

WORLD-WIDE HUB ON LEATHER EDUCATION

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LEATHER SECTOR: ITS GLOBAL DIMENSIONS

1. Raw material base is world wide; Leather manufacture is region wide; Leather product conversion is location specific
2. Leather product market is restricted; Leather products are part of fashion statement
3. Global trade on raw hides is skins is about one sixth of its trade and one twentieth of its consumer trade values, respectively.
4. Leather connects weak rural farmer in a developing nation to fashion statements of industrialized world through education& technology

LEATHER SECTOR: HORIZON SETTING

- 1. Raw material supply base would remain stagnant or progressively become weaker**
 - ❑ 19±1 billion square feet of raw material base might not change significantly
- 2. Share of leather in shoe upper might decrease to less than 25% in the next to decades**
 - ❑ To cover the feet of 7 billion people, world would need to use substitute materials for leather
- 3. Leather would become a product for niche market “demanding value of money” and vacate progressively merchandise market**
 - ❑ An economic reality of global competitiveness

BEYOND THE HORIZON: PEOPLE IN LEATHER

- 1. Diversity challenge of naturally endowed raw material base would defy harmonization and delinking of human interface through application of robotics and automated processing**
- 2. Man and Women may remain “important” players in leather sector with fashion statements and market segmentation into niche products reinforcing the role of people and their creativity as well as expertise**
- 3. Sooner than later, leather might emerge as a product for “ fashion ware” or Wealth statement**

LEATHER AS A GLOBAL BUSINESS

1. Is unlikely to expand in volume with raw material supply chain shrinking
2. Is likely to move up the value chain when genuine leather becomes a value statement
3. Providing user value and personal comfort may become the Unique Selling Point in Global business
4. When personal attention of people in creating value proposition in user perception is likely to become progressively more critical, high cost economies with per-capita income levels @1000 US \$ in current costs may not be able to sustain the leather and footwear as business.

BEYOND THE HORIZON: GLOBAL CIRCULATION

1. Raw material is likely to flow from industrialized world to emerging and developing world with high negative balance of trade
2. Research & Technology would remain viable only in countries with vast talent potential and low expertise costs. Technology flow for product conversion would be in favour of developing economies
3. Manufacture of leather based products would be in industrial clusters and concentrated in limited number of low cost economies.
4. Predominant use of leather products would be in nations with high purchasing power and with high per-capita GDP

EDUCATION: IN RAW HIDES AND SKINS SUPPLY CHAIN

1. **Raw material supply chain from industrialized world would continue to remain as a byproduct of meat handling sector with low human involvement.**
 - ❖ Institutions would play the major role since meat handling would demand high hygiene requirements
2. **Wherever raw hides and skins form livelihood product, it would remain a widely distributed social activity with limited control on quality. Extension would remain the only mode of technological education.**
 - ❖ Institutions specializing in extension would be the most relevant. As a cultural practice, the system would pose challenges to education through institutional models

HIGHER EDUCATION EDUCATION: IN LEATHER PROCESSING

1. **In-elastic supply of raw materials and environment sustainability needs would restrict number of tanneries and need for supply of graduate engineers to thousands in the world.**
 - ❑ Imparting expertise with technology intensity for reducing wastes and maximizing return to investors on B to B in buyers market would be institutional paradigm
2. **Shop floor expertise in adding value proposition to meet user perception would demand vocational education with “Hands-on” Approach.**
 - ❑ Imparting skills and experiential learning with focus on product rather than technology orientation

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: IN LEATHER PROCESSING

- 1. With the value of raw hides and skins increasing, mechanisation would emerge the way forward. Consolidation of tanning related activities through a fewer number of tanneries might become unavoidable. Finished Leather would become almost entirely an industrial commodity.**
- 2. Vocational education in leather processing would be largely related to operation and maintenance of machineries.**

HIGHER EDUCATION: FOR FOOTWEAR MANUFACTURE

Footwear is likely to become Foot care product not dependent on only craftsmanship but on engineering talent in leather footwear sector. This would make leather footwear manufacture highly specialized and technology intensive.

- ❑ Institutions in higher education in footwear engineering and technology would need to compete for talent with highly remunerative industrial sectors.**
- ❑ Advanced technology orientation in footwear education would be propelled. Research and education may need to be more strongly coupled than what is realised now**

VOCATIONAL EDUCATION: IN FOOTWEAR MANUFACTURE

With costs of leather rising, Leather Footwear sector would be more focused on zero-rejection rather than on labour productivity. Vocational education in footwear would need to emphasize upon

1. **Application to details**
2. **Transition from craftsmanship to Professionalism**
3. **Focus on perfection rather than production**
 - ❖ Institutions engaged in vocational education may need to build-in product and market specialization rather than general skill development. Transition from “hands-on” only to “minds- and hands-on” would demand changes in institutional models. Skilling people with focus on mind-hand coordination would become most critical

EDUCATION IN LEATHER ACCESSORIES AND PRODUCTS

Leather apparels and accessories sector would be challenged by the variety and diversity of product mix and hence “Economy of Scope” of the MSME sector would remain the forte..

1. **Number of senior level professionals at the levels of graduate engineers needed for the sector world wide would remain small and critical.**
2. **Craftsmanship is likely to remain the major functional need with vocational education as the main source. Enterprise model for training and training of trainers at institutional level would become the way forward.**

A NEED FOR DESIGNING EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

SCOPING THE SIZE OF GLOBAL LEATHER SECTOR

MEAT HANDLING AND RAW HIDES AND SKINS SECTOR

Likely Trend: Raw hides and skins base is likely to shrink in light of demands of land use by non-farm activities and likely technological changes in animal sector with higher productivity of animals. Flow of raw hides and skins in global trade is likely to be from developed and emerged economies to developing and emerging economies. With limited turn over of global trade on meat at say less than US\$ 20 billion and stagnant supply of Raw material base at about 19 ±1 billion sq.ft of leather making materials,

Number of people handling meat and raw hides and skins and relying on raw hides and skins for livelihood is likely to decrease.

FOOTWEAR SECTOR

Global Footwear industry would need to embrace non-leather footwear as a co-product for meeting the demands and sharing the costs of manufacturing and marketing infrastructure.

Non leather footwear sector is likely to lend itself to high levels of mechanization with high throughputs and higher labour productivity.

Current volume of production of about 5 billion leather footwear per year is unlikely to increase. Annual requirements of graduate level professionals in footwear sector is likely to be limited to less than 5000 globally.

FOOTWEAR AND PRODUCT SECTOR

Global need of about 10±1 billion footwear per year until 2025, total man hours needed for manufacturing of footwear could be estimated with global benchmarks for labour productivity.

Any realistic assessment of annual new talent needs for footwear manufacturing is likely to exceed one million globally.

Leather garment and accessories sector sharing the needs for similarity of skills with footwear sector, could add some more demands.

GLOBAL LEATHER SECTOR: LIKELY TRENDS

1. To remain small in size
2. To make demands for better trained and talented people.
3. Higher demands for brain hours than man-hours
4. Future roles of institutions engaged in capacity building would need to emphasize upon increasing the value addition in user perception and focus on minds-on and brain-hour capacity.

GLOBAL LEATHER SECTOR

Manpower supply needs

Leather and Product Sector

Meat
handling

Brain hour
Increased
emphasis

Man hour
Increasing
contextual need

Less labour
intensive

Institutional
format with
limited number

Enterprise centric
vocational education
@ million year

Transition to
mechanization and
reduced human
interface

WAY FORWARD FOR INSTITUTIONS: A REALITY CHECK

When the leather sector is needed to compete for talent and expertise supply with other high value employment sectors, institutions engaged in developing human capacity for the industry needs to rethink their strategies.

- Competition of institutions engaged in capacity building is with those from other industrial sectors and collaboration within is a choice-less option.
- Interconnecting institutions engaged in capacity building globally seems the way forward.

WORLD-WIDE HUB ON LEATHER EDUCATION (WHOLE)

When the annual talent demands is relatively small even on global scale, competition within is not a good strategy. Collaboration and creating world wide hub for leather education is pragmatic.

Such collaboration could involve co-developments

- a. Curricula; b. course ware, c. harmonization d. accreditation, e. twinning, f. expertise sharing, g. student and faculty exchange and h. universalization through technology enabled education.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN

Am a leather professional in exile. I do suffer from the lack of intimate knowledge of the current structure and shape of the global leather sector.

Therefore, I have given a ring side view of the educational needs of the global leather sector. I have drawn parallels from the talent supply management of R&D sector, which calls for supply of niche talents. Please deliberate within

Thank you