



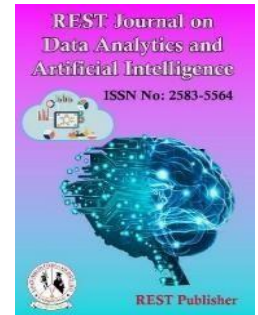
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Bata Corporation: A Comprehensive Profile of The Global Footwear Giant

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Abstract: Thomas J. Bata founded Bata Corporation in 1894, which has become a worldwide recognised name in the footwear industry, noted for its quality, affordability, and durability. Bata, headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland, and active in over 70 countries, provides a varied range of products such as casual, formal, athletic, and specialised footwear, as well as accessories and apparel. This detailed analysis looks at Bata's strengths, including great brand recognition, a diverse product portfolio, and creative techniques. It also tackles the company's flaws, such as supply chain risks and insufficient financial transparency. Furthermore, the analysis investigates prospects for e-commerce expansion, entry into emerging markets, and exploiting sustainability trends, while also recognising dangers from fierce competition, economic changes, and shifting consumer preferences.

1. INTRODUCTION

The footwear sector is a critical component of India's leather industry; in fact, it serves as the engine of growth for the whole Indian leather industry. India is the world's second-largest footwear producer, accounting for 13% of global production and 2.2% of exports. Leather shoes are the country's main export strength, accounting for \$2.2 billion in 2022¹. Bata's product line is vast, ranging from casual and formal shoes to athletic and specialised footwear. Additionally, the company manufactures accessories and apparel. Bata caters to a wide range of market categories, meeting the needs of both budget-conscious and high-end clients. The company has a multi-channel distribution strategy, which includes retail storefronts, franchisees, internet platforms, and wholesale partners. This varied approach enables Bata to retain a strong market presence and reach a large client base.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

According to Mr. Refeeq Ahmed's (1986) study "Development Perspectives of Indian Footwear Industry, the Case of Indian Footwear," the Indian leather footwear business has significant export potential. The author emphasises the need of promoting brand names, improving training opportunities for women, and fostering collaboration between business, training, and academic institutions. The study emphasised the importance of having specialists from affluent countries train local craftspeople in certain areas². Roy, R., Sharma, A et.al. (2016) study highlighted the Anupam Bansal (2014) study stated that Liberty and Bata shared an outdated perception of school shoemakers. Both have evolved to reflect a more extravagant lifestyle. Liberty footwear originates in India, while Bata is a UK-based company. In the Indian market, their transformation journeys were comparable. Bata's 2012 TV commercial reinvented the brand as comfortable, fashionable, and inspiring. Liberty, like Bata, made improvements and focused on design, style, and comfort within six months of its start. Bata's ad encouraged Liberty to update its brand image³. The Indian footwear business, currently estimated at \$26 billion, is expected to reach \$90 billion by 2030. This expansion will be marked by two significant changes: India's demand for non-leather footwear, including sports shoes, running shoes, casual wear and trainers, is expected to grow from 25% to 75% of the market by 2030. Leather shoe production is shifting from small-scale cottage enterprises to larger

corporations. Investing in high-quality design and production facilities for non-leather shoes, as well as protecting small enterprises, will propel the sector forward and assist Make in India initiatives.

Strengths of BATA

- **Strong Brand Recognition:** Globally recognised for quality, affordability, and durability.
- **Wide Product Range:** Provides a variety of footwear, accessories, and apparel to meet the needs of different market segments.
- **Global Presence:** Operates in over 70 countries, ensuring a wide market reach.
- **Innovative practices** include pioneering mass manufacturing processes and innovative employee welfare programmes.
- **Sustainability Initiatives:** Committed to environmentally responsible activities and lowering carbon footprint.
- **Multi-Channel Distribution:** Combines retail storefronts, franchisees, online platforms, and wholesale partners.

A CSR Initiatives

As a global leading shoe company, Bata feels obligated to all of its stakeholders, including the communities in which it operates across countries and regions. This is why Bata Group has pledged to gift 1 million pairs of shoes to health care workers, volunteers, and their families, who are on the front lines combating COVID-19 with amazing courage and dedication each day. The donation will benefit several countries in Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia-Pacific, and India.

Bata cooperated with the Government Medical College Alumni Association to distribute 2000 pairs of washable closed footwear to nursing staff and sanitation workers at several government hospitals in Nagpur. These washable footwears keep feet sanitary and prevent infections. Furthermore, the Batanagar factory has produced 4000 facial shields for use by police and medical personnel in addition to Bata employees⁴.

The library programme aims to improve children's grade level efficiency in reading, writing, listening, and speaking. Across three schools, 71% of pupils improved their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, compared to 47% in the beginning (based on 847 assessments).

Sports Programme: The Impact Driven technique evaluates fitness through six measures, including endurance, speed, upper and lower body strength, flexibility, and abdominal strength. A total of 1263 pupils were assessed.

The Menstrual Hygiene Programme: The programme is being implemented in phases. Currently, we are assessing students' comprehension of menstruation health, associated stigmas, and nutrition requirements.

Environmental Sustainability Projects:

1. **Solar Powering Schools:** The construction of a 15 KW off-grid solar plant in a school is expected to cut CO₂ emissions by 424 tonnes (4,24,000 kg). This is equivalent to planting 679 trees over 25 years.

2. **Rainwater Harvesting System:** A rooftop area of 5300 square feet is anticipated to recharge 2641 litres of water yearly.

Sustainability Initiatives of Bata India

1. **Environmentally Friendly Products:** Promoting footwear and accessories created from sustainable materials, including recycled or eco-friendly alternatives.

2. **Energy Efficiency:** Using energy-saving strategies and technology in manufacturing, retail, and office settings to minimise energy consumption and carbon emissions.

3. **Waste Reduction and Recycling:** Implementing programmes to reduce waste generation and encourage responsible waste management throughout the supply chain.

4. **Community Engagement:** Providing skills development programmes, education, and support to vulnerable populations to positively impact society.

5. Supply Chain Sustainability: Working with suppliers to promote ethical sourcing, fair working conditions, and environmental compliance throughout the supply chain.

4. CONCLUSION

Bata Corporation's rich history, together with its continuous commitment to quality, innovation, and sustainability, has emerged its position as a major leader in the worldwide footwear business. The company's strengths in brand awareness, product diversity, worldwide reach, and creative methods form a solid platform for future success. Despite facing challenges such as supply chain weaknesses, strong rivalry, and economic uncertainties, Bata's aggressive plans for e-commerce expansion, accessing emerging markets, and capitalising on technical advancements present considerable growth prospects. The company's commitment to sustainability also coincides with current consumer trends, which improves its brand image and market positioning. By resolving its flaws and efficiently managing risks, Bata can capitalise on its strengths and embrace new possibilities. This strategy ensures that Bata is well-positioned to continue its competitiveness.

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