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KEY WORD: STATUS, POTENTIAL, TEXTILE , SYNTHETIC FIBER INDUSRY, GARMENT INDUSTRY

WONGSAKORN TANGKAM : STATUS AND POTENTIAL ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTILE INDUSTRY : A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN SYNTHETIC FIBER INDUSTRY AND GARMENT INDUSTRY. THESIS ADVISOR: ASSOC. PROF. WARANYA PATARASUK, 186 pp. ISBN 974-636-317-4

The purpose of the thesis is to study status and potential of textile industry in Thailand will special reference to synthetic fiber industry and garment industry by considering the market and production structure, strength and weakness, problems and trend of them. The study is a descriptive method using primary data from questionnaires and interviews.

Textile industry in Thailand plays vital role in labour aspect, export earning and creating high value added in manufacturing industry. At present, Thailand textile industry includes fiber industry, spinning , weaving, knitting , dyeing, finishing and garment industry.

It was found that synthetic fiber industry is more capital intensive than garment industry which uses more of skilled labour. From entrepreneur's point of view, efficiency of labour in both industries are at the same level. Most of synthetic fiber's machines and inputs are imported while garment industry uses both imported and local ones. In addition, synthetic fiber industry is mainly joint-ventured but most firms in garment industry are all local. Each firm received technology in many ways but the most important way is by machine purchasing contract. By considering efficiency in each industry, most synthetic fiber firms produce with full capacity. On the other hand, garment firms are not yet in that level due to market restraints and insufficient skilled labour.

Focusing on the market, customers of synthetic fiber firms are both local and foreign while small size garment firms' customers are local and large size garment firms' are from abroad, U.S.A., European Union and China. Competitors in synthetic fiber industry are from both domestic and foreign, small and medium size garment firms are local , and large size garment firms are foreign. However, all firms have more advantages than other competitors particularly in quality of goods.

Problems and obstacles of textile industries are seperated as domestic and foreign problems; the first problem of synthetic fiber is about cost of inputs and tax whereas garment's is wages. The second problem of synthetic fiber concerns about import tariff of inputs while garment's problems are tax, trade barriers and export process.

Synthetic fiber and garment industries will survive if manufacturer enhance and develop their products continuously. In particular, garment industries which facing low cost competition should upgrade their products in order to compete with other high cost competitors. Furthermore, government must help these industries seriously so that Thailand textile industries will continue their roles permanently.

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