



SUSTAINABLE FASHION PRACTICES IN SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

The fashion industry's detrimental impact on the environment has prompted a global shift towards sustainable practices. This paper examines sustainable fashion practices in Singapore, a nation known for its innovation and commitment to sustainability. While Singapore has made significant strides in promoting sustainable fashion, challenges like consumer awareness and high costs persist. The paper highlights key practices including sustainable brands, fashion rental platforms, events, government initiatives, education, and circular economy adoption. Through a literature review, the study reveals positive consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion but a lack of knowledge. Initiatives like the Sustainable Fashion Blueprint and the Sustainable Fashion Alliance are driving change. Local brands, such as The Editor's Market and Matter Prints, are also championing sustainable fashion. However, obstacles like consumer education, cost, and limited textile waste management facilities need to be addressed. The study recommends increasing awareness, affordability, and accessibility of sustainable fashion, enhancing waste management, fostering collaborations, and strengthening policies. By addressing these issues, Singapore can lead the charge in sustainable fashion practices, aligning environmental and social goals with the growth of its fashion industry.

Keywords: Sustainability, Singapore, Industry

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

The fashion industry has long been known for its negative impact on the environment, from excessive resource consumption and waste generation to pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. As consumers become more aware of the environmental and social consequences of fast fashion, there is a growing demand for sustainable fashion practices that prioritize eco-friendly materials, ethical labour practices, and circular economy principles.

Singapore, a small but highly developed country in Southeast Asia, is a hub for international fashion brands and home to a growing number of local designers and startups. As a nation that has prioritized sustainability and innovation, Singapore is well-positioned to lead the way in sustainable fashion practices in the region.

However, while there have been some efforts to promote sustainable fashion in Singapore, there are still challenges to be addressed. For instance, consumer awareness and behaviour change remain key barriers to adoption, and there is a need for more supportive policies and infrastructure to enable a circular fashion system.

Singapore has been increasingly recognizing the importance of sustainable fashion practices in recent years. Here are some examples of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore:

- ❖ **Sustainable fashion brands:** Various homegrown sustainable fashion brands in Singapore are committed to promoting ethical and eco-friendly fashion. These brands use sustainable materials, such as organic cotton, bamboo, and recycled fabrics, and implement sustainable practices such as ethical production, fair wages for workers, and minimal waste.

- ❖ **Fashion rental platforms:** Fashion rental platforms like Style Theory and Rentadella are gaining popularity in Singapore. These platforms allow consumers to rent clothing items, reducing the need for fast fashion purchases and promoting circular fashion.

- ❖ **Sustainable fashion events:** Singapore hosts various sustainable fashion events, such as the Singapore Eco Film Festival and the Green is the New Black conscious festival.

These events aim to raise awareness about sustainable fashion and promote sustainable practices.

- ❖ **Sustainable fashion initiatives:** The Singapore government has been promoting sustainable fashion through initiatives such as the Sustainable Singapore Blueprint, which aims to promote sustainable living practices, and the Zero Waste Masterplan, which aims to reduce waste in the country.

- ❖ **Sustainable fashion education:** educational institutions in Singapore, such as the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts and the LASALLE College of the Arts, are integrating sustainable fashion into their curriculums, educating the next generation of fashion designers on the importance of sustainable practices.

Overall, these sustainable fashion practices in Singapore demonstrate the growing awareness and commitment towards a more sustainable fashion industry.

Increased recycling of textile waste: Singapore has a high percentage of textile waste, but the country is taking steps to reduce the amount of textile waste going to landfills.

Promoting the circular economy: Singapore promotes the adoption of a circular economy in the fashion industry, including using sustainable materials, reducing waste, and extending the life of fashion products through repair, reuse and recycling. This was facilitated by the government and various stakeholder efforts to promote sustainable fashion practices through education and awareness campaigns.

Creating a sustainable fashion market: The number of sustainable fashion marketplaces in Singapore is growing. These marketplaces provide a platform for local sustainable fashion designers to showcase and sell their products, thereby promoting sustainable fashion practices.

These start-ups focus on developing sustainable fashion products and services, including sustainable fabrics, circular economy solutions and sustainable supply chain management.

Implementing sustainable supply chain management: The adoption of sustainable supply chain management practices is a key achievement of the sustainable fashion solutions implemented in Singapore. This has led to the implementation of ethical working conditions, fair wages for workers and reduced environmental impact in the fashion industry.

Cooperation among stakeholders: Collaboration among various stakeholders, including government agencies, businesses and consumers, is a key achievement of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore. These events provide a platform for stakeholders to showcase sustainable fashion products and services, share knowledge and promote sustainable fashion practices.

Singapore has made great strides in promoting sustainable fashion practices, with various stakeholders taking initiatives to reduce the environmental impact of the fashion industry while promoting social responsibility.

The solutions implemented are: adopting sustainable materials, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, increasing recycling of textile waste, promoting circular economy practices, and growing sustainable fashion start-ups and markets, and stakeholders. It has yielded positive results, such as cooperation between results being more sustainable.

CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable fashion practices have gained increasing attention globally due to the growing awareness of the negative impacts of the fashion industry on the environment and society. Singapore, being a small island city-state with limited resources, has recognized the need for sustainable fashion practices. This literature review aims to explore the current state of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore.

Sustainable fashion practices in Singapore are relatively new, and there is limited research on the topic. However, several studies have examined the attitudes and behaviours of consumers towards sustainable fashion. A study by **Tan and Yeow (2020)** found that consumers in Singapore have a positive attitude towards sustainable fashion but lack knowledge and information about sustainable fashion practices. Similarly, a study by **Wong, Ong, and Chan (2020)** found that consumers in Singapore are willing to pay more for sustainable fashion but are unsure of how to identify sustainable products.

Several initiatives have been launched in Singapore to promote sustainable fashion practices. **The Sustainable Fashion Blueprint, launched by the Singapore government in 2019, aims to promote sustainable fashion practices in the country.** The blueprint includes initiatives such as promoting circular fashion, reducing textile waste, and increasing transparency in the fashion industry. The Sustainable Fashion Alliance, a non-profit organization, was also established in Singapore in 2019 to promote sustainable fashion practices.

In terms of sustainable fashion brands in Singapore, several local brands promote sustainable fashion practices. For example, **The Editor's Market, a local fashion brand, has launched a collection of sustainable fashion products made from recycled materials.** Another local brand, **Matter Prints, uses sustainable fabrics and traditional textile printing techniques to create their products.**

However, there are still challenges that hinder the growth of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore. One of the main challenges is the lack of consumer awareness and education on sustainable fashion. Another challenge is the high cost of sustainable fashion products, which may deter consumers from purchasing them. Additionally, there is a lack of infrastructure and facilities for textile recycling and upcycling in Singapore.

In conclusion, sustainable fashion practices in Singapore are still in the early stages of development. While several initiatives and local brands are promoting sustainable fashion, there is a need for increased consumer education and awareness. The government and industry stakeholders need to work together to overcome the challenges and promote sustainable fashion practices in Singapore.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of a study on sustainable fashion practices in Singapore includes:

1. To identify and analyse the current sustainable fashion practices and initiatives in Singapore, including those by the government, businesses, and individuals.
2. To examine the challenges and barriers to sustainable fashion adoption in Singapore, such as consumer behaviour, supply chain issues, and policy gaps.

Overall, the study would aim to contribute to the knowledge and understanding of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore and provide insights for policymakers, industry players, and consumers on how to support and accelerate the transition towards a more sustainable fashion industry.

Sample and research design- the study sample was 30 fashion shops that were working for creating sustainable awareness about fashion practices in Singapore.

Procedure- For conducting the research, the survey method was adopted. By approaching various shops on the local streets of Singapore, data was collected and analysed.

The selected methodology was **qualitative interviews** with founders, management, ownership, and sustainability managers at the stores and outlets.

The interviews collected **qualitative insights**, as well as **structured data** obtained from questionnaire responses, serving as guidelines for the interview.

CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS

28% of the companies surveyed are currently at the basic level of sustainability, 41% at the intermediate level and 31% at the advanced level. A company's sustainability level was defined based on the number of sustainable practices implemented and their relevance. For example, changes in packaging and communication have little environmental or social impact unless combined with other behaviours.

Over the past year, replacing packaging with more sustainable alternatives has been cited by companies as the only sustainable practice.

The fashion industry in Singapore is expected to grow at a CAGR of 4.1% from 2020 to 2025.

One of the most prominent examples of public-private partnerships in Singapore is the Sustainable Apparel Coalition (SAC), a collaboration between government, industry representatives and non-governmental organizations.

SAC promotes sustainable fashion practices by developing and implementing environmental and social standards and tools that help businesses measure and improve their sustainability performance.

Another example of public-private partnerships in Singapore is the Circular Textiles Programme, a collaborative effort between the government and stakeholders in the textile industry.

Statistics show that public-private partnerships and collaborations have been effective in promoting sustainable fashion practices in Singapore, for example, the SAC's Higg Index ranks 14,000 around the world, including much of Singapore.

Working together, companies and stakeholders can share knowledge, resources and expertise, which can

lead to more efficient and effective sustainable fashion practices.

Overall, public-private partnerships and collaborations are essential to fostering sustainable fashion practices in Singapore.

By working together, stakeholders can make great strides in reducing fashion's negative impact on the environment and promoting social responsibility in the fashion industry.

As per research and statistics, the following points have been derived which has contributed to the sustainable practices in the small Island of Singapore.

- ❖ As sales increase, so does the number of related practices implement
- ❖ An analysis of the relevance of practices conducted from a revenue perspective reveals the following:
 - 33.3% of SMEs are now at a baseline level of sustainability, compared to a further 66.5% compared to large companies.
 - 40% of large companies have reached the high sustainability level, 42.3% more than small companies.
- ❖ A company's sustainability level is calculated based on the number of sustainable practices in place and their relevance, so more practices are more effectively managed when there is a dedicated team within the company.

CHAPTER 5 RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the literature review, the following results can be drawn regarding sustainable fashion practices in Singapore:

1. Consumers in Singapore have a positive attitude towards sustainable fashion, but there is a lack of knowledge and information about sustainable fashion practices.
2. Consumers in Singapore are willing to pay more for sustainable fashion but are unsure of how to identify sustainable products.
3. The Singapore government has launched the Sustainable Fashion Blueprint to promote sustainable fashion practices in the country.
4. The Sustainable Fashion Alliance, a non-profit organization, was established in Singapore to promote sustainable fashion practices.
5. Several local brands in Singapore promote sustainable fashion practices, such as The Editor's Market and Matter Prints.
6. The lack of consumer awareness and education on sustainable fashion is a challenge that needs to be addressed.
7. The high cost of sustainable fashion products may deter consumers from purchasing them.
8. There is a lack of infrastructure and facilities for textile recycling and upcycling in Singapore.

Overall, the literature suggests that sustainable fashion practices in Singapore are still in the early stages of development. While several initiatives and local brands are promoting sustainable fashion, there is a need for increased consumer education and awareness. The government and industry stakeholders need to work together to overcome the challenges and promote sustainable fashion practices in Singapore.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES:

Based on the current state of sustainable fashion practices in Singapore, the following recommendations can be made for future development:

- ❖ **Increase consumer education and awareness:** More efforts should be made to educate consumers about sustainable fashion practices, such as the environmental and social impacts of the

fashion industry, how to identify sustainable products, and how to adopt sustainable fashion habits.

❖ **Increase accessibility and affordability of sustainable fashion:** To encourage consumers to purchase sustainable fashion products, there is a need to increase the availability and affordability of such products. This can be done by supporting local sustainable fashion brands and promoting circular fashion, such as rental and second-hand markets.

❖ **Improve textile waste management:** The government and industry stakeholders should work together to improve the infrastructure and facilities for textile recycling and upcycling in Singapore. This includes creating a system for textile collection, sorting, and processing, as well as promoting the use of sustainable fabrics and reducing textile waste.

❖ **Foster collaborations and partnerships:** Sustainable fashion practices require collaborations and partnerships between various stakeholders, including the government, industry, academia, and civil society. Such collaborations can foster knowledge-sharing, innovation, and resource-sharing to accelerate the adoption of sustainable fashion practices.

❖ **Strengthen policy and regulation:** The government can play a crucial role in promoting sustainable fashion practices by implementing policies and regulations that support sustainable fashion practices. This includes promoting transparency in the fashion industry, setting environmental and social standards for fashion products, and providing incentives for sustainable fashion businesses.

Overall, sustainable fashion practices in Singapore are still in the early stages of development, but there is potential for growth and innovation. By adopting these recommendations, Singapore can become a leader in sustainable fashion practices, promoting environmental and social sustainability while supporting the growth of the fashion industry.



CHAPTER 6 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, sustainable fashion practices in Singapore are still in the early stages of development. Consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion are positive, but there is a lack of knowledge and awareness of sustainable fashion practices. Several initiatives and local brands promote sustainable fashion, but there are still challenges, such as the high cost of sustainable fashion products and the lack of infrastructure for textile waste management. To promote sustainable fashion practices in Singapore, it is recommended to increase consumer education and awareness, increase accessibility and affordability of sustainable fashion, improve textile waste management, foster collaborations and partnerships, and strengthen policy and regulation. These recommendations can help Singapore become a leader in sustainable fashion practices, promoting environmental and social sustainability while supporting the growth of the fashion industry.

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These references provide information on the Sustainable Fashion Blueprint launched by the Ministry of Sustainability and the Environment, the Sustainable Fashion Alliance, local sustainable fashion brands such as The Editor's Market and Matter Prints, and consumer attitudes towards sustainable fashion in Singapore.



ANNEXURE

Sustainable fashion brands that are popular in Singapore:

1.The Editor's Market - a Singaporean brand that uses sustainable materials such as Tencel, organic cotton, and linen in their clothing. They also have a "Sustainable Collection" that features eco-friendly and socially responsible products.

1.Matter Prints - a Singapore-based brand that creates clothing using traditional textile techniques and sustainable materials. Their clothing is made with eco-friendly materials such as organic cotton and linen, and they also partner with artisans in rural communities to promote traditional textile craftsmanship.

1.Esse - a sustainable brand based in Singapore that creates clothing using eco-friendly materials such as bamboo and Tencel. Their clothing is designed to be versatile and long-lasting, promoting sustainable consumption.

1.Etrican - a Singaporean brand that creates clothing using sustainable materials such as organic cotton and bamboo. They also have a "Closed Loop Initiative" that encourages customers to return their old clothing for recycling.

1.Zhai Eco Collection - a Singapore-based brand that creates clothing using sustainable and eco-friendly materials such as organic cotton, bamboo, and Tencel. They also use natural dyes and low-impact printing methods to minimize their environmental impact.

These are just a few examples of sustainable fashion brands that are popular in Singapore. There are many more local and international brands that are promoting sustainable fashion practices in the country.

