



## An Examination of U.S. Cotton Product Imports Trade Patterns

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### ABSTRACT

*This study examined important environmental factors influencing the cotton export performance in the current top ten countries supplying cotton products to the United States, including Mexico, China, India, Honduras, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Indonesia, and Guatemala, using Austin's (1990) Environmental Analysis Framework (EAF). The research used secondary data collected from various government sources with a 26 year time period from 1974 to 2000. The results indicated that three variables, GNP, Exchange Rates, and Roads, have significant positive impact on U.S. cotton import dollar volume, while Tariff Rates have significant negative impacts on U.S. cotton import dollar volume. The findings have important managerial implications to U.S. cotton importers and retailers, and for the ten cotton-exporting countries.*

*Keywords: Cotton, international trade, Environmental Analysis Framework, import, export, competitive advantage, GNP, exchange rate, labor cost, roads, merchant marine, tariff rate, quota*

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### INTRODUCTION

According to a survey conducted by Cotton Incorporation (2001), 75% of consumers consider fiber content as one of their top concerns when they are purchasing clothing. Among all natural fibers, cotton is

the most popular fiber frequently used in clothing, interior decoration, and industry due to its unique properties—its softness, breathability, absorbency, durability, and other added values such as wrinkle, oil or water resistance. Cotton currently holds the strongest position in the United States with a