



ECO-FASHION IS GIVING TRUE ESSENCE OF ENVIRONMENTAL GUARDED GARMENTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the sustainable and eco-friendly aspects in garment manufacturing process. Environment is our future and it must be protected from pollution along with fulfilling the needs of fast changing fashion. Now a days, fashion is the hedonism for many people, but it causes harm to environment in multiple ways from manufacturing till disposing off garments. Eco-fashion implies usage of sustainable raw material such as natural fibers, fabrics, dyes etc. Fashion and textile designers are focusing on development of apparels which are sustainable in terms of reuse, recycle and upcycle along with the maximum use of natural fibers other than cotton, linen, jute, silk etc.

KEYWORDS: *Eco-fashion, apparel, hedonism, sustainable, fibers, up cycle etc.*

INTRODUCTION

What is eco-friendly and sustainability?

Eco-friendly refers the process of indulging in such activities which saves earth and prevents nature from variant pollutions. This leads to the development of such products which are completely biodegradable and also fulfil the needs of customer. Sustainability is defined as the process of maintaining ecological balance in environment by avoiding the depletion of natural resources. "The Commission defined sustainable development as development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." [1]. It is important to make optimum utilization of resources in order to fulfil future requirements.

What are eco-friendly garments?

Eco-friendly garments are those which not only fulfill the needs of consumer but also helps in preventing the nature from cure. There are various techniques used in industries for developing fibers and fabric which has been obtained from nature like plants, animals and fruits. Various types of herbal leaves, barks, roots, animals (urine, secretion), minerals,

vegetables, fruits and rinds are also used in the process of natural dyeing and printing. These are absolutely eco-friendly and carries biodegradable property along with some other properties such as anti-bacterial, anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory as well as anti-allergic. There are some other techniques which stands for zero wastage, recycle, reuse and upcycle, where old garments or waste material can be processed into new and creative outfits. Fashion is dynamic and getting more challenging with the increased demand of customers. In order to stand sound at market place along with the sustainability factor keeping in mind, designers are facing difficulty in developing creative apparels in minimum time at minimum cost which is complex in eco-friendly outfits.

BENEFITS OF ECO-FASHION

Fashion industry produces 10% of global carbon emission and 20% of global waste water. Whereas textile industry is second largest polluter of water. So, eco-fashion is the true need of our planet and it is beneficial to various sectors. It provide benefits to clients in terms of good quality products. Whereas, it is



also beneficial to designers and industries in various ways.

➤ Benefits to Environment

- Eco-fashion reduces toxic waste which majorly achieved from chemical dyes.
- Reduces air, land and water pollution level with the maximum use of biodegradable raw material.
- Save energy power with the use of traditional techniques of handloom weaving, manual dyeing, manual printing and hand embroidery.
- Decrease in disposing off old garments through recycle and reuse techniques.
- Reduce in death of animals due to availability of leather and furr from other natural sources like plants and fruits.

➤ Benefits to Consumer

- Eco-fashion provides great quality of garments which is long lasting.
- It provide variuos medical benfits such as anti allergic, anti-bacterial, anti-inflammtory etc.
- Eco-friendly fabric like linen, cotton provide coolnes to our body.
- It provides unique design and natural colors which are difficult to get in fast fashion clothes.
- Easy to maintain and required minimum chemical detergents for cleaning.
- It builds a sense of confidence and motivation towards planet.

➤ Benefits to Designers

- Eco-fashion helps designer to experiment with traditional techniques in morden way.
- It allows them to experiment with old garments and produce creative clothes.

- It leads to zero wastage and helps to motivate for optimum utilization of raw material.
- Eco-fashion motivates designers and industries to work ethically.
- It builds brand goodwill.

Beside all the benefits, many industries and brands are not involved in eco-fashion due to its slow procedure and high operating cost. This leads to high selling price and difficult to afford by customers of lower income. Here comes the need of maximum manufacturing in terms of sustainability by number of brands and designers, so that products become cheap and available easily. Awareness and knowledge of eco-fashion is to be provided among customers so that they may spend maximum on sustainable garments.

ECO-FRIENDLY TECHNIQUES OF GARMENT MANUFACTURING

Recycle - The process of converting old or waste product into usable material.

Reuse -The process of using a product again or second time in a different way.

Upcycle- Conversion of old product in such a higher quality that it enhanced its value than original product.

Zero Wastage – The process of optimum utilization of raw material by using leftover raw material with the motive of zero trash to landfills.

Natural raw material- The process of using maximum biodegradable raw material in terms of fibres, fabric, dyeing, printing, embroidery and manufacturing.

Handloom – The process of using manually operated looms for weaving, dyeing, surface embellishment etc. to save power.

Hand Embroidery – The technique of manual surface embellishment using creative material to save energy and to promote traditional art.

Plantation – The process of planting maximum trees which can be used as raw material for garment manufacturing process.



DESIGNERS AND BRANDS INVOLVED IN ECO-FASHION

It has become the responsibility of every designer to work and develop innovative techniques for eco-fashion. In order to enhance garments aesthetically and functionally, blending of different natural fibres like cotton with silk, silk with wool etc. are more preferable as compare to blending of natural with ester fibre which are nonbiodegradable and cannot be called as eco-

➤ The brands and designers involved in eco-fashion are:-

H&M

Member of Better Cotton Initiative, recycle old clothes from other brands by using renewable sources of energy.

- Avoids use of hazardous chemical and solvent based glues in manufacturing process.
- Great future targets to become 100% ecofriendly by 2030.

Patagonia

Works on cotton which is certified by Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS).

- Raw materials are produced from recycle and reuse fabric, avoids wastage and fast fashion.
- Believes in high quality products which are long lasting.

Timberland

Aims at using 100% cotton for apparel, certifies organic and recycled by 2020.

- Leather used in apparels is sourced from LWG silver or gold-rated tanneries, use non PFC for water repellent clothes .
- Focused on use of 100% recycled, organic and renewable material.

fashion. Beside this, use of traditional techniques of handloom weaving, hand embroideries, dyeing & printing, are used in order to save energy and promote sustainable heritage. “Whether they are offering haute couture or athleisure, functional or lifestyle products, brands are rapidly adopting and promoting eco-friendly material to strengthen their identity and highlight their social responsibility”.[2]



Paromita Banerjee

Designer uses kala cotton, processed it with organic things (soapberry, cowdung) to make it soft and usable.

- Work on eco-friendly and hand weavon textile like khadi, jamdani, using natural dyes on traditional handprinting techniques like ajrakh.
- Avoids plastic packaging by using waste fabric carry bags, wood packaging etc.

Anita Dongre

Designer has joined sustainable apparel Coalition (SAC), recycle 67% of waste water and reuse in toilet and lawn irrigation.

- Work on Tencel fibres, created by renewable raw material through natural way of photosynthesis.
- Manufactured Earth Tee in 2018, these are the sustainable t-shirt made from recycled plastic bottles.

Pero

Designer Aneeth Arora has launched two brands Pero-upcycle and Pero-recycle.

- Promotes handmade art like tussels, applique, patch work, quilting and creative surface embellishment through waste and remaining raw material.
- She works on natural fibres majorly linen and cotton.

AYURVASTRA – A HEALING APPROACH IN SUSTAINABLE CLOTHING

Textiles used in clothing which are 100% sustainable and fully biodegradable, processed through various natural herbs and dyes which contains medicinal qualities are called ayurveda. The sanskrit term “ayur” means life and “vastra” means clothing thus ayurveda stands for life clothing. It is said to be the branch of Ayurveda, majorly practiced in south-India. These herbal agent fabric are completely free from harmful toxic chemicals as these are developed by organic fibres like cotton, silk, linen, jute, wool etc. and processed through specific botanical herbs like organic seeds, barks, roots, plants, flowers & fruits and carries medicinal qualities to cure various disease like diabetes, skin infection, asthma, hypertension, high blood pressure, eczema, psoriasis and fistula.

Ayurveda is also called as herbal clothing, it creates a protective layer over skin which generates surface penetration and provides healing from skin

problems. It carries properties like anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory, anti-allergic. Ayurveda uses sustainable techniques in weaving through handlooms, organic bleaching through cow’s urine, organic dyeing through turmeric, tulsi (basil), neem (azadirachta indica) tea, coffee, vegetables like spinach, onion, beetroots etc. and fruits like pomegrante, grapes, orange, pineapple, papaya and flowers like marrigold, sunflower, lavender etc. Organic and herbal dye provide soothing pastels colors which are long lasting and requires less maintenance. Ayurveda provides wide range of clothing in sleepwear, meditation clothes, bed sheet, towels, cotton mats etc. as ayurveda is more effective when body is in relaxation mode.

Beside all the sustainable benefits of ayurveda it has few challenges in terms of aesthetical and functional aspects. It consume more time as the process is manual and complex which involves high cost of manufacturing. Whereas herbal dyes doesn’t provide customised colors in brighter shades. It is difficult for commercial purpose on larger scale.



Hence, sustainable garments are the major needs for better future environment. It is the responsibility of every sector to take necessary action in prevention of ecosystem from hazards. Government, designers and industries should build economic awareness and adopt innovative techniques towards eco-fashion. These are extremely beneficial not only towards environment but also for customer's health and skin as it heals from various diseases. Eco-fashion is the only way through which fashion industry can reduce various pollutions and save planet while satisfying present needs without compromising the future needs.

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