



JOURNAL OF CREATIVE INDUSTRY AND SUSTAINABLE CULTURE

<https://e-journal.uum.edu.my/index.php/jcisc>

How to cite this article:

Larissa, T. & Titisari, B. (2023). Traditional Aspects in Sustainable Fashion Practice. *Journal of Creative Industry and Sustainable Culture*, 2, 146-163. <https://doi.org/10.32890/jcisc2023.2.10>

TRADITIONAL ASPECTS IN SUSTAINABLE FASHION PRACTICE

¹Tiara Larissa and ²Bintan Titisari

*Faculty of Art and Design
Bandung Institute of Technology*

¹ Corresponding author: tiaralarissa.tl@gmail.com

Received: 7/8/2023

Revised: 30/8/2023

Accepted: 25/9/2023

Published: 31/10/2023

ABSTRACT

Sustainable issues have been forced for the fashion industry stakeholders to develop sustainable practices. Many strategies were attempted to overcome these issues, and one of the established sustainability strategies is to employ a traditional approach in their practices. As an archipelago country, Indonesia has a diverse traditional cultural heritage, which allows local fashion brand owners to use them in their practice. The importance of the traditional approach is learning and considering each community's existing culture. One of the established fashion practices in Indonesia that has employed traditional aspects as their primary approach is Threads of Life. This research aims to analyze the traditional aspect of Thread of Life practice and observe how the aspect of tradition plays a significant role in achieving sustainable fashion. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method with a single embedded case study by taking Threads of Life as the case study, focusing on traditional aspects of achieving sustainable practices. The analysis process focused on three units of analysis: production process, business model, and design. The research outcome is a model that explains the traditional aspect of the Threads of Life. The model shows that designing sustainable products focusing on traditional aspects should contain five aspects (environmental, social, economic, traditional aesthetics, and indigenous) with various strategies.

Keywords: Indonesia, Sustainable Fashion, Threads of Life, Traditional Aspects, Cultural Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

Since the last two decades, when the fast fashion business model has resulted in highly sought-after fashion brands in the market, the significant increase in the production of low-cost

clothing has resulted in environmental and social degradation at every stage in the supply chain process (Bick et al., 2018). Over time, a sustainable fashion movement emerged, offering alternatives such as slow fashion with careful manufacturing, fair labor rights, natural materials, and more durable clothing. This movement is becoming a voice through fashion brands, communities, and individuals fighting for the planet's safety and garment workers (Stanton, 2022). Sustainable fashion is an integrated and holistic concept that involves everyone in the entire supply chain working together towards conscious and responsible fashion production and consumption for a sustainable future (Tanzil, 2017). In Indonesia, the ongoing initiatives of Indonesian fashion brands are still in their early stages. This situation is a critical aspect of the fashion world, and every designer is encouraged to apply sustainability in creating fashion products. Indonesian fashion brands must continue developing sustainable initiatives and openly communicate and validate their practices to the public to inform and foster sustainability values. In addition, government assistance and support are also crucial for advancing sustainable fashion practices to develop Indonesia's creative economy (Tanzil, 2017).

Bringing a local agenda to the fashion sector to promote sustainability is a potential transformation process to promote economic resilience and cultural and aesthetic diversity. However, the pull of globalization is eroding this potential. Indonesian fashion still needs to reflect the diversity of fashion culture, and clothing styles generally still reflect the same Western aesthetic, regardless of where they are made or sold. Fashion designers are involved in this, as they often take inspiration from one area and copy it elsewhere where it can be produced at the lowest price. Things like this reduce cultural elements to mere surface ornaments, reduce the viability and traditions of the locality, and accelerate the standardization of markets and products (Fletcher & Grose, 2013).

One of the sustainability principles is to reduce costs and negative environmental impact. Therefore, the use of local content and local marketing is important (Fletcher, 2010). The normal cycle of making clothes with traditional manufacturing techniques can be a strategy for slow fashion that offers different marketing angles, such as adding aesthetic elements (Fletcher, 2010). Sustainable fashion design can create and add unique craftsmanship and handcrafts that reflect one's identity (Jung & Jin, 2016). A fashion designer can add elements of traditional skill and technique to add value to his collection. Preserving traditions is feasible because most traditional practices reflect a harmonious relationship with nature. Preserving traditions is also important as this can contribute to maintaining the cultural identity, which is important to human life and sustainability (Nugraha, 2012). Local crafts reflect human relationships with their environment in historical, cultural, and social contexts. Pre-industrial artisans are skilled craftsmen who use locally available materials to create products and generate income. Traditional crafts, which involve practices rooted in local knowledge and accumulated over time, are part of our cultural heritage and must be preserved and revitalized. Designers are called upon to bridge the gap between idea and practice and to connect artistic and creative elements with practical and realizable results (Dodgson et al., 2005). Therefore, organizations such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), World Crafts Council (WCC), and Aid to Artisans (ATA) have made efforts to bring traditional crafts into the mainstream of life. Such efforts include designers working with artisan groups to develop new product lines for new markets (Tung, 2012).

One of the businesses with sustainable practices that exist in Indonesia is Threads of Life. The Threads of Life is an Indonesian brand practicing sustainable practices for two decades. The Threads of Life utilizes local traditions and empowers local artisans to produce products that

have sustainability values. The products they produce highlight the uniqueness of craftsmanship with a focus on the use of raw materials found in the surrounding area to the manufacturing process that directly collaborates with artisans from regions in Indonesia. With their achievement, this aims to analyze traditional aspects of the Threads of Life practices. The analysis focuses on how their production process relates to the product design and business model. It is important to understand the connection between those three units in a model that can explain how the role of traditional aspects in sustainable fashion practice can serve as a guide for mapping practical steps in achieving sustainable fashion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Background

Sustainability is the efficient and equitable distribution of intra-generational and inter-generational use of resources by operating socio-economic activities within the boundaries of a limited ecosystem (Stoddart, 2011). On the other hand, Ben Eli sees sustainability as a dynamic balance in the interaction process between populations and environmental resources so that populations can develop to express their full potential without adverse environmental effects (Ben Eli, 2015). Meanwhile, from another point of view, sustainability focuses on human activities and their ability to fulfill human needs and wants without depleting or depleting their productive resources (Thomas, 2015). The most important value in sustainable development is environmental protection. It is a comprehensive concept and includes many different values and approaches. In addition to environmental protection, in sustainable development, there are three central positions of concern, namely: human, economic, and community (Leiserowitz et al., 2006). In the context of sustainable development, it is possible to add ideological value to objects through environmental values to value products in a completely new way. The concept of the three pillars of sustainability (social, economic, and environmental) is generally represented by three circles that intersect with the overall concept of sustainability.

1. **Environmental Aspect:** The objective of this environmental aspect is the simultaneous achievement of economic development and environmental sustainability (Tachega et al., 2021). The relationship between company performance and the environment is influenced by the heterogeneity of the organization's ability to manage various aspects of its operations (Rahman et al., 2020). The survival of humankind is directly linked to the achievement of environmental sustainability, which is one of the urgent concerns of the entire planet (Roy et al., 2020).
2. **Social aspect:** The social dimension in sustainable development is based on the fact that equality and understanding of people in a community is a fundamental prerequisite for a better quality of life in sustainable development goals. For sustainable development to take place in the long term, resources and opportunities must be distributed so that all citizens can enjoy basic standards of security, human rights, and social rights such as food, health, education, housing, and development opportunities (Arsic & Radojkovic, 2016). The social dimension refers to the social elements of the community and employees who are the recipients of the results of business training (Schönborn et al., 2019).
3. **Economic Aspect:** This dimension focuses on the economic values provided by the organization for the environment in achieving prosperity and for future generations (Alhaddi, 2015). Thus, the economic dimension is a subsystem of sustainability that facilitates survival and evolution towards the future (Spangenberg, 2005).

A sustainable fashion system can create a safe environment by using fewer chemicals in production, delivering safe products for users, and increasing product satisfaction through better quality and durable products. It can improve well-being and happiness through consumption that is not materialistic. One can invest in higher quality and more expensive products with a longer product life, items that are not excessive, so that they can be appropriately cared for (Niinimäki, 2013). A sustainable system can mean more in the context of social justice and better working conditions for textile factory workers. In contrast, by slowing down the system, it is possible to increase the final price of products and invest in factories that are better for the environment through cleaner production can reduce industrial waste. In this business model, business actors must be able to make a profit while also benefiting the environment (Niinimäki, 2013).

Traditionally the sustainability model includes three dimensions: environmental, social, and economic. However, for sustainable fashion design, those three dimensions can be extended. Kozlowski designed a five-dimensional model for continuous mode by adding facets, aesthetics, and cultural aspects (Kozlowski et al., 2019). The aesthetic aspect of sustainability is reflected at the product level, while cultural sustainability requires a systems-level approach. A culture can be seen as cultural sustainability, which is in the fourth dimension and is parallel to ecological, economic, and social sustainability (Murphy, 2012). When culture is considered the fourth pillar of sustainability, it must be distinguished from the other three pillars, especially social sustainability. Culture is often considered as part of social sustainability, and socio-cultural sustainability covers cultural aspects such as equality, participation, and sustainability awareness (Murphy, 2012).

Culture is an emergent property of individuals who interact, manage, and change their environment, representing the collective use of natural and human resources in achieving a desire (Kim, 2001). Culture provides humans with symbolic knowledge that becomes their identity, defining meaningful things, communicating with others, and managing the environment. In culture, there can be differences that refer to the setting of different collective goals that refer to different methods or resources in realizing a goal and different meanings and values attached to them. Culture usually correlates with studying the past, such as history, philosophy, literature, language, and handicrafts. The most important aspect of culture is the people who have created the products. One can conclude something in the future referring to an understanding of the past and present that is realized individually or collectively using existing resources and skills (Kim et al., 2006).

The term of culture refers to constituent elements, such as behavioral patterns, transmitted symbols, values, and others. Culture is also used to designate a group of people with the same culture. Each culture or cultural group has specific and unique features and meanings, such as language, myths, meanings, and symbols (Georgas & Mylona, 2006). In every cultural group, some beliefs and behaviors are passed down from one generation to another, making it a tradition. Traditions are a collection of customs, thoughts, or practices owned by a particular country, person, family, or institution that are still practiced for a relatively long period (Nugraha, 2012).

Sustainability is a central concept in reshaping and maintaining our world to ensure the continuity of life today and in the future. People generally see sustainability as only referring to ecological and environmental problems. However, in an ideal world of sustainability, each pillar cannot stand alone but is interrelated with other pillars. Each solution to an integrated

sustainability problem can be obtained in a single solution. Short-term and long-term, for present and future generations. The sustainability problem humans are struggling to solve has been solved and demonstrated by nature. Nature is sustainable because it effectively and efficiently only uses a given flow of energy, nutrients, and materials to maintain an ideal ecosystem (Nugraha, 2012).

Four essential things about the values of preserving tradition: (1) Most traditions imitate and combine nature, (2) Various precious traditions can disappear at any time, and (3) Tradition becomes a tool to express cultural identity (Nugraha, 2012). Preserving traditions will keep local traditions alive and well. For example, when we preserve a particular traditional technique that will soon disappear from our daily lives, we are working to keep it alive and facilitate the development of that technique. Since preserving tradition supports locality, it will also maintain cultural diversity simultaneously. Most traditional knowledge and practices operate in the local environment, use local materials, techniques, and experts, and serve the use of local communities. Sustainable solutions themselves refer to 'local' solutions, involving communities that mainly refer to the locality, and small scopes, which include possibilities in terms of relationships, participation, and democracy made possible by the human scale (Nugraha, 2012).

Sustainability itself is a central concept in reshaping and maintaining our world to ensure the continuity of life today and in the future. People often see curiosity as only referring to ecological and environmental problems. Still, in an ideal world of interest, each pillar cannot stand alone but is interrelated with other pillars, making every solution to the problem of curiosity integrated as one solution, which can be obtained in the short term and long term, for present and future generations (Nugraha, 2012).

The problems that humans are struggling to solve have actually been solved and demonstrated by nature. Nature is sustainable because it effectively and efficiently only uses the flow of energy, nutrients, and materials provided to maintain an ideal ecosystem (Nugraha, 2012). Nugraha (2012) outlines four basic things about the values of preserving traditions, which are explained in the following discussion: (1.) Most traditions support locality and diversity. (2.) Most traditions imitate and incorporate nature. (3.) Valuable traditions can be lost at any time. (4.) Traditions become a tool to express cultural identity.

Preserving traditions will keep various local traditions alive and sustainable. For example, when we preserve specific traditional techniques that will soon disappear from our daily lives, we are actually working to keep them alive and facilitate the development of those techniques. Preserving traditions supports locality, but it will also maintain cultural diversity at the same time. Most traditional knowledge and practices operate in the local environment, using local materials, techniques, and experts and serving the needs of the local community. Sustainable solutions themselves refer to 'local' solutions involving communities that primarily refer to locality and small scope, which include possibilities in terms of relationships, participation, and democracy that are possible on a human scale (Nugraha, 2012). Nugraha (2012) presents a method for preserving traditions that can be adapted and become a reference for artists, designers, and researchers. A method that explains how traditional objects are transformed. The method is named Atumics in reference to the six basic elements of artifacts. The atomic method is activity-centered (A) and works by organizing six elements, including technique (T), use (u), material (M), icon (i), concept (c), and form (s). Traditionally, sustainability models include three dimensions: 1. environmental, 2. social, and 3. economic. However, for sustainable fashion design, this can be extended. Kozlowski also designed a five-dimensional

model for sustainable fashion by adding 4. aesthetic and 5. cultural dimensions (Kozlowski et al., 2019). The aesthetic sustainability dimension is reflected at the product level, while cultural sustainability requires a systems-level approach (Figure 1).

Social Media Influencers' Attributes and Their Impacts on Consumers

Social media influencers (SMIs) are individuals who attracted numerous followers on social media due to their online presence, persona and expertise in niche areas (Cotter, 2019). As such, they are sometimes referred to as micro-celebrities (Gaenssle and Budzinski, 2020). They are different than the celebrities who gain popularity in the mainstream medias. They also have a closer connection with their audiences by sharing their private life to the masses. Due to the increase reliance on social medias in recent year, their popularity can be at par with those traditional celebrities. This is especially among the millennials who make up the largest market for creative products such as fashion, cosmetics leisure and entertainment. Due to this fact, most marketer often opt to capitalize on the SMIs popularity in hope of tapping into their target market (Abidin, 2018). Social media influencer marketing has emerged as a dynamic third-party endorser that is rising together with the development of social media because it is a more affordable and contemporary form of celebrity endorsement (Freberg et al., 2011; Hall, 2015). These influencers are usually on social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter and YouTube, where they will use their substantial network to exert influence on consumers. This has forced many marketers to switch their marketing strategies from traditional broadcasting and print media such as television, newspapers and radio stations to SMI as their new marketing and public relation tool (Borchers, 2019).

Within the marketing literature, numerous studies have examined the attributes of celebrity and their ability to transfer meaning through endorsement. These attributes include appeal, aspiration, awareness, breakthrough, endorsement, influence, trendsetter and trust (The Marketing Arm, 2021). Nevertheless, most of these studies have focused on the celebrity in the context of real entertainment business. Very few studies have explored the attributes of this new type 'celebrity' who gain their fame in the social media platforms (Hudders et al., 2021; Borchers, 2019; Freberg et al., 2011). Only recently, research have focused on attributes of SMIs deemed as important to the consumers and their impacts on them.

Research on SMIs spurred in the last four years and they can be divided into two branches that symbolize the two important characteristics of SMIs which are; reach and impact (Hudders et al., 2021). The first branch of research focuses on how SMIs construct their identity and image and how they are being perceived by the followers. Various attributes have been found to be important for SMIs to attract followers. These attributes can be divided into three main categories. The first category is social attractiveness which refers to how the SMIs is being perceived as conforming to social norms or expectations of the society. This shares some similarity with Sheth et al. (1991) definition of social value and Holbrook (1999) continuum of other-oriented. It refers to the attributes of being likable, and perceived as genuine, expert, trustable, credible and respected which can be linked to SMI's intellectual and/or social capital (e.g. Lee & Watkin, 2016; Audrezet et al., 2020; Argyris et al., 2021; AlFarraj et al., 2021; Aw & Chuah, 2021; Belanche et al., 2021; Kim & Kim, 2021a; van Driel, L. and D. Dumitrica, 2021; Ryu & Han, 2021 and Tan, 2021). The second category is physical attractiveness which refers to the possession of physical features that conform to conventional beauty or personality standards (e.g. Kim, 2022; AlFarraj et al., 2021; Aw & Chuah, 2021; Kim & Kim, 2021a; Su et al., 2021b). These include being perceived to be 'verbal', 'ambitious', 'smart', 'productive', 'poised', 'beauty', 'unique' and 'humourous' (Djafarako and Trofimenko, 2019; Freberg et al.,

2011). The third category is attitude homophily which refers to being perceived as sharing similar personality, characteristics, belief, status or interest (e.g. Argyris et al., 2021; Kim & Kim, 2021a; Sokolova & Kefi, 2020 and Tan, 2021). Attitude homophily is believed to encourage parasocial interaction between SMIs and their followers thus lead to intimacy (Shan et al., 2019). From cultural perspective, Bentley et al. (2021) found that engagement between SMIs and their followers increases and gets deeper as the cultural gap is closer.

The second strand of research examine the impact SMIs have on their followers. Numerous research have found that SMIs have the ability to influence consumers' behaviours and attitude such as brand awareness and loyalty, engagement and participation, intention to purchase and purchase, willingness to pay more, spread positive word-of mouth and continuous consumption (e.g. Kim, 2022; AlFarraj et al., 2021; Argyris et al., 2021; Aw & Chuah, 2021; Belanche, et al., 2021; Chopra et al., 2021; Farivar et al., 2021; Jaitly & Gautam, 2021; Kim & Kim, 2021b; Sánchez-Fernández & Jiménez-Castillo, 2021; Shin & Lee, 2021; Su et al., 2021a; Su et al., 2021b; Wang & Lee, 2021; Zhang et al., 2021 and Zhou et al., 2021). In addition to that, Kim (2022) also found that SMIs have the ability to affect consumers' satisfaction and provide them with flow experience. Most research found that all of these consequences have direct relationship to the source (i.e. SMIs) attributes discussed previously. For instance, SMIs trustworthiness, attractiveness, credibility and similarity significantly predicts consumers' brand awareness and intention to purchase (Lou and Yuan, 2019; Lou and Kim, 2019). However, these attributes and consequences are not universal. It is important for marketers to carefully choose a SMI to be their brand endorser by mapping these favorable attributes to their product, brand and strategic aims to ensure they are coherent and thus produce desired impacts to the target consumers (Chopra et al. 2021). Despite the spike on published studies in recent years, Hudders et al. (2020) postulate that research on SMI is still at infancy stage. This call for more studies to explore the meaning and context of the value of SMI.

Figure 1

Dimension of Sustainability (adapted from Kozlowski, 2019)



According to Murphy (2012), culture can be seen as cultural sustainability, which is in the fourth dimension and is parallel to ecological, economic, and social sustainability. When culture is considered as the fourth pillar of sustainability, it clearly must be distinguished from the other three pillars of sustainability, especially social sustainability. Culture is often considered part of social and socio-cultural sustainability, including cultural aspects such as equality, participation, and awareness of sustainability (Murphy, 2012).

The aesthetic dimension is also fundamental when people form attachments to clothing. Quality, aesthetic dimensions, and functionality are the most important attributes related to the long-term use of clothing and textiles. Aesthetic attributes such as beauty, style, color, and fit have an emotional effect on the wearer, which can be created by personal experience of how one feels when wearing them and developed in social situations. This emotional bond is central to product attachment and satisfaction, which plays a role in long-term product relationships (Niinimäki & Koskinen in Niinimäki 2013).

The fashion industry should be understood as a system with critical boundaries and a natural sense of disorder. Core considerations such as resilience and adaptability can ensure fashion systems evolve within the identified set of critical limits. The transition to a circular economy and closed loop systems is not a static process or utopian ideal but rather a system that must be adaptable and resilient. The new level of Resilient, Adaptable, and Circular (RAC) innovation, introduced in this paper, combines these concepts (Kozlowski et al., 2019)

RESEARCH METHOD

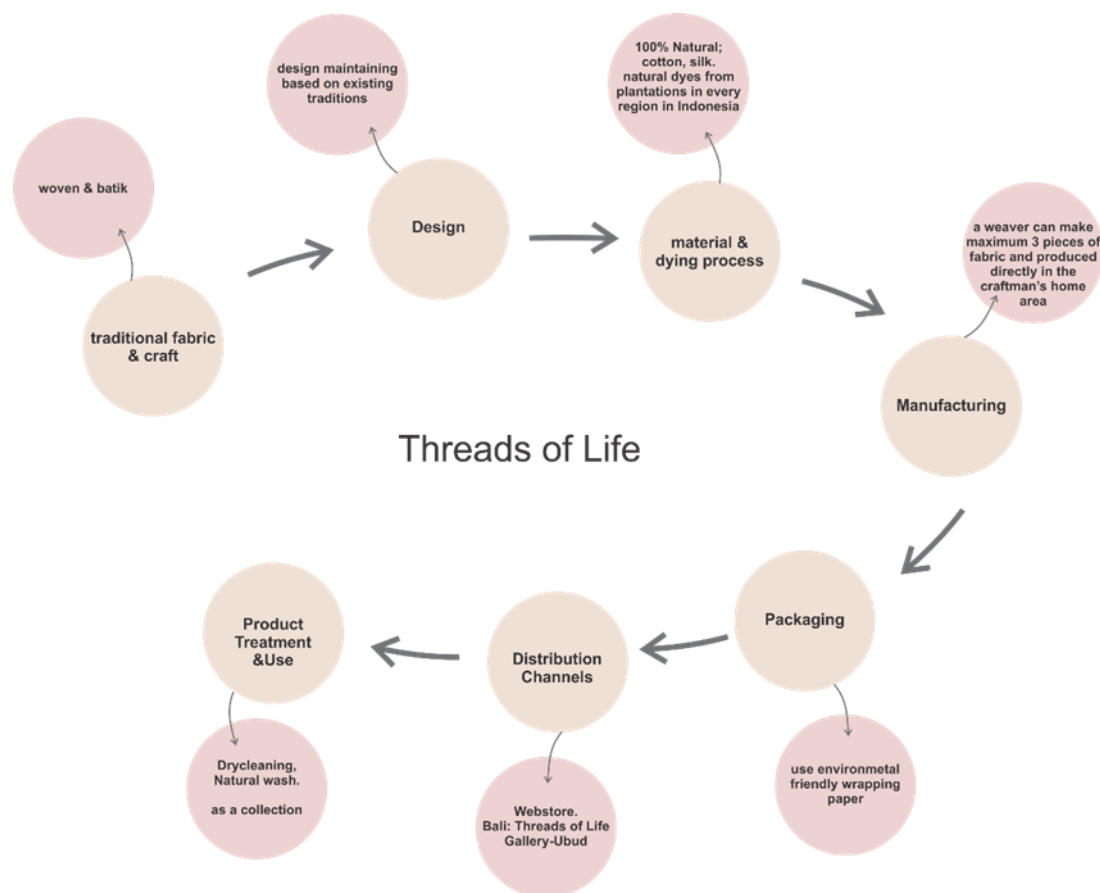
This research used a qualitative descriptive method to understand how sustainable practices work. The main focus of qualitative research is to understand, explain, explore, discover, and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs, and experiences of a group of people (Kumar, 2011). The qualitative descriptive is a research method that can systematically describe situations, problems, phenomena, and services or provide information about the living conditions of a society or a general description of a problem (Kim et al, 2017). The approach employed in this research is a case study method that is beneficial to understanding complex social phenomena involving important contextual conditions relevant to the case. The case study explains the presumed causal links in real-world phenomena, which are too complex for survey or experimental methods (Yin, 2018). In this research, Threads of Life is the case study, and the context is a traditional aspect of achieving sustainable practices. An embedded single case study was selected in this research since Threads of Life represents a rare or unique circumstance (Yin, 2018). Several subunits are analyzed in this research, such as production process, business model, and design. Case study research has important points that need to be raised in research questions, including (i) what happened and how the phenomenon could occur, (ii) who was involved, (iii) what happened. the central theme or core of the problem, (iv) what theoretical constructions can be used to underlie the phenomenon under study and why the theory is related, (v) what and where is the uniqueness of the phenomenon under study (Herdiansyah, 2010). The data collection in this study was conducted by observing documentary evidence, artifacts, and interviews with Threads of Life owner in Bali on June 15, 2022 at the owner's studio in Ubud, Bali. All collected data were coded and then categorized into three categories: production process, business model, and design. Later, those answers within categories were cross analyzed to see the correlation between the production process, business model, and design.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The main reason to choose the Threads of Life as the research object is that Threads of Life has carried out sustainable practices since the beginning of the brand establishment in 1998. Since then, they have been focused on promoting local traditional fabrics that have their philosophy from various regions throughout the country by not changing existing designs and maintaining existing traditions ranging from product characteristics to the manufacturing process. The analysis begins with product cycle mapping to see how sustainable practices work that is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Threads of Life product cycles based on data collection



The mapping (Figure 2) is carried out based on the results of various literature sources to clarify how sustainable flows and practices run on the Threads of Life. Mapping the product cycle is a long process that starts from preparing to create a product until it is marketed to customers. The process begins with collecting all information related to the brand from various media, including the internet, books, observations, and interviews. The explanation of Figure 2 is described as follow: (1) The Threads of Life initiates product ideas by selecting batik and woven fabrics; (2) The Threads of Life focuses on the authenticity of traditional fabrics from each region and strives to maintain the values in each fabric or other handicraft product; (3) Almost all the materials used are cotton, with natural dyes obtained and grown directly from the communities in each area that work with the Threads of Life; (4) The manufacturing process

is carried out traditionally; (5) Most of the products offered are traditional fabrics that are still intact (sheets of cloth) and have traditional values, so the Threads of Life has an urged to educate visitors about the use of cloth. The Threads of Life fabric is produced directly where the craftsmen are located and still uses traditional tools and follows a manufacturing process that follows the original history of how the fabric was made. Most of the fabrics are purchased for collection needs. Other products are produced from lower-middle grade fabrics used as clothes, bags, pillowcases, and souvenirs made from leftover fabrics. The Threads of Life recommends washing its products with 100% natural soap for product care.

Based on the product cycle mapping above, Threads of Life practice has not owned a closed loop yet because there is no existing action after the product treatment stage. However, the Threads of Life remains focused on minimum waste production by trying to utilize all materials to the left. The rest of the patchwork is to be made into a product. The end-of-life product is not the priority for the Threads of Life at the moment, because most of the products offered are traditional fabrics intended as collectibles which there is a high possibility that the fabrics will be kept longer by the owner.

Analysis of Sustainable Practices on Threads of Life

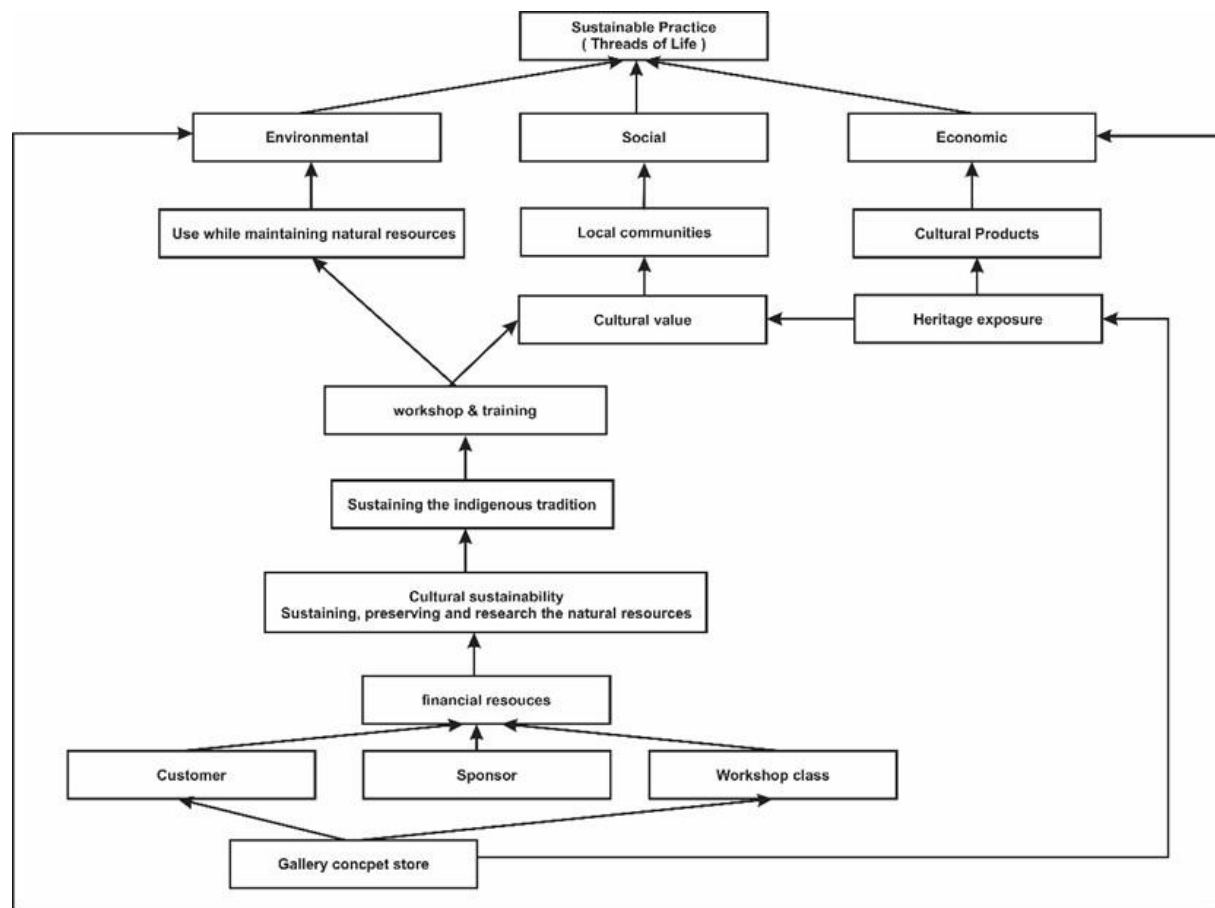
In the environmental aspects, Threads of Life is very concerned about the environmental impact resulting from the use of materials and production processes in manufacturing. In this regard, the Threads of Life focuses on using 100% natural materials and materials, ranging from natural fibers used to make fabrics, most of which are made of cotton, and some are made of silk. The overall coloring process, from mordanting to finishing, uses 100% natural materials. The Threads of Life strives to ensure that the dyes, oils, and soaps used do not harm the environment. For example, the Threads of Life uses natural dyes and the wastewater garden (wwg) system in the production process.

The environmental aspect has a relatively significant impact to the social aspect. For example, the selection of 100% natural materials will impact on the craftsmakers' health. In this case, public health is an important point in considering the social aspects of sustainable practice. The Threads of Life is considerable transparent regarding on how they work with craftsman from various villages spread across 13 islands in Indonesia. It can be considered as an indicator of assessment for the community to see how the Threads of Life is practicing. The disclosure of information provided by the Threads of Life on their digital media platforms and also their gallery and workshop locations can be evidence of how social responsibility is carried out for the people who work with the Threads of Life. In addition, the Threads of Life is committed in maintaining indigenous groups in each area and preserving customs and traditions in making traditional cloth. They try to make that tradition can be passed down to their generation in the future.

On the economic aspect, Threads of Life focuses on expanding employment opportunities to increase the income of people and craftsman in rural areas with a focus on environmental preservation in utilizing local resources for the materials used. Production to manufacturing is usually done locally, where craftsman directly work on their traditional fabrics using traditional tools characteristic of each region. By focusing on resources and local production, craftsman in rural communities can have a decent income. Each indicator in the sustainable practice aspect carried out by Threads of Life is tied to traditional values. The following structure shows how the traditional aspect depends on each aspect (Figure 3).

Figure 3

Threads of Life Product Cycles



In the sustainability practices carried out by Threads of Life, cultural, traditional, environmental, economic, and social aspects together create an ecosystem to achieve sustainability. This structure is both an instrument and a target at the point of the sustainable practice cycle, which refers to the Threads of Life brand. Regarding financial resources, Threads of Life gets fees from product sales, workshops, and sponsorships channeled through the Bebali Foundation. Traditional values appear in each indicator of the sustainability pillar, and then this structure is repeated. It becomes a cycle that starts with the Ubud Threads of Life gallery, which brings in customers who buy products and then register to participate in paid workshop classes held every week. Second, Threads of Life acquires, preserves, and researches cultural heritage in the form of traditional fabrics and traditional crafts and research natural resource fabrics. Third, Threads of Life educates the public by using cultural heritage with a history of creation to create awareness of the environment, social responsibility, and economic development. The traditional values created by Threads of Life motivate visitors, sponsors, and donors to continue to support sustainable practices.

Cultural Sustainability Model of Threads of Life

Based on several existing models regarding sustainability practice, this study adopts the existent model designed by Kozłowski et al. Because it has five aspects which are considered as the most appropriate for carrying out a sustainable fashion approach. The cultural sustainability model created in this study was referred to Kozłowski et al.'s model with some

adjustments adapted from the findings obtained in the case study. The model is proposed by considering three pre-existing main aspects, namely the economic aspects needed, environmental aspects to protect and restore ecosystems, and social aspects to increase the value of people's lives. After analysing the three sustainability aspects that had existed and carried out by the Threads of Life, the study concluded that they had employed those three sustainability aspects with an addition of one more important factor which is the traditional aspect. In this case, the traditional aspect refers to cultural heritage, which is essential in carrying out sustainable practices, especially in Indonesia.

Figure 4

Cultural Sustainability Model Based on the Threads of Life



The traditional aspect of the Threads of Life is very profound in these two aspects, which are: (i) product design that focuses on highlighting the traditional aesthetics of a product and cultural artifacts, and (ii) practice that focusing on maintaining the authenticity of indigenous people traditions. Both two additional aspects, “traditional aesthetics” and “indigenous,” had been a strong influence in conducting the sustainable practices which can be seen on the charm of traditional fabrics and crafts, as well as their authenticity (indigenous). Both aspects have been around for a long time using tools and materials that are also used from generation to generation. Therefore, these two aspects will be added to the form of a new model which make the model consists of five sustainable aspects which are: social, environmental, economic, traditional aesthetics, and indigenous (Figure 4). The five aspects were considered based on the in-depth interviews and observation. The result shows that traditional aesthetics and tradition are stand out in the practice of cultural sustainability, thus, those two points are added to the fundamental sustainability model (Figure 4).

The cultural sustainability model based on the Threads of Life (Figure 4) shows the connection between the five fundamental cultural sustainability aspects, namely: (1) environmental, (2) social, (3) economic, (4) traditional aesthetics, and (5) indigenous. The diagram illustrates an equal importance of the five aspects. The following section describes each aspect that was practiced by the Threads of Life which can be followed by other fashion practices.

1. Environmental aspects can be the first consideration in starting cultural sustainability. This aspect includes things that need to be considered in the process of sustaining tradition regarding natural resources and maintaining these natural resources. The following are the details of indicators from the Threads of Life that refer to environmental aspects:

- 1) Natural materials: The use of environmentally friendly materials ranging from fibers, and dyes, to materials used in the production process.
- 2) Traditional manufacturing: Manufacturing is done locally by utilizing practices and tools commonly used by local people.
- 3) Clean production: Production is carried out by considering the environmental impact, starting from washing, coloring, and using water and materials that do not damage the ecosystem.
- 4) Research & study: Conduct continuous research on materials used to maintain environmental and ecosystem sustainability.

2. The social aspect considers the interaction between humans or indigenous groups with a prosperous social life. The following are the details of indicators from the Threads of Life that refer to social aspects:

- 1) Community: Development and collaboration with community groups in various areas to support sustainability.
- 2) Local production: Production is carried out locally by prioritizing cooperation with craftsmen and local communities.
- 3) Symbiotic relationship: Maintaining a mutually beneficial relationship for businesses, craftsmen/community, and nature.
- 4) Slow fashion: Making products that focus on the impact on humans and nature.
- 5) Transparency: Openness in terms of information about the community, production, manufacturing, and product distribution.

3. The economic aspect is an aspect of consideration regarding people's income. The following are the details of indicators from the Threads of Life that refer to the economic aspect:

- 1) -Local economic empowerment: Focus on increasing local people's income.
- 2) Employment: Strengthen and collaborate with local communities through transparent practices that benefit communities, businesses, and the environment.
- 3) Product attachment: Considering aspects of the emotional attachment that can be created between the product and the customer regarding local traditions.

4. The traditional aesthetics aspect highlights the beauty of traditional fabrics and crafts without changing their original form. The following are the details of indicators from the Threads of Life that refer to aspects of traditional aesthetics:

- 1) Natural materials: The use of organic materials from raw materials obtained directly from existing plantations. Moreover, consider the use of materials that can be recycled.
- 2) Craftsmanship: Adapting indigenous crafts from various regions that can show cultural identity and where the product comes from

- 3) Product attachment: Considering aspects of the emotional attachment that can be created between the product and the customer regarding local traditions and culture.
- 4) Historical value: Considering historical aspects such as maintaining the design or motif of a traditional product/fabric to maintain the authenticity and value of the product as a cultural object with a long story.
- 5) Preserving cultural value: Keeping artifacts and traditions intact.
- 6) Local images: Shows traditional identity from various aspects, starting from specific motifs, colors, and symbols.
- 7) Traditional fabric: Traditional fabric has always been the central aspect of product development.

5. The indigenous aspect refers to considerations in maintaining traditional products by paying attention to who, how, and with what tools the product is made, which refers to the original habits of indigenous people who have knowledge related to these traditional products that have been passed down from generation to generation. The following are the details of indicators from the Threads of Life that refer to indigenous aspects:

- 1) Community: Focus on indigenous groups who have been equipped with hereditary traditions.
- 2) Tools & Skills: Using tools and highlighting skills that characterize a community/craftsman group.
- 3) Ways of living: Collaborating with community groups by observing and maintaining habits, to beliefs that have existed for a long time.

Figure 5

Indicators of Cultural Sustainability Model

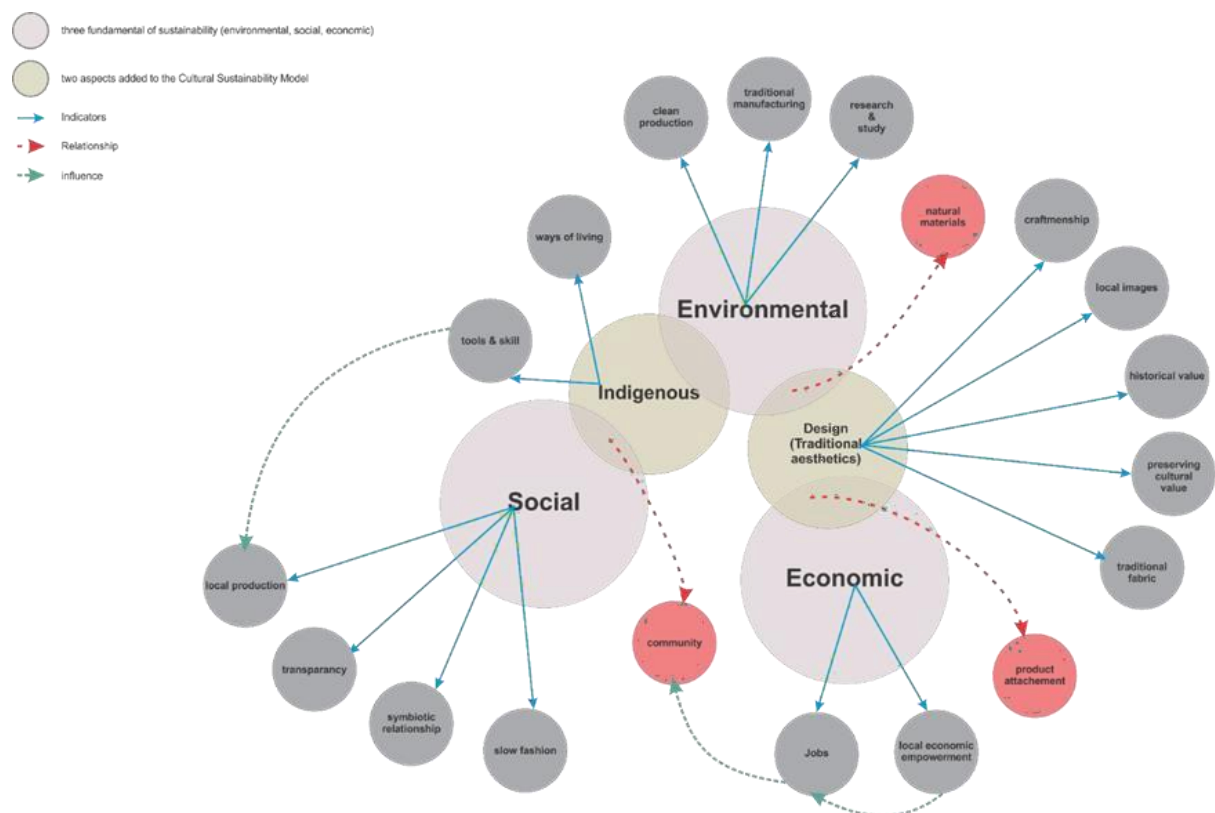


Figure 5 illustrates the connection between each aspect and indicator of the cultural sustainability model is explained. The design aspect is the most significant point in the approach process based on this model, referring to the practice that Threads of Life has carried out, the design aspect is the first thing to be considered in preserving traditions because it must first consider existing cultural artifacts and how to preserve cultural object.

The design aspect intersects with environmental and economic factors. In this case, the design aspect intersects with the environmental aspect because cultural artifacts, especially traditional cloth, depend on natural resources in their manufacture. In the case of Threads of Life, they are preserving traditional fabric from various regions with a focus on resources nature which is characteristic of each area, such as raw materials for fibers and natural dyes, which are also obtained and processed directly by indigenous peoples. The design aspect also intersects with the economic part because products and stories about traditional fabrics, in the case of Threads of Life, are the primary financial sources.

From the relationship between design, environmental, and economic aspects, it will directly impact social aspects because all production and manufacturing are carried out locally. The social aspect intersects with the indigenous aspect because every process carried out will pay attention to the customs that are traditions for indigenous peoples in making traditional cloth. In practice, Threads of Life has challenges in terms of regeneration for both the wider community and the next generation of indigenous people, so in this case, it is essential to think about transparent marketing strategies, primarily referring to social and indigenous aspects, so that they can continue to educate directly or indirectly, for the broader community regarding traditional Indonesian fabrics and also for the next generation of indigenous people to continue to love the culture and traditions they have and preserve them for a long time. Recommendations for fashion practices referring to social factors, marketing, design, and cultural artifacts will be presented in the form of points and explanations below:

1. Social factors: paying attention to and understanding indigenous peoples and their traditions; in this case, education is essential regarding sustainable practices, which must continue to be carried out through promotion and direct communication with the broader community and indigenous communities.
2. Marketing factors: paying attention to openness or transparency regarding information on practices carried out and having a platform that is easy to access, such as a website or social media, which can be a forum for sharing every activity carried out starting from production to field surveys and interacting with indigenous communities.
3. Design factors & cultural artifacts: pay attention to and understand the cultural artifacts that will be preserved. Focus on production and manufacturing processes that refer to the original traditions of indigenous communities, from materials to the tools used. The actual characteristics and beauty of cultural artifacts are important to convey to the public; in this case, Threads of Life maintains the authenticity of traditional fabrics by not changing their original form but does not rule out the possibility of transformation and revitalization of cultural artifacts.

In conclusion, designing sustainable products with a focus on traditional aspects cannot be done in one way. However, at least the products and business models developed can contain five aspects (environmental, social, economic, traditional aesthetics, and indigenous) with various strategies. The Cultural Sustainability Model (Figure 2) was created as a guide and can also be used as a parameter in identifying sustainable practices. Furthermore, these aspects must be the

principles in brand/business operation, design, production planning, manufacturing, and sustainable development in a regional or city scope.

CONCLUSION

The traditional aspect in Indonesia shows that there are values and visible patterns which can be used as fundamental aspects in fashion practice. The fashion practices can follow the pace of the sustainable fashion framework, which is slower than fast fashion. After analyzing the practice on the Threads of Life, it can be concluded that the Threads of Life has a good sustainable practice. Although, there are several findings that can be improved. The Threads of Life has a product life cycle with a loop that is not closed, but every stage of the practice that is carried out has complied with the principles of sustainability. The traditional aspect is considered as a fundamental aspect where the brand maintains the authenticity of textile making tradition and the product aesthetic. However, in some cases, maintaining the tradition can also be developed by modifying products or techniques in textile processing. The study found a new pattern where the traditional aspect has the closest relationship to the three main pillars (environmental, social, and economic) to achieve sustainable practices. The improved cultural sustainability model was formulated which consists of five pillar aspects: (1) environmental, (2) social, (3) economic, (4) traditional aesthetics, and (5) Indigenous. This model is created as a guide and can also be used as a parameter in identifying sustainable practices. Hopefully, these aspects can be the principles in brand/business operation, design, production planning, manufacturing, and sustainable development in a regional or city scope.

Limitation & future research

Due to time constraints, this study produces a cultural sustainability model and recommendation for fashion practices, but the model has not been tested and reviewed further. Therefore, there are several suggestions that can be formulated for further research:

1. Employing and analyzing the five aspects of the cultural sustainability model with focusing more intensely on each aspect in other case study research, namely (1) environmental, (2) social, (3) economic, (4) traditional aesthetics, and (5) Indigenous.
3. Further research can also focus on traditions in Indonesia which can be preserved by creating a business model that focuses on cultural sustainability to be adapted by other fashion brands in the fashion business aspect.
4. Ethnographic research can also be carried out to examine cultural artifacts, traditions, and indigenous peoples in various regions in Indonesia.
5. Further research can also focus on comparative research by comparing several brands in Indonesia that have implemented sustainable practices by looking at the influence of the traditional aspect. Comparative research in the future can sharpen and, simultaneously, try the model that has been made with several kinds of case studies.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public or commercial sectors.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

All authors contributed to the study conception and design. Material preparation, data collection, and analysis were performed by all authors.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

ETHICS STATEMENT

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

REFERENCES

- Alhaddi, H. (2015), "Triple bottom line and sustainability: a literature review", *Business and Management Studies*, Vol. 1 No. 2, pp. 6-10. <https://doi.org/10.11114/bms.v1i2.752>
- Arsic, A, K., Mišić, M., Radojković, M., & Prlinčević, B. (2016). *Social aspects of sustainable development of enterprise* (1st International conference on Quality of Life, June 2016). http://cqm.rs/2016/cd1/pdf/papers/focus_1/11.pdf.
<https://doi.org/10.32890/jcisc2023.2.10>
- Ben Eli, M. . (2015). Sustainability: Definition and Five Core Principles - A New Framework. *The Sustainability Laboratory*, 1–12.
<http://www.sustainabilitylabs.org/assets/img/SL5CorePrinciples.pdf>.
- Bick, R., Halsey, E., & Ekenga, C. C. (2018). The global environmental injustice of fast fashion. *Environmental Health: A Global Access Science Source*, 17(1), 1–4.
<https://doi.org/10.1186/s12940-018-0433-7>.
- Dodgson, M., Gann, D., Salter, A. (2005): *Think Play Do: Technology, Innovation & Organization*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Fletcher, K. (2010). Slow Fashion: An Invitation for Systems Change. *Fashion Practice*, 2(2), 259–265. <https://doi.org/10.2752/175693810x12774625387594>.
- Fletcher, K., Grose, L. (2013): *Fashion & Sustainability: Design for Change*. Laurence King Publishing, London.
- Georgas, J., Mylona, K. (2006): Cultures Are Like All Other Cultures, Like Some Other Cultures, Like No Other Cultures. In Kim, u., Kuo, S, Y., Kwang, K, H, Indigenous and Cultural Psychology (319-356). Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta.
- Herdiansyah, H. (2010): *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif untuk Ilmu-Ilmu Sosial*. Edisi 2. Salemba Humanika, Jakarta Selatan.
- Jung, S., & Jin, B. (2016). Sustainable development of slow fashion businesses: Customer value approach. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 8(6). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su8060540>.
- Kim, H., Sefcik, J. S., & Bradway, C. (2017). Characteristics of qualitative descriptive studies: A systematic review. *Research in nursing & health*, 40(1), 23-42.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/nur.21768>**Digital Object Identifier (DOI)**
- Kim, U. (2001): *Culture, science and indigineous psychologies: An integrated analysis*. In D. Matsumoto, Handbook of Culture and psychology (57-76). Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Kim, U., Park, Y, S. (2006): Landasan Ilmiah Indigenous and Cultural Psychology. Pendekatan Transaksional. In Kim, u., Kuo, S, Y., Kwang, K, H, Indigenous and Cultural Psychology (43-78). Pustaka Pelajar, Yogyakarta.
<https://doi.org/10.32890/jcisc2023.2.10>
- Kumar, R. (2011) *Research Methodology: A Step-by-Step Guide for Beginners*. 3rd Edition. Sage, New Delhi.
- Kozlowski, A., Bardecki, M., & Searcy, C. (2019). Tools for sustainable fashion design: An analysis of their fitness for purpose. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(13), 1–19.

- <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11133581>.
- Leiserowitz, AA, Kates, RW, & Parris, TM. (2006). *Sustainability values, attitudes, and behaviors: a review of multinational and global trends*.
<https://climatecommunication.yale.edu/>.
<https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.energy.31.102505.133552>
- Murphy, K. (2012). The social pillar of sustainable development: A literature review and framework for policy analysis. *Sustainability: Science, Practice, and Policy*, 8(1), 15–29. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2012.11908081>.
- Nugraha, A. (2012) *Transforming Traditional: A method for Maintaining Tradition in a Craft and Design Context*, PhD Thesis, School of Arts, Design and Architecture, Aalto University, Finland.
- Niinimäki, K. (2013): *Sustainable Fashion: New Approaches*. Aalto, Finland.
- Rahman, M., Aziz, S., & Hughes, M. (2020). The product-market performance benefits of environmental policy: Why customer awareness and firm innovativeness matter. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 29(5), 2001–2018
<https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2484>.
- Roy, S., Das, M., Ali, S. M., Raihan, A. S., Paul, S. K., & Kabir, G. (2020). Evaluating strategies for environmental sustainability in a supply chain of an emerging economy. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 262, 121389.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.121389>.
- Schönborn, G., Berlin, C., Pinzone, M., Hanisch, C., Georgoulas, K., & Lanz, M. (2019). Why social sustainability counts: The impact of corporate social sustainability culture on financial success. *Sustainable Production and Consumption*, 17, 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2018.08.008>.
- Stanton, A. (2022): *What Is Fast Fashion, Anyway?*
<https://www.thegoodtrade.com/features/what-is-fast-fashion>.
- Stoddart, H. (2011). A Pocket Guide to Sustainable Development Governance Edited by Second Edition Commonwealth Secretariat Stakeholder Forum. *Commonwealth Secretariat Stakeholder Forum*, 1–158. www.stakeholderforum.org.
- Spangenberg, J. H. (2005). Economic sustainability of the economy: Concepts and indicators. *International Journal of Sustainable Development*, 8(1–2), 47–64.
<https://doi.org/10.1504/ijsd.2005.007374>.
- Tachega, M. A., Yao, X., Liu, Y., Ahmed, D., Ackaah, W., Gabir, M., & Gyimah, J. (2021). Income heterogeneity and the environmental kuznets curve turning points: Evidence from Africa. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 13(10). <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13105634>.
- Tanzil, M. Y. (2017). The Sustainable Practices of Indonesian Fashion Brands. *Sustainability, Inter-and Trans-Discipline, Culture towards Creative Economy*, 203–211.
- Thomas, C. F. (2015): *Naturalizing Sustainability Discourse: Paradigm, Practices and Pedagogy of Thoreau, Leopold, Carson and Wilson*. Ph. D Thesis, Arizona State University.
- Tung, F. W. (2012). Weaving with rush: Exploring craft-design collaborations in revitalizing a local craft. *International Journal of Design*, 6(3), 71–84.
- Yin, R.K. (2018). Case study research and applications: design and methods. Sixth edition. ed. Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications, Inc.