areas, particularly in the Samarkand region.

Research Methodology

The methodology of this research leverages an in-depth analytical impulse to evaluate service efficiencies enterprises and found leverage points for improving their performance. The research is a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods of research. These methodologies provide systematic analysis of service sector evolution, as well as investigation a scientific basis for the development of recommendations to improve economic mechanism of service enterprises.

This research was conducted by using the following methods:

- statistical analysis
- comparative analysis
- economic modeling
- system analysis
- structural analysis
- scientific generalization

The statistical and analytical data used in this study are based on State

Statistics Committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regional statistical offices, and one of the analytical reports supporting the development of the service sector of the Republic of Uzbekistan, regional statistical departments, and analytical reports related to the development of the service sector. The study focuses on the Samarkand region, which is one of the leading regions in terms of service sector development in Uzbekistan. The research covers the period 2015–2024, which allows for analyzing long-term development trends and structural changes in the service sector. The efficiency of service enterprises can be evaluated using a system of economic indicators that reflect the productivity of resources used and the overall effectiveness of service activities.

In this research, the following indicators were selected to assess service enterprise efficiency:

- volume of services provided
- net income
- net profit
- profitability level
- labor productivity
- service cost
- service speed

- customer satisfaction level
- service quality
- digital service share

In this regard, these indicators are useful in estimating both the economic and qualitative parameters of service enterprise efficiency. From the service enterprises the following basic indicator innovatively was used to monitor such efficiency.

$$E = Q/L$$

E – efficiency indicator of service enterprises Q – total volume of services provided L – labor resources involved in service production

This is an indicator which shows the efficiency of clear resources use through time comparison.

Service enterprises with higher value on this indicator might prove greater usage of labor resources. Service enterprises' efficiency relies on multiple interconnected factors. Thus, the economic mechanism for the improvement of service enterprise efficiency was analyzed from a system approach.

The system includes the following components:

- institutional factors
- financial factors
- technological factors
- organizational factors
- human capital factors

The interaction of these components determines the overall effectiveness of service enterprises. For example, institutional support mechanisms such as government policies and regulatory frameworks can significantly influence the development of service enterprises. At the same time, technological innovations and digital transformation contribute to improving operational efficiency and service quality.

The research was conducted in several stages.

Stage 1 - Analysis of theoretical approaches. At this stage, theoretical approaches to service enterprise efficiency and economic mechanisms were analyzed based on international academic literature.

Stage 2 - Statistical analysis. The development dynamics of the service sector in the Samarkand region were analyzed using statistical data for the period 2015–2024.

Stage 3 - Factor efficiency identification. Comparative analysis led to the identification of key factors affecting the efficiency of service enterprises.

Stage 4 - Creation of economic mechanism model. A macroeconomic mechanism model based on the results of analysis was constructed to boost service enterprise efficiency.

Despite the multifaceted analytical methods employed in this study, there are certain limitations to address:

Availability of detailed statistical data on particular service sectors at the scale of regions is limited. Second, some qualitative indicators such as customer satisfaction and service quality are difficult to measure accurately due to the lack of standardized statistical indicators.

Nevertheless, the use of multiple analytical methods and long-term statistical data allows for obtaining reliable research results and developing scientifically grounded recommendations.

Results

In Uzbekistan, the service sector has been one of the most rapidly growing areas of the regional economy. The Samarkand region, in particular, showed stable growth rates for services; this is due to both favorable institutional reforms and the expansion of small business activities and demand for various types of services.

Structural shifts took place in the service sphere of the Samarkand region during 2015–2024. Factors that paved the way for an expansion of service enterprises included the establishment of tourism infrastructures, growth in trade activities, and the

Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13961

rising importance of digital technologies in service delivery.

The volume of services provided in the region has increased significantly over the study period.

Table 1. Dynamics of service sector development in the Samarkand region (2015–2024)

Year	Volume of services (bln UZS)	Growth rate (%)	Number of service enterprises	Employment in services (%)
2015	3842	108.1	14200	32.4
2017	5120	110.3	15840	33.9
2019	7310	112.4	17620	35.8
2021	10850	114.6	21450	38.5
2023	17620	115.2	28400	40.9
2024	21470	116.8	31540	41.7

The data show that the total volume of services increased more than five times during the analyzed period. This growth indicates the increasing importance of the service sector as a key component of regional economic development. The number of service enterprises also increased significantly, which reflects the expansion of small businesses and private entrepreneurship in the region. The increase in employment in the service sector indicates that services are becoming one of the main sources of job creation.

The service sector consists of various types of economic activities that differ in terms of productivity, capital intensity, and employment levels. An analysis of the structure of service activities allows identifying the most rapidly developing service industries.

Table 2. Structure of service activities in the Samarkand region (2024)

Type of service	Share (%)
Trade services	29.4
Transport services	18.7
Tourism services	15.3
Education services	12.6
Health services	10.2
Household services	7.1
ICT services	6.7

Trade services account for the largest share of the service sector. This can be explained by the rapid development of retail trade and wholesale markets in the region.

The transport services which have the second largest share is explained by the geographical location of the region Samarkand as one of big transport knots connecting major economic centers.

There has been significant growth in tourism services as well over the recent years. The Samarkand region is one of the major tourist destinations in Central Asia, which contribute to the development of hospitality, catering and tourism services.

Still, ICT services account for a relatively small share of overall services but are fast growing as the role of digital technologies and online services continue to expand.

The per capita volume of services is one of the significant indicators used in evaluating the development level of the service sector; This indicator shows population side availability and access to services.

Table 3. Service volume per capita in the Samarkand region

Year	Total service volume (bln UZS)	Population (mln people)	Service volume per capita (thousand UZS)
2015	3842	3.5	1097
2018	6150	3.7	1662
2020	8915	3.9	2286
2022	14520	4.0	3630
2024	21470	4.1	5237

Academia Open

Vol. 11 No. 1 (2026): June
DOI: 10.21070/acopen.11.2026.13961

The data show that the volume of services per capita increased nearly five times between 2015 and 2024. This indicates a significant improvement in service accessibility and an increase in consumer demand for services.

Labor productivity is one of the key indicators used to measure the efficiency of service enterprises. Higher productivity levels indicate more efficient use of labor resources.

Table 4. Labor productivity in service enterprises

Year	Total services (bln UZS)	Number of employees (thousand)	Labor productivity (mln UZS per employee)
2015	3842	174	22.1
2018	6150	198	31.0
2020	8915	257	34.7
2022	14520	298	48.7
2024	21470	381	56.3

The results show that labor productivity increased significantly over the study period. The increase in productivity can be explained by several factors:

- introduction of digital technologies
- improvement of service management systems
- expansion of service infrastructure
- growth of entrepreneurial activities

Digital transformation plays an important role in improving the efficiency of service enterprises. The development of digital platforms, electronic payment systems, and online services significantly increases the productivity of service enterprises.

Table 5. Digital transformation indicators in the service sector

Indicator	2015	2020	2024
Share of digital services (%)	8.5	17.2	32.6
Number of online service platforms	5	17	42
Share of electronic payments (%)	18.4	41.6	67.3

The rapid growth of digital services indicates the increasing role of digital technologies in the development of the service sector. Digitalization contributes to:

- reducing transaction costs
- increasing service accessibility
- improving service quality
- enhancing customer satisfaction

Head of the Samarkand regional department for Economy and Industry, candidate of economic sciences A.S.Hayotov The development analysis shows that service sector is developed unevenly on districts of the Samarkand region. Urban areas exemplifying greater population density and enhanced infrastructure, like Samarkand city or Kattakurgan city, show more prominent service growth.

Model econometric pour évaluation de l'efficience service entreprise. An econometric regression model was developed in order to further analyze on factors affecting the efficiency of service enterprises. The model enables to assess the influence of key economic and institutional factors on indicator of efficiency of service enterprises. The econometric model can be written as:

$$E = \alpha + \beta_1 DI + \beta_2 FI + \beta_3 INF + \beta_4 HC + \beta_5 INV + \varepsilon$$

Where:

E – efficiency of service enterprises

- DI – level of digitalization in service activities
- FI – financial accessibility for service enterprises
- INF – level of service infrastructure development
- HC – human capital development level

- INV – investment volume in service sector
- α – constant term
- $\beta_1 \dots \beta_5$ – regression coefficients
- ε – error term

This model allows assessing how different economic factors influence the efficiency of service enterprises in the Samarkand region. The analysis of regression enables to determine which of the four examined factors in the service sector are influencing productivity growth the most. The outcomes of this analysis can form the scientific foundation for targeted regional policies to improve service enterprise efficiency.

Conversely, rural districts are less developed with service. Nevertheless, tourism and household services in rural areas are gradually improving the service infrastructure of these regions.

To lessen the unevenness of service sectors in different regions, policy measures must be targeted to support service enterprises in rural areas.

Discussion

The results of the empirical studies show that the service sector has emerged as one of the key drivers of regional economic development in Samarkand. The fast-growing speed of service enterprises, rising employment scale and expanding service activities show that the service industry is starting to become an important part in regional economic structure. The improvements of the efficiency for service enterprise is the result of some decisive factors according to this analysis. These factors encompass institutional support, infrastructural development, digital transformation, financial accessibility and human capital development. English summary: The study analyzes the volume of services provided in the Samarkand region from 2005 to 2022, based on an annual report published by a regional administration. Between 2015 and 2024, the total volume of services increased more than five times. This is in line with global trends in many developing economies where the service sector has become the main force behind structural transformation of production.

Global studies further validate the assertion that growth of the services sector drives economic diversification and creates jobs. More than 60 percent of global GDP is made up of the service sector, which also constitutes most employment opportunities in many nations (World Bank, 2023).

In this SRD, it is concluded that the development of service enterprises in the Samarkand region is directly linked to small businesses and private entrepreneurship. The growth of service industry enterprises shows the good opportunities offered by the service sector for entrepreneurial activity and investment. Another important finding of the study is a highly intensive growth of labor productivity in service enterprises. The data analysis shows that labor productivity doubles in the time frame for which it is ultimately focused. This indicates that service enterprises have improved the efficiency of resource utilization and adopted more advanced management practices. There are some main reasons behind the growth of labor productivity in the services sector.

First, the emergence of digital technologies has vastly contributed to operational efficiency. Digital platforms and electronic services lower transaction costs and facilitate service delivery processes.

Second: The development of tourism in the Samarkand region allowed to expand a number of related service industries, such as hospitality, catering and transport services. With more and more tourists coming to the area, urges for service activities have been increased, which drives the development of service enterprises as well. Third, government policies aimed at supporting small businesses have created favorable conditions for the development of service enterprises. Various programs designed to improve access to finance, develop infrastructure, and support entrepreneurship have contributed to the growth of the service sector.

But, together with the positive trends of the development, there are a number of problems which impede enhancement of efficiency of service enterprises.

The uneven development of service infrastructure in different parts is one of the major challenges. The vast network of various business services and excellent organization transformed the urban areas like Samarkand city where service sectors are highly developed but at the same time there is an infrastructure void in rural areas. It also results in uneven access to services and restricts the scope of service sector growth in rural districts.

This can be attributed to the lower degree of technological modernization in some service sectors. Many Small Services Enterprises are still based upon traditional management practices together with very narrow access to modern technologies. Hence, their productivity is comparatively poor.

Similar continues an important area in the service sector. The quality and excellence of services mainly rely on the capabilities and competency of staff. Hence, to enhance service enterprise efficiency we need to improve both education and training systems for workers in the service sector.

Findings of the study show that to use factors of development, it is possible and need to develop a unified economic mechanism for improving efficiency of service enterprises by integrating material and human resources. A mechanism of this nature will need to include institutional reforms, financial support instruments, infrastructure development and technological innovation.

From the findings of the empirical analysis, a paradigm model for enhancing operational efficiency can be suggested for service oriented enterprises.

It comprises several components which are important for determining the efficiency of service enterprises:

Institutional environment. Government policies, regulatory frameworks, and state support programs create the institutional foundation for service sector development.

Infrastructure development. Service activities are growing with transport infrastructure, tourism facilities and digital infrastructure and business service centers.

Financial support mechanisms. Credit resources, investment programs, and financial incentives promote the development of service enterprises.

Technological innovation. These new tools including digital platforms, online services and information technologies enhance productivity and the processes of service delivery.

Human capital development. Educators, professionals and skilled workers provide quality services.

The combination of all the above elements forms an integrated mechanism that supports the sustainable growth of service enterprises.. The proposed economic mechanism can be presented as an integrated system that combines state regulation, market mechanisms, and innovation processes.

The mechanism includes several interrelated elements:

- regulatory policies supporting entrepreneurship
- financial instruments for business development
- digital transformation of service activities
- development of regional service infrastructure
- improvement of management systems in service enterprises

The implementation of this mechanism will contribute to increasing productivity, improving service quality, and strengthening the competitiveness of service enterprises.

Conclusion and Implications

The service sector has emerged as one of the most crucial sectors in tackling modern economic development. Services become an important factor of sustain economic growth, raised employment and life level in the last decades. The growth of service activities has contributed to structural economic transformation and the emergence of innovation-led economies across many countries. These results show that, in the 2015–2024 period, a positive growth trend was observed in the service sector of the Samarkand region. The volume service transaction has shown more than five scales growth in the data acquisition year, it presents the rapid development of service actions.

The rise in the number of service enterprises and an increase in employment in this area show that services comprise one of the leading engines of regional economic development. The growth of the service sector leads to job creation as well as building small businesses and private entrepreneurship.

Analysis of the structure of service activities shows that the largest share in the service sector in Samarkand region accounts for trade, transport and tourism services. Increasing consumer demand, growth of tourism activities and local infrastructure have proven to be the greatest growth factors for these sectors. In addition, the considerable rise of labor productivity occurs in service enterprises (an essential outcome of the research). There are different reasons for an increase in productivity, like the implementation of new digital technologies, a better service management system and developing a service infrastructure. Digital transformation is one of the major factors that affects the efficiency of service enterprises. The adoption of electronic payments systems, digital platforms and services has greatly enhanced operational efficiency and access to services for customers. This is evidenced by the rapid increase in the proportion of digital services within the service sector, highlighting the increasing relevance of digital technologies to service activity.

Although these tend to be positive, the study identifies several sustainability challenges that constrain the efficiency of service enterprises. If we don't take care of it, the following challenges await us: uneven regional availability of service infrastructure, lack of modernization in some service crafts and underdevelopment of human resources. Overcoming these obstacles involves implementing a new economic approach to increase the productivity of service sector companies. It must combine support of institutions, financial funding, technological innovations and development of human capital.

Recommendations Based on Research Findings

Strengthening relevant institutional support mechanisms in service enterprise development. The role of government policies must be to create enabling regulatory environment, provide support to small business and stimulate entrepreneur activity in service sector.

Second, the development of digital infrastructure should be prioritized in order to accelerate the digital transformation of service enterprises. Modern digital technologies can lead to a considerable increase in productivity and qualitative improvement of the services.

Third, financial support instruments for service enterprises must be diversified. With access to affordable credit products and investment schemes, innovative service activities can be developed.

Fourth, education and training system reform for service sector work is crucial to improving the efficiency of service enterprises. You receive training data until October 2023

Lastly, eliminating regional polarisation in terms of the services sector warrants becoming one of the main goals of regional economic policy. 962-984, DOI: 10.2139/ssrn.2748480 This study provides recommendations for targeted support programs that can foster service enterprise development in rural areas.

This approach In conclusion, the development of an effective economic mechanism for improving service enterprise efficiency is essential for ensuring sustainable economic growth and promoting innovation in the service sector. The findings of this research provide a scientific basis for developing policies aimed at supporting the long-term development of service enterprises in regional economies.

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