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Environmental and socioeconomic sustainability through textile recycling

Amita Khandzode [1st] M.SC Student PG Department Of textile science and Apparel Design, S.N.D.T Women's University Mumbai.
Nikhila Rane [2nd] Asst. Prof P.G Department of Textile Science and Apparel Design, S.N.D.T Women's University Mumbai.

Abstract:

Recycling textiles has become an essential part of sustainable waste management, with the goal of reducing environmental effects and alleviating socioeconomic issues. This essay examines the situation of textile recycling today as well as the problems, advantages, and benefits to society and the environment. This review emphasises the value of textile recycling in supporting environmental conservation, lowering landfill waste, preserving resources, and developing a circular economy through a thorough analysis of the body of available knowledge. It also looks at the socioeconomic benefits of recycling textiles, such as the emergence of new jobs, increased economic prospects, and social empowerment. The study also outlines solutions to these obstacles and addresses important issues like consumer behaviour, technology constraints, and legal frameworks. This research highlights the significance of including socioeconomic and environmental factors in textile recycling initiatives in order to achieve comprehensive sustainability.

Keywords : Recycling , Socioeconomic ,

Introduction:

The consumption of clothing has increased along with the waste of textiles and clothing due to the growing global population and changing lifestyles. This has sparked issues about freshwater resources and effluents causing harm to the ecosystem. Research is being done on the sustainable development of textile waste management from both an environmental and social perspective.[9]

This paper goals are to describe recycling systems for different kinds of recycled resources as well as identify system structural issues and impact variables.[1] the recycling of textile waste appears to be limited by certain fundamental invocations, other than Tantric etiquette. Textile waste recycling has significant challenges due to a lack of technical information regarding recycling procedures. Garbage collection and classification issues are evident as a result of inadequate technical understanding. Because of globalisation, the apparel industry needs to make more clothes faster and cheaper. The demand for more affordable, diverse, and mass-produced clothing has given rise to fast fashion trends. The rapid growth in clothing consumption and sales as a result of the fast fashion trend has only contributed to the rise in textile waste. Consequently, waste textiles cause harm to society.[2] Consumers view

environmentalism favourably. However. Economic gains took precedence over environmental considerations when it came to the notion of getting rid of their clothing.[17]

The textile business has a big influence on the environment in addition to being a major consumer product industry. This is due to the industry's diversity and variability, which includes crucial activities like turning fibre into yarn and fabrics and producing a wide range of goods like clothing, lockers, bed linens, industrial filters, and high-tech synthetic threads. These global life cycles have a substantial negative impact on the environment and society.[4].Pre- or post-consumer waste can be used to categorise textile recycling material. The term "post-consumer waste" refers to "any type of garment or household article made from manufactured textiles that the owner no longer needs and decides to discard." Pre-consumer waste is generated during the creation of a product. By-product materials from the cotton, fibre, and textile industries make up pre-consumer waste textiles. The Council for Textile Recycling states that 750,000 tonnes of this waste are recycled annually Into new raw materials for the paper, mattress, automotive, furniture, and home furnishings industries, among others. Roughly 75% of the pre-consumer textile waste created is recycled instead of ending up in landfills because of the efforts of this industry.[11] Recycling of textiles includes all operations using fibres, polymers, or monomers. The chemical structure of the polymers that make up the fibres and their content have a major role in determining whether a garment is suitable for recycling its fibres, polymers, or monomers.

- Recycling fibres refers to keeping the fibres intact after the fabric has broken down.
- Fibre disassembly with the polymers still intact is part of polymer recycling.
- Recycling of monomers suggests that fibres and polymers are disassembled into their constituent chemical elements.[14]

The textile recycling Industry:

Textile waste has increased as a result of the textile industry's expansion. Pre-consumer textile waste, or trash created during the textile production process, and post-consumer textile waste, or waste created between consumer use and disposal, are the two primary categories into which textile waste can be divided.[13]

The industry, its many participants, and the range of goods manufactured from recovered textile fibre are generally little understood by the general public. Used clothing and textile items are reclaimed by the textile recycling sector, which then finds innova tive new applications for them. A large number of companies in the sector are able to redirect the yearly post-consumer textile waste. Additionally, the textile recycling sector can handle the trash without producing hazardous waste or new products. The majori ty of post-consumer textile materials can be recycled for several uses.[12]

Recycling is the process of recycling a product or its parts to create something new while using less virgin raw materials and reducing the amount of garbage that is dumped in landfills or burned.Recycling can be broken down into five basic steps: collecting; sorting according to material, colour, and structure; disassembling, shredding, or dissolving; reprocessing, regenerating, or restoring quality; and integrating into the forward supply chain.[15]Based on the level of processing required, recycling procedures are categorised. Utilising fibre as a filler material is one example of how the product is recycled when the physical and chemical makeup

of the waste material is not altered during the process. There is also material recycling, which is the process of melting down polyester fabric and then spinning it again to create new fibres, changing the waste material's physical but not its chemical composition.[20] Recycling of Textiles by Machine Since the start of the Industrial Revolution, innovations in mechanical textile recycling have been made. Mechanical recycling is also thought to be one of the simplest recycling techniques for small-scale operations. When carded yarn is spun into mixed yarn, wool can be used again or woven. Textile waste is categorised based on the kind of material and colour achieved by mechanical decomposition. Based on how much of the recovered material breaks down, mechanical recycling can be divided into a number of categories, including recycling of fibre, fabric, polymers, and monomers. Products can be made with new textiles thanks to mechanical recycling applications in the prespun fibre, fibre material, and wiper industries.[16]

Socioeconomic Benefits of Textile Recycling:

General Benefits of Used Clothing To ensure the accuracy and consistency of the findings from this study, it would be good to use alternative techniques to calculate the avoided manufacture of new clothing. This kind of additional research might look into whether the lifespan of new and used clothing differs. When most of a garment's potential lifetime remains, it is frequently thrown away. As a result, a number of non-profits gather used clothing and resell it as vintage apparel.[6].The recycled materials can be used in a variety of industries, including automotive, furnishings, seafaring, and/or insulation. For example, they can be used to make geo-fleece, carpet underlay, car rear shelves, stuffed toys, shoe insoles, and more. A portion of the trash generated by spinning and weaving can be sent to recycling facilities to go through a fibre recovery procedure. Then, like natural fibres like cotton or linen, recycled fibres are incorporated into the textile and apparel industries' resource pools, enabling the creation of further value. [8].There are a number of possible environmental advantages to reusing and recycling waste textiles. Reusing clothing and textile items, for instance, saves energy. It also reduces emissions into the air, water, and land throughout the textile recycling process. In order to assess the efficacy of recycling initiatives, it is necessary to determine if the recycling process offsets energy and resource consumption as well as the pollutants emitted during the creation of new products using virgin materials.[10]

Recycled fibres are often assessed for use in low-value product creation in relation to their original use. But fibre recycling has started to raise the value of these materials in high-value products. However, it is inappropriate to adopt a strategy that emphasises the financial side of making recycled apparel. The textile business is recognised as the most waste-producing and polluting industry in terms of water consumption, pesticide use, and artificial fertiliser use. In order to reduce the usage of natural resources (such as oil used in the manufacturing of seeds or synthetic fibres) and CO2 emissions, recycling textiles and clothes is crucial. Recycling prevents pollution from the manufacturing process and uses less energy and chemicals to make new textiles. It is important to recycle waste textiles. The industry's adoption of textile recycling and the encouragement of more experienced and creative techniques are critical to the field's future. Retailers of clothing are important players in this regard because of their special power to shape and elevate customer perceptions of sustainability.(18)

Barriers:

The textile industry is under pressure to create more clothing in less time and at a lower cost due to globalisation. Fast fashion is defined by mass manufacturing, variety, and affordability, which has resulted from this need. Textile waste has surged as a result of fast fashion trends, which have increased the sale and consumption of garments. Hence, society is facing increasing hazards from textile waste. Some basic issues also seem to be impeding the advancement of recycling textile waste, in addition to technological ones. Textile waste recycling has significant challenges due to a lack of technical information regarding recycling procedures. Problems with waste collection and sorting have been noted as a result of a lack of technical understanding.[2]

This is due to a number of factors, including a lack of viable business models for recycling, a lack of demand for textile items made from recycled materials, the inability of recycled goods to stimulate demand for new production, a lack of support for the management of industrial waste, and the absence of legislation and tax incentives. Five recycling trenches for discarded textiles.[5]

The implementation of a successful textile recycling system is fraught with significant technical and financial hurdles. For instance, even if textile recycling techniques are developing, the systems currently in place are not scalable to the scale necessary to handle the substantial volume of textile waste generated annually, or the technology currently in use is not appropriate for the wide range of specialty textile materials that consumers can purchase. Roughly 100 million tonnes annually; over the last five years, there has been an annual growth of roughly 10%, and given the current trajectory, there may be an increase in the years to come.[7] without a shift in customer behavior, it is doubtful that the trend in the production of textile waste will change. Public awareness campaigns, instruction on basic textile repairs in elementary schools—like button sewing—and the introduction of eco-labels for longer-lasting textiles should all be taken into consideration.[19]

There are several barriers to overcome in the textile industry's transition:

(i) The market for recycled textile products is still small;

(ii) There aren't many successful circular business models available;

(iii) It can be difficult to get supply chain partners to collaborate on new ideas; and (iv) recycling textiles of a relatively low grade can be costly in the short run with little return on investment.(3)

Conclusion:

This review study has looked at the socioeconomic and environmental aspects of textile recycling and has shown how important it is for advancing sustainability. It is clear from a thorough examination of the body of research that textile recycling has several advantages, including reduced waste, resource conservation, the creation of jobs, and economic growth. To completely realise the potential of textile recycling, however, issues like infrastructure deficiencies, technological constraints, and legislative gaps still exist.

In summary, the present analysis highlights the significance of sustained endeavours to progress textile recycling as a strategy for attaining ecological sustainability, cultivating financial gain, and advancing social wellbeing.

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