

CHAPTER II

OVERVIEW OF THE CONCEPT SUSTAINABLE FASHION

The concept of sustainable fashion is rapidly and progressively gaining popularity as customers increasingly demonstrate awareness of their choices and their implications for the environment and society. It signifies a transition towards a fashion sector that prioritises environmental preservation, social equity, and transparency of information, thereby embodying a more responsible and ethical approach.

The historical timeline of ethical and sustainable fashion has undergone a gradual transformation, paralleling the growing global consciousness surrounding environmental and social concerns within the fashion sector. Indonesia, renowned for its abundant textile legacy, is making significant progress in embracing sustainable fashion methodologies, encompassing the procurement of resources and the advocacy of ethical labour norms. These developments reflect a growing commitment to creating a more sustainable and responsible fashion industry in the country.

2.1 A Brief History of Ethical and Sustainable Fashion

Over the years, the negative and environmental effects of the fashion business have grown continuously throughout the years. Efforts have been made to educate people about the problem of sustainability. The United Nations first used the term "sustainability" since 1987, which has been going on for a very long time. According to the United Nations (UN), sustainability is characterised as a form of development that adeptly attends to the demands of the present generation, while

simultaneously safeguarding the capacity of future generations to meet their own requirements without compromising their well-being.

Let us begin by defining the term of ethical fashion before moving on to the topic of sustainable fashion. To begin, it is noteworthy that ethical fashion has many nuances that differentiate it from sustainable fashion, namely by prioritizing the societal impacts of the fashion industry to a greater emphasis. The term "ethical" comes from the idea that it is "morally right" to produce clothing in an ethical manner. The concept of ethical fashion encompasses a wide variety of topics, including but not limited to: living wages, working conditions, health and safety, forced labor, and child labor. It involves going above and beyond simply complying with the labor rules of the local jurisdiction. Apparel that is vegan and cruelty-free as well as apparel that treats animals with kindness is an example of ethical fashion. In this sense, ethical fashion can be described as clothing that considers all issues pertaining to moral and social ideals (Astuti & S. 2014).

Meanwhile, according to the Collins dictionary, sustainability is characterised by the deliberate effort to prevent the depletion of natural resources, with the ultimate goal of preserving ecological balance. The term "sustainable fashion" encompasses clothing items that are produced with a considerations towards the various environmental issues associated with the fashion industry. Sustainable fashion is a lifestyle development that can affect global warming, ecological balance, natural disaster mitigation, vegetative conservation, wildlife conservation, and all things nature-friendly or environmentally friendly (Kaikobad et al., 2015). It aims to bring all players in the fashion industry together to improve the way

production and consumption work together. Fashion designers, producers, distributors, and consumers are all involved in the fashion sector (Kulsum, 2020).

These three words all share one thing in common: fashion. The history of the fashion industry as a whole must be understood in order to comprehend how it became so unsustainable and how the sustainable fashion movement developed in reaction. According to George Simmel, a German philosopher and sociologist, the classic theory of fashion states that status and wealth were the driving forces behind fashion in the past. In earlier times, the most wealthy people were the ones who established fashion, which was eventually adopted by the masses. Being current was essential in this regard. Even while department stores, tailors, and couturiers in Paris recreated the most up-to-date patterns for the general populace during the middle of the 19th century, Parisian couturiers became the industry's leaders and trend-setters.

The beginning of the Industrial Revolution was a crucial turning point in the human history, shaping the modern world and laying the foundation for the industrialized societies we see today. Started in the late 18th century in Britain and later spread to other parts of the world, brought about significant advancements in manufacturing and technology. One of the key innovations of the Industrial Revolution was the steam engine, which powered machinery and revolutionized various industries. In the textile industry, for example, the invention of the spinning jenny, water frame, and power loom mechanized the production of cloth, greatly increasing efficiency and output. Factories emerged, replacing cottage industries, and mass production became possible on a scale never seen before.

During the transition from the 19th to the 20th century, the phenomenon of mass production emerged, leading to the widespread manufacturing of goods. In the 1950s, a consumer society emerged, marked by heightened levels of production and consumption driven by marketing strategies. This development occurred around ten years subsequent to the aforementioned period. Subsequently, a discernible sustainable fashion movement started to emerge. The advent of the late 1960s witnessed the emergence of countercultural groups that posed a challenge to the prevailing consumerist culture. Notably, the hippie revolution emerged as a prominent force, advocating for the use of natural fabrics and a return to a more simple lifestyle, while openly expressing opposition to the fashion industry. Subsequently, the punk and goth movements of the 1970s and 1980s emerged, exhibiting analogous disavowal of conventional fashion norms. These subcultures exhibited a preference for unique second-hand and vintage garments, amalgamating several fashion styles. The late 1980s witnessed the presence of vigorous movements against the use of fur. During that period, there was a growing emergence of sustainable and ethical fashion.

However, the 1990s saw a wave of fashion democratisation. Fashion has become more affordable and accessible than ever before as a result of advances in global communication and offshore production. The rates of production and consumption increased even further. That's when we started to see rapid fashion emerge. At the same time, as the counter of mass production, the eco-fashion movement started to appear as some businesses and articles started increasing awareness of the environmental implications that the fashion sector has.

The Rana Plaza disaster in 2013 sparked more conversation about ethical fashion as we came to understand the harsh conditions under which clothing is produced (Young, 2020). The collapse of an eight-story building in Dhaka, Bangladesh, that contained five garment manufacturers, resulted in the deaths of at least 1,134 people and the injuries of at least 2,000 more. During the endeavor to recover the building, it was found that a number of well-known clothing labels, such as Primark, Mango, and Benetton, had used the buildings to manufacture their products. This incident shed light on several issues related to the fast fashion industry. One of the key issues highlighted by the Rana Plaza tragedy was the poor working conditions and lack of safety measures in many garment factories, particularly in developing countries where labour is cheaper. The building that collapsed housed multiple factories producing clothing for various global fashion brands and many of these factories did not adhere to proper safety regulations, putting workers at risk.

Figures 2. 1 The Rana Plaza Disaster



Source: Satusatu.id

This incident provoked a global outrage and raised awareness about the need for greater transparency and accountability in the fashion industry. It prompted discussions on ethical sourcing, responsible production practices, and the importance of supporting workers' rights. Many consumers and advocacy groups began demanding more sustainable and ethical alternatives to fast fashion. That is when the phrase "fast fashion" then started to climb to the surface. The term "Fast Fashion," which is taken from "Fast Food," refers to clothing that is created rapidly and at a lower cost to meet the newest trends, typically by copying the runway. Fast fashion labels are incredibly affordable but have a bad reputation for waste, overproduction, poor labor conditions, and adverse environmental effects. They aren't exactly sustainable and ethical, to put it simply.

Today, many groups are working to raise awareness of the toll that our consumerist culture has had on humanity and the world. The sustainable fashion movement is on the rise, and as a result, shoppers are cutting down and altering their consumption habits in an effort to make the fashion industry clean up its act.

There has been a reawakening of oppositional movements in recent years. The concept of "Slow Fashion," which promotes a less frenetic approach to manufacturing and consumption, is gaining popularity (Assoune, 2020). Vintage clothing is becoming more acceptable and attractive as people become more aware of the whole lifetime of garments. Up-cycling and circular economy activities have occurred with the development of recycling and recycled clothing, as these approaches aim to restore value to discarded garments. Although it's easy to dismiss the fashion business as unimportant, it really has far-reaching effects on both the global population and the natural world (Remy et al., 2016). Therefore, in order to

make positive changes, it is essential to learn about the background, structure, and development of the ethical and sustainable fashion movement.

2.2 Overview of Developments Sustainable Fashion in Indonesia

The textile sector in Indonesia is responsible for the second-highest levels of water pollution in the world, which has contaminated rice fields and farms and cost the country an estimated US \$866 million over the past two decades. Additionally, Indonesia's ability to establish local fashion trends and attract global attention attributed to its quick development has a direct and indirect impact on the country's economic growth. For instance, according to Global Business Guide Indonesia (2016), the value of exports in the Indonesian fashion business exceeded 58.5 trillion rupiah in 2016. The growth of small and medium-sized enterprises, which is accompanied by significant trade competition, is another factor supporting the development of the fashion industry in Indonesia.

In addition to economic development, there are other issues with the global and particularly Indonesian fashion industries that frequently slip our minds. In the era in which we currently reside, fashion is beginning to produce 52 micro seasons annually. Whereas in the past there were only two main seasons per year, which Spring/Summer and Fall/Winter. As a result, a new fashion model that can be produced in vast quantities will be presented every week. Due to the fashion industry's high energy use and extensive use of both human and natural resources, this has a huge impact on social and environmental issues. The fashion business, according to numerous studies, is the second biggest polluter in the world. Even foreign journalists on the Ecowatch article the Citarum River in West Java as the

most polluted river in the world due to the textile industry's support of global fashion enterprises (Benchehib & Benchehib, 2017).

Figures 2. 2 Citarum River dye waste



Source: carmenbusquets.com

According to Sustainable Businesses, since the pandemic began, demand for up to 54% of sustainable fashion businesses has increased. In the meantime, 57% of consumers concur to undertake significant modifications via sustainable approaches to lessen environmental impacts. As a result of an increase in public demand for clothing that prioritizes sustainability, numerous local brands in Indonesia have implemented the concept of environmentally-friendly clothing. Some example that implemented sustainable and environmentally-friendly clothing:

1. Kin+Ally

Kin and Ally is a fashion business that focuses on athleisure and employs recycled plastic bottles as the fabric for its products. This product has also obtained eco-certification and has been recognized by well-known media such as Vogue, GQ, Harpers Bazaar, and Tatler.

Figures 2. 3 Kin+Ally Products



Source: @Kinandally (Instagram)

Kin and Ally is a fashion business that focuses on athleisure and employs recycled plastic bottles as the fabric for its products. This product has also obtained eco-certification and has been recognized by well-known media such as Vogue, GQ, Harpers Bazaar, and Tatler.

2. Sukkha Citta

Sukkha Citta is a clothing brand that has been accredited as a pioneering standard for sustainable fashion by B Corp and Ethically Handcrafted. Sukkha Citta strives to enhance the economic status of women artisans and farmers in Indonesian villages while also maintaining traditions and renewing the environment.

Figures 2. 4 Sukka Citta



Source: sukkhacitta.com

Sukkha Citta uses natural resources to create quality and durable apparel and is accountable for not destroying the environment through the Farm-to-Closet concept. Sukkha Citta has continually prioritised healthy work practises for craftsmen and farmers to earn acceptable salaries while caring for the Earth through regenerative farming since its inception in 2016. Starting with the women in the hamlet, more than 1,500 people are now affected.

3. Sare Studio

Cempaka Asriani and Putri Amandewi, two Indonesian women, founded the Sare Studio brand. This is a pyjama brand that promotes environmentally friendly fashion.

Figures 2. 5 Sare Studio



Source: @sarestudio (Instagram)

This brand's pyjamas are produced from LENZING™ ECOVERO™ Fibre, which is derived from certified and sustainable wood. Sare has also received EU Ecolabel accreditation as a brand that meets environmental requirements throughout its life cycle, from raw material extraction to distribution and disposal.

4. Pijak Bumi

Pijak Bumi is a Bandung-based shoe brand that made its international debut in September 2022 at the MICAM Milano international footwear exhibition in Italy, a renowned international footwear show that is frequently considered as a benchmark for dealers from all over the world.

Figures 2. 6 Pijak Bumi



Source: lifestyle.kompas.com

Pijak Bumi is a Bandung-based shoe brand that made its international debut in September 2022 at the MICAM Milano international footwear exhibition in Italy, a renowned international footwear show that is frequently considered as a benchmark for dealers from all over the world. Pijak Bumi shoes are manufactured with environmentally friendly materials such as water hyacinth fiber, coconut shells, kenaf, and recycled cotton. Pijak Bumi also represented Indonesia at Accelerate2030 in Geneva, the world's largest program assisting

developing market impact entrepreneurs in scaling solutions for the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

5. Sejauh Mata Memandang

Sejauh Mata Memandang (SMM) is a textile brand that promotes slow fashion and uses a circular business strategy. This brand also actively participates in numerous environmental and Earth preservation actions. Initially, the materials utilized for SMM items were only linen and cotton.

Figures 2. 7 Sejauh Mata Memandang



Source: Antaranews.com

However, this firm has just begun to use organic cotton and tencel fabrics that are more environmentally friendly. SMM has also fought on multiple occasions for social problems such as environmental protection by presenting exhibitions such as at ARTJOG in 2022 by placing art as a reminder of how near we are to extinction. In 2019, there will also be an exhibition with the topic "Laut kita" in Plaza Indonesia in Jakarta. The goal is to raise public awareness about plastic debris, which frequently ends up in the water and harms Indonesia's marine ecosystems. In addition, in 2021, an exhibition will be conducted in Senayan City, Jakarta, to raise public awareness of the state of trash, particularly textile waste. SMM involves the audience in an exhibition to change behavior, develop ecosystems, and become an environmentally

responsible community based on four principles: (1) reduce, (2) reuse, (3) recycle, and (4) renew.

The five above are among many fashion brands from Indonesia that are participating in the slow fashion movement while also continuing to support sustainability as a central tenet of their businesses. Their business relies on giving the consumer a chance to do good while also looking good by producing clothes that are made by sustainable materials, produced with a safe-for-environmental system, and distributed to customer with reusable packaging. The green marketing is also the method these business used while promoting their products, which gives the market a new sub-consciousness whereas they could help their surroundings and the planet so much more just by doing a simple act; choosing sustainable clothes. While the market in Indonesia became more aware about the matter of environment through these business, sustainable clothing line tend to have higher price than the fast fashion clothing; mainly because the complicated technical production of making sustainable clothes; makes the market for this line more niche.

According to Binet et al. (2018), the expansion of the fashion business is likely to continue to expand at rapidly until the year 2030, when it is anticipated that the sector will have grown by 50%, which would result in a carbon footprint of 2,791 tonnes and trash created will reach 148 tonnes. Because of this fact, several corporate players in the international fashion industry are working towards the goal of lowering the levels of water pollution by up to 50% and exploring the possibilities of adopting chemical and textile waste processing systems. The conditions in Indonesia, where the majority of micro,

small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) as business actors frequently become contributors to environmental degradation, contrast with the gains made by the fashion sector outside. The selection of raw materials, the manufacturing method, and the waste created during production and post-production are all points of origin for the negative effect that is caused by MSMEs. The location of the business and the issue of waste produced by manufacturing are the two primary challenges that must be overcome before an organisation can become environmentally responsible. It is difficult for MSMEs to be able to focus on sustainability issues, one of which is green environmental sustainability. The difficulty stems from a lack of information regarding sustainable business practices, capital, and human resources.

This is what increases the need from the people of Indonesia to transition to utilising items that use notions of sustainability (SC Media, 2020). 66% of millennials are prepared to buy more garments for sustainable companies, according to a worldwide study that was conducted in 2018, and 69% of millennials pay attention to "eco-friendly" and "sustainable" branding promises while they are shopping for clothes (Media Indonesia, 2022). This younger generation's dedication has also begun to impact actors in the textile sector, large retailers, and local firms, prompting them to adapt their business models towards sustainability. From this perspective, businesspeople with integrity have the potential to become a driving force for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) to establish communication in educating customers about sustainable fashion practises. This is because, with the assistance of the

trust that consumers have, it will undoubtedly increase the intention to buy sustainable fashion items produced by MSMEs.