



Sustainable & Transforming Waste to Fashion: A Study on Enhancing Reusability and Sustainable Apparel Products.

Rajib Das^{1*}, *Ashraful Islam*², *Farjana Mita*³

1* Assistant Professor. Department of Apparel Manufacturing Management & Technology, Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology, Uttara, Dhaka 1230, Bangladesh.

2* Lecturer, Department of Fashion Design and Technology, Port City International University, South Khulsi, Chittagong

3* Associate Professor. Department of Apparel Manufacturing Management & Technology, Shanto-Mariam University of Creative Technology, Uttara, Dhaka 1230, Bangladesh

ABSTRACT

Sustainable fashion is increasingly gaining attention as consumers become more aware of the environmental impacts of the industry. The fashion & Apparel industry is known for its high environmental impact, particularly in terms of waste generation and resource consumption one significant aspect of this movement is the use of recycled apparel, which plays a crucial role in promoting both reusability and style.

The fashion industry is known for its high environmental impact, particularly in terms of waste generation and resource consumption. However, recent innovations are transforming this landscape by turning waste into fashionable and sustainable apparel. This study explores the methods, benefits, and challenges of creating reusable and sustainable clothing from recycled materials.

Keywords: Sustainable, Recycling, Apparel waste, Material Innovation.

1. Introduction

Transforming waste into fashion presents a compelling solution to the environmental challenges posed by the traditional apparel industry. Global population increase, better living conditions, and shorter textile product life cycles have all contributed to the world's increasing textile waste crisis. One of the most important ways to lessen the enormous waste issue produced by the fashion and textile sectors is through textile recycling. Although the development of textile waste recycling industry is necessary, workable temporary solutions must still be implemented. Textile waste can have an economic and environmental impact on people's life. Pollutants and waste can be produced at every stage of the production of clothing, whether it is made of synthetic or natural materials. The effects of the fashion and textile industries have been examined from both an economic and environmental standpoint in this review paper. Products' post-recycling usage have been thoroughly examined, as have the technologies and techniques for trash recovery and recycling at every level. Even with all the advancements in the fashion industry's waste recycling procedures, there are still a lot of issues and problems that need to be resolved.

2. Literature Review:

As the apparel sector's supply chain structure is comparatively complex and the application of the sustainability concept is relatively new in this sector, there is a lack of a clear definition of sustainable apparel. In literature, researchers have presented sustainable apparel in the form of green apparel, ethical fashion and eco-friendly apparel. Recent sustainable apparel production trends indicate that the apparel industry has been incorporating environmentally friendly materials, such as organic fibers, recycled and upcycled fibers. Moreover, various concepts, such as transformable design and few brand are working on this issues like, Eileen Fisher: The brand has developed a circular system called "Renew," which encourages customers to return their old clothing for recycling and provides a buy-back option to promote reusability. Levi's: With their "Well Thread" collection, Levi's incorporates sustainable materials and focuses on the recyclability of their jeans, emphasizing a lifecycle approach to garment production.

H&M: The brand's "Closing the Loop" program aims to collect used garments for recycling, integrating circular practices into their business model. Patagonia: This brand has been a pioneer in using recycled materials in their products. Their "Worn Wear" program encourages consumers to repair and reuse garments, further promoting sustainability. Ralph Lauren's Recycled Polyester: The brand has incorporated recycled plastics into its collections, demonstrating that luxury and sustainability can go hand in hand. Ecoalf: A company that creates fashionable apparel from recycled materials, Ecoalf has successfully developed a range of products while raising awareness about ocean pollution.

3. Types of textile waste:

Textile waste generated by the apparel industries is generally classified into three categories: pre-consumer, post-consumer, and industrial waste.¹ Pre-consumer textile waste refers to manufacturing waste generated when natural, synthetic, or blended fibers are processed into yarns, fabrics, and finished garments, footwear, interior, or technical textile products. Pre-consumer waste is easier to recycle than post-consumer waste as it tends to be more uniform with fewer unknown contaminants. Unsold stock and returns from offline and online sales are also included in pre-consumer waste. Unsold stock and returns are considered by some industry specialists to be industrial waste since the fashion industry must dispose of them. According to the European Union (EU) waste directive,²⁴ waste items should be avoided as much as possible and can only be disposed of in landfills when they are no longer useful. Clothes usually have different decorations, buttons, and accessories, and are commonly blended, making their recycling process more complicated.

Post-consumer textile waste includes any apparel or fabric that has reached the end of its useful life and has been discarded, because it is worn out, has been damaged, has been outgrown, or has fallen out of style. About 11 kg of textile waste is discarded per person in the EU each year. These materials are most commonly incinerated or disposed of in landfills. Smaller percentages are resold in secondhand European markets or shipped overseas. Economists and representatives of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are also critical of secondhand clothes. Asian and African garment industries are harmed by the large number of used clothes arriving at secondhand markets these days.

Finally, commercial and industrial users generate industrial textile waste, including carpets, hospital refuse, filters, conveyor belts, etc. Industrial textile waste is usually considered dirty waste. Due to the difficulty of collection and the complexity of its chemical processes, this waste is less likely to be recycled. Burning or burial methods are very common for this category of waste.

4. Challenges in the Waste-to-Fashion or Apparel Product Movement:

Focusing on sustainable fashion and waste transformation can significantly impact environmental conservation and consumer behavior. Here are some key areas,

- **Quality and Durability:** Ensuring that recycled materials meet the quality standards of traditional fabrics can be challenging. Innovations in textile technology are essential to improve the performance of recycled materials.
- **Supply Chain Complexity:** Establishing an efficient supply chain for collecting, sorting, and processing waste into usable materials requires significant coordination among stakeholders.
- **Consumer Perception:** Some consumers may still perceive recycled clothing as inferior. Overcoming this stigma through effective branding and storytelling is crucial.
- **Scalability Issues:** While there are successful examples of waste-to-fashion initiatives, scaling these solutions to meet global demand presents logistical and economic challenges.
- **Economic Viability:** While sustainable practices are essential, brands must balance environmental goals with profitability to ensure long-term success.

5. Methods of Waste-to-Fashion or Apparel Product:

5.1. Material Innovation

- Investigate the use of recycled materials (like plastic bottles or textile waste) in creating new fabrics.
- Explore bio-based textiles, such as organic cotton, hemp, or innovations like lab-grown leather.

5.2. Design for Longevity

- Emphasize design principles that promote durability and timelessness, encouraging consumers to keep garments longer.
- Investigate modular designs that allow for easy repair or alteration.

5.3 Circular Fashion Models

- Analyze business models that promote circularity, such as take-back schemes, rental services, or resale platforms.
- Examine brands that have successfully implemented closed-loop systems.

5.4. Consumer Behavior

- Study consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion and how they influence purchasing decisions.

- Explore educational initiatives that inform consumers about the impact of fashion waste.

5.5. *Technological Solutions*

- Look into innovations like 3D printing or AI in the design process that minimize waste.
- Assess apps and platforms that facilitate the recycling and repurposing of garments.

5.6. *Policy and Regulation*

- Examine governmental policies that support sustainable practices in the fashion industry.
- Analyze how regulations on waste management impact fashion brands.

5.7. *Case Studies*

- Highlight successful brands or initiatives that have effectively transformed waste into fashionable products.
- Include comparisons of different approaches within the industry.

5.8. *Future Trends*

- Predict future trends in sustainable fashion and how they might evolve with changing consumer values.

6. **The Role of Apparel Recycling:**

Reducing Waste: Recycling apparel minimizes textile waste in landfills by reprocessing old garments into new fabrics. This helps conserve resources and reduces the environmental footprint of fashion.

Resource Efficiency: By reusing existing materials, brands can decrease their reliance on virgin resources, which are often associated with high environmental costs.

Economic Benefits: Recycling creates economic opportunities in new sectors, from collection and sorting to manufacturing, supporting local economies.

7. **Textile or Apparel waste To Finished Usable Product:**

Being a product developer using innovative idea for waste to finished product without using any textile process only innovative design can recycle the product.

7.1. *"Upcycling Worn Leg Panels from Pants, Jeans, or Skirts into New, Usable Skirts"*



Upcycling worn leg panels from pants, jeans, or skirts into new, usable skirts is a creative and sustainable way to repurpose fabric that would otherwise go to waste. This project combines basic sewing skills with creativity and can give your old garments a fresh, fashionable life.

7.2. "Transforming GSM Cut Piece Waste Fabric into Hexagon-Shaped Outerwear"



The hexagons are made by folding the edges of a gsm fabric circle to meet the center and securing the folds into place with a few stitches. To make up the pattern pieces that were required for the curtains using full and partial hexagons. All the gsm cut pieces' fabrics come from old denim pants especially and past projects that were no longer being worn. The curtain is infinitely repairable too.

7.3. "Using Knit Fabric Cutting Waste to Create Patchwork T-Shirts"



Creating patchwork T-shirts from knit fabric cutting waste is a fantastic and sustainable way to repurpose fabric scraps. Knit fabrics, such as those used in old T-shirts, jerseys, or even leggings, tend to be stretchy and comfortable, making them ideal for creating new garments with a bit of creativity. This project is a great way to reduce fabric waste and create a unique, personalized T-shirt. Up cycling knit fabric scraps into a patchwork T-shirt is not only a sustainable way to reuse fabric waste but also a chance to create something completely unique and personal. Whether its going for a simple, coordinated look or a bold, mismatched patchwork style, this project allows for endless creative possibilities. Plus, you'll have a one-of-a-kind, eco-friendly T-shirt to wear or gift to others!

7.4. "Transforming Shade Blanket Waste Fabric into Usable Denim Pants"



By using waste fabric from shade blankets, its only creating something new and useful but also contributing to reducing textile waste. The transformation into denim-style pants may take some creativity and patience, but the end result will be a unique, eco-friendly piece of clothing that combines practicality and sustainability. Transforming waste fabric from shade blankets into usable denim pants is an innovative and sustainable approach to upcycling textiles. This process involves repurposing fabric that might otherwise go to waste and turning it into a completely new garment.

7.5. "Converting GSM Cut Pant Waste and Knit Fabric Scraps into New Outerwear"



Converting GSM (Grams per Square Meter) cut pant waste and knit fabric scraps into new outerwear is a sustainable and creative way to reduce textile waste while creating stylish, functional garments. By repurposing fabric scraps, you can design and produce unique outerwear items such as jackets, coats, or vests, using materials that would otherwise be discarded. Repurposing GSM pant waste and knit fabric scraps into outerwear is an excellent way to create functional and fashionable clothing while promoting sustainability.

7.6. "Upcycling Used Denim Pants into New Hand-Painted Denim"



One of the best things about customizing your denim with hand fabric paint is that you can give old jeans new life. Whether you want to revive denim that's been sitting in your closet for a few years or totally reinvent a pair of jeans you found at the thrift store, you'll fall in love with your pants all over again with these DIY strategies.

Plus, now that you know the basics of painting denim, you don't have to stop with your jeans. Add custom touches to your denim jacket, or even begin to play with other experiments in upcycled fashion

7.7. "Repurposing Sample and Waste Pants into New Garment Products"



Repurposing sample and waste pants into new garment products is a fantastic way to reduce waste and create unique, sustainable pieces. Fashion industry samples and fabric remnants often go unused or are discarded, but with creativity, they can be transformed into new, functional items. Whether you're working with full pants that didn't meet design standards, leftover fabric from production, or offcuts from previous garments, the possibilities are endless

7.8. "Transforming Denim Fabric Cutting Waste into New Products with Laser Printing"



Transforming denim fabric cutting waste into new products with laser printing is a highly creative and sustainable approach to repurposing textile waste. Laser printing on denim allows for intricate designs, logos, and patterns to be applied to the fabric, enhancing its aesthetic value while giving new life to leftover denim scraps. Whether you're interested in creating fashion items, home décor, accessories, or even upcycled industrial products, this process can open up a world of possibilities. Laser printing on denim fabric cutting waste is a fantastic way to turn textile waste into valuable products, from custom apparel to home décor. By using laser technology, you can create intricate designs and patterns that give your denim pieces a unique and contemporary flair.

8. Conclusion:

Recycled apparel represents a promising avenue for advancing sustainable fashion. By blending reusability with innovative design, it offers consumers stylish options that align with their values. As the industry continues to evolve, the integration of recycled materials can play a pivotal role in creating a more sustainable future for fashion. Through collective efforts from brands, consumers, and policymakers, the potential of recycled apparel can be fully realized, leading to a fashion industry that values both style and sustainability. Continued innovation, collaboration, and education will be essential in advancing this movement and ensuring a more sustainable future for fashion.

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