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“Greening” the Indian Economy: A Tryst with India’s Fashion Industry

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Abstract

It is inherent human need and nature to be driven towards profit and growth. Humans owe everything to nature; it is the reason for their survival, however, they have exploited and destroyed it to no end. The paper tries to answer the question of why transitioning to a green economy could help India grow faster and discusses the objectives and features of a green economy. In addition, the paper thoroughly performs a PESTELE analysis of a green economy. Further, it dissects the fast fashion industry by discussing its shortcomings and bringing to light the unsustainable practices by which products are produced. The paper talks about the importance of accountability towards all practices and studies how luxury brands dabble a little in sustainable practices. It finds that the clothes used by karighars are unsustainable, however, many luxury brands tie up and offer them sustainable clothes in return for their sustainable practices. Moreover, it argues that sustainable goods would increase self-reliance, purchasing power and employment. A green economy would also help human society grow by working towards social inclusion. The paper concludes by suggesting a few public policy recommendations. Shifting to a greener economy with one of the biggest industries- fashion- taking the first step towards sustainable practices, would not only help in saving the environment but also help humans grow faster.

Keywords: *green economy, green economics, sustainability, fashion industry, brown economy.*

1.0 Introduction

Since its surge in the mid-nineteenth century, fashion has created a new world, a world that lusts for novelty with ever-changing tastes and styles. Accommodating these tastes, however, has become more and more impossible since the shift was made from natural to synthetic fabrics and as labour practices become less and less ethical. The fashion sector currently accounts for 20% of wastewater and 10% of global carbon emissions (BBC Future, 2020). However, it is important to note that India's fashion industry contributes 108 billion dollars to the GDP and employs close to 100 million people (fashionunited.com, 2021). Due to the heavy employment and the money involved, doing away with the industry at hand will not only lead to a huge economic loss but will also render millions of individuals

unemployed.

This paper argues that the transition to a green economy would help reform India's fashion industry and expedite India's economic growth. The movement towards a green economy would subject other industries to look towards sustainable practices to thrive. The growth of economies and protection of the environment need to go hand in hand to leave Earth in a better condition for future generations.

This paper deems to recognize the problem in the current workings of the fashion industry. And in recent times, fast fashion is where the issue lies. Loosely described, fast fashion is a segment of the industry based on cheaply produced and sold garments with the main objective that they reach the retail floor in the least possible time. While the fast fashion pieces may be in vogue now, they might not be soon, which in turn validates the expedited nature of these goods. From the year 2000 to 2014, humanity has a little more than doubled its garment purchases and that's because fast fashion has made it possible for clothes to be both cheaper and much more rapidly produced (Business Insider India, 2019).

The United Nations, while stating the Sustainable Development Goals, wants to ensure that the damage done to the environment should be reversed while helping countries with economic growth by the 2030s. This paper hypothesizes that sustainable practices would expedite economic growth and would also help stop any further damage to the ecology and environment. Furthermore, reviving Earth through sustainable practices would help improve the quality of life for all.

The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) defines a 'green economy' as something that leads to improved social equity and human well-being, while significantly decreasing ecological scarcities and environmental risks. It is low in carbon, resource-efficient, and socially inclusive (UNEP, 2011). While another definition was proposed by Green Economy Coalition as a resilient and adaptable economy that within the ecological limits of the planet provides a better quality of life for all (UN-DESA, 2012). In general, both definitions advocate for sustainable development practices that are ethical and inclusive. A brown economy, in contrast, is a derivative of social marginalization and

resource depletion (UNEP, 2011). The eco-friendly and rather more ethical alternative, the model of a green economy broadly has three features: constraining human greed, sustainability and decoupling. Its primary objectives are that an economy must emit less carbon, must be resource-efficient and socially inclusive. The paper attempts to delve into the same later on and tries to dabble upon the nitty-gritty of sustainable practices.

2.0 Literature Review

Most of the green economics debate is about the extent of the modification brought on by a change to green economics and how to achieve this modification. David Pearce puts forward the notion that uninhibited free markets tend to be the enemy of the environment and by extension the enemy of green economics (Pearce, 1992). The Industrial Revolution has not entirely been successful in reducing poverty and inequality gaps; on the flip side of the coin, it has paved the way for widespread destruction of the environment. The Industrial Revolution does not provide a way to reduce unemployment if protection of the environment is also kept in mind (Koulagi, 2015). The introduction of green economics becomes even more important to integrate both global development and environmental sustainability.

Many economists predicted that at one point in time growth would come to a halt if no innovation were introduced. Therefore, the introduction of the concept of a Green Economy becomes even more significant and is a ray of hope in these troubled times. Green practices are one of the most sensible and powerful solutions to avoid economic crises as a green economy offers increased employment, decreased imports, increased purchasing power and savings, and a positive investment pattern. Before colonial rule, the Indian textile industry used to be a leading and profitable industry, constantly attracting new traders to arrive in the country. The slow dismantling of the industry by the British led to losing the industry. Due to a new ray of consciousness and a shift in thinking of the newer generations, the introduction and integration of green economic practices would lead to an increase in demand for sustainable fashion. The Indian karigars, for generations, have been working in the bounds of green practices. A boost to this sector would provide jobs to millions of Indians. This would further be followed by positive consequences. In addition, Jackson coined the phrase,

“flourishing within limits,” which captures the strong relationship between development and ecological sensitivity (Jackson, 2009).

The brand states that the concept of the green economy was just coined for political interests and is not much different from the words ‘sustainable development’. He further adds that globalisation will never let this concept succeed because the companies only care about extracting as many profits as possible; he argues that profit-hungry countries and institutions do not care enough to spend money to revive the environment (Brand, 2012). Companies have started to integrate green practices in their production, a detailed discussion of this can be seen below, however, they are way behind the Indian Karigars.

A key finding in a UNEP report published in 2011 was that greening not only generates increases in wealth, gain in ecological commons or natural capital but also predicts a higher rate of GDP growth over the next six years. It also links poverty eradication and better maintenance and conservation of the ecological commons, arising from the benefit flows from natural capital that is received directly by the poor (UNEP, 2011). The report states that a shift in various sectors of the country would also reduce deforestation and would replenish the water table providing cleaner water. This would be visible in the agricultural sector, providing livelihood to a majority of the world population. It would also reduce negative externalities and environmental profit loss, which would help in stimulating investments. UNEP uses a macroeconomic model to show that by using green economic practices, GDP would grow over time. The people below the poverty line depend majorly on nature, so investing in improving the environment would directly provide income to them, which would alleviate poverty. The UNEP report states various policy changes that both the government and the private sector could incorporate for their profits, public wealth and environmental sustainability.

3.0 Green Economics: Features and Objectives

Though its origins were made in the British Government Report titled Blueprint for a Green Economy (Pearce, Markandya and Barbier, 1989), it now has been revived and co-opted by the United Nations and its many subsidiaries. Green Economics is constructed

based on three objectives: low carbon usage, resource efficiency, and social inclusivity.

Decarbonization' is an essential step towards building a green economy, one that requires a change in every aspect of the production process. Fossil fuel-based energy system is at the very root of climate change. In a UNEP report, it was indicated that the energy sector is responsible for a large portion of greenhouse gases emissions and US\$ 50-170 billion is the estimated cost of climate change in terms of adaptation by 2030, half of which could be borne by developing countries. India devotes 45% of its export earnings to energy imports (UNEP, 2011). The shift to decarbonization is predicted to cost between US\$ 11 and 21 trillion dollars and will require accelerating the build-out of renewable-energy capacity, to provide four to nine times as much clean power as the industry would need in the absence of any effort to reduce emissions (Pee et al., 2020). Resource efficiency aims to reduce the number of resources needed, emissions, waste generated, and per unit of product or service. It operates on the idea that natural capital should be preserved for future generations and poor people whose livelihoods depend on natural resources. All in all, a green economy shall create jobs and enhance social equity. Since businesses will no longer be constrained by resource and energy scarcity, green investments will allow for greater employment and growth. The three primary features of green economics are constraining human greed, sustainability, and decoupling.

The notion of constraining human greed is based on the fact that people operate on selfish interests but should instead be motivated by non-selfish concerns and ergo must alter their behaviour. People should diminish their greed because other living beings matter equally, however, their cupidity has an adverse cascading effect on these other beings. Moreover, a green economy also ensures intergenerational equity i.e., fairness between generations.

Pearce stated that an economy based on the principles of green economics has the capability of replicating itself through sustainability. Sustainability is therefore a common feature of all green economics and lives at the very heart of it. The ability of an economy to self-replicate greatly increases substantially when it's able to lower the ratio of materials and energy to economic output over time. This brings us to the idea of decoupling. Pearce also mentions that the rates of change of systematic decoupling of economic output and with that

the environmental assets used up in that process is the essence of a green economy (Pearce, 1992). Thus, the third feature ties the previous two in a neat little bow.

3.1 PESTELE Analysis of Green Economy

3.1.1 Political

From a political standpoint, India might never get a go-ahead for setting up a green economy. Green economics policies often encourage developing countries to redesign their national plans and strategies in ways that might be inconsistent with natural comparative advantages and past investments. India, especially, has seen tremendous growth by sticking with its coal-based and fertilizer-rich development plans, both of which are important to the fashion industry. In turn, there are often sizable anti-reform coalitions whose interests may conflict with a green growth agenda (Resnick et al., 2012). The problem with defending the environment is that it sets up a weak case, politicians are used to the current development practices and they tend to excite the voters too by ensuring greater jobs, or exports, or a better standard of living. The new ways are untested and most uneducated voters might not understand them and thus the politicians can't quite sell these to the voters in their propaganda. In addition to this, the implementation of the existing policies at the lowest rungs of the government is weak.

While the Indian government hasn't gone as far as imposing a carbon tax, it has committed to 40% of electricity capacity being from non-fossil fuels by 2030, and lowering the ratio of emissions to GDP by one-third from 2005 levels (Araral, 2020).

3.1.2 Economical

The entire idea of Green Economy was tailor-made to improve the economy and everyone and everything that falls under it. Green Economists suggest that green economies have the potential of reducing unemployment, poverty and boosting growth. It ensures an increase and more equitably distributed GDP as well as increased production of unpriced ecosystem services. Economic diversification, i.e., improved management of economic risks is key with green growth. With innovation and access in the field of green economics, there will also be improved market confidence (OECD, 2012).

One of the main features of a green economy is social inclusion. This would help in expanding the labour force and boosting production; with more people getting incomes, investment and demand would increase. A cleaner environment would help in saving incomes by reducing the risk of a negative externality. People would fall ill less in comparison to when the environment is toxic for health. In addition, this would also decrease overall Disability-Adjusted Life Years (DALYs); this measures the years lost by a person due to premature illnesses. Furthermore, the extra costs needed to build the infrastructure due to poisoning or depletion of natural resources would decrease. All these points are explained later in the paper, in detail.

3.1.3 Social

The path from green economics to green societies is one human must cross. A green economy implies a redistribution from the affluent to the non-affluent, from present to future generations, and from humans to non-humans. It is set up with the idea that the standard of living humans have defined for themselves is similarly applicable to other members of society and should not damage the planet (Cato, 2012).

Since India is an agrarian country, green economics will reduce the pressure off of this sector and allow people to diversify and move up the economic ladder. While a set-up of green economics ensures to reduce poverty and improve quality of life, the society itself must help to nudge this transition. They must be open to new ideas and innovations and allow the movement from traditional to modern energy sources.

3.1.4 Technological

Adaptation and innovations are the two key factors to ensure the growth of any economy and society. Industrial Revolution- the biggest development of humankind- made the world shift from its roots to a brown economy. Since then, the world has seen its environment reach the brink of destruction. The concept of a green economy, once again, surfaced back up to stop that destruction from happening. From the time it was reintroduced, humankind has seen several new changes, from the infrastructure that generates renewable energy to convert the waste generated to useful commodities. The world has seen the

innovation of recycling, ways to calculate and reduce the carbon footprint, biodegradable products, and much more.

Green Technology complements sustainable development. With new innovations, Green Technology helps to reduce negative footprints on the environment. Technology and demand are what drives everything that happens in the environment- positive or negative- (Guo et al., 2020,). Resources are scarce and to be able to ensure the planet's survival for many years to come, humans continuously need to develop new technology to keep up with this changing world.

3.1.5 Environmental

To grow and maximise earning profits, humans have exploited nature to no end. Major Indian cities generate 38,254 million litres per day of sewage. In addition, India is predicted to suffer from water shortage by 2025. Most cities in India have extremely bad air quality; studies have shown that India's temperature has been rising by 0.51°C every year since 1970 (Javadekar, 2015). The concept of the Green Economy aims at finding a way for humans to grow and prosper while trying to reverse the damage already done and save the earth for the future.

Without the environment, animals and humans will cease to exist, which makes it even more imperative to ensure the damage done by us does not reach this state. A cleaner environment not only improves the quality of life but also saves a lot of income which, otherwise, would have been spent in saving lives.

3.1.6 Legal

The Constitution of India has provisions to save and revive environmental health. In addition, the National Environment Policy is there to provide the platform for the implementation of the UN SDGs. This policy highlights the importance of humans in implementing sustainable development. It has provisions for equity, for conservation of resources, for bridging the gap between the economy and social development, for enhanced governmental efficiency in regard to the environment and efficient use of resources. This policy came into being because of the dire need for a comprehensive environmental policy,

however, the implementation of this policy has been weak. The points highlighted in the policy, somewhat push India towards a greener economy, despite this, the results are weaker than was initially expected.

There are industry-specific mandates prescribed where some industries are mandated to install infrastructure to produce renewable energy from the waste they generate. The Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) allows for a provision that if an area is declared ecologically sensitive, no industry is allowed to be set up there. Furthermore, the EIA finds a way for the environment and humans to prosper. In addition to this, there are a few laws and policies made by the government to ensure that industries minimise their carbon footprint and practice a few green practices.

3.1.7 Ethical

While people like to believe climate change and sustainability are only technological or management problems, they are wrong. It is also a problem of morals. Humans are built to be selfish and constraining their greed is necessary to ensure that they might have something to be selfish about in the future. In terms of ethics, green economics gives us a glimpse into what humans owe to future generations and each other. Green economics ensures that people don't turn a blind eye when it comes to the plight of workers or that testing of products on animals doesn't go unscrutinized.

4.0 India's Fashion Industry and its Shortcomings

India has had a rich textile tradition since prehistoric times which is facilitated by diverse climatic conditions along with an abundance of natural resources and a strong network of the cottage and family-run industries. India's prominence began nearly 600 hundred years ago, with the production of superior cotton cloth (Gage & Pasricha, 2020). This recognition and dominance stand strong even today with Indian textile and apparel exports projected to hit US\$ 82 billion by 2021 holding approximately 63% of the global market in these sectors. It is also one of the sectors capable of being a world leader (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2019). India holds 17% of export shares in textiles and clothing in Europe and Central Asia (including 25% in the United Kingdom and 21% in Germany) and

16% of clothing and textile export shares in the United States (World Integrated Trade Solutions, 2019).

The increasing use of fabrics and materials may have led to a manifold increase in textile production but has also impacted the environment. India has moved on from traditional fabrics and works, to become a large-scale manufacturer of clothes, hosiery, upholstery, and well, pollution. The environmental degradation by way of pollution of land, air, and water occurs during the procurement and use of natural resources, industrial processes and activities and product use and disposal (Hasanuzzaman & Bhar, 2016). It's no news that India's fashion industry is running on unsustainable practices. In an ideal world where humans had unlimited resources and ways to combat environmental degradation and social inclusivity, they could keep moving down this road. But unfortunately, that's not the case.

4.1 Fashion Industry and the Brown Economy

The fashion industry is built on the back of the brown economy and due to its size and nature has a massive environmental impact. Starting right from the fibres such as cotton, wool and synthetics have a significant environmental impact. Cotton, wool, and other natural fibres require large quantities of water and pesticides while synthetic fibres are extracted from non-renewable resources and require considerable energy to produce (Myers and Stolton, 1999). The subsequent industrial processes like dyeing, drying and finishing, make intensive use of chemical products and natural resources and also damage the environment (De Brito et al., 2008). Transport, too, contributes significantly to environmental damage, whether it is the delivery of clothes to western countries or sourcing of raw materials by luxury fashion houses to finish the dress work in foreign countries.

Apart from the production process, many companies (not just fast fashion brands) have come into the spotlight due to inhumane practices and ill-treatment of workers. A majority of apparel companies face issues pertaining to unethical labour conditions throughout their supply chains, low wages, including child labour, and health and safety hazards (Remy et al., 2020).

4.2 Fashion Practises Coherent with Green Economics

Most fashion companies are in the business of making money, it's not within their objectives to look out for the environment. It is often only when they come into the spotlight for the unsustainable practices that they decide to make amends. Usually, these amends are on the lines of having a division in the company that takes in old clothes or introducing a line of clothing that "uses less water" or is "made of recycled material" (often in dull colours to make the consumer think that are recycled). But then some companies decide that a primary goal of theirs is to align with the interests of green economics, fair working conditions, a sustainable business model, organic and environmentally friendly materials, certifications, and traceability and most importantly accountability.

4.2.1 Fast Fashion Brands' and a Dabble with Green Economics

Typically, fast fashion brands don't concern themselves with sustainability and the like of green economics and there's often blatant abuse of labourers. But since the past couple of years, companies like Zara and H&M (and many others) have come under much scrutiny. Inditex, the owner of Zara recently declared a new line of sustainability initiatives to be fulfilled by 2025, including a goal for 100% of its linen, cotton and polyester to be sustainable (Chan, 2019). Its impact will be that the conglomerate will use fewer water sources and guarantees that this will lead to resource efficiency. Though, it does not aim to reduce carbon usage or improve supply chain management.

H&M, on the other hand, is committed to becoming fully recycled by the year 2030. They are targeting offset carbon and move towards 100% renewable energy usage while cutting down on greenhouse emissions by at least 40%. Uniqlo, a brand that entered the Indian market only a few years ago, is working to reduce single-plastic usage by 85% by the end of 2020. The brand is devoted to switching from plastic to paper bags as well as reducing plastic from its packaging.

The Spanish clothing company, Mango has decided to move towards more eco-friendly fabric, which like Zara aims to minimise the usage of water and other resources. Myntra, India's premier fashion e-commerce brand on World Environment Day announced an

Earth store that will sell a selection of handcrafted and naturally-dyed organic (or recycled) clothes ensuring vegan and cruelty-free production procedures (Sharma, 2021).

These decisions may or may not lead to change, but what is necessary is that these brands be held accountable for the damage they have done.

4.2.2 Luxury Retailers and Sustainability

While fast fashion brands are limited in their paths to sustainability due to the costs of the products they sell, luxury brands have no such problems, as a typical luxury brand makes 300-400% more dollars on each purchase vis-à-vis a fast-fashion brand. Considering how many customers today value sustainability, a luxury brand should be on its path to making hundred per cent sustainable goods.

Stella McCartney, an advocate for both ethical and sustainable fashion practices is committed to bringing back upscaling and recycling with the introduction of their A-Z Manifesto. Chloé and Louis Vuitton are too on the similar path of upscaling. Balenciaga's SS21 collection comprises 93.5% plain materials that were either sustainable or the least upcycled (Bala, 2021).

Indian Luxury brand Anita Dogre introduced an initiative from the grassroots level to promote dying crafts. And in doing so has helped provide employment opportunities to many artisans in hundreds of villages in India (Driver, 2021). It is also working on lightening its carbon footprint. As a brand, it resonates well with the principles of green economics. Austrian-based Lenzing Group, a mass manufacturer of cellulose-based fibres has tied up with many Indian Fashion Houses such as Anita Dongre, Ritu Kumar, Abraham & Thakore, and Rajesh Pratap Singh. These fibres are 100% biodegradable and do not release any waste, such as microfibres, into the environment or water (Spinning A Greener Yarn: Sustainable Fabrics' Day In The Sun, 2021).

4.2.3 Indian Karigars

Unlike big brands, Indigenous Karigars don't play fast and loose with the rules. Material is procured from vendors and is stitched and dyed in 'karkhanas' or workshops, it

reaches the consumer in the villages directly and via a middleman in urban centres. The entire production process is ethical and mostly sustainable apart from the fabric. Many large Indian fashion houses collaborate with local karigars and provide them with recycled materials or sustainable fibres to create clothes that are later sold under the company's label.

5.0 The Need to Head Towards a Green Economy

The existing literature suggests that there is a need for a new concept of revolution to find a way for growth and ecological well-being to move together. Moreover, the outmoded economic theories do not take into account the environmental damage done due to the presence of a brown economy, thereby exerting immense stress on the resources. Green Economics finds a way to integrate the two most important aspects for human survival: economic growth and environmental preservation.

Firstly, contrary to popular belief, sustainably produced goods will be cheaper than machine-produced goods. The prices of organically or sustainably produced goods on paper are more expensive than goods resulting from the fast industry. This is because companies involved in fast fashion fail to include environmental costs while calculating the costs of their goods. If environmental costs were included in the selling price then the prices of products produced without green practices would skyrocket, making it undesirable for general consumers. Producing locally would incur less environmental costs and raw material costs making the greenly produced goods much cheaper; hence, it would be more appealing to the common consumers. This would encourage the buying and selling of locally produced goods, helping all aspects of the economy to grow. Additionally, sustainably produced goods use less energy which further helps in reducing their carbon footprint.

Secondly, sustainably made goods multiply growth. This sector creates growth by increasing employment and purchasing power. For example, the Khadi industry is a self-sufficient sector; it relies on human capital as a resource reducing the environmental costs. It encourages locally grown organic products and promotes a greener economy as well as social inclusion. Before the British Rule, India was a self-sufficient country with minimal need for imports; India had a big share in the world market per its exports. The products

made and exported from India were sustainable as the Industrial Revolution had not yet come in. Furthermore, the British flooded the Indian markets with machine-made goods and British inclined policies, destroying India's indigenous industries (Tyagi, 2010).

In addition, sustainable sectors would reduce India's burden and reliance on imports. The money spent on procuring goods from foreign countries can now be invested elsewhere. Furthermore, a greener economy leads to a cleaner and safer ecology. This improves the quality of life, which would lead to better health conditions for everyone living in the community. This would also free their incomes that they would have spent in hospitals or paying for negative environmental externalities, giving them greater purchasing power. Social inclusion from adopting Green Economy would employ every citizen in the economy irrespective of their gender, religion, race, etc. The features of green economics both ensures an increase in the GDP as well as a more equitable GDP. The human capital that would now be included in the labour force will add to the production level, which would further lead to the creation of demand in the market due to increased purchase power. The income received would turn to investments and savings, hence getting the flow of money going.

In addition, with innovations coming in, increased and stable incomes and an increase in purchasing power increase market stability and confidence. With this new investment-domestic and foreign- would enter the market. Hence, giving the economy a chance to grow. Lastly, the risk of negative externalities that would have been created due to non-green practices would be dodged. This would save the extra costs that would have, otherwise, emptied the consumers' pockets. For example, due to the pollution of water bodies, freshwater sources would be harmful to consume and difficult to find; to counter this, the government will have to spend extra money on infrastructure to ensure that every citizen has access to clean drinking water. As mentioned before, consuming toxic water would not only put a dent in the government's budget but also the consumer's pocket. Installation of smog towers, getting the oceans rid of years of garbage, new illnesses, mutation of viruses, etc, all harm the economy in some way or the other.

6.0 Policy Reforms and Suggestions

- It is evident from the previous arguments that the implementation of a Green Economy would be beneficial for the Indian economy. However, there is no policy made to promote and support sustainable industries. The first recommendation would be to frame some policies specifically catered to sustainable industries.
 - This could be done by either making an entirely new policy for the said subject or the addition of this in the already existing policies. This can also be done to create a market for sustainable products
 - This can be done by providing tax concessions and subsidies termed as “green stimulus packages” to businesses that decide to be involved with sustainable practices (Pearce, 1992). This would promote a sustainable industry, encouraging people and/or businesses to enter.
- Furthermore, the government can reduce the barriers to entry as well. With this, the concept of sustainable businesses should be included in the education curriculum of all boards across the country. Considering that many fast fashion brands set up their manufacturing plants in developing countries like India, the government must ensure that workers are paid decent wages and have access to improved working conditions.
- Most importantly, the government needs to introduce a carbon tax, so as to minimize the carbon footprint and hold the organization accountable. The government has made a few policies to try to shift India from its current brown economy to a greener economy but we need to be more firm for the same.
- Despite this, the implementation of policies like the National Environmental Policy at the lowest rungs has been extremely weak. It is essential for the government to ensure that they are strictly implemented.
- While there are expectations of reforms from the top, there is a need for companies to intervene and evolve to better, more sustainable practices. Companies can and should move towards organically produced fabrics so as to reduce the collateral effect on soil and water sources and CO₂ emissions. They can develop standards and practices for manufacturing fabrics that can be easily reused or recycled. To calculate the full life-cycle impact of apparel products, the Sustainable Apparel Coalition curated an

index (Remy et al., 2020).

- There's also a need to move away from carbon energy sources to renewable energy sources, cloth manufacturers must see to it that their factories contribute less pollution, especially in developing countries where health conditions borne from air pollution is a big issue.

7.0 Conclusion

Many scholars have always argued that sustainable development and green economics have weaknesses and there's a chance that they might not work out. However, one thing is certain that the current path at which humans are surviving has all the signs of being unsustainable. The fashion industry may not be the only one to take us down, however, it will contribute significantly to our doom. It is evident that humans have destroyed ecological well-being, so it is every human's moral responsibility to ensure its revival. More than our ethical duty, it is essential for humanity's benefit.

The paper argues that shifting to a greener economy is not only good for the environment but also would let us expedite the process of economic growth. The arguments provide support and evidence to contribute to the strengthening of the hypothesis. The Industrial Revolution has not been as successful in decreasing poverty and unemployment as was expected, the green economy offers better solutions for the same. Fashion is one of the biggest industries in the world to transform into a green economy, makes it essential for fast fashion to find alternative ways to make the environment cleaner.

India is not new to the concept of sustainable fashion, which is the reason why Indians would be able to adjust faster than the rest of the world. Promoting and producing greener products will eradicate the risk of any further environmental crisis while promoting growth. India would benefit greatly by shifting to greener practices as argued in the paper. Greening the economy would expedite the process of growth in India by making use of that section of the labour force which is considered a burden - unemployed personnel. Kickstarting this sector would revive the lost Indian textile industry and would provide income to the small businesses in the country.

As the climate takes a turn for the worse and the global temperature skyrockets, it is consequential to not only bring the perilous effects of fast fashion into the limelight but also the need to switch over to eco-friendly alternatives: the green economy model. It is imperative to understand that the discussed model will play a dual role - aid in giving the planet a respite from the impairment caused by human greed and tapping into resources that have been unused for the longest time.

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