

Fortunately, the present book seeks to answer some of these questions and provides clues to some others. Valladares' is basically workman's book. It provides us how to think, how to ideate and how to write and evaluate good copy – for press ads, for hoardings, for radio, for films/TV/audio-visual and for direct mailers.

To get the most out of this guidebook, the readers must attempt the assignments given at the end of the each chapter. All the assignments have been structured to lead us step by step to a total mystery of the craft of copywriting. In fact, doing the assignments is the only way we will understand the basic principles so that they become an essential part of our creative thinking and working.

Using a direct and anecdotal style, Valladares taught us a valuable lesson about advertising identifiability; "Technology may become more sophisticated. There is no substitute for IDEAS and these can be generated only by the human mind".

Finally, it must be admitted that there is nothing *original* in this book. Actually, Valladares has done what the copywriters the world over are doing every day of their working lives : "Saying it differently while trying to say it memorably". This is the real essence of copywriting.

Tridib Chakraborti
IIM Calcutta

Textiles and Fashion : Challenges and Strategies for the Industry, Edited by V. L. Mote, Tata-McGraw-Hill, New Delhi, 2000, xxviii+159 pp., price not stated.

India has a large and diversified base in fibres. Labour is among the cheapest in the world. It is not surprising that India is the home of the world's second largest textile industries in terms of overall capacity. And yet, India

has a rather poor presence in the world market for textiles and clothing. It is well-known that many of the problems of the competitiveness of Indian textiles and clothing in the world market are a legacy of the regulatory regime in force until the 1980s, and partly in force even today.

The 1985 Textile Policy and the 1991-2 economic reforms allowed a greater play of market forces and enabled globalization on a limited scale. In particular, conditions for export of downstream goods and import of technology became easier. Encouraged by these changes, and the steady devaluation of the rupee from the early-1980s, garment and yarn exports began to increase very rapidly. India's share in the world clothing and yarn trades increased too. Sometime later, fabrics also began to be exported for the use of clothing manufacturers in other developing countries.

However, the technical and organizational capability of the industry had always been poor, partly due to the earlier insulation from world competition, partly due to structural factors such as poor infrastructure, and partly due to policies such as reservation of clothing manufacture for small-scale industry. The textile industry did not have time to adapt in these respects, and the government was not sufficiently active in further reform of competition policies. The state of excess demand for Indian textiles for a brief few years in the mid-1990s created a state of complacency. The deficiencies, therefore, hurt badly when the boom turned into recession in 1996.

Nevertheless, the background of a qualified success in the world market between 1985 and 1995 has changed the mentality that drives the discourse on textiles. Twenty years ago, all eyes were focused on domestic competition. The sole focus now is international competitiveness of the industry. The special concern of the book under review is clothing. Despite steady double-digit growth rates in exports maintained for nearly 15 years, India's performance in clothing trade has been rather poor, especially by the standard of East and Southeast Asia. Under the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing of the WTO, India must allow import of garments soon, and it is believably held that Chinese imports will succeed in India to a large extent. What is lacking and what needs to be done?

The book under review is an attempt to answer this question. The result of a seminar organized in October 1999 by the National Institute of Fashion Technology and Ahmedabad Textile Mills' Association, it has 13 articles written by persons experienced in the problems of the textiles and clothing industries as managers, scholars, and entrepreneurs. The editor V.L. Mote is well-known in his field, and especially as a textile industry consultant. Many of the articles contain interesting ideas and diagnoses, and all of them share a sense of urgency for action, both on the government's part and on the industry's.

It is not necessary to summarize the articles individually. However, the core themes discussed do need a summary, for they are of great importance for the future of the industry. Two critical deficiencies of Indian clothing are most commonly cited, in this book and in the concerned literature. These are, poor quality, and narrow range. As a result of these deficiencies, India can compete only in markets that value cost more than quality. Such markets include (a) other developing countries within easy reach from India, (b) items consumed in developed countries where cost matters relatively more. These markets do not include high-value-added garments. The low-cost image rules out India's access to the larger part of the developed country markets.

Why do these deficiencies arise? Various chapters in the book cite one or more of the following reasons. Other relevant literature also cites some reasons behind India's poor quality image. All these reasons can be listed as follows :

1. Economies of scale are not fully utilized. Indian clothing factories tend to be smaller in size than in the rest of Asia. This smallness is partly a policy problem, a result of the reservation of clothing for the small-scale sector, which has just been revoked. Partly, it is a structural problem, arising from the high cost of capital. Elsewhere in Asia, a more open FDI policy mitigated capital scarcity in exportable industries to some extent, while also enabling market access. In India, FDI policy has been considerably more rigid.

2. As a result of poor globalization of enterprises, retailing abroad has remained undeveloped.
3. Garment-textile interface has been limited in India. The textile industry includes powerlooms and large integrated mills. The latter, who have better technology on average, traditionally retailed cloth pieces rather than supplying the clothing industry. The old habit has led to the mills being badly responsive to the garment industry's needs. On the other hand, the powerlooms are on average not equipped to supply world-class quality textiles.
4. As a result of the above factor, the quality of cloth in India tends to be poor, if cheap.
5. While labour is cheap in India, it is not of very high quality. Both managerial and technical practices tend to be deficient and wasteful in clothing manufacture. For example, tailors trained in traditional lines of work are placed in charge of cutting. The former are not usually aware of standardization requirements, which require a different skill and mentality altogether.
6. Infrastructure such as ports, railways and roads are of much worse quality in India than in, say, China. This problem makes small firms bear a great deal of direct and indirect costs while exporting.

The concluding chapter of the book presents an 'agenda for action'. This chapter needed to be both longer, more organized, and more tuned to the analyses of the earlier chapters. Still, it contains some important suggestions, the most important in my view is the call for more liberal FDI in retailing.

The book is timely and insightful. But it is somewhat badly planned. It is driven by the in-house expertise of NIFT and ATMA rather than by a concern to educate the lay reader on the industry itself and its problems. The descriptive content of the book is poor, there is little here on sectors other than clothing, or on weaving firms other than the mills. There are other

irritants. All the authors, writing at the peak of the recession, reflect a pessimistic world-view. East Asian competition is given more importance, and India's recent exports to East, Southeast Asia, and the scrapping of capacity in the latter, are ignored. The truth is, there is rapid redistribution of textile capacity in Asia going on, and this process is *a mixture of challenge and opportunity* for India. An effective response to this process needs a better understanding of it than is reflected in the book.

Having made that criticism, I wish to say that it does not devalue the book, but calls for more exercises of the kind the book originated from. India's largest and most successful manufactured exportable faces still challenges. The book represents a sincere and well-timed attempt to highlight this fact.

Tirthankar Roy
IGIDR, Mumbai