

Article Info

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Liberalization of Textiles and Clothing Trade and Evolving Global and Indian Trade Scenario

Aditi Agrawal and Archana Gandhi***

ABSTRACT

Before the liberalization of Textiles and Clothing trade, export from developing countries to developed countries was subject to selective quantitative restrictions to protect the industry of the importing country. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade over a period of 47 years facilitated world trade with a view to bind tariffs and foster liberalization. But as world trade grew complex the General Agreement was found wanting and the Multifibre Arrangement was drafted to carry forward liberalization of textiles and clothing trade more effectively. In 1994 the Multifibre Arrangement gave way to the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing, a ten year liberalization process that was undertaken to remove the existing quota in stages. This liberalization of trade altered the level of employment in regions where the textile and clothing industries were important. While certain regions lost, others gained in this arena. This liberalization reshaped trade across the globe in the global textiles and clothing markets. As a leading participant in this trade, India too was directly affected by these policy changes.

Keywords: *Liberalization of Textiles; Indian Trade Scenario; Clothing Trade.*

1.0 Introduction

With Globalization came in two types of International economic networks, namely, “producer driven value chains” and “buyer driven value chains” (Gereffi, 2001). Large retailers, marketers and branded manufacturers are central to setting up decentralized supply chain networks with production being carried out in developing countries. The Global organization of textile and clothing industry serves as a prime example of buyer-driven value chains (Hassler, 2003). Large retailers or marketers that design and market the merchandise outsource its production while they order the goods and supply the specifications to developing countries like India, China and Bangladesh. In these emerging markets, tiered networks of contractors manufacture this clothing and textile merchandise as per the specifications supplied by the retailers (Hassler, 2003).

2.0 Evolution of Liberalization of Textile Trade

Textiles had existed in the former GATT system, and was hence one of the hardest-fought issues in the WTO. The system of import quotas that had dominated textiles trade since the early 1960s has

now been phased out. However, this process was of an elaborate nature, spanning decades and multiple policy changes that were instrumental in shaping trade as it is today (Understanding The WTO: The Agreements.).

2.1. GATT 1947-1994

The Bretton Woods Conference of 1944 led to the creation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), today known as the World Bank. This further created the need to link these two institutions and facilitate the control of international trade. The International Trade Organization (ITO) was created at a UN Conference on Trade and Employment in Havana, Cuba in 1947 by over 50 participating countries.

Meanwhile 23 founding members came together to sign the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) on 30 October 1947 in Geneva, less than a month before the Havana Conference was held. These 23 members were also a part of the larger group negotiating the ITO Charter. The GATT was formed with a view to reduce and bind customs tariffs and give an early boost to trade liberalization. The tariff concessions came into effect by 30 June 1948.

*Corresponding author; Department of Fashion Technology, National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi, India (E-mail: ackashyap@hotmail.com)

**Department of Fashion Technology, National Institute of Fashion Technology, New Delhi, India

The ITO Charter was finally signed in Havana in March 1948. However, ratification in some national legislatures proving to be impossible, the ITO did not survive and was effectively dead by 1950.

From 1948 to 1994, GATT presided over world trade. Its basic legal principles remaining much as what they were in 1948 with any changes being made by a series of multilateral negotiations known as “trade rounds” (The GATT years: from Havana to Marrakesh, WTO).

2.2. MFA

“Multifibre Arrangement (1974-94) under which countries whose markets are disrupted by increased imports of textiles and clothing from another country were able to negotiate quota restrictions” (WTO Glossary).

From 1974 until the end of the Uruguay Round, trade was governed by the Multifibre Arrangement (MFA) 1974-1994. Quotas were established to limit imports into countries whose domestic industries were facing serious damage from the rapidly increasing imports. The MFA was a framework for bilateral agreements and unilateral actions that imposed selective quantitative restrictions to protect the industry of the importing country as a short term measure to help developed countries adjust to imports from developing countries (Understanding The WTO: The Agreements.).

2.3. ATC

The WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing was negotiated in the Uruguay Round of Trade Negotiations spanning 1986 to 1994, and replaced the Arrangement Regarding International Trade in Textiles (MFA, or Multifibre Arrangement) of 20 December 1973. The ATC integrated trade in this sector back to GATT rules, and expired on 1 January 2005 (WTO). The ATC provided for all then-existing textile and clothing trade restrictions to be notified and eliminated over a period of 10 years from the date of entry into force of the WTO Agreement. This process was carried out progressively in stages of 3 years, 4 years and 3 years respectively. The ATC also provided that the ATC itself would be terminated at the beginning of the 12th year of the WTO, together with all of the remaining restrictions within its scope. As this termination duly took place on 1 January 2005, the ATC is no longer in effect (Textiles

Agreement, WTO). From 1st January, 2005, with the lift of import quotas and the Textile and Clothing trade being governed by the general rules of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), the global face of the Textile and Clothing industry changed (Nordås, 2004).

2.4. Progression of ATC

Article 2 of the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing describes how the ATC progressed. The products to be integrated by the Members consisted of products from the following four groups: tops and yarns, fabrics, made-up textile products, and clothing (Article 2, Agreement on Textiles and Clothing). On 1 January 1995 when the WTO Agreement came into force, every member integrated into GATT 1994 products that accounted for not less than 16 per cent of the total volume of the Member’s 1990 imports (Paragraph 6, Article 2, Agreement on Textiles and Clothing).

On the first day of the 37th months that the WTO Agreement came into effect, i.e., 1 January 1998, products that accounted for not less than 17 per cent of the total volume of the Member’s 1990 imports were integrated into GATT 1994 (Paragraph 8, Article 2, Agreement on Textiles and Clothing).

On the first day of the 85th month that the WTO Agreement came into effect, i.e., 1 January 2002, products that accounted for not less than 18 per cent of the total volume of the Member’s 1990 imports were integrated into GATT 1994 (Paragraph 8, Article 2, Agreement on Textiles and Clothing). On the first day of the 121st month that the WTO Agreement came into effect, i.e., 1 January 2005 the Textiles and clothing sector stood integrated into GATT 1994 while all restrictions under the ATC were terminated (Paragraph 8, Article 2, Agreement on Textiles and Clothing).

3.0 Impacts of Liberalization

Employment The preferential trade regime of the importing regions led to significant growth in the textile and clothing exporting industries in these preference-receiving countries. Therefore the phasing out of the ATC caused a loss of employment on a massive scale in these countries post ATC. The Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP) suggests that the quotas led to 19 million fewer jobs in developing countries (Ernst, C. et al, 2005).

The textiles and clothing industry contributes significantly to employment in the developed countries as well.

From Table 1 we can conclude that as the The WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing (ATC) 1995-2004 progressed and the quota was gradually lifted, the employment in the textiles and clothing industry in developed countries like the United States, France, Germany and the United Kingdom dropped significantly. While these were the importing countries, employment in the sector has dived in some of the exporting countries like Hong Kong and China. In this same period employment surged in other exporting countries, Turkey and Romania whose EU market share increased, EU's North African trading partners, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic (Nordas, 2004).

Textiles and clothing trade has evolved with the evolution of the policies and the institutions governing it. Controlled by GATT for nearly half a century from 1948 to 1994, trade grew with leaps and bounds. Continual reductions in tariffs helped boost very high rates of world trade growth during the 1950s and 1960s. However, by the early 1980s world trade had become far more complex than it was 40 years before. Globalization of the world economy and increases in world merchandise trade were underway. The General Agreement was found wanting. In the textiles and clothing sector an exception to GATT's normal disciplines was negotiated in the 1960s and the early 1970s, leading to the Multifibre Arrangement(The GATT years: from Havana to Marrakesh, WTO).

Table 1: Employment in Textiles and Clothing, ATC Countries (Thousands)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Textiles								
Canada	54	55	51	60	59	54	51	54
United States*	688	660	653	642	614	595	539	489
France**	134	129	126	126	123	119	116	109
Germany	261	209	188	194	184	168	154	146
Italy	332	340	326	351	334	352	344	335
Portugal	99	87	83	101	101	100	106	104
Spain	108	91	94	99	99	101	101	99
United Kingdom**	188	185	184	178	162	149	135	120
Clothing								
Canada	92	80	92	98	97	85	94	80
United States*	814	743	700	639	556	497	427	358
France**	137	128	121	115	106	95	87	81
Germany	122	133	128	120	114	117	118	105
Greece	66	65	60	52	50	50	51	45
Italy	274	243	235	229	209	206	206	198
Portugal	143	131	124	176	164	156	151	143
Spain	117	114	120	111	126	123	125	116
United Kingdom**	173	165	163	159	133	109	88	78

Source: ILO (2004).

* Data based on establishment surveys.

** Data based on official estimates.

3.1 Trade

Table 2: Textiles Exports In USD bn.

YEARS	1994	1995	1998	2000	2002	2005	2010	2012
WORLD	131.673	152.319	149.831	154.848	153.846	202.839	252.221	285.668
EUROPE				62.305	63.561	79.575	78.859	82.172
AUSTRALIA	0.306	0.383	0.371	0.347	0.283	0.329	0.239	0.257
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND				0.5	0.467	0.601	0.522	0.539
NORTH AMERICA				15.732	15.034	16.999	16.005	17.739
CANADA	1.171	1.377	1.917	2.204	2.181	2.465	1.907	2.018
USA	6.592	7.372	9.205	10.956	10.662	12.398	12.169	13.485
MEXICO	0.941	1.283	2.03	2.571	2.21	2.138	1.928	2.236
SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA				2.082	1.778	3.121	3.872	4.193
ASIA				68.995	67.592	95.52	142.027	168.235
CHINA	11.818	13.918	12.817	16.135	20.562	41.05	76.871	95.45
INDIA	3.829	4.358	4.558	5.593	5.813	8.331	12.833	15.274
INDONESIA	2.498	2.713	2.359	3.505	2.909	3.353	4.144	4.541
VIETNAM			0.156	0.299	0.424	0.725	3.061	4.117
PAKISTAN	3.985	4.256	4.302	4.532	4.79	7.087	7.848	8.705

SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

Table 3: Clothing Exports In USD bn.

YEARS	1994	1995	1998	2000	2002	2005	2010	2012
WORLD	140.757	158.353	185.963	197.786	203.865	277.988	353.092	422.686
EUROPE				64.54	72.481	100.545	116.331	126.815
AUSTRALIA	0.211	0.224	0.229	0.196	0.175	0.206	0.216	0.264
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND				0.311	0.317	0.42	0.42	0.466
NORTH AMERICA				19.335	15.775	14.172	10.23	11.342
CANADA	0.825	1.016	1.706	2.077	1.989	1.86	1.173	1.28
USA	5.616	6.651	8.793	8.628	6.033	5.006	4.694	5.614
MEXICO	1.701	2.731	6.603	8.631	7.751	7.306	4.363	4.449
SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA				11.694	11.559	14.252	13.116	15.608
ASIA				91.056	91.57	134.257	198.686	245.768
CHINA	23.731	24.049	30.048	36.071	41.302	74.163	129.82	159.614
INDIA	3.701	4.11	4.782	5.965	5.832	8.739	11.229	13.833
INDONESIA	3.206	3.376	2.63	4.734	3.875	4.959	6.82	7.524
VIETNAM			1.302	1.821	2.633	4.681	10.39	14.068
PAKISTAN	1.578	1.611	1.84	2.144	2.228	3.604	3.93	4.214

SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

3.2 Before ATC

1994

The Multi-Fibre Arrangement (MFA) 1974-1994 was coming to an end and selective quantitative restrictions on textiles and clothing export from developing countries to developed countries were yet to be abolished.

The total world exports of textiles and clothing amounted to USD 272.43 bn, of which Textiles trade contributed USD 131.7 bn while Clothing trade contributed USD 140.7 bn. The quantity of textiles and clothing exports of different regions in 1994 in USD bn can be seen from Table 2 and Table 3.

3.3 During ATC

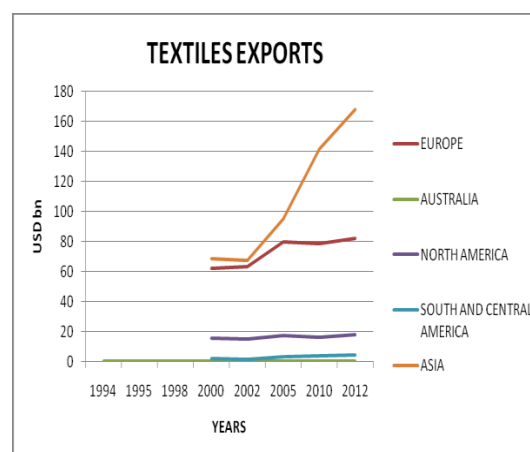
1995-2005

The ATC was put into effect in 1995 and the first phase of the notification and elimination of textile and clothing trade restriction was afoot. As explained above, the ATC was conducted in three phases of 3 years, 4 years and 3 years respectively. The first stage began on 1st January 1995. Stage 2 on 1 January 1998, Stage 3 on 1 January 2002. Finally, on 1 January 2005, all the remaining products were integrated and the Agreement terminated.

From the data it may be noted that the Textiles and Clothing trade in Asia expanded the most as a result of the ATC followed by Europe which emerged as the second largest player in textiles and clothing trade. While textiles trade in North America grew

marginally, clothing trade fell. South and Central America went on to show marginal growth in both textiles and clothing trade from 1995 to 2005.

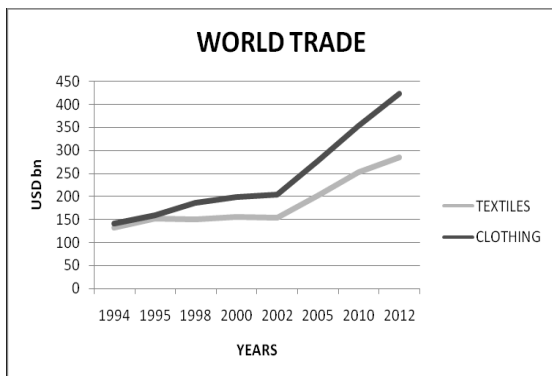
World trade in Textiles grew from USD 152.319 bn in 1995 to USD 202.839 bn in 2005, by almost 33.2 per cent. In Stage I it fell from USD 152.319 bn in 1995 to USD 149.831 bn in 1998. Then in Stage II it expanded to USD 153.846 bn, and then finally in Stage III reached USD 202.839 bn in 2005. On the other hand World trade in Clothing grew from USD 158.353 bn in 1995 to USD 277.988 bn in 2005, by almost 75.5 per cent. In Stage I it grew from USD 158.353 bn in 1995 to USD 185.963 bn in 1998. In Stage II it further expanded to USD 203.865 bn to finally reach USD 277.988 bn at the conclusion of Stage III.



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

4.0 Post the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing

4.1. Present scenario of world trade 2005 To 2012

It has been many years since the selective quantitative restrictions have been eliminated and world textiles and clothing trade has been liberalized. In all these years the trade patterns have further shifted and evolved.

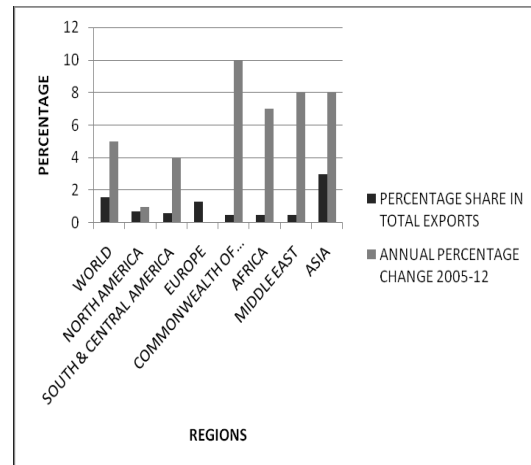
International Trade Statistics, 2013 from World Trade Organization were analyzed to reveal the following results:

The total world exports of textiles and clothing today amount to USD 709 bn. Of this, textiles exports contribute USD 286 bn while clothing exports comprise USD 423 bn. Textiles and Clothing exports comprise a combined 4 per cent share in world merchandise trade, the breakup being 1.6 per cent for textiles and 2.4 per cent for clothing. Since the conclusion of the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing in 2005, the annual percentage change in the Textiles exports has been 5 per cent and the Clothing sector 6 per cent. Since the conclusion of the ATC in 2005, world trade in textiles has grown by 41 per cent while world trade in clothing has grown by 52.2 per cent.

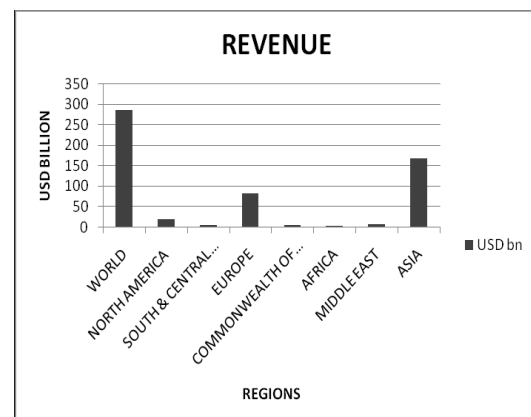
4.2. Textiles

Asia has the largest percentage share in the total textiles exports at 3 per cent, with an annual percentage change of 8 per cent in the period 2005-12, earning USD 168 bn. Europe comes next at 1.3 per cent, with a nil annual percentage change, showcasing no growth in the industry since 2005, valued at USD 82 bn. This is followed by North America at 0.7 per cent share in the total exports, an annual percentage change of 1 per cent and earning USD 18 bn in the trade. South and Central America on the other hand enjoy a percentage share of 0.6 per cent in the total exports, having grown at the rate of 4 per cent every year since 2005 and earning USD 4 bn. Africa, Middle East and the Commonwealth of Independent States all have a percentage share of 0.5 per cent in the total exports and enjoy an annual percentage change of 7 per cent, 8 per cent and 10 per cent respectively with an income of USD 3 bn, USD 7 bn and USD 4 bn respectively.

5.0 International Trade Statistics, 2013, Textiles



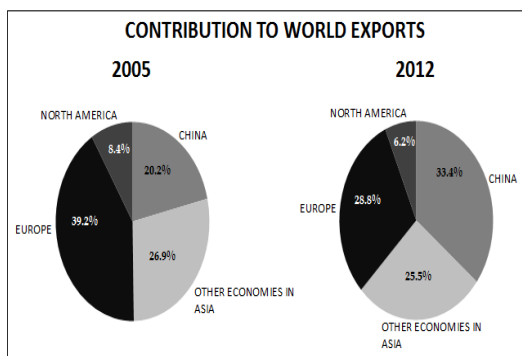
SOURCE: WTO DATABASE



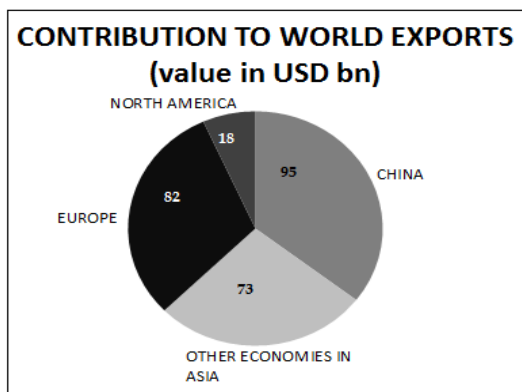
SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

In 2005 when the ten year liberalization process had only just concluded and the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing had completed phasing out the pre-existing quotas, the world exports scenario was thus. Asia contributed to 47.1 per cent of the global textiles trade of which 20.2 per cent came from China alone and the remaining from other economies in Asia. However, the International Trade Statistics (2013) from WTO show a significant alteration in the scenario. Asia's contribution today has surged to 58.9 per cent, with China's share increasing by 13.2 per cent and the share of the other economies in Asia decreasing by 1.4 per cent. Europe's share on the other hand has dived by 10.4 per cent and North America's by 2.2 per cent since 2005.

Contribution to World Exports, 2013, Textiles



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE



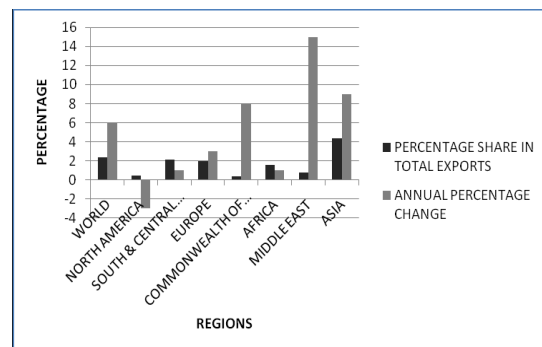
SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

5.1. Clothing

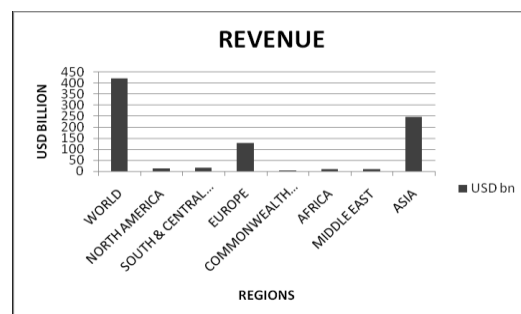
In the Clothing market on the other hand the market has progressed differently. Asia leads with a percentage share in the total exports of 4.4 per cent, having grown by 9 per cent every year since 2005. Asia today earns a total of USD 246 bn from the

trade. South and Central America have a 2.1 per cent share in the same, growing at the rate of 1 per cent per annum and earning USD 16 bn. Europe earns the second highest amount from its clothing exports after Asia, amounting to USD 127 bn. It has a 2 per cent share in total exports and a 3 per cent growing rate. Next comes North America, making USD 11 bn with a percentage share of 0.5 per cent. The Clothing exports industry in this region has suffered a decline in the post ATC period and has been consistently depreciating at a rate of 3 per cent every year since the quotas were completely lifted in 2005. The Clothing exports industry in the Middle East has grown at a rate higher than any others, at 15 per cent. It earns USD 10 bn and has the percentage share of 0.8 per cent in the total exports. Africa on the other hand has a 1.6 per cent share, 1 per cent growing rate and earns USD 10 bn. The Commonwealth of Independent States has a 0.4 per cent share, 8 per cent growth rate and is earning USD 3 bn through its Clothing exports.

6.0 International Trade Statistics, 2013, Clothing



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

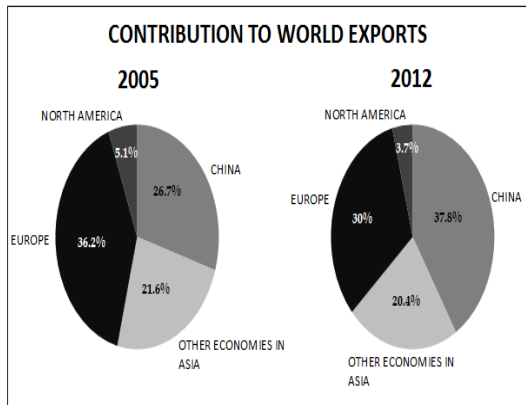


SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

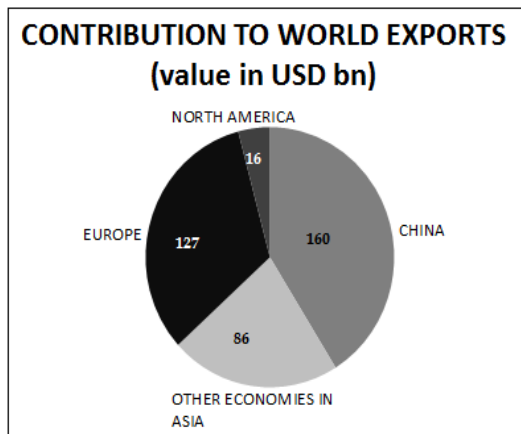
China's share in the world clothing exports has increased by 11.1 per cent since the abolition of selective quantitative restrictions in 2005. It may be noted that after China, Europe is the leading exporter of Clothing in the world, though its share has since

declined by almost 6.2 per cent. North America, the region that enjoys the minimum market share in the clothing exports has seen a further reduction of 1.4 per cent.

Contribution to World Exports, 2013, Clothing



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE



SOURCE: WTO DATABASE

7.0 Growth of Textiles and Clothing Trade In India

Textiles and Clothing industry is one of the mainstays of the Indian economy. Accountable for almost 11 per cent of the country’s total exports basket, it is one of the largest contributing sectors of India’s exports worldwide. The textiles and clothing industry employs nearly 45 million people and accounts for 14 per cent of industrial production, which is 4 per cent of GDP. The 12th Five Year Plan envisages India’s exports of textiles and clothing at USD 64.41 billion by the end of March, 2017 (Government of India Ministry of Textiles (International Trade Section)).

Indian textile exports contribute 5.35 per cent of the world textile trade, while Indian clothing exports contribute 3.26 per cent of the world clothing trade.

The Textiles and Clothing exports have grown over the years. Policy changes have contributed significantly to this growth.

7.1. Before ATC

Up until the end of 1994 textile and clothing trade was still governed by the norms of the MFA. Trade between India and the rest of the world was subject to various quotas and hence limited the growth of the Textiles and Clothing industry. The Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 75.6 per cent from 1990 to 1994 at an average annual growth rate of 15.7 per cent. The Clothing Exports industry on the other hand grew by 46.3 per cent from 1990 to 1994 with an average annual growth rate of 10.7 per cent. In 1994 the Textiles exports volume stood at USD 3.8 bn while the Clothing exports stood at USD 3.7 bn.

7.2. During ATC

1995-2005

STAGE I (1995-1998)

On 1 January 1995 Stage I of the ATC came into effect. During Stage I of the ATC from 1995 to 1998, the Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 20.3 per cent at an average annual growth rate of 11 per cent. On the other hand the Clothing Exports industry grew by 5.7 per cent at an annual average growth rate of 5.5 per cent. By the end of 1997, the Textiles exports volume stood at USD 5.2 bn while the Clothing exports volume stood at USD 4.3 bn.

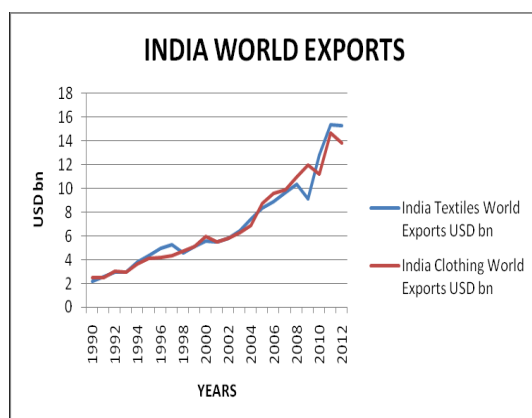
STAGE II (1998-2002)

Stage II of ATC came into effect on 1 January 1998. During Stage II of the ATC from 1998 to 2002, the Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 21.2 per cent, at an average annual growth rate of 1.8 per cent. Clothing Exports industry expanded by 14.7 per cent, growing at an average annual growth rate of 6.4 per cent. By the end of Stage II, the Textiles exports volume stood at USD 5.5 bn while Clothing exports volume stood at USD 5.5 bn. STAGE III (2002-2005) Stage III of ATC came into effect on 1 January 2002. During Stage III of the ATC from 2002 to 2005, the Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 27.4 per cent at an average annual growth rate of 10.3 per cent.

Clothing Exports industry expanded by 18.8 per cent, growing at an average annual growth rate of 8 per cent. At the end of Stage III of the ATC on 1 January 2005 when it was terminated, India's Textiles exports volume stood at USD 7.4 bn while the Clothing exports volume stood at USD 7 bn. Therefore it may be noted that from 1995 to 2005 the Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 70 per cent at an average annual growth rate of 7.2 per cent. On the other hand the Indian Clothing Exports industry grew by 68.5 per cent expanding annually at an average rate of 6.7 per cent. The Indian Textile Exports industry went from USD 3.8 bn on the onset of the ATC to 7.4 bn on its conclusion while the Indian Clothing Exports industry grew from USD 3.7 bn to USD 7 bn.

7.3. Post ATC

2005-2013 On 1 January 2005 the ATC was terminated and all the remaining products were integrated for their trade to be henceforth governed by the rules of the GATT. Liberalized, Textiles and Clothing trade no longer suffered from the quotas that had pre-existed. From 2005 to 2013, Textile exports grew by 83.3 per cent, expanding at an average annual rate of 10.4 per cent. Clothing exports on the other hand grew by 58.3 per cent, growing at an average annual rate of 9.7 per cent. In the year 2012-2013, Textile exports stood at USD15.3 bn while Clothing exports stood at USD 13.8 bn.



8.0 Conclusion

The study above brings various points to conclusion. We can effectively say that the abolition of selective quantitative restrictions on Textiles and Clothing trade between countries has severely altered the employment scenario as well as international trade.

Employment dropped significantly in importing countries like United States, France, Germany and the United Kingdom whose local industry suffered and also in exporting countries like China and Hong Kong who received preference before ATC had been abolished. On the other hand employment surged in other exporting countries like Turkey, Romania, and EU's North African trading partners, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh and the Dominican Republic.

While GATT was strongly instrumental in the growth of international trade since its inception in 1948 to 1994, new policies had to be adopted in order to accommodate the increasing complexities in world trade. Its deficiencies were addressed by the Multi fibre arrangement, and post that by the Agreement on Textiles and Clothing. Analysis reveals that during the ATC world trade in textiles grew by 33.2 per cent, while world trade in clothing grew by 75.5 per cent. Textiles and clothing trade in Asia expanded the most, to be closely followed by Europe. While textiles trade in North America grew marginally, clothing trade fell. South and Central America went on to show marginal growth in both textiles and clothing trade. Since the conclusion of the WTO Agreement on Textiles and Clothing in 2005, world trade in textiles has grown by 41 per cent while world trade in clothing has expanded by 52.2 per cent. The annual percentage change in the Textiles exports has been 5 per cent and the Clothing sector 6 per cent. Asia has the largest percentage share in textiles and clothing world trade while Europe stands second.

Textiles and clothing industry is one of the mainstays of the Indian economy, accountable for almost 11 per cent of the country's total exports basket. Indian textile exports contribute 5.35 per cent of the world textile trade, while Indian clothing exports contribute 3.26 per cent of the world clothing trade. During ATC from 1995 to 2005 the Indian Textile Exports industry grew by 70 per cent and the Indian Clothing Exports industry grew by 68.5 per cent. The ATC was terminated on 1 January 2005, since then Textile exports have grown by 83.3 per cent while Clothing exports have grown by 58.3 per cent. Indian Textile exports today stand at USD 15.3 bn while Indian Clothing exports stand at USD 13.8 bn.

Therefore it may be noted that over the years different policies have been adapted to liberalize and boost world trade, changing strategy as and when

required. This has in various ways affected employment and trade across the globe and the liberalization of Textiles and Clothing trade has significantly altered the global trading scenario.

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