

Chapter 8

Revitalizing Tradition: The Impact of Khadi on Sustainable Fashion in India

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ABSTRACT

In the era of fast fashion, the global fashion industry is increasingly scrutinized for its environmental and social impacts. As one of the largest polluters, the industry's conventional production processes contribute to significant ecological degradation. Amidst this backdrop, there is a growing movement towards sustainable fashion, which seeks to reduce the negative impacts of clothing production and consumption through more ethical and eco-friendly practices. In this context, the concept of sustainable textiles is important and one of the most prominent examples from India is Khadi. The main purpose of this study is to measure the customer perception about the economic and environmental benefit of Khadi and assess the satisfaction of customers regarding Khadi products. The researcher also examines the challenges and opportunities in promoting Khadi as a sustainable fashion. The researcher uses a descriptive research design and both primary and secondary data. The sample size of the study is limited to 187 customers in Kerala. The study uses various statistical tools like CAGR, regression analysis, percentage analysis, mean, and standard deviation with the help of SPSS. The researcher found that there is an impact of environmental and economic benefits on customer satisfaction about the Khadi products.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-7853-3.ch008

INTRODUCTION

According to UNEP, “The global fashion industry is at a crossroads, facing increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices in response to mounting environmental and social challenges. Fashion production is responsible for approximately 10% of global carbon emissions and nearly 20% of wastewater, with synthetic textiles contributing to micro plastic pollution in oceans”. The fashion industry is regularly criticized for poor labour conditions and unfair wages, especially in developing countries. These issues have sparked a movement towards sustainable fashion, which aims to create clothing that is environmentally responsible and socially fair.

Khadi, a hand-spun and hand-woven fabric, symbolizes not only India's rich cultural heritage but also the country's struggle for independence. Championed by Mahatma Gandhi as a means of self-reliance and economic empowerment, Khadi embodies values of simplicity, sustainability, and self-sufficiency. Today, it represents a potential bridge between traditional practices and contemporary sustainable fashion. The relevance of Khadi in sustainable fashion lies in its inherent characteristics. The production of Khadi is environmentally friendly, involving minimal use of energy and water, and generates low carbon emissions compared to industrial textile production. Moreover, it supports local artisans and preserves traditional artisanship, thereby contributing to socio-economic sustainability. Despite these advantages, Khadi faces several challenges in achieving widespread acceptance and integration into the mainstream fashion industry.

A number of methods are included in sustainable fashion, such as the use of environmentally friendly materials, moral production procedures, and circular fashion models that encourage recycling and waste minimization. Traditional textiles like Khadi are a viable option in this regard. Khadi's production process is labour-intensive rather than resource-intensive, making it a low-impact alternative to industrial textiles. Khadi supports local economies and empowers artisans, aligning with the principles of social sustainability.

This research aims to investigate the impact of Khadi on sustainable fashion in India by examining how this traditional fabric influences sustainable fashion practices and consumer behaviour. The study will explore both the environmental and economic benefits of Khadi while also identifying the challenges and opportunities associated with promoting Khadi as a sustainable fashion option.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

To measure the customer Perception about Environmental and Economic Benefits of Khadi in Sustainable Fashion.

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