

EXPORT STATUS OF SHOXING TEXTILE INDUSTRY UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE

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Abstract: Shaoxing has China's largest textile trading and distribution center and a relatively complete textile industry chain, which not only brings a lot of employment for the local, but also brings a lot of foreign exchange income. Textile is the main export product of Shaoxing city, and the annual total export is the main source of its trade surplus, which plays a vital role in the economic development of Shaoxing City. However, with the continuous strengthening of technical barriers to trade, the increasingly fierce international competition and the rise of textile industries in other countries, Shaoxing textile exports continue to face more challenges. How to deal with the various challenges brought by the international market is the problem that Shaoxing city must face if it wants to maintain the advantage of textile export. Therefore, under the background of the Belt and Road, this paper takes Shaoxing textile export as an example, analyzes its current situation and problems, and finally puts forward solutions to provide reference opinions for the sustainable export development of Shaoxing textile.

Keywords: The belt and road; Textile exports; Shaoxing

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background and Significance

1.1.1 Research background

After years of historical development, the textile industry has now become a pillar industry of China's manufacturing sector. With the advancement of the current global economic integration process, the export scale of China's textile industry will also expand. Due to historical reasons and the problems left by its own structure, many enterprises are forced to constantly seek technological innovation to establish a foothold in the international market. Based on this, the textile industry needs a solution to the trade predicament. The initiative concept of the "Belt and Road Initiative" is precisely a major turning point in the development history of the textile industry.

Through the investigation and analysis of the production areas of textiles in our country, it is found that most of them are concentrated in the populous provinces around Jiangsu and Zhejiang. Among them, the development of the textile industry in Zhejiang is particularly outstanding. In 2020, the textile and garment enterprises in Zhejiang Province achieved an industrial output value of 928.4 billion yuan, ranking first in the country. Meanwhile, the export value of textiles and garments reached 491.2 billion yuan, also ranking first in the country. Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, is an important textile production base and distribution center in China. Since ancient times, Shaoxing has been renowned for the saying, "Ten thousand feet of silk rise from the Huashe at sunrise." After years of development, Keqiao District of Shaoxing City now has the largest textile distribution center in the country - Shaoxing Textile City. The adoption of the "Belt and Road Initiative" has brought more development opportunities for the export of its textiles. What was once a small street has now transformed into the world's largest, most diverse and highest transaction volume professional textile wholesale market.

With the strengthening of international trade barriers, the intensification of domestic and foreign competition, and the rise of textile industries in other countries, the export of textiles from Shaoxing City has also faced more challenges. For example: Driven by trade interests, many countries, in order to protect their domestic textile industries, have continuously created trade frictions against China, which has an adverse impact on China's textile exports. The continuous improvement of the quality of textile exports from countries along the Belt and Road Initiative, such as Mongolia, Vietnam, Turkey, India and Pakistan, poses a certain threat to China's textile exports. The continuous rise in domestic raw material costs and the increasing labor costs have led to a rise in textile prices, causing the original advantage of high quality and low price in our country to gradually weaken. Therefore, dealing with various challenges in domestic and foreign markets is a problem that the textile exports of Shaoxing City must face.

Based on this, under the background of the "Belt and Road Initiative", taking the current situation of textile exports from Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province to the countries along the "Belt and Road Initiative" as the entry point, it is of great practical significance to specifically study the challenges and opportunities faced by the export trade of the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, and put forward corresponding countermeasures and suggestions. It is expected to provide new ideas for the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, the export of the textile industry in China, and even the import and export trade of the textile industry in the countries along the "Belt and Road", and achieve an upgrade and optimization in import and export sales.

1.1.2 Research significance

Explore the significance of the textile industry and the new opportunities for the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province, and conduct a necessary analysis of the export optimization of the textile industry. Under the implementation of the "Belt and Road Initiative", the signing of various cooperation documents between China and the countries along the routes, and the promotion of various trade preferential policies by the Zhejiang Provincial government, the import and export trade exchanges and cooperation between Zhejiang and the countries along the routes have become more frequent, and the breadth and depth of trade have been continuously strengthened. This is a new opportunity for the export of Zhejiang's textile industry. Since the reform and opening up, Zhejiang's GDP has grown from 12.3 billion yuan in 1978 to 8,255.3 billion yuan in 2023, and the textile industry is one of the major industries. Textiles are the main products exported by Shaoxing City, accounting for 60% of the city's total export volume. Their export volume is also the main source of Shaoxing City's trade surplus. Therefore, it is particularly important for Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province to maintain its export advantages in the textile industry and accelerate the process of textile exports.

Taking the export trade of the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province to the countries along the Belt and Road Initiative as a typical example, it promotes the export of the entire Chinese textile industry. The huge economic losses caused by the novel coronavirus have made the industry's decline irreversible. Against the backdrop of sluggish manufacturing development, restricted pace of industrial expansion, and rapid technological advancement, the textile industries in Zhejiang are leveraging new technologies and methods such as digital empowerment. These measures have profound and long-term development significance for the sustainable development of the entire textile industry in China. It can further promote the optimization of export trade of Zhejiang's textile industry to countries along the route, and provide experience and reference for the export of textile industries in all provinces across the country. Based on this, taking the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province as the starting point, through data analysis, we explore the problems existing in the textile industry and their solutions, to help each enterprise enhance its own competitive strength and thus better establish itself in the international market. Make further use of the opportunities brought by the Belt and Road Initiative, accelerate the pace of "going global", drive economic development, and implement the country's 14th Five-Year Plan well.

1.2 Research Status at Home and Abroad

1.2.1 Domestic research status

Many scholars in China have conducted relevant research and discussions on the development, export status and existing problems of China's textile industry in different eras and contexts. However, there are relatively few studies specifically focusing on the export trade exchanges between the textile industry in Shaoxing, Zhejiang Province and the countries along the "Belt and Road". Hu Huiwan mentioned in "Research on the International Competitiveness of China's Textile Industry and Its Influencing Factors" that currently, China's textile industry is accelerating the advancement of its global strategic layout, but its export share has decreased somewhat [1]. First, the global economy is developing slowly and the market demand is insufficient. Second, industrial competition is becoming increasingly fierce. More and more countries are becoming future manufacturing bases for the textile industry due to their advantage of low labor costs. Thirdly, Chinese textile enterprises are confronted with more international trade protectionism. In the article "Input-Output Analysis of the Textile and Garment Industry under the Background of the Belt and Road Initiative", Yan Songlin used the input-output method to study and concluded that the proposal of the Belt and Road Initiative has a significant promoting effect on the textile industry [2].

Secondly, many scholars have put forward relevant studies on the export trade of the textile industry in various provinces and cities of our country, but few have analyzed the current export situation of each province and city to the countries along the route in combination with the background of the "Belt and Road Initiative". Wang Ruoxin analyzed Xinjiang Province in various aspects such as labor force, region, production chain, resources, and transportation in the textile industry in the article "Research on the Export Competitive Advantage of Xinjiang's Textile Industry", and used various index formulas to analyze the export of Xinjiang's textile industry [3]. It is believed that the textile industry in Xinjiang Province has great competitive advantages in terms of region, cost, labor force and sales market. However, Xinjiang is still restricted by problems such as water shortage and the decline of international competitiveness in the development of the industrial chain. Among them, the most prominent one is that the textile industry brands in Xinjiang lack leading enterprises and lack popularity. This is one of the reasons why the international competitiveness of the textile industry in Xinjiang is gradually weakening. Xu Qiang, Fang Jingjing, and Shu Chenti analyzed the foreign trade situation of Zhejiang Province's textile industry in 2023 under the background of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, sluggish market demand, and the decline in imports from the European and American markets [4]. This paper summarizes and sorts out the severe situation of overall decline in the export of the textile industry in Zhejiang Province in 2023, and further clarifies the reasons for the severe foreign trade situation in Zhejiang Province from aspects such as the global supply chain, comprehensive costs, exchange rate fluctuations, and overseas consumer demand. This paper makes a comparison with other foreign trade countries in the textile industry and other provinces in China, and analyzes the characteristics and differences between the two in terms of export status, government subsidies, product quality, environmental protection efforts, brand cooperation, etc. Finally, strategies for promoting the high-quality development of foreign trade in Zhejiang's textile industry are proposed in aspects such as regional coordinated high-quality development, expanding the international market to enhance international reputation, deepening industrial chain cooperation to optimize international trade channels, and continuously doing a good job in industry monitoring.

1.2.2 Foreign research status

There are also many scholars abroad who have conducted analyses and studies on the development and export status of the textile industry, but few have carried out analyses on the foreign trade situation of the textile industry in a certain urban area of China. Kanupriya "Export Similarity Index as a Barometer of Indian Textiles Exports Competitiveness" holds that the textile industry is of crucial importance in the economic pattern of India [5]. Further assessment of the regional export competitors of Indian textiles was conducted using the export similarity index. The data shows that the competitiveness of Indian textile exports is relatively low, and the competitive pressure faced by this industry is considerable. Meanwhile, it clarifies that Indian textiles are facing problems such as high manufacturing costs, the lack of universal preferential systems, logistics performance, and the lack of technological upgrades. This analysis is conducive to enterprises and the government taking necessary measures to enhance the competitiveness of Indian textile exports and drive the economic development of India. Tawfik A. Khattab, Meram S. Abdelrahman, Mohamed Rehan Textile dyeing industry: "environmental impacts and remediation" holds that synthetic dyes used in industrial production and dyeing have seriously affected the environment [6]. The textile dyeing industry is crucial for innovation, environmentally friendly restoration technologies, and the exploration of alternative ecosystems in the textile dyeing and finishing industry.

1.3 Research Contents and Methods

1.3.1 Research content

This article mainly takes the "Belt and Road Initiative" as the background, specifically studies the export situation of the textile industry in Shaoxing City, Zhejiang Province to various countries along the route under this background, as well as the problems encountered in the export process, and proposes relevant countermeasures. It is expected to seek new opportunities and explore new ideas for the export market and methods of the textile industry in Shaoxing City.

1.3.2 Research methods

This article mainly employs the research methods of literature research and statistical analysis. Taking the current export situation of the textile industry in Shaoxing as the entry point, through the combined analysis of literature research and statistical analysis, it can further clarify the current and potential advantages and disadvantages, threats, cooperation prospects and opportunities, and other current situations and problems in textile exports between Shaoxing City and the countries along the route under the background of the "Belt and Road Initiative".

2 ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TEXTILE INDUSTRY EXPORT DEVELOPMENT IN SHAOXING UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF THE "BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE"

2.1 Export Scale of the Textile Industry

Shaoxing City is renowned as the "Hometown of Textiles", and the export scale and quantity of its textile industry are among the top in other regions. Overall, the total export volume of Shaoxing's textile industry has continued to grow steadily from 2018 to 2023. In 2022, the export value of the textile industry in Shaoxing City exceeded 170 billion yuan, reaching 174 billion yuan. Compared with the total export value in 2018, it increased by more than 50 billion yuan, with an average annual growth rate of 8.22%. The fluctuation range of the growth rate varies greatly, and the overall trend is unstable. Among them, the fluctuation range of the growth rate was the largest in 2021. Although the growth rate showed a downward trend from 2022 to 2023, the total export volume still increased. It is worth noting that in 2020, affected by the global COVID-19 pandemic, the export value of Shaoxing's textile industry decreased by 13.8% compared with the previous year, showing a negative growth. However, its export value still reached 116.705 billion yuan, and in 2021, it could quickly recover and exceed 140 billion yuan. This shows that although its textile industry was impacted by the deterioration of the external environment, However, it is highly resilient. When the environment improves, it will quickly recover, demonstrating its strong vitality. In addition, the textile industry has always been the main export industry of Shaoxing City. In 2018, 2019 and 2021, it accounted for more than 50% of the total exports of Shaoxing City, and in 2019, it even reached 60.1%. Although the proportion of exports has declined in recent years, it still accounts for nearly 50% of the city's total export volume and holds a dominant position in Shaoxing's foreign trade. The Belt and Road Initiative aims to build a community of shared interests, a community with a shared future and a community of shared responsibilities by promoting policy communication, infrastructure connectivity, unimpeded trade, financial integration and people-to-people bonds. It helps to drive economic development and industrial upgrading in countries along the routes and provide new impetus for global economic growth. The textile industry in Shaoxing is currently in a critical period of transformation and upgrading. The proposal of the "Belt and Road Initiative" has enabled Shaoxing City to further expand its market and increase its export volume. Overall, from 2018 to 2023, the total export volume of Shaoxing's textile industry to countries along the "Belt and Road" has continued to grow steadily. In 2022, the export volume was nearly 40 billion yuan, an increase of about 10 billion yuan compared with 2018, demonstrating a strong export momentum. It can be seen from the data that the scale of textile exports from Shaoxing City to the countries along the "Belt and Road" is getting larger and larger, and the trade between the two countries is constantly strengthening and deepening. The countries along the "Belt and Road" have become the key markets for Shaoxing City's foreign trade exports.

2.2 Export Structure of the Textile Industry

The export products of the textile industry in Shaoxing City mainly fall into two categories: textile yarns, fabrics and products, and clothing and clothing accessories. Both of them showed a trend of growth first, then decrease, and then growth again from 2018 to 2022. Through data integration, further segmentation can be made. The main export products of the textile industry in Shaoxing City are composed of textile yarns, textile fabrics, chemical fiber fabrics, cotton fabrics, linen fabrics, textile products, embroidery products, finished home textiles, and fabric clothing, etc. The types of export products are relatively rich. According to the data from Shaoxing Yearbook, the proportion of textile yarns, fabrics and their products in the total export value of the city's textile industry is nearly 80%. In 2021 and 2022, the proportion even exceeded 80% of the city's textile industry's total export value, reaching 82%, making it the leading commodity in Shaoxing's textile industry exports. The traditional textile industry is a labor-intensive industry. With the transformation and upgrading of China's industrial structure, many countries along the "Belt and Road" have taken over industrial transfer by virtue of their own advantages such as labor resources, and the demand for textile products and textile raw materials in these countries has also expanded accordingly. In contrast, the export volume of clothing and clothing accessories is relatively small and shows a downward trend in the total proportion, resulting in a serious imbalance in exports. Improving the current export situation of clothing and clothing accessories may further optimize the export structure and expand the overall export scale.

2.3 Textile Industry Export Market

The main markets for textile exports from Shaoxing City are Asia, Europe and North America. Different countries and regions have different demands for textiles, and there are also certain differences in export volumes.

2.3.1 Traditional market

In 2018, Shaoxing's export volume to Asia was 83.021 billion yuan, accounting for 40.58% of Shaoxing's total foreign trade export volume. In 2022, Shaoxing's export volume to Asia was 158.779 billion yuan, an increase of 91.3% compared with 2018, accounting for 41.67% of Shaoxing's total foreign trade export volume. It can be seen that Asian countries and regions are the main export markets for Shaoxing's textiles, and the export volume of Shaoxing to the Asian region has been increasing year by year. This indicates that Asian countries and regions play an important role in promoting the export of Shaoxing's textile industry. Shaoxing's export volume to Vietnam has remained at a high level. Since 2010, Vietnam has gradually become the preferred contract manufacturer for brands such as Adidas and Nike, thanks to its labor force advantage. However, as much as 70% of the raw materials in its textile industry rely on imports, leading to a continuous increase in the demand for textile raw materials from other countries. In 2020, Shaoxing's export volume to India was 8.053 billion yuan. However, by 2022, the export volume to that country had reached 15.44 billion yuan, representing a 91.72% increase compared to 2020. In 2020, Shaoxing City's export volume to the United Arab Emirates was 5.456 billion yuan, and in 2022, it was 11.679 billion yuan, representing a growth of 114.06% compared to 2020. Through the analysis of the export volume to major export countries/regions of Shaoxing, it can be seen that its biggest growth points are in India and the United Arab Emirates, indicating that the countries and regions along the "Belt and Road" are new growth points for Shaoxing's exports. However, the export volume to other Asian countries is relatively small, which shows that the export potential to these countries still needs to be explored.

2.3.2 High-end market

The European market is the second largest export market for Shaoxing City after the Asian market in terms of export volume, and it is also a high-end market that Shaoxing's textile export enterprises focus on developing. Shaoxing's export volume to Europe has consistently ranked second only to Asia over the years. Shaoxing's export volume to Europe rose from 39.719 billion yuan in 2018 to 55.065 billion yuan in 2022, an increase of 15.346 billion yuan, showing a year-on-year upward trend. It is evident that the European market is also an important export region for Shaoxing City. However, the EU market has high requirements for the technical and ecological standards of textiles, and its enforcement is also very strict. Therefore, if the export enterprises of the textile industry in Shaoxing City want to consolidate their market share, they still need to constantly improve their production technology and product quality.

2.3.3 Emerging markets

The African market among the various markets along the "Belt and Road Initiative" is an emerging market that cannot be ignored for the export of Shaoxing's textile industry. In recent years, the export volume of Shaoxing to Africa has been very stable and has shown a steady upward trend. The export volume of Shaoxing City to Africa increased from 20.437 billion yuan in 2018 to 39.973 billion yuan in 2022, representing a growth of 95.59% compared to 2018. The African region is rich in mineral resources, but textile raw materials are relatively scarce and the industrial system of the textile industry is not very complete. It relies more on textile imports, and the mass consumption tends to be mid-to-low end. The market potential is huge. The textiles of Shaoxing City have certain competitive advantages when exported to the African market.

At present, the textile industry in Shaoxing should maintain the export scale to traditional markets, pay attention to the export rules and product quality of high-end markets, attach importance to the export opportunities in emerging markets, make emerging markets gradually become one of the traditional export markets, and further expand exports.

3 COMPETITIVE ANALYSIS OF SHAOXING'S TEXTILE EXPORTS TO COUNTRIES ALONG THE "BELT AND ROAD"

Through the assessment of the international competitiveness of the textile industry in Shaoxing City, the advantages and

disadvantages of the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City can be better judged, thereby helping the textile export enterprises in Shaoxing City to put forward more targeted suggestions.

3.1 Trade Competitiveness Index Analysis (TC)

The Trade Competitiveness Index (TC) is used to reflect the import and export situation of a certain product in international trade, that is, whether it is a surplus or a deficit. Specifically, it is calculated by subtracting the export value of a certain product from the import value of the country and calculating its proportion in the total import and export volume, to estimate whether the product or service has strong international competitiveness. If the product is in a surplus state, it means that a certain product of the country has a competitive advantage in the international market and can bring in more foreign exchange earnings. Conversely, it shows its comparative disadvantage and needs to meet domestic demand through imports. The formula is: $TC_{ij} = (X_{ij} - M_{ij}) / (X_{ij} + M_{ij})$. This index ranges from -1 to 1. The closer the value is to 1, the stronger the international competitiveness of the product is; the closer it is to -1, the weaker the international competitiveness of the product is. This paper tie-shan wang, Song Xin, the TC index is divided into six interval, TC value between [1, 0.6), [0.6, 0.3), [0.3, 0), (0,0.3), [0.3, 0.6), [0.6, The six intervals respectively indicate that the country has extremely strong competitive disadvantage, relatively strong competitive disadvantage, weak competitive disadvantage, weak competitive advantage, relatively strong competitive advantage, and extremely strong competitive advantage [7]. From 2018 to 2022, the TC index of Shaoxing's textile industry remained stable at 0.98 or above. In 2020, the TC index of Shaoxing's textile industry broke through 0.99 and has continued to rise in recent years, with the value very close to 1. The export TC index of the textile industry in Shaoxing City can be maintained at this high value, which indicates that the city's textile industry has a stable and extremely strong competitive advantage in the international market.

This paper uses the trade data of the textile industry between Shaoxing and the countries along the "Belt and Road" from 2018 to 2022 to calculate the trade competitiveness index of both sides respectively. By comparing the TC indices of the two over the past five years, it can be found that the TC index of the textile industry in Shaoxing has always been around 1, showing a strong comparative advantage. The import and export trade of the textile industry is relatively stable and in a surplus state. However, the trade competitiveness index of the textile industry in the countries along the route has always been less than zero, and it has been in a trade deficit state as a whole, showing a significant disadvantage in market competition. However, in recent years, as some developed countries have transferred their textile industries to South and Southeast Asian countries along the "Belt and Road", the trade competitiveness index of these countries has shown a slight upward trend, and their competitiveness in the textile industry has also improved to a certain extent. As major textile exporters, The improvement of the export advantages of the textile industry in other countries deserves the vigilance of relevant export enterprises in China's textile industry.

To further analyze the competitive level of the textile industry in the countries along the "Belt and Road Initiative", the trade competitiveness index of the textile industry in some selected countries was calculated. Based on the average value of the TC index, they were classified into two major categories according to the differences in competitiveness: having competitive advantages and having competitive disadvantages. Overall, among the countries along the "Belt and Road Initiative", There are 18 countries with competitive advantages and 42 countries with competitive disadvantages. The countries represented by Pakistan have the strongest competitive advantage, while those represented by Iraq have the strongest competitive disadvantage. The rest of the countries are all at a medium level [8].

3.2 Explicit Comparative Advantage Index Analysis (RCA)

The Explicit Comparative Advantage Index (RCA Index) was proposed by Barassa in 1965. It refers to the ratio of a country's export value of a certain product to its total export value to the proportion of the world's export value of that product to the global total export value. It is the most persuasive indicator for measuring the international market competitiveness of a country's certain product or industry. Its formula is: $RCA_{ij} = (X_{ij}/X_{it}) / (X_{wj}/X_{wt})$. Generally, if the RCA values are located at (0,0.8), [0.8, 1.25), [1.25, 2.5), and [2.5,+∞), it indicates that a certain country has weak, medium, strong, and extremely strong competitive advantages respectively. The export RCA index of the textile industry in Shaoxing City has remained stable at 5.6 overall, which can prove that the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City has a very strong competitive advantage in the domestic market. Due to the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the export RCA index of Shaoxing's textile industry dropped to 4.53 in 2020, compared with 5.58 in 2018. This indicates that the export competitive advantage of its textile industry is not unshakable in the unpredictable market. For the related enterprises of Shaoxing's textile industry to survive in the complex and ever-changing international market, It is necessary to constantly optimize and improve one's own products and structure [9].

This paper calculates the explicit comparative advantage index of the textile industry in Shaoxing and the countries along the "Belt and Road". Since 2018, Shaoxing's explicit comparative advantage index has basically been between 4.5 and 6. It has a very strong competitive advantage in the textile trade and has always been higher than that of the countries along the route. From the perspective of the changing trend, the explicit comparative advantage index of Shaoxing's textile industry has slightly declined, dropping by 0.01 in 2022 compared to 2018. The explicit comparative advantage index of the textile industry in the countries along the route has always been between 1 and 1.5. Their competitive advantage in the textile industry is weaker than that of Shaoxing. Generally, it shows a fluctuating upward trend, mainly due to the fact that many countries along the route actively carry out industrial optimization and

upgrading and absorb industrial transfer from other countries.

To further analyze the competitive advantages of the textile industry in the countries along the "Belt and Road Initiative", this paper calculates the explicit comparative advantage index of the textile industry in some selected countries and classifies them into four categories according to the differences in competitive advantages based on the average value of the RCA index. In terms of the total number, there are 35 countries with relatively weak explicit comparative advantages, 12 countries with medium advantages, 5 countries with relatively strong advantages, and 8 countries with extremely strong advantages. It can be seen that most of the countries along the route have relatively weak explicit comparative advantages, mainly including Moldova, Georgia and other Central and Eastern European and West Asian and North African countries, while the countries with relatively strong explicit comparative advantages are mainly concentrated in Bangladesh, Cambodia and other Southeast Asian and South Asian countries [10].

4 PROBLEMS EXISTING IN THE EXPORT OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY IN SHAOXING

4.1 Export Trade Barriers

The export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City is mainly restricted by two non-tariff barriers: technical trade barriers and green trade barriers. This is related to factors such as the economic structure behind the industrial protection policies of developed countries and the discourse power game in the process of formulating international environmental protection standards. If the export growth rate of textiles in Shaoxing City is to be accelerated, these two major non-tariff trade barriers are problems that the export of Shaoxing's textile industry has to deal with.

4.1.1 Technical trade barriers

Technical trade barriers are mainly restricted by technical regulations and technical standards. The export of textiles encounters technical trade barriers. The most direct impact is that the batch of goods cannot enter the buyer's country smoothly, which will lead to the delay and breach of orders [11].

In 2020, according to the statistical annual report on the number of TBT(Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade) notifications of the WTO, the total number of TBT notifications worldwide was 3,354, with China accounting for 128, representing 3.82% of the total number of notifications. Among them, the number of TBT notifications for textiles was 44, accounting for 1.31% of the total number of notifications. The proportion of China in the world's TBT notification volume increased from 1.5% in 2016 to 3.82% in 2020, which indicates that China's product exports have been restricted by technical trade barriers in recent years.

At present, the export of textiles to Europe and America is confronted with various strict legal and regulatory requirements. For instance, the REACH regulation restrictions faced by the export of textiles to the European region, which classifies the risk categories of textiles into physical risks and chemical risks [12]. Among them, physical risks include various types such as strangulation, injury and infarction, and chemical risks include the ban on some harmful chemicals to the human body such as hexavalent chromium, azo dyes and dimethyl fumarate in textiles.

The technical trade barriers in developed markets in Europe and America have been constantly increasing, causing a large number of textile export enterprises in Shaoxing to frequently lose orders. A large number of textiles have been returned due to failure to pass the inspection. For instance, the Yongtong Dyeing and Weaving Group in Qianqing Town, Shaoxing, once exported a batch of textiles worth 1 million yuan to Europe. As a result, a chemical component harmful to human health was detected in the fabric of this batch of textiles, and they were required to return the goods [13]. Not only did the enterprise not receive the payment for the goods in this transaction, but the cost of transporting the goods back for turnover also exceeded the price of the batch of textiles themselves.

4.1.2 Green trade barriers

The green trade barriers faced by the textile exports of Shaoxing City mainly include restrictions such as the green packaging system, the green health and quarantine system, and the green labeling system. For instance, the EU's "Eco-Textiles Standard 100" is mainly used to test whether textiles are made from raw materials that are harmless to the surrounding environment and human health, and whether the entire manufacturing process is environmentally friendly. Due to the fact that green trade barriers not only have environmental protection requirements for finished products, but also have green and pollution-free requirements during the production and processing of products [14]. This undoubtedly exerts dual pressure on textile export enterprises in terms of technology and cost. Moreover, once they encounter resistance from green trade barriers, enterprises will face various losses such as breach of contract compensation and the return or on-site destruction of goods.

European and American countries and regions are the main export markets for Shaoxing's textile industry. However, these countries and regions have a strong sense of environmental protection and relatively strict inspection standards for products. For instance, in China, the fiber content of textiles is allowed to have an error of about 3% to 5%, while in some other countries, the fiber content of textiles is only allowed to have an error of about 3%. The traditional textile industry in Shaoxing itself is under pressure from imperfect corresponding technologies and high costs [15]. Moreover, the green trade barriers deliberately established by some countries and regions have made it difficult for the textiles produced in Shaoxing to meet the environmental protection standards of other countries, further restricting the export of Shaoxing's textiles.

4.2 The Product Has a Low Technological Content and Low Added Value

According to the data, during the period from 2011 to 2021, the number of invention patents in Shaoxing City has been

increasing year by year, among which invention patents in the textile industry account for approximately 10%. However, a further analysis of the population size and industrial scale reveals that the two indicators of Shaoxing, namely the number of valid patents per 10,000 people, the number of invention patents, and the ratio of industrial enterprise operating income, have always been at a medium to low level within the province. For instance, in 2021, the number of valid patents per 10,000 people in Shaoxing was 31.8, and the ratio of the number of invention patents to the operating income of industrial enterprises was 51.4 per million yuan, both of which were lower than the provincial average. From this, it can be seen that the technical support for the textile products in Shaoxing is insufficient and the technological content of the products is low. Secondly, the export product structure of the textile industry in Shaoxing City is overly monotonous. The main types of textile exports from Shaoxing City include textile yarns, finished garments and clothing accessories, etc. Among them, the main export products are still textile fabrics and chemical fiber fabrics, and their proportion exceeded 50% between 2019 and 2022. The added value of these products is relatively low, and their prices are also relatively low. Although the low price can give them a certain advantage in the international market, it is difficult to establish a brand effect, and the long-term development space is small, making it difficult to enter the international high-end market. With the rapid development of economic globalization, the single product export structure of the textile industry in Shaoxing City is not friendly to its future development [16].

4.3 Insufficient Brand Building and Lack of Competitiveness

At present, some of the more well-known textile enterprise brands in China include Bosideng, Youngor, JNBY, Ailei, Langsha, Nanfang Bedding, Luolai, and Boyang Home Textiles. Among them, those that are more well-known internationally include Bosideng, Youngor, Boyang Home Textiles, and JNBY. Among them, Bosideng, Youngor, and Boyang Home Textiles are all from Ningbo, while JNBY is from Hangzhou. At present, Shaoxing City has no relatively well-known textile brands internationally. Moreover, in China, the brand value-added capacity of Shaoxing's textile industry is also relatively weak. For instance, in May 2023, the China Brand Building Promotion Association released the "China Brand Value Evaluation Information" list. A total of 40 textile, garment and footwear enterprises across the country made the list, but only Zhuji Huahai Spandex Co., Ltd. from Shaoxing was included. This is highly inconsistent with the status of Shaoxing's textile industry. Brand competitiveness is the manifestation of an enterprise's core competitiveness and is something that competitors cannot easily imitate. For instance, on cross-border e-commerce platforms, textiles may seem almost uniform on the website. However, with the support of a brand, it can make a company's products more distinctive among numerous options. Outstanding brand effects can also bring extremely high brand premiums to a company's products and generate additional profits [17]. However, the degree of intensive organization of textile enterprises in Shaoxing is low, lacking the guidance of leading enterprises. Most of them are small and micro enterprises and lack the ability of independent research and development, thus lacking brand competitiveness. From 2019 to 2022, the number of medium and large-sized industrial enterprises in Shaoxing decreased, but the number of small and micro enterprises increased. In 2022, the number of medium and large-sized industrial enterprises in Shaoxing City was 447, while the number of small and micro enterprises was 4,816. The number of medium and large-sized industrial enterprises accounted for less than 10% of the total number of industrial enterprises. It can be seen that the textile enterprises in Shaoxing City are mainly small and micro enterprises. However, the processing mode of small and micro textile enterprises still mainly relies on OEM production, manufacturing and operating medium and low-end goods. Their product structure is single and they cannot form brand scale. Moreover, their development model is extremely easy to be replicated. In contrast, in the countries along the "Belt and Road", relying on their advantages such as labor force, most of their textile enterprises are also processing enterprises, producing and operating products with relatively low added value. It poses a certain threat to the textile industry exports of Shaoxing City.

4.4 The Degree of Dependence on Foreign Trade is Relatively High, and the Export Market is Relatively Concentrated

The textile industry in Shaoxing City mainly relies on the development model of processing and export. The growth of domestic demand is slow, which has further strengthened the dependence of the textile industry in Shaoxing City on the foreign market. It can be seen from Table 4-3 that the export dependence of Shaoxing City has increased from 37.77% in 2018 to 48.90% in 2023. Not only does it remain high, but it also shows an upward trend year by year. In addition, the textile industry in Shaoxing City has been exported to approximately 197 countries and regions. The export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City mainly relies on the European and American markets and the Asian markets represented by Vietnam and India, while the exploration of other markets is relatively limited. Therefore, once market changes occur, risks cannot be dispersed in a timely manner. Although the concentration of foreign trade regions can reduce the risks brought by enterprises entering the international market, long-term concentrated trade in the same regions can also generate risks. When enterprises are concentrated in one market, it will lead to the accelerated saturation of the supply of market commodities, affect the spatial profits of enterprises, and be detrimental to their long-term development. Secondly, when a relatively concentrated trade market is suddenly hit by a crisis, foreign trade enterprises will suffer a fundamental blow, and there will be phenomena such as losses or even bankruptcies of small, medium and micro enterprises.

5 OPTIMIZATION OF EXPORT COUNTERMEASURES FOR SHAOXING'S TEXTILE INDUSTRY UNDER THE BACKGROUND OF THE "BELT AND ROAD INITIATIVE"

5.1 Strengthen Green and Ecological Production to Avoid Export Trade Barriers

To enhance green and ecological production, the government needs to improve the relevant laws and ecological standards for domestic textile exports in accordance with various laws, regulations and ecological standards of the international market. It should formulate plans for establishing green ecological mechanisms at different times for textile enterprises of different scales, and provide each enterprise with a subsidy of 30% of the cost spent on establishing ecological mechanisms. For instance, within five years, medium and large-sized enterprises will complete the establishment and improvement of their green ecological mechanisms, while small-sized enterprises will do so within three years. All enterprises should establish textile inspection and testing institutions that can carry out higher-standard inspection and testing to cope with more stringent inspection and testing standards abroad. It is also necessary to strengthen the control over the production process of textiles from raw materials to finished products to ensure that the entire production process does not cause harm to the environment and human health. Timely follow up and understand the changes in laws and ecological standards related to international textile exports, and improve the export standards of one's own products according to international market demands to avoid corresponding technical trade barriers. Enable the goods to enter the buyer's country smoothly to reduce losses. Enterprises should pay attention to resource conservation and ecological protection during the production process, and meet the demands of consumers in countries along the "Belt and Road", such as Europe, for green textiles. They should choose pollution-free and environmentally friendly materials for production and processing, avoid the use of chemical substances, and adopt ecological mode operations in all processing technologies to reduce material waste during the process [18]. Green environmental protection should also be achieved in the packaging of textiles, and degradable materials should be adopted. Green and ecological production can first help enterprises avoid being sanctioned by green trade barriers of other countries when exporting. Secondly, green and ecological production can help enterprises avoid the impact of green trade barriers on product exports and expand the export scope of products. Finally, green and ecological production can also help textile enterprises obtain certification marks, labels and certificates from some well-known international textile certification institutions, such as the OKOTEX-100 certificate of the European Union, the SIF mark of Japan and the Oeko-Tex100 label of the International Textile Association, etc. These marks, labels and certificates not only help enterprises enhance the export competitiveness of their textiles in the international market, but also meet the demands of eco-consumers, obtaining a large amount of green premiums from them, thereby increasing the profits of the enterprises.

5.2 Improve Product Quality and Optimize the Industrial Structure

The countries along the Belt and Road Initiative have both mid-to-low-end markets and corresponding high-end markets. Although the textile industry in Shaoxing has a complete industrial chain, there is still a considerable gap in terms of innovation ability compared with other regions. At present, the textile enterprises in Shaoxing City are still mainly small and micro enterprises. Most of these small and micro enterprises adopt low prices as their competitive strategy. To ensure a long-term dominant position in the "Belt and Road" market, the export enterprises of the textile industry in Shaoxing City need to take quality as a clear goal for the future. On the one hand, enterprises themselves need to enhance their innovation capabilities and increase investment in science and technology as well as the introduction of technologies [19]. For instance, by encouraging the research and development of advanced textile technologies and the transformation of achievements within the region, as well as the innovation and entrepreneurship of small and micro textile enterprises, a healthy competition can be formed within the cluster to seek the market and profits through science and technology. Improve the quality of export products, increase their added value, change the past product structure mainly based on the export of textile fabrics and chemical fiber fabrics, and enhance the core competitiveness of enterprises. In addition, textile enterprises and the government in Shaoxing City should also pay attention to the export situation of their products to avoid the situation where there are too many or too few advantageous products. On the other hand, while strictly controlling product quality, the shift from traditional textile manufacturing technology to emerging manufacturing technology requires increased investment in technical costs, which may be unaffordable for some enterprises. Therefore, the government needs to promote and support it to encourage these enterprises to carry out technological innovation. For instance, the emerging technologies in the current textile industry include hollow spindle spinning technology to prevent pectin, antibacterial and deodorizing processing technology to meet people's pursuit of aseptic and healthy living, anti-static production technology to prevent fabric deformation and electrical conductivity, and innovative enzymatic biotechnology that can reduce environmental pollution, etc. Ultimately, the core competitiveness of an enterprise still lies in the products themselves. Only by enhancing the production technology level of an enterprise can it achieve a qualitative leap in product quality and better support the textile industry of Shaoxing City to establish a long-term foothold in the vast market of the "Belt and Road Initiative".

5.3 Strengthen Brand Building and Enhance Brand Awareness

For any industry, the construction and dissemination of a brand are of great significance. Therefore, textile enterprises

in Shaoxing City should recognize that brand building and promotion of the company and its products can not only enhance market competitiveness but also be an important factor in ensuring the sustainable development of the enterprise. To build competitive international brands, textile export enterprises need to strictly follow international standards, cultivate solid production and manufacturing techniques, and enhance the core competitiveness of their products. Meanwhile, enterprises should also intensify the marketing efforts of their brands, increasing their exposure and popularity. On the one hand, enterprises can increase the exposure of their brands by participating in internationally renowned on-site exhibitions. On the other hand, in the era when e-commerce is prevalent, enterprises need to deeply explore the development trends of cross-border e-commerce, accurately grasp the direction of market development, and promptly adjust their strategies. It is suggested that some textile enterprises in Shaoxing increase and expand digital online platforms. They can establish digital channels and platforms to enhance online sales and brand promotion. This can not only help enterprises expand their market coverage, increase order volume and sales volume, but also enhance the brand awareness of different consumer groups. Digital transformation can also enhance the transparency and efficiency of an enterprise's supply chain, and reduce logistics costs and risks. Meanwhile, online platforms can provide a broader communication and exchange platform for major foreign trade enterprises, promote advanced management experiences and models, and better facilitate in-depth exchanges and cooperation with countries and partners in all links and regions of the "Belt and Road Initiative", learn from each other, and jointly seek good development strategies. In addition, some enterprises need the government to guide them to focus on brand building, firmly seize the development opportunities brought by the relevant policies of the "Belt and Road Initiative", transform from single "imitation" to diversified creation, support brand building, and enhance product quality. For enterprises with relatively tight funds, it is necessary for the local government to introduce relevant preferential policies to provide financial support for them, so as to facilitate the creation of their brand image. Textile enterprises with certain economic capabilities, such as medium and large-sized ones, can set up brand counters in high-end shopping malls at home and abroad to enhance brand awareness. For instance, Bosideng down jackets have become a household name in recent years [20]. They are also well-known abroad and have a certain consumer base. Bosideng Company has successfully transformed from an OEM processing and manufacturing enterprise into one that has registered its trademark and participates in international market competition under its own brand. Facts have proved that brand effect can not only enhance a company's popularity, but also help it explore new markets, increase profit margins, thereby facilitating better transformation and upgrading, consolidating and improving product quality, and gradually occupying the high-end market.

5.4 Promote Market Diversification and Adapt to Emerging Markets

The export market of Shaoxing's textile industry is relatively concentrated. The concentrated market structure also brings corresponding risks. To avoid the occurrence of these risks, while Shaoxing's export enterprises are constantly consolidating high-end traditional markets such as Europe, America and Asia, they should also explore some emerging markets to achieve diversified development of the market structure. Since the Belt and Road Initiative was proposed in 2013, the import and export trade exchanges and cooperation between Zhejiang Province and the countries along the routes have become more frequent, and the breadth and depth of trade have been continuously strengthened. This has also provided more options for the textile export enterprises in Shaoxing City to implement the "going global" strategy. In this regard, textile export enterprises in Shaoxing can adjust the quality and structure of their export products according to different export markets, for example: For markets like Europe and America that have high requirements for textiles, more investment in science and technology should be made. High-standard and high-quality products should be produced strictly in accordance with the laws and regulations of various countries. Active maintenance of customer relationships with high-tech developed regions should be carried out to increase market share. As for some developing countries such as India and Vietnam, their demands in terms of the types and quantities of textiles should be met. Offer corresponding export preferences to deepen cooperation and promote sustained and long-term win-win cooperation. In addition, as can be seen from the analysis of Table 2-4, with the continuous increase in cooperation among the countries along the "Belt and Road", the African market has also become one of the important export markets for Shaoxing City. Moreover, the mass consumption in the African market tends to be mid-to-low end, and the market potential is huge. This is a development opportunity for small and micro enterprises in the textile industry of Shaoxing City. These enterprises mainly produce and operate medium and low-end goods. They can take advantage of the African market to consolidate the previous development of their enterprises and lay a certain foundation for their development. Overall, the textile industry of Shaoxing City has certain competitive advantages when exporting to the African market. Shaoxing City should seize this emerging market in Africa, increase cooperation efforts and optimize the structure of the export market.

6 CONCLUSION

This paper studies the current export situation and existing problems of the textile industry in Shaoxing City under the background of the "Belt and Road Initiative", and analyzes the development trend of the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City. Finally, combined with the export competitive advantages of Shaoxing's textile industry, corresponding solutions and specific guiding opinions on how to achieve the sustainable export development of Shaoxing's textile industry are proposed.

This paper concludes through the calculation of TC index and RCA index that the export of the textile industry in

Shaoxing City has stable and extremely strong competitiveness in the "Belt and Road" market. However, the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City still faces a series of problems that need to be improved, such as export trade barriers, low technological content of products, lack of brand effect, and relatively concentrated export markets. In response to these issues, and in light of the new policies and environment brought about by the Belt and Road Initiative, the following suggestions are put forward for textile export enterprises in Shaoxing City: strengthening green and ecological production, improving production technology levels, focusing on brand building, and implementing diversified development of the market structure, etc.

The textile industry in Shaoxing City is a representative microcosm of China's textile exports. Therefore, the research on the exports of the textile industry in Shaoxing City has reference significance for the exports of the textile industry in other regions. It is hoped that based on the research of this article, reference suggestions can be provided for the export of the textile industry in Shaoxing City.

COMPETING INTERESTS

The authors have no relevant financial or non-financial interests to disclose.

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